PRESS ANNOUNCEMENT FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Maternity leave benefits scheme commences operations effect November 2016

Based on Law N°003/2016 of 30/03/2016 establishing and governing maternity leave benefits scheme, published in the Official Gazette n° Special of 20/04/2016;

Based on the Ministerial Order N° 007/16/10/TC of 28/10/2016 relating to maternity leave benefits scheme, published in Official Gazette n° 44 of 31/10/2016;

Rwanda Social Security Board announces that Maternity Leave benefits insurance scheme is now established to compensate the female employee who is absent from employment for the purpose of pregnancy, giving birth and subsequently caring for the new-born child.

The scheme has begun its operations with this month of November 2016.

According to provisions of the aforementioned law especially in article 9 which states that "The employer declares and remits collected contribution to the Social Security Administration not later than fifteen (15) days of every month following the month of contribution" the deadline for paying contributions by employees for the Month of November will be 15th December, 2016.

We take this opportunity to inform all employers in Rwanda of this deadline and encourage them to respect the law to avoid any unnecessary consequences that may arise from delays in declaring and remitting contributions to the scheme.

Maternity Leave benefits scheme is a new social security scheme, whose establishment is part of Government of Rwanda’s commitment towards empowering Rwandan women to physically recover, care for the newborn to give the best start in life and avoid maternity to become barrier to women contribution to the national development.

With the new maternity leave benefits regime, mothers will no longer face the hard choice of either completing 12 weeks of leave and lose 80% of their family’s income or return to work after 6 weeks to keep their income.

The established Maternity Leave Benefits Scheme introduces 12 Weeks (three months) of fully paid leave during which a monthly compensation equivalent to the mother’s last salary shall be given.

RSSB as custodians of the maternity leave benefits insurance will pay 6 weeks of the paid leave starting from the seventh week while compensations for the first six weeks will be met by the employer.

Every employed woman who goes on maternity leave and who will have contributed for at least one month to the maternity leave benefits scheme is an eligible beneficiary of the scheme.

However as provided for by the law in its article 12, in case of delivery complications certified by an authorized medical doctor necessitating prolonged maternity leave, additional maternity benefits is granted but does not exceed one (1) month.

Monthly contributions to the maternity leave benefits scheme managed by RSSB shall be 0.6% of the employee’s gross salary. Both the employer and employee shall contribute to a tune of 0.3%.

Contributions shall be made by all employees in Rwanda (male and female) and by every employer (private or public).

Maternity leave insurance contributions are a percentage of an employee’s Gross salary (minus transport allowances and any other compensatory allowances) and shall be paid by the employer not later than the 15th day of the following month similar to all contributions to other social security insurance schemes managed by RSSB.

Also, the employer as laid down by the law is required to pay the employee maternity leave benefits due by RSSB and claim reimbursement which shall be made within thirty (30) days of the receipt of request of reimbursement.

Done at Kigali 08/11/2016