



**REGULATORY FRAMEWORK
FOR THE PROTECTION OF
FEMALE PLAYERS AND COACHES**

JULY 2024

FIFA

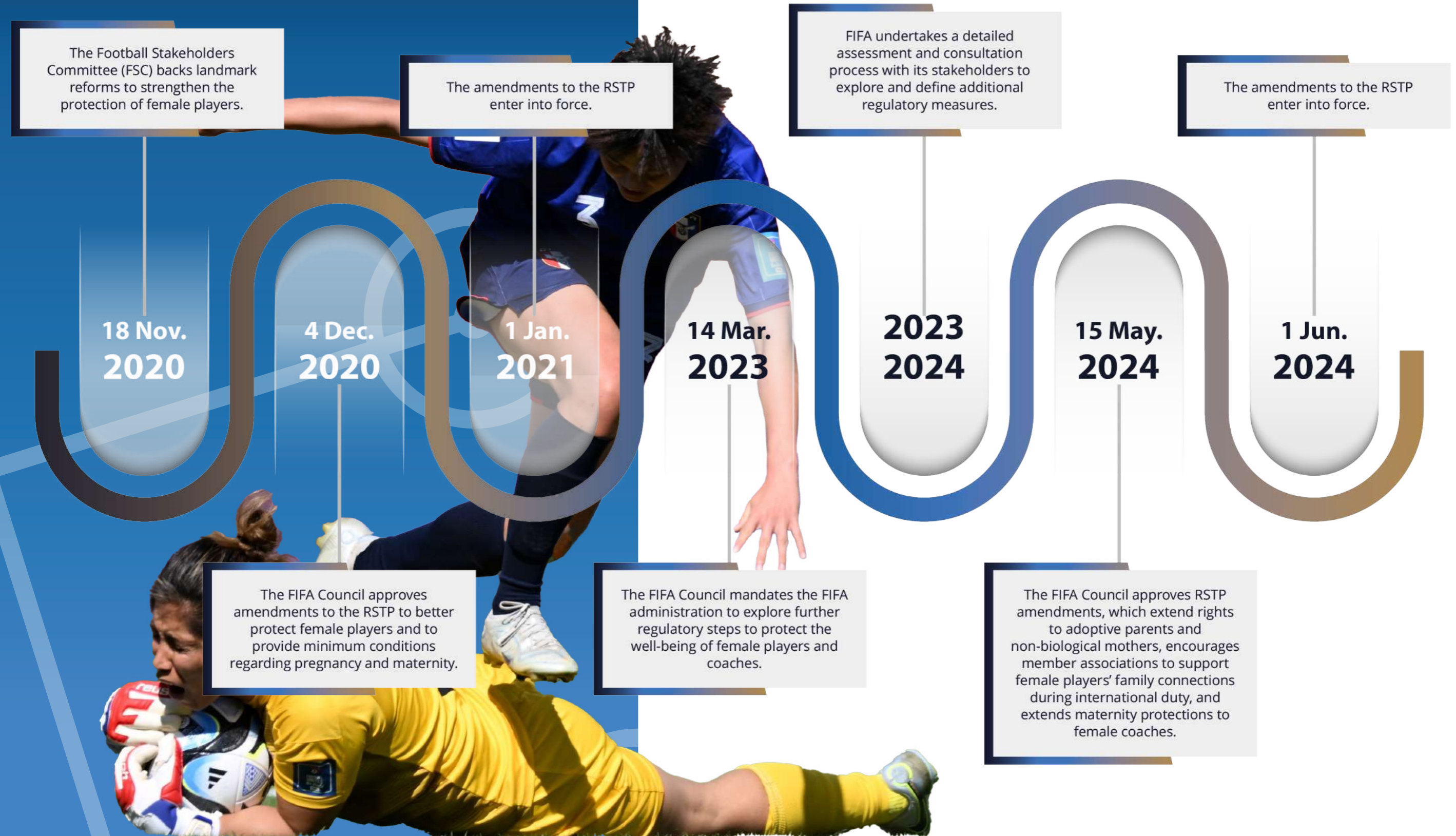
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Before 2021

Although the FIFA Regulations on the Status and Transfer of Players (RSTP) applied to both male and female players, the RSTP did not provide specific provisions in relation to maternity or other specific provisions to protect female players or coaches.

TIMELINE OF THE FIFA REGULATORY FRAMEWORK FOR THE PROTECTION OF FEMALE PLAYERS AND COACHES





Leave entitlements for female players and coaches (ARTICLE 18 PARAGRAPH 7 OF THE RSTP)

Who is entitled to take leave?

- Female players/coaches as biological mothers, adoptive parents and non-biological mothers during the term of their contract.

Salary during leave:

- Two-thirds of the contracted salary.

Types of leave and duration:

MATERNITY LEAVE:

- 14 weeks of paid absence.
- At least eight weeks must be after the baby is born.

ADOPTION LEAVE:

- For adopting a child under 2 years: eight weeks of paid absence.
- For a child aged 2 to 4 years: four weeks of paid absence.
- For adopting a child over 4 years: two weeks of paid absence.
- Must be taken within six months of adoption.

FAMILY LEAVE:

- Non-biological mothers: eight weeks of paid absence.
- Must be taken within six months of the child's birth.

Important notes:

- Adoption and family leave cannot be taken by the same person for the same child.
- If a collective bargaining agreement (CBA) with related provisions exists, the terms of the CBA take precedence.
- If national law offers better conditions, those will apply instead.



Special protections for female players and coaches (ARTICLE 18QUATER PARAGRAPHS 1, 2 AND 3 OF THE RSTP)

Contractual stability:

AS A PRINCIPLE, EVERY CONTRACT REMAINS VALID REGARDLESS OF:

- pregnancy tests or results;
- being or becoming pregnant;
- taking maternity, adoption or family leave; and
- using any leave rights in general.

Fair treatment:

A CONTRACT CANNOT BE TERMINATED...

- for refusing a pregnancy test, being or becoming pregnant, or taking leave.

IF THIS HAPPENS...

- as a principle, it will be presumed that the termination is without just cause, which means that a club will:
 - have to pay compensation;
 - face sporting sanctions; and
 - possibly pay a fine.





Basic rights and options for a player who becomes pregnant

(ARTICLE 18QUATER PARAGRAPH 4 OF THE RSTP)

Keep playing:

- As a principle, a player can decide that she wishes to continue to play and train, and the club must then support that decision.

Alternative work:

- If the player does not feel safe to play or train, the club must offer another type of work.

Medical leave:

- If the player cannot play or work in an alternative manner for health-related reasons, the player can take medical leave (upon presentation of a valid medical certificate).
- Medical leave applies to female coaches as well.

Flexible leave and return to work

(ARTICLE 18QUATER PARAGRAPH 5 OF THE RSTP)



Flexible leave start:

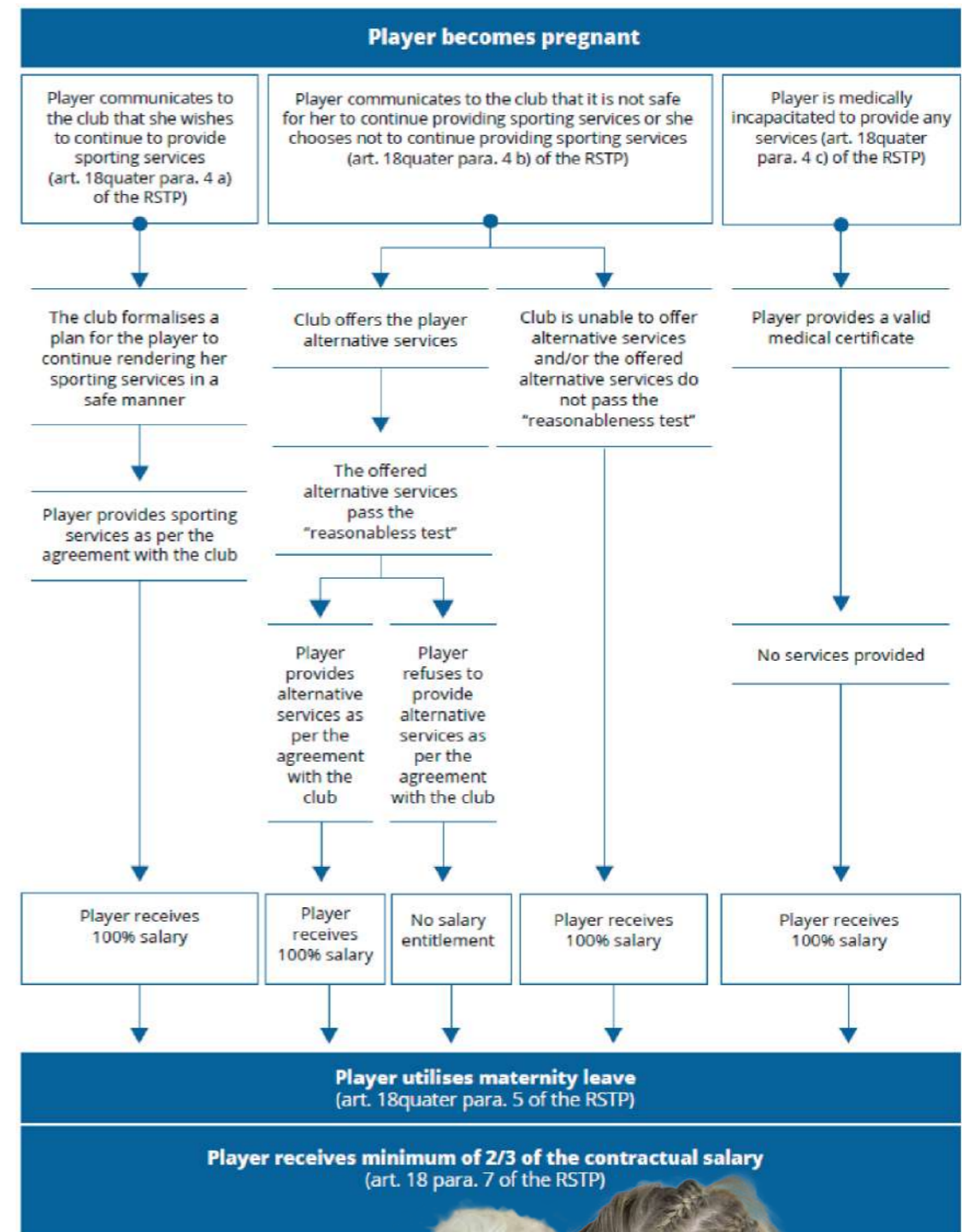
- As a principle, players and coaches are free to choose when their leave starts and when they wish to return to football.

Full pay when back:

- Full salary once player/coach is back to football activity.

Support after maternity leave:

- After maternity leave, the club must help the player get back into football, work with her on a postpartum plan and provide medical support.





Breastfeeding

(ARTICLE 18QUATER PARAGRAPH 6 OF THE RSTP)

Breastfeeding rights:

- A player/coach is allowed to breastfeed and/or express milk as required.

Suitable facilities:

- Clubs must provide suitable facilities for breastfeeding/expressing milk, in line with national laws or agreements.

Full pay for reduced hours:

- If the player/coach can only work fewer hours because of breastfeeding/expressing milk, the salary remains the same.



Menstrual health

(ARTICLE 18QUINQUIES OF THE RSTP)

Approved absence:

- A female player or coach can take time off from training or matches whenever needed for reasons of menstrual health, with a valid medical certificate.

Full pay guaranteed:

- Absence for reasons of menstrual health have no impact on the salary of a player or coach.



Special registration rules for female players

(ARTICLE 6 PARAGRAPH 3 OF THE RSTP)

Temporary replacements:

- Clubs are allowed to register a female player outside of a registration period if she is replacing another player who is on maternity, adoption or family leave.

Return from leave:

- A player who returns from maternity, adoption or family leave can also be registered outside of the registration periods.



Supporting national-team players and their families

(ARTICLE 1BIS PARAGRAPH 11 OF ANNEXE 1 TO THE RSTP)

Member associations are encouraged to provide a family-friendly environment during final competitions, for example by:

- ensuring that families can stay in the same hotel or nearby during final competitions;
- providing appropriate facilities for breastfeeding or expressing milk, as required by national laws;
- offering necessary sanitary provisions for players with infants;
- providing financial assistance for travel and accommodation for families; and
- facilitating childcare services to help players focus on their performance.





Implementation of the regulatory framework at national level

(ARTICLE 1 PARAGRAPH 3 a) OF THE RSTP)

Minimum standards:

- The rules of the RSTP are basic standards that must be followed at national level.

National flexibility:

- Each member association can implement stronger protections through their own regulations.

Collective bargaining agreements (CBAs):

- If a valid CBA with provisions for female players and coaches exists at national level, those provisions are fully applicable.

More beneficial national law prevails:

- If no CBA exists, but national laws provide better protections than the FIFA framework, those laws take precedence.

Regulatory Compliance:

- The applicable conditions from CBAs or national laws must be properly included in the domestic regulations.



Do you need additional support or information?

Please do not hesitate to contact the FIFA Legal & Compliance Division at legal@fifa.org who, in close coordination with the FIFA Women's Football Division, remain at your disposal should you have any queries in respect to this topic.

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