

Half of the Women Who Go on Maternity Leave Lose Their Jobs Upon Return

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(Não assinado)

According to a study conducted by FGV EPGE (Brazilian School of Economics and Finances at the Getúlio Vargas Foundation) half of the women who go on maternity leave no longer find themselves with a job one year later.

"We tracked the careers of women between the ages of 25 and 35 who went on maternity leave between 2009 and 2012, and we noticed that one year after the benefit was conceded, 48% of them were no longer in the labor market", said Cecilia Machado, a professor at FGV EPGE who authored the study along with with Valdemar Neto, a PhD student at the institution.

A total of 247.5 thousand women went on maternity leave during the period in question. Five percent of them were without a job five months into their leave, while 15% were without a job by the 6th month.

After four months on leave, mothers are entitled to an additional month of tenure, which would explain the low percentage of women who were out of a job 5 months into their leave.

According to professor Machado, employees who no longer hold a job after 5 months decided to leave on their own. Employers who fire workers without just cause make up most dismissals from month six and onward.

"That doesn't mean that all these women are being fired because they went on maternity leave. There may be a percentage of workers who reached an agreement in order to have access to social security benefits, such as the FGTS [Guarantee Fund for Length of Work]".