

How to Become a Breastfeeding Mother Friendly Employer



Babies were born to be breastfed!

*Together we are building a community
that supports breastfeeding.*



DPHHS Work-site Breastfeeding Promotion

Access this packet online at : www.breastfeeding.mt.gov

Table of Contents



6 Easy Steps! 2

Fast Facts on... Breastfeeding 3

Breastfeeding Saves \$\$\$ 4

Employer Support is Critical 5

**Minimum Support Needed to Help
Working Mothers Continue Breastfeeding** 6



**Many Employers Provide
Additional Support** 7

Sample Breastfeeding Support Policy 8

**Breastfeeding Mother Friendly Employer
Designation Application** 9 - 10



6 Easy Steps!

1 Review the “Breastfeeding Mother Friendly Employer” Packet. The packet, along with breastfeeding information, is available on the web at www.breastfeeding.mt.gov

2 Develop a plan to help provide support for breastfeeding mothers. You can include:

- a. A list of why it is important to support nursing mothers.
- b. A description of the facilities needed.
- c. A draft workplace policy for supporting breastfeeding employees. A sample policy is included in the packet.
- d. A description of how management and employees will be informed of the policy.

Helpful Hint:
Contact other employers who already have breastfeeding-friendly policies. A list with contact names and phone numbers is included and is on the web at:
www.breastfeeding.mt.gov

3 Obtain support and formal approval for the breastfeeding policy from company management.

4 Set up your “Mothers’ Room.”

- Not a public restroom or toilet stall.

5 Inform all employees of the new policy.

- Include the policy in employee orientation materials and descriptions of wellness benefits.

Idea:
Have a grand opening or ribbon cutting for the new “Mothers’ Room.”

6 Complete the “Breastfeeding Mother Friendly Employer” designation application and send with your breastfeeding support policy to:

Contact mailing address information is posted on web at:
www.breastfeeding.mt.gov

Fast Facts on . . . Breastfeeding

Breastfeeding helps mothers:

- ✧ Lose their pregnancy weight gain more quickly, with no return of weight when weaning occurs.
- ✧ Reduce their risk of breast, ovarian and endometrial cancers.
- ✧ Reduce their risk of osteoporosis and bone fracture later in life.



*Breastfed babies are healthier . . .
now and throughout life.*

Babies who are not breastfed are at higher risk for:

- ✧ Ear and other infections.
- ✧ Allergies. Human milk is made for human babies and is easier to digest.
- ✧ Asthma.
- ✧ Hospitalization due to a serious illness.
- ✧ Childhood obesity.

Breastfeeding Saves \$\$\$

for families, employers and the health system

- 1 Families save several hundred \$\$ when their child is breastfed compared to the high cost of using artificial formula!
- 2 Employers save \$\$ because of lower absenteeism. Parents of breastfed children miss fewer days of work because their children are healthier.
- 3 Health care costs are lower since breastfed babies require fewer sick care visits, prescriptions and hospitalizations.

Consider this . . .

For every 1,000 babies who are never breastfed there are:



2,033 excess office visits



212 excess days of hospitalization



609 excess prescriptions

A minimum of \$3.6 billion in medical expenses annually would be saved if the number of children breastfed for 6 months was increased to 50% as recommended by the U.S. Surgeon General.



Employer Support Is Critical

Many breastfeeding mothers find it hard to continue breastfeeding after they return to work. Employer support can make or break a woman's resolve to provide her child with the best nutrition that nature has to offer. Workplace support helps mothers, children and society reap the *immediate and lifelong health benefits of breastfeeding*.

These three important facts have implications for employers and the health of their worker's young children . . .

- 1** Women with infants and toddlers are the fastest-growing segment of today's workforce.
- 2** More than 50 percent of women who are working when they become pregnant return to work by the time their infant is only eight to 12 weeks old.
- 3** The American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) recommends that breastfeeding continue for *at least 12 months*.



Minimum Support Needed to Help Working Mothers Continue Breastfeeding

The workplace environment is supportive and respectful of a woman's decision to breastfeed.

Breastfeeding Policy

The employer has a written policy that describes the worksite accommodations available to breastfeeding employees.

- The policy is part of the employer's written policies.
- All employees are informed of the policy.



Flexible Breaks

A flexible break in the morning and afternoon is provided for the woman to (a) nurse her child or (b) express her milk. If necessary, the beginning and/or ending time of work can be adjusted to accommodate these breaks. For example, if two 15-minute breaks are allowed for all employees, the breastfeeding employee starts work 10 minutes earlier and leaves work 10 minutes later to allow for two 25-minute breaks. Or, the employee can use annual leave or take a shorter lunch.



Private Area

A private area with an electric outlet (not a toilet stall or public restroom) is available for nursing or expressing milk. It is quiet, clean, and has enough room for a comfortable chair and a place to set a breast pump.

Place to Wash Hands

A clean water source for washing hands and rinsing out any breast pump equipment is available close to the private area.



Place to Store Breastmilk

A place for storing breastmilk is available. Breastmilk can be stored in a refrigerator or the mother can bring a small ice chest or thermos from home.

Many Employers Provide Additional Support for Breastfeeding Mothers

Some Employers . . .

- *Provide* an electric breastpump. With an electric pump women can express breastmilk in the least amount of time. However, the cost may be prohibitive for some employees. More than one woman can use the pump.
- *Allow* mothers to have their nursing child brought to work during breaks or allow employees to leave the workplace to breastfeed their child.
- *Offer* opportunities for part-time employment, job sharing, flex schedules, and/or a gradual return to work.
- *Provide* on-site childcare. Many employers consider accessibility to childcare in facility planning.
- *Provide* breastfeeding education and support by:
 1. Providing written breastfeeding pamphlets or books.
 2. Offering on-site mother support groups.
 3. Providing lactation consultant services on-site.
 4. Providing breastfeeding classes on-site as part of wellness activities.



A high quality electric breastpump makes pumping quicker and easier.

SAMPLE

Workplace Breastfeeding Support Policy for

Employer: _____ Date: _____

1. This workplace breastfeeding support policy is being initiated to support employees in providing their child with the healthiest food nature has to offer, their own mother's breast milk.
2. Breastfeeding employees shall be allowed a flexible schedule for nursing or pumping. The time allowed will not exceed the normal time allowed for lunch and breaks. For time above and beyond normal lunch and breaks, annual leave will be used or the employee can come in earlier, leave later or take a shorter lunch.
3. A private room (not a toilet stall or restroom) will be available for employees to breastfeed their child or express milk using a breast pump. The room will have accessible electrical outlets for an electric breast pump and a sink close by for hand washing and rinsing out breast pump parts.
4. The breastfeeding promotion area/room will contain a comfortable chair with arms, a small low table, and a nursing stool.
5. Storing breastmilk:
 - a. A refrigerator will be available for safe storage of breastmilk. Breastfeeding women will provide their own containers and milk stored in the refrigerator will be clearly labeled with name and date.
 - or —
 - b. If a refrigerator is not available, mothers can bring in a small ice chest for storing breastmilk.
6. All employees will be informed of this policy.