

University of Maine Breastfeeding and Lactation Support Policy

NOTE: Students needing/requesting breastfeeding and/or lactation support should contact the Division of Student Life, 315 Memorial Union, (207) 581-1406.

Date: November 1, 2020

Purpose:

The University of Maine recognizes the importance and benefits of breastfeeding for both mothers and their infants, and in promoting a family-friendly work and study environment. Maine Law and the federal Affordable Care Act provide for the needs of mothers who are nursing and their infants. The University of Maine intends to fully comply with these provisions of law by implementing a breastfeeding and lactation policy for faculty and staff.

By implementing a breastfeeding and lactation policy, the University strives to create an environment conducive to working and learning and attuned to both professional and personal needs, such as the needs of an employee who is breastfeeding to nurse or express milk for her baby while she is at work.

Applicable To:

All relevant University faculty and staff.

Responsibility:

All University supervisors are responsible for being aware of the policy and working with relevant employees to arrange mutually convenient lactation break times.

Policy:

In accordance with Maine law, the University acknowledges that a woman may breastfeed her child in any place open to the public on campus. As required by federal and state law, the University also makes reasonable efforts to provide sanitary and private space, other than a bathroom, to be used as a lactation room in close proximity to the work area for employees who are breastfeeding. Supervisors in non-academic and academic units or departments shall work with employees who are breastfeeding to schedule reasonable and flexible break times each day for this activity.

1. Lactation Breaks

- a. Whenever possible, the University shall provide flexibility for staff and faculty who give their supervisor adequate notice identifying a need for lactation support and facilities.
- b. Employees are responsible for requesting lactation support prior to or during maternity leave, preferably no later than two weeks before returning to work.
- c. The unpaid time (such as a lunch period), generally not to exceed one hour, may run concurrently with an employee's paid break time (if applicable), but the University shall make separate time available if this is not reasonable. Supervisors and employees shall work together to establish mutually convenient times.
- d. Alternatively, personal leave, vacation time, or flexible scheduling may be used for this accommodation.
- e. No serious disruption of University operations may result from providing lactation time.
- f. Consistent with the University's efforts to recognize the importance of supporting the needs of working caregivers, supervisors shall respond seriously and positively to notice of a need for lactation support and facilities and shall ensure that there are no negative consequences to employees who are breastfeeding when lactation break times are needed.

2. Lactation Facilities:

- a. The University shall make reasonable efforts to provide sanitary and private facilities in close proximity to the work area for employees to breastfeed or to express breast milk.
- b. The location may be the place an employee normally works if there is adequate privacy, cleanliness, and that location is comfortable for the employee.
- c. Areas such as private offices or conference rooms with lockable doors qualify as appropriate spaces for lactation purposes.
- d. Bathrooms are not appropriate spaces for lactation purposes, unless the bathroom is equipped with a separate, designated room for lactation purposes.

3. Procedure:

- a. Employee completes a Lactation Accommodation Request form.

- b.** Supervisors shall review available space in their unit or department and provide appropriate nearby space and break time upon a request for lactation support and facilities.
- c.** Completed and signed lactation accommodation form will be sent to HR within fourteen (14) business days prior to the start of the accommodation request.
- d.** If the employee wishes to use a designated lactation room, the employee should visit our lactation resources website - <https://umaine.edu/hr/lactation-resources/>. Included on the website are instructions for scheduling the room and a list of amenities provided.
- e.** If the employee is not able to use a designated lactation room and indicates on the lactation accommodation form a desire to have a temporary accommodation for breastfeeding, HR will review the request and initiate the process to establish a temporary accommodation. The employee is responsible for notifying HR when a temporary lactation space is no longer needed.
- f.** Employees who are breastfeeding or expressing milk are responsible for any spot cleaning of the lactation facility upon completion of their breastfeeding or expressing milk.
- g.** If an employee has comments, concerns, or questions regarding the University of Maine Breastfeeding and Lactation Support Policy or believe they have been denied appropriate accommodation, they may contact the Office of Human Resources.