

LACTATION IN THE WORKPLACE TOOLKIT FOR MANAGERS & SUPERVISORS

Key Topics

- Business Case for Breastfeeding
- Affordable Care Act (ACA) and Maine Requirements
- University of Maine's Breastfeeding and Lactation Support Policy
- What Employees Need to Know
- What Employees Should Expect from a Lactation Space
- Employee Example
- Creating a Culture of Support
- Summary

Business Case for Breastfeeding

More than 80 percent of infants in Maine have been breastfed at some point in time (CDC, 2016). When breastfeeding employees return to work, a supportive environment encourages productivity and job satisfaction. Workplace support for breastfeeding employees contributes to the company's return on investment (HRSA, 2008) through:

- Reduced health care costs.
- Reduced turnover.
- Lower absenteeism rates because breastfed babies are healthier and their parents are less likely to miss work. One-day absences occur half as often among parents whose infants are fed human milk.
- Improved morale, job satisfaction, and productivity.
- Higher employee retention rates of 86-92%; national average is 59%.

ACA and Maine Requirements

ACA Requirements:

In 2010, Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (ACA) amended section seven of the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) to require employers to provide nursing employees with:

1. Reasonable break times to express breast milk;
2. A place, other than a bathroom, that may be used to express milk; and
3. Ensure provisions #1 and #2 are met for up to one year after the child's birth.

Maine Requirements:

1. Allows ACA provisions 1 & 2 (see above) for up to 3 years.
2. An employer may not discriminate in any way against an employee who chooses to express breast milk in the workplace.

Breastfeeding and Lactation Support Policy

The University of Maine has worked to develop a supportive breastfeeding policy and accompanying practices that enable employees to successfully return to work while continuing to feed their child(ren) breastmilk. It’s our hope that through the implementation of these practices, we’re sending a message to all employees that breastfeeding is valued here.

We ask supervisors and managers to support breastfeeding by making reasonable accommodations for employees who want to breastfeed after returning to work. Your attitude and practices can encourage other employees to exhibit a positive, accepting attitude as well.

To review this policy and to learn more about available resources, including how to initiate a lactation accommodation request and how to request use of our lactation room, please visit our Lactation Resources website at <https://umaine.edu/hr/lactation-resources/>.

What Employees Need to Know

- How to initiate a lactation accommodation request.
- Where lactation spaces are located.
- How to initiate temporary lactation space requests.
- How to reserve a room.
- Lactation Resources Website - <https://umaine.edu/hr/lactation-resources/>.
- That their supervisor/manager will take time to discuss lactation accommodations and other information.
- That management and leadership support breastfeeding.

What Employees Should Expect from a Lactation Space

- A clean, private space free from intrusion by coworkers or the public.
- A comfortable chair.
- A desk or table.
- A lockable door.
- An electrical outlet(s).
- Cleaning supplies.
- Our permanent lactation room is also equipped with a refrigerator.

Employee Example of Milk Expression during the Workday

8:00 am	Arrive to work
9:00 am – 9:30 am	Lactation break
12:00 pm – 12:30 pm	Lunch time lactation break
3:00 pm – 3:30 pm	Lactation Break
4:30 pm	Leave work

How to Create a Supportive Culture: Do's and Don'ts!

Do:

- Familiarize yourself with the University's Breastfeeding and Lactation Support Policy and recommended process.
- Know where lactation spaces are located.
- Familiarize yourself with our Breastfeeding and Lactation Support website.
- Contact the Office of Human Resources with any questions or to ask for supervisor support.
- Understand that employees experience stress when returning to work after welcoming a new child(ren).
- Work with employees to balance work duties and personal needs.
- Be as flexible as you can with breaks and schedules.
- Inform and encourage employees to visit our Breastfeeding and Lactation Support website - <https://umaine.edu/hr/lactation-resources/>.
- Set aside time to meet with breastfeeding employees to plan and demonstrate support.

Don't:

- Ask an employee when they will be done.
- Treat an employee's needs like an inconvenience.
- Consider the restroom an adequate place to express milk.
- Insist pumping should be done at certain times or for a certain period of time. Each individual is different.
- Ask personal questions such as, "what do you do in there?"
- Tolerate disrespect towards breastfeeding employees from other team members.

Summary

- Organizational support for breastfeeding employees brings many benefits: healthier babies, happier employees, cost savings to organizations, and compliance with state and federal requirements.
- It is important for supervisors to become familiar with the University's Breastfeeding and Lactation Support policy and recommended process.
- A culture of support for breastfeeding includes respect for individual needs, flexibility, and collaboration for practical solutions.

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