

LACTATION ACCOMMODATIONS: GENERAL SOLUTIONS

Workplaces of all types have found solutions for supporting breastfeeding employees. These solutions need not be expensive or complicated. Best of all, lactation support is a valuable addition to your employee benefits package and worksite wellness program. Breastfeeding employees who are supported by their employer are healthier, more productive, and loyal.

It Works for Business

Providing lactation accommodations in the workplace can bring about a **3 to 1 Return on Investment**¹ due to:

- ▶ **Lower absenteeism rates** from unplanned sick days since breastfed babies are healthier.²
- ▶ **Higher retention rates** after leave to give birth. A 9-company study found that the return to work rate among employees who are provided lactation support is 94% compared to the national average of 59%.³
- ▶ **Lower healthcare costs** and insurance claims when infants are breastfed.⁴
- ▶ **Higher productivity** and loyalty among workers.⁵

It's Required by Law

The Break Time for Nursing Mothers Act⁶ requires employers to provide:

- ▶ "Reasonable break time" to express milk as often as the employee has need.
- ▶ Private space that is not a bathroom and is "shielded from view and free from intrusion from coworkers and the public" that employees can use to express milk.

Although the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938 provisions cover workers who are eligible for overtime, businesses of all types have found that supporting all staff, regardless of status, ensures fairness and leads to bottom-line benefits for the organization.

Space Solutions

Lactation space can be small (minimum of 4' x 5') as long as it accommodates a chair and flat surface for a breast pump and enables the employee to move around a little. Options include:

Flexible Space

- Private office of employee, colleague, or manager
- Conference room
- Private area within an employee break room
- Partition or screen with signage and well-communicated policy
- Cubicle space if it can be secured and is tall enough (7' or more) to prevent intrusion.



Employees Who Travel

- Identify spaces in community locations (e.g., public spaces, library, federal buildings).
- Provide information about TSA guidelines for transporting human milk at <https://www.tsa.gov/travel/security-screening/whatcanibring/items/breast-milk>.



Designated Lactation Space

- Converted closet or storage area (if well-ventilated).
- Seldom-used small office area.
- A “funny little space” that can be retrofitted as a lactation area.
- Constructing walls or tall cubicle partitions to create a lactation area.
- Lactation “pod(s)” placed in convenient areas.
- For workplaces with multiple locations, consider establishing lactation space in key areas.

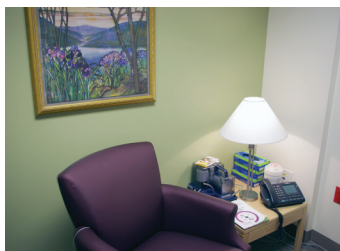


Amenities

The U.S. Department of Labor states that lactation areas must be functional for milk expression⁷ and include, at a minimum, a chair, a flat surface (other than the floor) on which to place the breast pump and, ideally, access to electricity.⁸

Storing Expressed Milk

Human milk is food. This means it can be stored in a general company refrigerator. However, most women prefer to keep their expressed milk in a small refrigerator in the lactation room or in their own personal cooler or insulated bag.



Time and Coverage

Breastfeeding employees typically need to express milk every two to three hours throughout their shift. It typically takes 15-20 minutes to express milk, depending on the mother and the age of her baby. This does not include travel and clean-up time. Each employee is different and no set amount of time will fit everyone’s needs. If coverage is needed, other staff, floaters, or managers can assist. In some settings, nursing breaks might need to be scheduled.

Consider...

- ▶ Facility policy that requires lactation space as part of any new building development or major renovation.
- ▶ Collecting feedback from employees using the space so ongoing improvements can be made.
- ▶ Allowing employees to have direct access to their baby for feedings.



For more information, contact the Ohio Department of Health at www.odh.ohio.gov/breastfeeding.

Or, visit the “Employer Solutions” website at the HHS Office on Women’s Health at

www.womenshealth.gov/supporting-nursing-moms-work.

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LACTATION ACCOMMODATION SOLUTIONS: EDUCATION

Educational settings can accommodate breastfeeding women with a variety of creative solutions. Support need not be expensive or time-consuming. Best of all, supporting both staff and teachers can make it easier to recruit and retain quality employees. It is a valuable addition to your employee benefits package and worksite wellness program. Breastfeeding employees and students who are supported at work are healthier, more productive, and loyal.

It Works for Business

Providing lactation accommodations in the education sector can bring about a **3 to 1 Return on Investment**¹ due to:

- ▶ **Lower absenteeism rates** from unplanned sick days since breastfed babies are healthier.²
- ▶ **Higher retention** rates after staff leave to give birth. A 9-company study found that the return to work rate among employers who provide lactation support is 94% compared to the national average of 59%.³
- ▶ **Lower healthcare costs** and insurance claims when infants are breastfed.⁴
- ▶ **Higher productivity** and loyalty among workers.⁵

It's Required by Law

The Break time for Nursing Mothers Act⁶ requires employers to provide:

- ▶ "Reasonable break time" to express milk as often as the employee has need.
- ▶ Private space that is **not a bathroom** that is "shielded from view and free from intrusion from coworkers and the public" that employees can use to express milk.

Although the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938 provisions extend to workers eligible for overtime, educational institutions find that supporting all staff ensures fairness and leads to bottom-line benefits. Schools receiving Title IX funding must provide equal access for pregnant and new parenting students.



Space Solutions

Educational institutions use varied solutions to create lactation stations for staff and students. The facility manager is an ideal partner in this effort.

K-12 School Setting

- Nurse's office or clinic within the school (if it can be disinfected prior to use)
- Personal office space
- Conference room
- Office of other staff (e.g., guidance counselor or school official)



College Campus Setting

- Ideally, provide space in all campus buildings to limit walk time and optimize use. At a minimum, select locations in key buildings (e.g., student union, administrative building).
- Indicate lactation facilities on campus map and on website.
- Convert storage areas, well-ventilated closets, and small office space.
- Provide space in campus childcare center.



Amenities

The U.S. Department of Labor states that lactation areas must be functional for milk expression⁷ and include, at a minimum, a chair, a flat surface (other than the floor) on which to place the breast pump and, ideally, access to electricity.⁸ Identify locations near a source of running water with the ability to be locked and include anti-microbial wipes to wipe down surfaces between users. Some schools include a white noise machine to minimize hallway traffic noise.



Time and Coverage

Breastfeeding employees typically need to express milk every two to three hours. It takes around 15-20 minutes to express milk depending on the mother and the age of her baby. This does not include travel and clean-up time. Each employee is different and no set amount of time will fit everyone's needs. Most employees use existing breaks and meal periods to express milk. Many find that creative scheduling in advance can help them meet their needs and the needs of the school. In some schools, women make up any extra time needed by coming to work earlier, staying later, or taking a shorter meal period. If coverage is needed, other staff, Title IX staff or floaters, or managers can assist. In some settings, nursing breaks might need to be scheduled.



Other Support

An onsite health clinic and health staff can provide additional support for breastfeeding. Some clinics include milk expression space. The campus grant funding office may be able to secure special funding to allow for any necessary renovations.



Consider...

- ▶ Collaborate with other departments (e.g., work life, women's studies, HR, public health).
- ▶ Open lactation spaces to staff, faculty, students, and guests visiting the campus.
- ▶ In larger physical campuses seek to provide spaces within 5-minute walk.
- ▶ Partner with the local hospital, WIC agency, lactation consultant, La Leche League, or breastfeeding coalition to offer breastfeeding classes for students, staff, and faculty.
- ▶ HR or work life can include lactation support laws and support services as part of training for department managers and supervisors.
- ▶ Policy can require lactation space in development of new or renovated campus buildings.
- ▶ Policies and practices that account for the needs of pregnant and breastfeeding students.

For more information, contact the Ohio Department of Health at www.odh.ohio.gov/breastfeeding. Or, visit the "Employer Solutions" website at the HHS Office on Women's Health at www.womenshealth.gov/supporting-nursing-moms-work. A breastfeeding toolkit is also available specifically for the education sector at [http://www.kansasbusinesscase.com/sites/default/files/Breastfeeding Support on College Campuses Toolkit.pdf](http://www.kansasbusinesscase.com/sites/default/files/Breastfeeding%20Support%20on%20College%20Campuses%20Toolkit.pdf).

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LACTATION ACCOMMODATION SOLUTIONS: HEALTHCARE

Healthcare organizations have a unique mission to promote health. This means it is even more important that they model healthy practices of supporting their employees with lactation accommodations. Solutions need not be expensive or complicated. Best of all, lactation support is a valuable addition to your employee benefits package and worksite wellness program. Breastfeeding employees who are supported by their employer are healthier, more productive, and loyal.

It Works for Business

Providing lactation accommodations in the healthcare industry can bring about a **3 to 1 Return on Investment¹** due to:

- ▶ **Lower absenteeism rates** from unplanned sick days since breastfed babies are healthier.²
- ▶ **Higher retention rates** after leave to give birth. A 9-company study found that the return to work rate among employees who are provided lactation support is 94% compared to the national average of 59%.³
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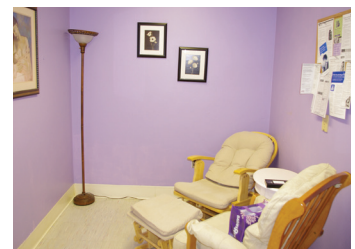
Although the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938 provisions cover workers eligible for overtime, healthcare agencies find that supporting all staff ensures fairness and leads to bottom-line benefits for the organization.

Space Solutions

A variety of options can work in healthcare settings.

Smaller Health Agencies

- Seldom-used exam room
- Private office space of physician or office coordinator
- Conference room
- Patient consultation room
- Well-ventilated closet or storage area
- On-call sleeping room when unoccupied



Larger Organizations or Health Systems

- Identify multiple spaces in key areas of the health unit.
- Locate spaces near a central bank of elevators to improve quick access.
- Consider spaces with a sink to minimize the amount of break time needed.
- Consider "multi-user" spaces with separate privacy stations for individual users.
- Ask employees to schedule their lactation time via the hospital intranet to assure available space.
- Monitor usage of the space to identify when additional spaces are needed.



Other Creative Options

- Consider a system-wide policy to be used by all hospitals or units within the system.
- Extend lactation space to visitors and mothers pumping for a hospitalized child.
- Allow employees to use a refrigerator in the lactation space or their own cooler to store expressed milk.

Amenities

The U.S. Department of Labor states that lactation areas must be functional for milk expression⁷ and include, at a minimum, a chair, a flat surface (other than the floor) on which to place the breast pump and, ideally, access to electricity.⁸



Storing Expressed Milk

Human milk is food. This means it can be stored in a general company refrigerator. However, most women prefer to keep their expressed milk in a nearby small refrigerator or in their own personal cooler or insulated bag.



Time and Coverage

Breastfeeding employees typically need to express milk every 2-3 hours throughout their shift. It takes around 15-20 minutes to express milk, depending on the mother and the age of her baby. This does not include travel and clean-up time. Each employee is different and no set amount of time will fit everyone's needs. If coverage is needed, nurse managers or other staff can assist. In some settings, nursing breaks might need to be scheduled.

Consider...

- ▶ Make multi-user breast pumps owned or rented by the hospital available for employees.
- ▶ Invite employees to attend breastfeeding classes offered at the hospital.
- ▶ Allow the hospital lactation team to provide lactation support for employees experiencing breastfeeding concerns.



For more information, contact the Ohio Department of Health at www.odh.ohio.gov/breastfeeding.

Or, visit the "Employer Solutions" website at the HHS Office on Women's Health at www.womenshealth.gov/supporting-nursing-moms-work.

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LACTATION ACCOMMODATION SOLUTIONS: MANUFACTURING

Manufacturing firms across America have found creative solutions to accommodate breastfeeding employees. Solutions need not be expensive or complicated. Best of all, lactation support is a valuable addition to your employee benefits package and worksite wellness program. Breastfeeding employees who are supported by their employer are healthier, more productive, and loyal.

It Works for Business

Providing lactation accommodations in the manufacturing industry can bring about a **3 to 1 Return on Investment¹** due to:

- ▶ **Lower absenteeism rates** from unplanned sick days since breastfed babies are healthier.²
- ▶ **Higher retention rates** after leave to give birth. A 9-company study found that the return to work rate among employers who provide lactation support is 94% compared to the national average of 59%.³
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Space Solutions

Manufacturing organizations have found a variety of solutions for milk expression space for breastfeeding employees.

Individual Spaces

- Well-ventilated storage area
- Unused office space
- Constructing a space within a larger area using partitions or screens
- Conference room space that gives breastfeeding employees priority use
- Employee "rest" area
- Space in the company's onsite health clinic
- Lactation "pod" or pop-up tent within larger areas



Multiple User Space

- Create individual private "stations" within a larger lactation space.
- Use curtains, tall partitions, or screens to provide individual privacy for employees. Or construct walls to create smaller individual areas.
- Provide individual spaces in multiple areas of the plant or in multiple buildings throughout the campus.



Amenities

The U.S. Department of Labor states that lactation areas must be functional for milk expression⁷ and include, at a minimum, a chair, a flat surface (other than the floor) on which to place the breast pump and, ideally, access to electricity.⁸ Other amenities, such as a sink for washing hands and breast pump parts, are not required, but will decrease the amount of break time needed to express milk. Include anti-microbial wipes to wipe down surfaces between users.



Storing Expressed Milk

Human milk is food. This means it can be stored in a general company refrigerator. However, most women prefer to keep their expressed milk in a nearby small refrigerator or in their own personal cooler or insulated bag.



Time and Coverage

Breastfeeding employees typically need to express milk every 2-3 hours throughout their shift. It takes around 15-20 minutes to express milk, depending on the mother and the age of her baby. This does not include travel and clean-up time. Each employee is different and no set amount of time will fit everyone's needs. Most employees use their existing breaks and meal period to express milk. In some firms, employees clock in and out or make up extra time by arriving at work earlier or staying later. Manufacturing firms with more rigid schedules often use floater staff for coverage while the employee is on break to express milk.



Other Support

Onsite health clinics can provide additional support for breastfeeding employees. Some clinics house milk expression space. Occupational health nurses can also be a resource to assist employees with milk expression questions and concerns.

Consider...

- ▶ Partner with local WIC agency for peer support of breastfeeding employees.
- ▶ Partner with WIC and local breastfeeding coalition to provide training for supervisors.
- ▶ Identify space along the plumbing line to accommodate a sink in the space.
- ▶ Ensure a company-wide policy on lactation to assure equitable access to lactation support.

For more information, contact the Ohio Department of Health at www.odh.ohio.gov/breastfeeding.

Or, visit the "Employer Solutions" website at the HHS Office on Women's Health at www.womenshealth.gov/supporting-nursing-moms-work.

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LACTATION ACCOMMODATION SOLUTIONS: RESTAURANTS

Restaurants have found many creative solutions to accommodate breastfeeding employees. Even small restaurants and fast-food industries with limited space and rigid time schedules can make it work. Solutions need not be expensive or complicated. Best of all, they can be a valuable addition to your employee benefits package and worksite wellness program. Breastfeeding employees who are supported by their employer are healthier, more productive, and loyal.

It Works for Business

Providing lactation accommodations in the restaurant industry can bring about a **3 to 1 Return on Investment¹** due to:

- ▶ **Lower absenteeism rates** from unplanned sick days since breastfed babies are healthier.²
- ▶ **Higher retention rates** after leave to give birth. A 9-company study found that the return to work rate among employers who provide lactation support is 94% compared to the national average of 59%.³
- ▶ **Lower healthcare costs** and insurance claims when infants are breastfed.⁴
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It's Required by Law

The Break Time for Nursing Mothers Act⁶ requires employers to provide:

- ▶ "Reasonable break time" to express milk as often as the employee has need.
- ▶ Private space that is not a bathroom that is "shielded from view and free from intrusion from coworkers and the public" that employees can use to express milk.

Although the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938 provisions cover workers eligible for overtime, restaurants find that supporting all staff ensures fairness and leads to bottom-line benefits for the organization.

Space Solutions

Breastfeeding employees need only a small area to express milk. Even a space 4' x 5' can suffice as long as it accommodates a chair and a flat surface for the breast pump. A number of flexible options in small spaces can work.

- ▶ Well-ventilated storage room or area
- ▶ Manager's office area (with personnel files locked and surveillance cameras covered)
- ▶ Private space within an employee "break" area
- ▶ Small area enclosed with an inexpensive privacy screen or partition
- ▶ Pop-up tent placed in an area not viewed by restaurant patrons





Other Creative Options

- Creative scheduling can help! Some employees work a “split shift” (e.g., the busy lunch and dinner periods and go to their baby between shifts to directly breastfeed).
- Some restaurants allow a family caregiver to bring the baby to the employee for direct feedings during slower periods.
- Some small restaurants arrange with a nearby business to enable employees to express milk at a shared location.



Amenities

The U.S. Department of Labor states that lactation areas must be functional for milk expression⁷ and include, at a minimum, a chair, a flat surface (other than the floor) on which to place the breast pump and, ideally, access to electricity.⁸ When space is limited, flexible spaces such as a partition should include signage that the space is occupied along with a well-communicated policy that respects the employee’s privacy.



Storing Expressed Milk

Expressed milk can be stored in a separate small refrigerator or in the employee’s personal cooler or insulated bag.



Time and Coverage

Breastfeeding employees typically need to express milk every 2-3 hours throughout their shift. It takes around 15-20 minutes to express milk, depending on the mother and the age of her baby. This does not include travel and clean-up time. Each employee is different and no set amount of time will fit everyone’s needs. Restaurant managers often use creative scheduling options to assure the employee has the time and coverage needed. In some settings, nursing breaks might need to be scheduled.

Consider...

- ▶ Partner with your local WIC agency for peer support of breastfeeding employees.
- ▶ Partner with the health department, WIC, or local breastfeeding coalition to provide training for supervisors.
- ▶ A company-wide policy on lactation to assure equitable access to lactation support and set expectations for honoring the privacy of breastfeeding employees.

For more information, contact the Ohio Department of Health at www.odh.ohio.gov/breastfeeding.

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LACTATION ACCOMMODATION SOLUTIONS: RETAIL

Retail stores have found many creative solutions to accommodate breastfeeding employees. Even small stores with limited space can make it work. Solutions need not be expensive or complicated. Best of all, they can be a valuable addition to your employee benefits package and worksite wellness program. Breastfeeding employees who are supported by their employer are healthier, more productive, and loyal.

It Works for Business

Providing lactation accommodations in the retail industry can bring about a **3 to 1 Return on Investment¹** due to:

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Although the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938 provisions cover workers eligible for overtime, retail stores find that supporting all staff ensures fairness and leads to bottom-line benefits for the organization.

Space Solutions

Breastfeeding employees need only a small area to express milk. Even a space 4' x 5' can work as long as it accommodates a chair and a flat surface for the breast pump. A variety of options can work in the retail setting.

- ▶ Converted dressing room (cost for installing an electrical outlet can be nominal)
- ▶ Manager's office with personnel files locked and surveillance cameras covered
- ▶ Private space within an employee break area
- ▶ Well-ventilated storage area
- ▶ Privacy screens or partitions to create a small private space
- ▶ Multi-purpose structure built in a storage area for lactation purposes as needed
- ▶ A designated central lactation area in a retail mall for breastfeeding employees from any store





Other Creative Options

- Some retail stores allow a family caregiver to bring the baby to the mother for direct feedings during slower periods.
- Some small retail stores allow employees to keep their infant in arms with them through the work period. A sling can provide coverage while feeding the baby.
- Some small retail outlets arrange with a nearby business to enable employees to express milk at another location.



Amenities

The U.S. Department of Labor states that lactation areas must be functional for milk expression⁷ and include, at a minimum, a chair, a flat surface (other than the floor) on which to place the breast pump and, ideally, access to electricity.⁸ When space is limited, flexible spaces (such as a manager's office or screened area) should include signage that the space is occupied. A well-communicated policy should include respecting a breastfeeding employee's privacy.



Time and Coverage

Breastfeeding employees typically need to express milk every 2-3 hours throughout their shift. It takes around 15-20 minutes to express milk, depending on the mother and the age of her baby. This does not include travel and clean-up time. Each employee is different and no set amount of time will fit everyone's needs. Retail managers use creative scheduling options with managers or floaters providing coverage as needed. In small gas stations or retail outlets that staff only one employee at a time, scheduled nursing breaks can allow the manager to provide coverage as needed or to permit the business to close for short breaks.



Consider...

- ▶ Allow the lactation space to be extended to breastfeeding customers as a valued customer benefit.
- ▶ Partner with your local WIC agency for peer support of breastfeeding employees.
- ▶ Partner with the health department, WIC, or local breastfeeding coalition to provide training for supervisors.

For more information, contact the Ohio Department of Health at www.odh.ohio.gov/breastfeeding.

Or, visit the "Employer Solutions" website at the HHS Office on Women's Health at

www.womenshealth.gov/supporting-nursing-moms-work.

The State of Ohio is an Equal Opportunity Employer and Provider of ADA Services

1 Washington Business Group on Health. Breastfeeding Support at the Workplace. Washington, D.C.; 2000. Issue No. 2.

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3 Ortiz J, et al. Duration of breast milk expression among working mothers enrolled in an employer-sponsored lactation program. *Ped Nursing.* 2004;30(2):111-119.

4 Mutual of Omaha. Prenatal and lactation education reduces newborn health care costs. Omaha, NE: Mutual of Omaha, 2001.

5 Galtry J. Lactation and the labor market: breastfeeding labor market changes and public policy in the United States. *Health Care Women Int.* 1997;18:467-480.

6 U.S. Department of Labor. Break Time for Nursing Mothers. <https://www.dol.gov/agencies/whd/nursing-mothers>

7 U.S. Department of Labor. Fact Sheet #73: Break Time for Nursing Mothers Under the FLSA. <https://www.dol.gov/agencies/whd/fact-sheets/73-flsa-break-time-nursing-mothers>

8 U.S. Department of Labor. Request for Information on Break Time for Nursing Mothers. Federal Register 75:80073-80079, Dec. 21, 2010. <https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/FR-2010-12-21/pdf/2010-31959.pdf>