



Providing Lactation
Upgrades and Support

EMPLOYEE
GUIDE

CONGRATULATIONS FOR GIVING YOUR BABY A HEALTHY START IN LIFE THROUGH BREASTFEEDING! YOU CAN CONTINUE TO BREASTFEED... EVEN AFTER YOU RETURN TO WORK. HERE'S HOW!



Breastfeeding mothers who are away from their baby will need to express their breastmilk. This allows your baby to continue receiving your milk. It also helps you maintain a healthy amount of milk!

Legal Protections for Ohio Breastfeeding Moms

Ohio breastfeeding mothers have specific legal rights with breastfeeding. These include:

- ▶ 1. The **right to breastfeed** in “any location of a place of public accommodation wherein the mother is otherwise permitted.” [Ohio Rev. Code Ann. 3781.55 (2005)]
- ▶ 2. The right to **reasonable time and private space** to express milk at work (if you are eligible for overtime status under the Fair Labor Standards Act). [FLSA Section 7, P.L. 111-148 (2010)]. Breastfeeding employees eligible for overtime have the right to:
 - Reasonable time to express milk
 - Private place that is not a bathroom that is “free from intrusion from coworkers and the public”
- ▶ The Pregnancy Discrimination Act (PDA) forbids employers from discriminating against you if you are pregnant or have pregnancy-related conditions. Breastfeeding is considered a pregnancy-related condition according to the PDA.
- ▶ The **right to file a complaint** if you feel your rights are being violated.
 - a. For violations of the FLSA, contact the Department of Labor Wage and Hour Division at www.employeeights.info/2/oelasmart/breastfeeding-workplace-laws.
 - b. For violations of the PDA, contact the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission at <https://www.eeoc.gov/employees/charge.cfm>.
 - c. Review your employer’s internal complaint options to file an internal complaint, if you wish to explore that option.



Learn more about your rights at:

- National Conference of State Legislatures: <https://www.ncsl.org/research/health/breastfeeding-state-laws.aspx>
- U.S. Department of Labor: <https://www.dol.gov/agencies/whd/nursing-mothers>
- U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission: <https://www.eeoc.gov/laws/types/pregnancy.cfm>

Sample Language to Try:

"It is very important for me to be a good employee and a good mom. My doctor recommends that I breastfeed my baby to help minimize the risk of illness. Your support will make that easier! My needs are simple: I'll need to express milk around every 2 or 3 hours at work, and I will need a clean, private place that is not a bathroom to do so. What accommodations are available?"



Tips for Working and Breastfeeding

Talk with Human Resources (HR) and Your Supervisor

- During your pregnancy or before you return to work from childbirth, talk with your supervisor/manager or HR department about your plans to breastfeed. This gives them time to make arrangements.
- Learn about lactation policies and family leave options at your company. Know and follow your company's policies related to lactation needs.
- Use the "My Lactation and Work Plan" to discuss your options.
- Give your supervisor/manager and/or HR a copy of the Ohio Workplace PLUS guide for employers.

Prepare Your Baby

- While you are on leave, breastfeed regularly and avoid formula supplements unless medically necessary. This will help you build your milk production.
- Find help with your breastfeeding questions and concerns. For example:
 - Your hospital or community lactation consultant
 - WIC office or local health department
 - 24/7 Statewide Breastfeeding Hotline at 1-888-588-3423 (staffed by the Appalachian Breastfeeding Network)
 - Ohio Breastfeeding Alliance
 - Local La Leche League group
 - Social media support group
- Select a childcare provider who supports breastfeeding and is near your workplace so you can breastfeed your baby during the workday. [See the list of breastfeeding-friendly childcare centers in Ohio at www.odh.ohio.gov/breastfeeding.](http://www.odh.ohio.gov/breastfeeding)
- Around 2 weeks before you go back to work, help your baby practice being fed with a bottle. Give small amounts, about ½ to 1 ounce. This is practice time, not a full meal!
- If your baby isn't interested in feeding from a bottle, no worries. Just try again later. Ask someone else try. Babies are often more likely to accept a bottle from someone besides the parent.
- Some babies accept milk in a cup, dropper, or spoon.
- Some babies "reverse cycle feed." This means they breastfeed more when they are with you and nurse less when they are away from you. This is normal! Just be sure your baby still nurses at least 8 to 12 times every 24 hours.

Learn How to Use a Breast Pump

- Check with your insurance plan to find out what breast pumps are available.
- Breastfeeding employees usually use a double-electric breast pump to remove milk efficiently.
- Seek help from a lactation consultant, local health department or WIC, or other lactation support providers in the community.
- Use a properly sized pump “flange.” The flange is the plastic part that fits over your breast. If it is too large, the vacuum may not remove milk sufficiently. If it is too small, it can cause friction to your nipple and breast tissue.
- Practice expressing milk before returning to work. Pick a time of day when you have more milk, which tends to be in the morning for most women. For this practice session, try feeding the baby on one side and pump on the other side. Keep in mind that pumping takes practice! It’s normal to only get small amounts at first.

Back at Work

Private Lactation Space

There are many options for private spaces that can work. A bathroom is NOT acceptable. It is not a sanitary place to prepare food for a baby. And it is not allowed by law. Explore these ideas:

- Employer designated lactation room
- Private area within an employee break room
- Unused private office
- Conference room
- Storage room that is well-ventilated
- Partition or screen in the corner of a larger room
- Locker room if separate from bathroom
- An area that can be locked or secured, with a sign to ensure privacy



When to Express Milk

Most breastfeeding employees need to express milk around every 2-3 hours. It can take around 15-20 minutes for each session, not counting the time needed to set up, clean up, and get to and from the milk expression area. The actual time needed will depend on many factors: your personal needs, your breast pump, how comfortable you feel, how fast your milk begins to flow, your baby's age and feeding schedule, and how long it takes you to walk to the milk expression area and to clean up. These tips can help:

- Use your regular breaks and meal period(s) to express milk.
- If breaks are not long enough, ask if you can arrive at work early, stay late, or take a shorter lunch break to make up the time.
- Try to pump around the same time every day.
- Encourage your milk to flow:
 - Listen to your baby's recorded noises on your phone.
 - Scroll through photos of your baby in your phone gallery.
 - Bring a baby blanket or clothing that smells like your baby.
 - Take some relaxation breaths or play calming music.
 - Stimulate your nipple to release milk.
- Try not to stare at the collection container while pumping to see the amount of milk you have expressed. Instead, read a book or magazine. Some moms put a sock over the collection container while they are pumping.



Sample Feeding/Pumping Schedule

7:30 am.	Feed baby at childcare provider before heading on to work
8:00 am.	Begin work
9:45 am.	Milk expression break
12 noon	Meal break – express milk over lunch
2:30 pm.	Milk expression break
5:00 pm.	Leave work
5:15 pm.	Feed baby at childcare provider before heading home

Keep Your Milk Production Strong

- Find a childcare provider close to where you work, if possible. Breastfeed your baby there before you leave for work, and again as soon as you return from work. This will help you fit in a couple of extra feeding sessions to maintain your milk production!
- Breastfeed exclusively when you are home with your baby. Many moms notice their milk production increases when they breastfeed exclusively on their days off.
- Go to the childcare facility during a meal break to directly breastfeed your baby, if possible.
- Try “hands on” pumping! Massage your breasts while you pump to help the milk flow. After the pumping session, hand express as much milk as you can.
- Contact a lactation consultant, WIC staff, or other breastfeeding expert if you need help rebuilding your production.



The Magic Number!

Count the number of times your baby usually breastfeeds every 24 hours. This is your “magic” number! To maintain your milk production, breastfeed and express milk for a total of your magic number. For example: if your baby typically feeds 9 times every 24 hours, then “9” is your magic number. Once you are back at work, you could express milk 3 times during the work period and breastfeed your baby 6 times while you are home to reach your magic number of 9.

(Concept by Nancy Mohrbacher)

Milk Storage Guidelines

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention milk storage guidelines are available at https://www.cdc.gov/breastfeeding/recommendations/handling_breastmilk.htm.

Storage Location and Temperature

	Countertop 77° F or colder (room temperature)	Refrigerator 40°F (4°C)	Freezer 0°F (-18°C) or colder
Freshly expressed breastmilk	Up to 4 hours	Up to 4 days	Within 6 months is best Up to 12 months acceptable
Thawed breastmilk (previously frozen)	1-2 hours	Up to 1 day (24 hours)	NEVER refreeze human milk after it has been thawed
Breastmilk left over from a feeding (i.e., the baby did not finish the bottle)	Use within 2 hours after baby is finished feeding		

Talk with Your Coworkers

- Before you are back at work, bring your baby to meet your coworkers so they can fall in love with your baby, too.
- Offer to cover for others when needed. You are a team!
- Let coworkers know that expressing milk is a temporary need and that their support will make it easier.

Sample Language to try:

"I plan to breastfeed my baby. It's very important to me to continue, even after I'm back at work. I plan to use my breaks and meal periods to express milk for a few months. Your support will help make that possible. Let me know how I can make your life easier, too. **We are a team!**"



Your Responsibilities!

- Know and follow your company's policies related to lactation needs.
- Inform your supervisor and HR during your pregnancy about your lactation support needs so they can arrange time and space options for milk expression.
- Keep your supervisor and HR informed about how things are going and any concerns that arise.
- Keep the milk expression area clean.
- Share feedback about ways to make lactation accommodations even better for future moms!

The Ohio Workplace PLUS Toolkit is published by the Ohio Department of Health. It is available as a free resource at the website www.odh.ohio.gov/breastfeeding. The State of Ohio is an Equal Opportunity Employer and Provider of ADA Services.



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