



FACTS ABOUT BREASTFEEDING/LACTATION SUPPORT

DEFINITION: Policies that support employees who choose to continue providing their milk for their infants after returning to work. It is important to note that since 1978 New Mexico state law allows breastfeeding in public places and requires employers to provide time and space for mothers to express milk. Since 2010, federal law also requires employers to provide reasonable break time for an employee to express breast milk for her nursing child for one year after the child's birth.

According to the U.S. Health and Human Services, Health Resources and Services Administration:

Breastfeeding employees miss work less often

Breastfeeding lowers healthcare costs

Worksite lactation support contributes to lower turnover, higher productivity and loyalty

What are the costs of offering breastfeeding support?

Many accommodations are very inexpensive or cost employers nothing to implement. Repurposing a room for breastfeeding is an example of a no to low cost accommodation. Purchasing a multi-user, hospital-grade breast milk pump can cost up to \$1,500 at the first purchase, then about \$800 per year thereafter for maintaining attachments and the pump itself (National Business Group on Health, 2009). Another cost to consider is a small “college dorm-sized” fridge for safe storage of breast milk.

What are the benefits of offering breastfeeding support?

Better infant health means fewer health insurance claims, less employee time off to care for sick children, and higher productivity. A CIGNA Insurance Case Study found lactation programs resulted in 77% reduction in lost work time due to infant illness (annual savings of \$60,000) (Dickson, 2004). Families who follow optimal breastfeeding practices can save \$1,500 in expenditures on infant formula in the first year alone. A study published in 2010 in the Journal of Pediatrics estimated that if 90% of US families followed guidelines to breastfeed exclusively for six months, the U.S. would annually save \$13 billion from reduced medical and other costs (Bartick & Reinhold, 2010).

Mutual of Omaha found that health care costs for newborns are three times lower for babies whose mothers participate in the company's employee maternity and lactation program. Breastfeeding has also been shown to influence the cognitive and emotional development of children (Del Bono and Rabe 2012).

What do businesses say about offering breastfeeding support?

Aetna estimated that implementing a lactation program saved the company \$1,435 in medical claims per breastfed infant during the first year of life. Total claims savings =

CIGNA's Working Well Moms Program saw a savings of \$300,000 in annual health care expenses for breastfeeding mothers and their children. The program also reduced absenteeism



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\$108,737/ ROI of 3 to 1. (SOURCE: AAFP, 2005)

among breastfeeding mothers. (SOURCE: SHRM, 2007)

How can employers help?

- Providing clean places for mothers to breastfeed; and
- Starting or maintaining high-quality lactation support programs for employees.

Sample Lactation Support Policies

WomensHealth.gov: <https://www.womenshealth.gov/breastfeeding/employer-solutions/index.html>
<https://www.womenshealth.gov/files/assets/docs/breastfeeding/employer-solutions/samplepolicy.pdf>

State and Federal Laws Regarding Breastfeeding:

- New Mexico: NMSA 1978, Section 28-20-1 (1999) makes it legal for a mother to "*breastfeed her child in any location, public or private, where the mother is otherwise authorized to be present.*"
- New Mexico: NMSA 1978, Section 28-20-2 (amended 2007) requires employers to provide flexible break time, and a clean, private space, not a bathroom, in order to foster the ability of a nursing mother who is an employee to use a breast pump in the workplace.
- Federal: Section 7 of the FLSA requires employers to provide reasonable break time for an employee to express breast milk for her nursing child for one year after the child's birth. Employers are also required to provide a place, other than a bathroom, that is shielded from view and free from intrusion from coworkers and the public, which may be used by an employee to express breast milk. The break time requirement became effective when the Affordable Care Act was signed into law on March 23, 2010. The Wage and Hour Fact Sheet #73 "Break Time for Nursing Mothers under the FLSA." For basic information about the law go to: <https://www.dol.gov/whd/regs/compliance/whdfs73.htm>

CITATIONS

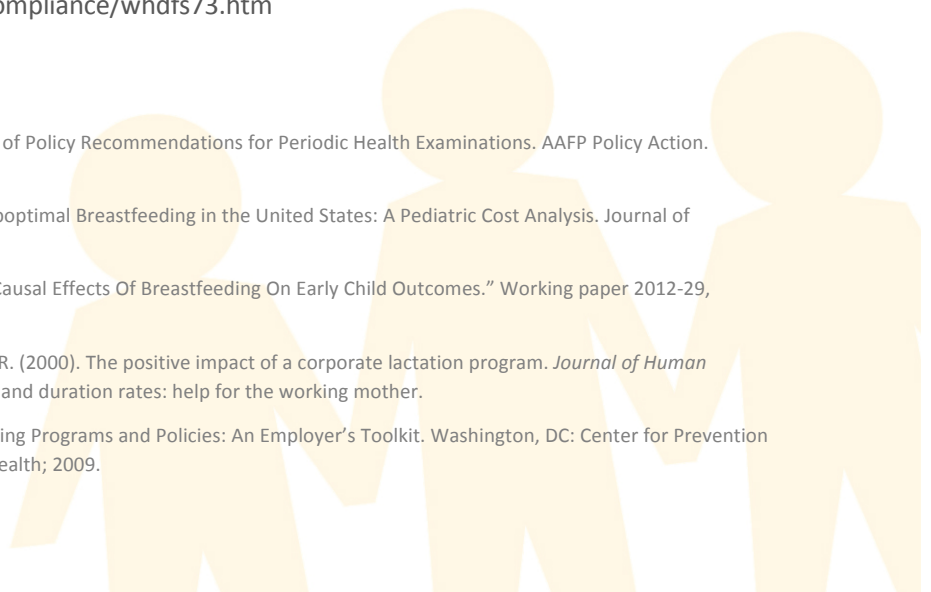
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