

**How to Become  
A Mother Friendly Workplace  
that Supports Breastfeeding**



**Orientation Packet for Businesses**

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# BECOMING A MOTHER- FRIENDLY WORKPLACE THAT SUPPORTS BREASTFEEDING

## A. INTRODUCTION

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North Carolina, with about 68% of mothers with children under five in the workforce, is a national leader in the number of working mothers. This suggests that North Carolina employers need to make a priority to provide supportive breastfeeding environments. With the average maternity leave being only 12 weeks, many mothers return to work soon after the birth of their children. Additionally, the American Academy of Pediatrics recommends that infants receive breast milk for at least the first year of life and the World Health Organization and UNICEF recommends breastfeeding well into the second year of life. Therefore, all working mothers appreciate your support of breastfeeding.

You are to be commended in your efforts to promote breastfeeding among your employees. In this packet you will find information and frequently asked questions to help you develop your breastfeeding program.

### **Employers Benefit from Supporting Breastfeeding**

As an employer of women, you may be aware of the benefits of supporting breastfeeding. A major benefit for you, as an employer, is that ***Breastfeeding makes healthier babies, and healthier babies result in mothers missing less time from work.***

Additional benefits of breastfeeding support that may positively impact your business's bottom line include:

- Reduced sick time/personal leave for breastfeeding women because their infants are more resistant to illness
- Higher job productivity, employee satisfaction and morale
- Lower health care costs associated with healthier breastfed infants
- Reduced staff turnover rate and loss of skilled workers after the birth of a child
- Added recruitment incentive for women
- Enhanced business reputation for the well-being of its employees and their families

## **Women in the work force are breastfeeding mothers too**

Working mothers can continue to provide their infants with the best nutrition, which is mother's milk, when they return to work after childbirth. In optimum conditions, the baby is brought to the mother's work site once or twice each work shift for feedings or mothers can go to their child care provider site for feedings.

When babies can not be brought to the worksite, mothers should be encouraged to express their milk by pumping their breasts to provide mother's milk for subsequent feedings. Some mothers may choose to use their own electric or manual breast pump, milk storage containers and small cooler, thereby needing only a private place to express their milk. With just a few provisions to facilitate the collection and storage of mother's milk, these mothers will be happier employees and will have healthier infants.

## **Support from Management**

A breastfeeding program is most successful when management is supportive and flexible. Managers need to understand the importance of mothers providing their milk to their babies and that everyone, including the employer, realizes the benefits. In larger businesses it is essential to have a written policy that supports and encourages employed mothers to provide mother's milk for their babies.





***B. COMPANIES CAN PROVIDE A SUPPORTIVE WORK ENVIRONMENT FOR BREASTFEEDING BY:***

- ❖ Allowing breaks, flexible work hours, and part-time work or job sharing
- ❖ Offering a private place that is comfortable and clean so that mothers can express their milk during work hours
- ❖ Purchasing or renting breastpumps to be kept on-site in a designated breastfeeding room
- ❖ Providing a small refrigerator for safe storage of milk
- ❖ Arranging for on-site or near-site child care so that mother's can feed their infants during the day
- ❖ Providing information to all employees on the benefits of breastfeeding, on company policies, and on services available to support breastfeeding women
- ❖ Creating support groups for working parents
- ❖ Educating management staff about why breastfeeding employees need support
- ❖ Having a lactation consultant on-site at intervals to answer questions for employees

## **SETTING UP A ROOM FOR BREASTFEEDING MOTHERS**

Rooms for Breastfeeding Mothers are a valuable resource for providing the privacy, equipment and convenience that mothers need for pumping when they are separated from their babies. Some businesses contract with a local Board Certified Lactation Consultant (IBCLC) to help set up and maintain a lactation program for their employees. Community WIC Programs have breastfeeding coordinators who can also be an excellent resource.

### **Basic Features of a Mothers Room**

A private room or area that locks is the most important feature of a room. Other features that help make this room efficient and comfortable include:

- A sign-up sheet to schedule times to use the room
- A sign for the door
- A sink (or nearby access) with hot & cold running water, soap and paper towels
- A table or counter at approximately desk height for placing electric pump
- A comfortable chair(s) that will fit next to table where electric pump will sit
- An electrical outlet
- Disinfecting solution available for clean-up of spills
- A waste basket

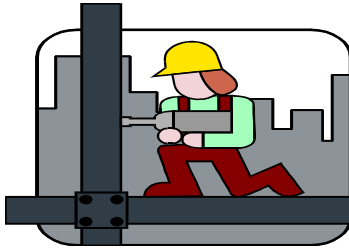
### **Optimal Features of a Room for Breastfeeding Mothers**

- Electric breast pump(s) (Each mother uses her own personal pump kit that she either purchased or received free-of-charge through her health care plan or the WIC Program. The brand of the kit should be the same as the brand of the pump.)
- Bulletin board for baby pictures
- Lending library of informative books on working and breastfeeding
- Refrigerator (or nearby access) with a thermometer registering 40° F
- Referral available to a breastfeeding expert for counseling and questions

Some employers purchase or rent hospital grade electric breast pumps that can be used by several mothers. Community WIC Programs might be able to loan an electric pump to you. The user of the pump and room should sign a "Use Agreement and Release statement". (See attachment for Sample). Each mother needs her own personal pumping kit that connects to the pump. Each mother should wipe down the pump and tubing after each use with a disinfectant solution. Follow the manufacturer's suggestions for maintenance, electrical inspections, suction checks, etc.

A sign-up sheet (see attachment 3) can be used to schedule a time to use the room. This allows each worker to have privacy and to organize a scheduled break from her work. Fifteen to thirty minutes should be adequate time for pumping.

Insulated coolers can be used to store the expressed milk if a refrigerator is not available. Insulated coolers and ice packs are also needed for transporting the milk safely between the worksite; home and the child care provider.



## Employees in Unusual Settings

Employees whose primary work setting is outdoors or who spend most of the workday in an auto can also pump their milk for their babies. There are manually operated pumps, foot powered pumps, battery operated pumps, rechargeable battery pumps and pumps that adapt to power from a cigarette lighter. Milk can be stored and transported in a small cooler with a cold pack.

A separate pumping room is not always needed. It depends on the environment of the worksite. For example, mothers with their own private office area may prefer to lock their office door and pump at their desks.



## C. FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

### **Where can my company find space for a room for Breastfeeding Mothers?**

This is a common question among employers. A mother's room does not need to be a large space. The best solution is an existing room that may have minimal usage. Some companies have found that a storage room could be emptied and converted for use as a mother's room. Some companies have found space by dividing an existing room, installing a new wall and door. Still other companies have converted large bathroom lounge areas into suitable mother's rooms.

Ideally, if resources are available, it is best to have a room with a sink. So begin by looking where the water lines in the building run. Tapping into existing water sources makes the cost of providing a room with a sink reasonable. If providing a sink in the room is not feasible then it is important to consider having a sink nearby the mother's room.

It is important to consider your employee population when planning for mother's rooms. If you are a small company then one room should be sufficient. If you are a large company you may need several rooms depending on the number of women you employ that are of childbearing age. Having the mother's room in close proximity to the workstation ensures efficient use of time. Some companies have more than one building and have needed to establish mother's rooms in all of their buildings.



### **What will a room for Breastfeeding Mothers cost?**

The cost of establishing a mother's room varies greatly from one company to another. If you have a room available that does not require any remodeling the cost can be quite minimal. If you plan to remodel space then the cost will be more. Do you have employees that can do the remodeling or will you have to hire outside the company?

The kind of amenities you provide will affect the amount of money you initially spend getting this room established. The chart on the "Estimated Cost of Furnishing a Workplace Lactation Room" may help you decide what amenities you can afford at this time. Often times a company may have some of the required furnishings in storage which will minimize the cost further.

In any event, the cost of the mother's room is a one-time expense. Studies have shown that companies that have a lactation support program for their employees will have "bottom-line dollar" results. A breastfeeding employee will save you money in the long run.



## Estimated Cost of Furnishing a Workplace Room for Breastfeeding Mother

<u>Minimum Accommodations</u>	<u>Medium Accommodations</u>	<u>Maximum Accommodations</u>
Private space/door that locks	Private space/door that locks	Private space/door that locks
Electrical outlet	Electrical outlet	Electrical outlet
Chair (\$40)	Chair (\$40)	Chair (\$40)
Small table (\$40)	Small table (\$40)	Small table (\$40)
Wastebasket (\$5)	Wastebasket (\$5)	Wastebasket (\$5)
Nearby sink w/hot water	Nearby sink w/hot water	Nearby sink w/hot water
Towel/soap dispensers (\$50)	Towel/soap dispensers (\$50)	Towel/soap dispensers (\$50)
Sanitizer for spills (\$10)	Sanitizer for spills (\$10)	Sanitizer for spills (\$10)
Storage for cooler/pump	Storage for cooler/pump	Storage for cooler/pump
Employee rents, loans or owns breast pump	Employee rents, loans or owns breast pump	Employee rents, loans or owns breast pump
Baby brought to mom for feedings	Baby brought to mom for feedings	Baby brought to mom for feedings
Estimated cost = \$145	Foot stool (\$20)	Foot stool (\$20)
	Bulletin board (\$10)	Bulletin board (\$10)
	Wall clock (\$15)	Wall clock (\$15)
	Wall or door space for pictures of baby	Wall or door space for pictures of baby
	Full length mirror (\$20)	Full length mirror (\$20)
	Pillows (\$30)	Pillows (\$30)
	Library of breastfeeding resources (free materials)	Library of breastfeeding resources (free materials)
	Radio/cassette player (\$60)	Radio/cassette player (\$60)
	Outgoing phone (\$45)	Outgoing phone (\$45)
	Motivating art on walls (\$60)	Motivating art on walls (\$60)
	Estimated cost = \$840	Estimate cost = \$1055

**Who should administer the program?** Human Resources personnel, a company nurse, a manager, supervisor or employee can manage the administration of this program. With the accompanying materials and guidelines, this is a simple program that does not require a lot of staff time.

**How do women schedule room usage?** Scheduling room usage depends on how many employees your company has that would need the room. Some companies have a schedule on the door; some have a room sign up, some schedule usage through a computerized company calendar system or through e-mail among the room users. (See attached Sample)

**Who can I contact if I have questions about setting up a breastfeeding program in my business?**

**How much time will it take my employee to express her milk?**

With a quality double electric pump most women need between 15 to 30 minutes two or three times during her work day.

**Who can I contact if I have questions about setting up a breastfeeding program in my business**

North Carolina Local Public Health Agency  
WIC Programs  
Ask for the Breastfeeding Coordinator  
1-800-FOR-BABY (ask for the phone number  
of the one closest to you)

International Lactation Consultant  
Association  
Boone Trail  
Raleigh, NC 27610  
PH: 919-787-5181

La Leche League International  
9616 Minneapolis Avenue  
Franklin Park, Illinois 60131  
**Contact: Marijane McEwan 708- 519-7730**

#### **Pumps and supply vendors:**

Medela Incorporated  
P O Box 660  
McHenry IL 60051-9908  
For products and training needs in North  
Carolina contact: *Debbie Gardner ph: 800-  
435-8316 ext. 574*

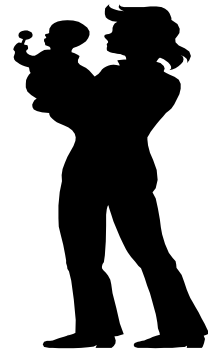
Hollister Incorporated  
2000 Hollister Drive, Libertyville, IL  
60048-3781  
For products and training needs in North  
Carolina contact Ph: 800/624-5369 ext.  
1041

White River Concepts  
924 Calle Negocia, San Clemente, California  
92673  
Ph: 800-824-6351

*The following pages are designed for the employer to use as samples or to us as is and to photocopy and give to employees who plan to use the mothers' room.*

## ORIENTATION PACKET FOR PREGNANT OR BREASTFEEDING EMPLOYEES

*Are you expecting a baby and considering breastfeeding? Or are you a new mother who wants to keep breastfeeding after returning to work? This business has a service to help you combine the demands of working and breastfeeding so that your breastfeeding experience is as pleasant and convenient as possible. To learn more about how your employer supports breastfeeding and about the **Mothers' Room** contact the Human Resources Manager.*



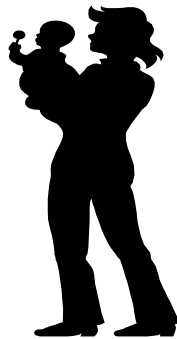
## WELCOME TO YOUR MOTHER- FRIENDLY WORKPLACE

Congratulations on your decision to feed your baby mother's milk! Your baby deserves the best possible start in life and mother's milk provides that!

Your employer recognizes the importance of breastfeeding for you and your baby and has agreed to become a "Mother Friendly Workplace".

With the a Mother Friendly Workplace Program you can return to work or school and still provide your baby with the best possible source of nutrition -- mother's milk. Mother's milk provides your baby with the most nutritionally complete, easily digested, convenient and economical source of nourishment. In addition, mother's milk has many health benefits for your baby including a reduction in the incidence and severity of ear infections, respiratory infections, gastrointestinal infections and allergies. Breastfeeding enhances the bond between you and your baby.

Benefits for you, as the mother, include more time spent with the baby instead of preparing formula, less risk of premenopausal breast cancer, and more relaxation and stress relief due to hormones produced during lactation.



As a participant in the Mother Friendly Workplace Program you are asked to follow the Employee Guidelines outlined in this packet. For the mothers who will be using an electric pump provided by the company, please read and carefully follow the directions on how to operate it. Your employer may ask you to keep records of room usage to ensure that company officials understand the value of this type of employee program.

If you have questions or concerns regarding breastfeeding, contact your personal Lactation Consultant, the Lactation Consultant who is contracted by your business, your family Physician, a La Leche League Leader or other community breastfeeding support group. In North Carolina, you can also call 1-800-FOR-BABY to help answer some of your breastfeeding questions. Again, congratulations on your decision to breastfeed your baby. The benefits for you and your baby will last a lifetime!

## MOTHER- FRIENDLY WORKPLACE EMPLOYEE GUIDELINES



1. Talk with the human resources manager about signing up to use the nursing mother's room. Find out what kind of system your employer will use for accessing the nursing mother's room. Obtain your key or access code or learn how to check out a key and reserve a scheduled time to use the room.
2. Read your orientation packet. If your employer provides a breast pump you will need to purchase your own personal pump kit for use with that pump (your employer should provide you with a list of available suppliers). If your company does not provide a pump, consider purchasing a good quality double electric pump that is designed for working women. Contact your local La Leche League Leader or Lactation Consultant for information regarding good quality pumps. Community WIC Programs have breastfeeding coordinators who can also help you.
3. If your company can provide a locked designated room, your personal pump kits may be stored in the nursing mother's room provided they are stored in a sealed container or zip lock bag and labeled with your name.
4. Your pumping equipment should be rinsed well after each use. It is recommended that you rinse your pumping equipment first in cold water and then wash with hot soapy water and rinsed well on a daily basis to avoid contamination.
5. Good hand washing before and after pumping is essential to prevent contamination of your milk, your pumping equipment and the environment.
6. If your company provides a refrigerator for storing your milk, be sure to take home your milk each day. If your company does not provide a refrigerator, a cooler with "blue ice" packs will keep your milk safe. It is best to transport your milk from work to home in a cooler as well.
7. Each woman using the room is responsible for cleaning up after her use of the room. Please ensure that you clean up any spills off the counter, table, refrigerator or pump. Spills should be wiped up and then sprayed with a disinfectant like Lysol.
8. It is a good idea to document room usage by signing a usage log each time you use the room. This allows company officials to see the importance of providing this room for it's nursing employees. Having a notebook available for women to write comments is also a good idea. If you have comments or suggestions please feel free to write them in the notebook.
9. Notify the Human Resources manager or designated lactation room manager if you have any problems or if cleaning supplies are not available.
10. A list of resources for breastfeeding information is provided in this packet if you have questions or concerns.

## MOTHER'S SHEET: HINTS FOR MOTHERS WHO PUMP



Your milk is the best food for your baby for the first year of life and longer. Research shows that babies on mother's milk are less likely to have infections or be sick. This is especially true for babies in childcare. Because it is not always possible to have your baby with you, you can express your milk by pumping your breasts to provide your milk for later feedings. Here are some guidelines to help you in this process so that you can be sure that your baby will receive most of the benefits of your milk even when nursing is not possible.

### **Storing, Refrigerating and Freezing Milk**

Once you pump your milk, you must plan to store the milk and transport it home and to the childcare provider who will feed it to your child.

- Collected milk may be stored/transported in glass bottles, "hard" plastic bottles, or disposable nurser bags.
- Milk should be transported in a thermal container with an ice pack.
- Label all containers with the date and time collected. Add your name and your baby's name to the label if your milk will be given to your baby in a childcare setting. The date you are bringing the milk to the childcare setting must be added to the label to indicate when it is to be used.
- Freeze milk near the back of the freezer for better temperature control. If using disposable bottles, double bag to prevent waste from leaking. Store in volumes that baby is drinking. Leave some room in the container because the milk will expand as it freezes.
- You may add milk to previously expressed milk in the refrigerator or freezer if you chill the newer milk before you add it.
- Expressed milk may be refrigerated for up to 48 hours and then should be frozen if not used. Place milk in refrigerator immediately upon arrival home. Refrigerated milk will separate into layers; shake vigorously to mix before feeding.
- Freeze milk immediately if it will not be used within 48 hours. Frozen milk may be safely stored
  - 3 weeks in a freezer inside a small dorm-type refrigerator
  - at least 6 months in a freezer with a separate door
  - up to one year in a deep freeze that reaches zero degrees F

## Labeling containers of milk

Label the container of milk with the date the milk was pumped or frozen. If your milk will be given to your baby while at childcare center, you will need to write on the bottles

- your name,
- your baby's name,
- the date the milk you are bringing the milk to be used. (Bring enough milk for a one-day supply only. Take any unused milk home.)
- Try to bring some extra frozen milk to the childcare center each day in case your baby is extra hungry.

## Cleaning Bottles and Pumping Kits

- Rinse bottles and pump equipment in cold water first and then wash in the dishwasher or hot soapy water dishwasher and rinse twice.
- Air-dry all parts on a clean towel.

## Thawing and Warming

Refrigerator defrost or water "bath" defrost may be used.

- To defrost in the refrigerator, move the milk from the freezer to the refrigerator the night before it is needed.
- To defrost in the water "bath" put the bottle of frozen milk in a pan of temperature (not hot) water or hold under warm tap water until thawed.
- After thawing, swirl to mix and pour into the feeding bottle or cup the portion for this feeding only. Refrigerate the remainder for the next feedings.
- Use the oldest milk first.
- Milk may be warmed to room temperature in lukewarm water "bath"; shake gently before feeding.
- Microwave heating causes hot spots in the milk that can burn the baby's mouth and throat. Never use a microwave to thaw or heat milk
- Warm only what will be used for this feeding; keep the remainder refrigerated for same-day use. Thawed milk may be refrigerated 24 hours.
- **DO NOT** refreeze milk that has been warmed and partially utilized for a particular feeding.



BREASTFEEDING MOTHER'S ROOM  
Use Agreement and Release Statement



The Breastfeeding Mothers' Room offers breastfeeding women who work in the - \_\_\_\_\_ (name of business) a private place to express their breast milk. Located in the \_\_\_\_\_, the Breastfeeding Mothers' Room will be open from \_\_\_\_\_. Although appointments are not always necessary, there is a sign-up sheet in the room, so people can schedule time to use the room. Each user should sign a "Use and Release Statement."

When using the Breastfeeding Mothers' Room, I, \_\_\_\_\_, agree to observe scheduling and housekeeping procedures outlined below:

- ❖ I understand the Breastfeeding Mothers' Room is open, by appointment or availability, from \_\_\_\_\_.
- ❖ I understand that the electric breast pump in the Breastfeeding Mothers' Room is provided for my use during work hours as a convenience and must not be removed.
- ❖ I will leave the Breastfeeding Mothers' Room in order after using it and will report any problems or broken equipment to the nursing staff.
- ❖ I am responsible for bringing my own personal pump kit that connects to the electric breast pump.
- ❖ I am responsible for bringing my own personal cooler to store and transport my own milk.
- ❖ I understand that the Breastfeeding Mother's Room is a public service provided for breastfeeding women of - \_\_\_\_\_ (local agency or company) and staff members will not be responsible for any losses, injuries, or other damages that I might experience as a result of using the Breastfeeding Mothers' Room or any equipment in the room.
- ❖ I have read and understand the items above.

\_\_\_\_\_  
(User Signature)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date Began Using

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date Discontinued



**BREASTFEEDING MOTHER'S ROOM**

**sign-up Sheet**



Sign-up to schedule a time to use the room. This allows each worker to have privacy and a scheduled break from work. Thirty minutes should be adequate time for pumping.

<b>Month/Week of:</b>					
<b>Hours</b>	<b>Mon.</b>	<b>Tues.</b>	<b>Wed.</b>	<b>Thurs.</b>	<b>Fri.</b>
8:00-8:30					
8:30-9:00					
9:00-9:30					
9:30-10:00					
10:00-10:30					
10:30-11:00					
11:00-11:30					
11:30-12:00					
12:00-12:30					
12:30-1:00					
1:00-1:30					
1:30-2:00					
2:00-2:30					
2:30-3:00					
3:00-3:30					
3:30-4:00					
4:00-4:30					
4:30-5:00					

BREASTFEEDING MOTHER'S ROOM

# Daily Record of Nursing Mother's Room Use



Sign-in sheet for employees to record that they used the room and to report any concerns or suggestions to help maintain the room.

Name	Date	Start Time	Concerns or suggestions

- Auerbach, K. (1987). Maternal Employment and Breastfeeding. *Lactation Consultant Series*, La Leche League International. Garden City Park: Avery Publishing Group.
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*The Florida Breastfeeding Promotion Committee of Healthy Mothers, Healthy Babies - March 1994*



North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services  
Division of Public Health Women's and Children's Section  
Nutrition Services Branch  
Raleigh, North Carolina



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