

The BUSINESS CASE for BREASTFEEDING

STEPS FOR CREATING A BREASTFEEDING FRIENDLY WORKSITE

EASY STEPS TO SUPPORTING
BREASTFEEDING EMPLOYEES



B O T T O M L I N E B E N E F I T S



EASY STEPS FOR SUPPORTING BREASTFEEDING EMPLOYEES

For Human Resource Managers and staff interested in implementing a lactation support program.

Return on investment (ROI) is the bottom line in assessing the value of new programs. Research shows that providing a lactation support program is not only highly desired by breastfeeding employees who return to work after childbirth, it can also improve your company's ROI by saving money in health care and employee expenses.

The Business Case for Breastfeeding (companion to this booklet) demonstrates to corporate executives and others interested in improving employee services how a lactation support program can:

- Lower medical costs and health insurance claims for breastfeeding employees and their infants (up to three times less for breastfeeding employees);
- Reduce turnover rates (86-92 percent of breastfeeding employees returning to work after childbirth when a lactation support program is provided compared to the national average of 59 percent);
- Lower absenteeism rates (up to half the number of 1 day absences);
- Improve productivity; and
- Raise employee morale and loyalty to the company.

This booklet, *Easy Steps to Supporting Breastfeeding Employees*, provides you, the human resource manager, and other members of your wellness team with an integrated approach to implementing a cost-effective lactation support program. This turnkey method is ready to operate with straightforward planning options, proven strategies, and a CD-ROM with reproducible tools that can easily be tailored to meet company needs.

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Lactation programs of various companies described in this booklet and on the accompanying “Tool Kit” CD-ROM are used as examples of organizations with breastfeeding programs. Mention of trade names, commercial practices, or organizations in this publication does not imply endorsement by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services or the U.S. Government.

STEPS TO SUPPORT

The basic needs of breastfeeding employees are minimal. Across the United States businesses have created supportive work environments for breastfeeding employees, and have discovered that the return in cost savings and productivity among employees is worth the investment.

Basic needs for breastfeeding employees are outlined in detail in this booklet. **A comprehensive program that includes the following four components has been shown in business environments to provide the greatest return on investment:**

1. Privacy for milk expression.

This can be a woman's private office (if it can be locked) or an onsite, designated lactation room(s) with an electrical outlet where breastfeeding employees can use a pump to express milk during the work period.

2. Flexible breaks and work options.

Women need to express milk about every 3 hours, or two to three times during a typical work day. Each milk expression

time takes around 15 minutes, plus time to go to and from the lactation room.

3. Education.

Employer-provided information and resources accessible through the worksite during pregnancy and after the baby is born help prepare women for balancing the requirements for breastfeeding with their job responsibilities. This information is also beneficial for expectant fathers. Companies that provide lactation information and support for male employees and their partners have lower absenteeism rates among men and lower health insurance claims.

4. Support.

A positive, accepting attitude from upper management, supervisors, and coworkers helps breastfeeding employees feel confident in their ability to continue working while breastfeeding.



GETTING STARTED



Executive Summary:

- Start small with a simple pilot program.
- Actively solicit input from employees to determine their needs and communicate the employers' interest in this topic.
- Gain buy-in from company stakeholders.
- Get help from available community resources.

Lactation support programs for employees can be tailored to fit the needs of your organization, and can be as simple or as elaborate as desired. Companies typically report that developing a program is easier than they had imagined.

A variety of models for breastfeeding support programs have been implemented in diverse workplace settings:

- One U.S. Army installation found a creative way to support breastfeeding soldiers who serve overseas by providing a breast pump and arranging for shipping of expressed milk back to the United States through next-day courier services (see *Madigan Army Medical Center in the "Employer Spotlight" section of the Tool Kit*).
- The corporate office of a California retail operation provides onsite childcare so that breastfeeding employees can breastfeed their children during the work day (see *Patagonia in the "Employer Spotlight" section of the Tool Kit*).
- Many companies provide designated lactation rooms for breastfeeding employees to express milk.
- Other companies allow employees to use a conference room or other designated area to breastfeed or express milk.

Program models are as varied as the companies themselves. A few simple guidelines, however, can be applied in most start-up situations.

1. Begin a Pilot Project

Most companies with successful lactation support programs recommend starting small with a simple pilot project that may grow as the needs of employees become more apparent. For example, a simple "no frills" milk expression area can be the start of a program that could later add other components such as education resources, flexible break options, lactation support, and additional lactation rooms or amenities. Most employers report that providing a simple, small space for milk expression takes little time and effort and reaps significant benefits in employee satisfaction and retention.

2. Gain Buy-In

Managers and front-line supervisors have a powerful role as partners with human resources in creating a supportive environment in the workplace. Assure team members that a breastfeeding-friendly environment in the workplace is cost-effective and that the nominal costs help the company achieve its business goals and support the goals of individual business units. *The Business Case for Breastfeeding* (available with this kit) provides clear evidence of the value of a lactation support program.

3. Assess the Need for a Program

Assessing the business environment can help with justification and support for a lactation support program and assist in the strategic planning process. Include such questions as:

- How many women are likely to be affected by a support program?
- What department should be responsible for program oversight?
- How should space be allocated for a lactation room?
- What resources are available to equip the lactation room?
- What program policies should be developed?
- What record keeping may be required by the company?
- What promotional venues are optimal for reaching potential program users, their colleagues and supervisors, and the general community?

A sample assessment is included in the *Tool Kit*.

4. Determine the Administrative Home for the Program

Most companies establish the administrative home for a lactation support program within the human resource division, dovetailing it comfortably with various department services and offerings such as:

- Employee health benefits platform...provides broad appeal and an opportunity to market the program as an important and valued employee benefit.

- Employee wellness or health programs...builds on shared goals of improving the health and well-being of employees.
- Existing family and work-life programs...increases the opportunity for maximum exposure and promotion through family-centered programs already in place.

5. Convene a Task Force

Many medium to large companies begin by convening a team of key company stakeholders and knowledgeable experts within the community, such as lactation consultants and other health professionals. The task force identifies issues pertinent to the business and recommends program policies that will address the needs of breastfeeding employees. See Figure 1 on page 4 for a list of potential company stakeholders who can bring important perspectives to this task force.

6. Identify Community Resources

A variety of community experts can also be brought onto the task force to assist with designing a program that will address needs of both the company and its employees. These community resources can also provide direct services to your breastfeeding employees:

Health Professionals. Many companies rely on knowledgeable breastfeeding health professionals at hospitals and obstetric and pediatric care programs as valuable resources. A hospital community outreach program may also provide health related information that can be useful.

Lactation Consultants. An International Board Certified Lactation Consultant (IBCLC) is a credentialed health professional who can provide direct breastfeeding education and clinical counseling for mothers who have breastfeeding questions and concerns. Some lactation consultants can also assist businesses with establishing appropriate accommodations for lactating employees. *(See the “Resource Guide” in the Tool Kit for information on how to locate an IBCLC in your community.)*

WIC. The United States Department of Agriculture Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) provides a nationwide system of nutritionists and breastfeeding support professionals and paraprofessionals. Many WIC programs are committed to providing community-based assistance to improve the environment for working mothers, and can assist with providing education

resources. Some WIC programs may also provide breast pumps for eligible participants. *(See the “Resource Guide” in the Tool Kit.)*

Breastfeeding Coalitions. Many states and local communities have breastfeeding coalitions that address the needs of breastfeeding women in their respective locales. Coalitions can often assist companies with implementing a lactation program. Lactation experts and educators, peer counselors, medical professionals, and other community leaders are usually active members. *(See the “Resource Guide” section of the Tool Kit for information on how to locate a coalition in your community.)*

La Leche League International. This mother-to-mother support program provides breastfeeding support groups and knowledgeable volunteers who offer telephone and one-on-one assistance to new mothers. A local leader with expertise in helping working mothers may also be available to teach classes or to assist worksites with specific guidance on how best to support working mothers. *(See the “Resource Guide” in the Tool Kit.)*

Insurance Carriers. Check with your company’s primary insurance carrier to explore policies and benefits for breastfeeding employees. Insurance companies may cover breastfeeding resources and services such as consultations from a lactation consultant, breast pumps, a home visiting nurse during the early postpartum period, and breastfeeding supplies.

Other Community Organizations.

Community groups such as the March of Dimes, Healthy Mothers Healthy Babies Coalition, and Healthy Start initiatives may have community outreach specialists who can assist with establishing a program or providing resources and services to employees. *(See the “Resource Guide” in the Tool Kit.)* The local Chamber of Commerce may also have access to information about other companies in the community that provide lactation support programs.

7. Implement the Program

Actual implementation of the program can be completed by the task force, current or previous breastfeeding employees within the organization, or other interested individuals. Some large companies contract with a corporate lactation program to develop and operate a program; others may utilize a community lactation consultant as a program advisor. Most companies find that once in place, the program is easy to maintain.

Potential Company Stakeholders	How They Contribute
Human Resource Specialist	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Understands employee needs and motivators ■ Knows how to integrate a new program within existing company programs and policies ■ Experienced at quantifying the ROI for programs ■ Assists with potential evaluation efforts as part of existing employee satisfaction surveys
Wellness Coordinator or Occupational Health Nurse	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Skilled in addressing health needs of employees ■ Can provide creative ideas and support for integrating the program into existing employee health services
Facilities Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Provides solutions for adapting or converting building space for use as lactation rooms ■ Provides expertise in planning future building projects which include space for lactation rooms ■ Knowledgeable about security, accessibility, housekeeping considerations, and equipment maintenance issues
Current and Previous Breastfeeding Employees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Understand the needs and issues of breastfeeding women in their particular worksite situation ■ Employees from different staff levels and positions will provide the most useful guidance in creating a program that meets diverse needs
Representative staff from varied departments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Can provide feedback on potential concerns that might arise from co-workers when the lactation support program is implemented
Pregnant Employees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Can provide feedback on typical concerns about returning to work and sustaining lactation as well as messages that provide reassurance about the support they can expect from the company
Financial Advisor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Provides guidance on current and future funding resources, and assists in resource allocation strategies
Public Relations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Assists in promoting the program with potential users, colleagues, and supervisors ■ Promotes the program within the community as a valuable employee benefit
Supervisors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Provide insight on merging needs of the business with employee concerns

Figure 1

MERGING WORK REQUIREMENTS WITH EMPLOYEE NEEDS



Executive Summary:

- All major medical organizations recommend that babies receive human milk exclusively during the first 6 months, with continued breastfeeding to 1 year and beyond to reduce illness and disease for both babies and mothers.
- Many women discontinue breastfeeding early because of concerns about maintaining lactation within the work environment. Other women delay returning to work, or do not return at all, because they feel employment prevents them from exercising this choice.
- Mothers do *not* have to choose between providing human milk for their baby and returning to work, and employers can retain valuable employees! A supportive environment makes the difference.

Breast Milk – More than just Food

Breastfeeding is an essential part of the overall reproductive cycle for the mother, resulting in faster recovery from pregnancy. It may also reduce her risk of breast cancer. A healthy mother means an employee who is able to contribute more productively to her workplace.

Breastfeeding is also the healthiest way to feed infants during at least the first year of life. Breast milk is full of important ingredients that boost an infant's immune system and reduce the risk of many common childhood illnesses and infections, including ear infections, respiratory and gastrointestinal illnesses, diabetes, dermatitis, and many other diseases. Essential nutrients important in brain development result in increased IQ points for breastfed children. Breastfed infants may also be less likely to become obese.

Breastfeeding is so important for mothers and babies that major medical organizations such as the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) and the American Association of Family Physicians (AAFP) recommend that babies receive nothing but breast milk during the first 6 months of life, and continue receiving breast milk for at least the first year and beyond. More than 70 percent of new mothers now follow their doctor's advice by breastfeeding immediately after birth.

General Concerns of Mothers

Despite the well documented health imperative of breastfeeding, many women who would like to breastfeed make the decision either not to breastfeed, or to wean early, due to their need to return to work. Women also face obstacles in the community that make breastfeeding challenging.



Modesty Concerns. Although there is growing public support for women to breastfeed wherever they go with their baby, the reality is that many new mothers are sensitive about breastfeeding, and often feel shy about speaking with supervisors about their breastfeeding needs. Some worry about what their colleagues might say. Women are particularly concerned if there is no designated area at work to express milk in privacy. Management and supervisors can help ease that discomfort by providing supportive policies and a place for women to express milk in privacy.

Time and social constraints. Employment (especially full-time)

is a primary consideration in a woman's infant feeding decision. The reverse is also true. A woman's decision to breastfeed often affects when and if she will return to work. Many women do not know that lactation can continue after returning to work and decide to either wean their baby earlier than they would prefer, or choose not to return to work at all if they can afford it. Workplaces that provide

employee education and a supportive environment can help ease these stresses and help mothers feel good about their decision to combine working and breastfeeding.

Lack of support. Lack of support and misconceptions about breastfeeding within families, workplaces, and the community create additional challenges. An environment where breastfeeding is accepted and supported will encourage women to meet their breastfeeding goals. Further, a workplace support program helps fathers and family members assist the new mother.

Making enough milk for baby. Many women worry about how being separated from their babies during employment will impact their ability to make enough milk. Although separation can indeed affect the amount of milk a mother makes, research shows that regular milk expression in a comfortable, relaxing environment can help women produce ample milk to nourish their babies. Many company lactation programs provide access to a lactation consultant, a staff nurse, or other health care professional to assist mothers with their ongoing questions about maintaining their milk supply. (See the “Education Resources” section of the Tool Kit for more

information about ways to access health professionals who can assist breastfeeding employees.)

Why Women Need to Express Milk

Milk production is a constant, ongoing process. Whenever the baby suckles and removes milk, the mother’s body automatically makes more milk to replace it. The more often the baby feeds, the more milk the mother’s body makes. If the baby does not take the milk directly, it must be regularly removed by hand or with an efficient breast pump about as often as the baby usually feeds; otherwise, the mother’s breasts become overly full and uncomfortable. This can lead to an infection and ultimately a drop in her milk supply.

Most women who return to work easily sustain their milk supply and avoid the pressure and discomfort of becoming overly full by simply expressing their milk every 2 to 3 hours for around 15 minutes per session. After the baby is 6 months old and begins eating solid foods, the number of milk expression breaks usually begins to diminish. (See the “Deciding on Breast Pump Equipment” section on page 9 to learn more about types of breast pumps that a company can consider providing employees to help them efficiently remove milk.)



EMPLOYER SPOTLIGHT

Mutual of Omaha Omaha, Nebraska

“I nursed all three of my children for a year and I could not have been so successful without the help and the nice facilities at Mutual.”

Regional Manager – West Region
Medicare Audit and Reimbursement
Mutual of Omaha



Mutual of Omaha, which employs 4,600 people primarily in its Omaha office, found that going the extra mile to help employees feel comfortable with breastfeeding after they return to work can provide big dividends to the company, as well.

The “extra mile” for Mutual of Omaha includes two state-of-the-art lactation rooms converted from small, little used areas. The “Renaissance Room” and “Mediterranean Room” are designed to help mothers feel relaxed and comfortable in the midst of a hectic workday, which facilitates milk flow and volume. The attractively furnished rooms include a sink, soft lighting, ergonomic chairs, telephones to check voicemail or check on their baby, and refrigerators to keep milk stored safely. Hospital-grade electric breast pumps are available, and company-wide baby showers add to a comprehensive education and support effort that helps employees feel better prepared to juggle the demands of parenthood and employment.

Mothers appreciate the supportive, family-friendly environment and access to ongoing support from an onsite Registered Nurse and local Lactation Consultants. Data collected by the company show the nominal investment also helps the company by contributing to significant cost savings.

Program Components:

Private Area to Express Milk:

The 9'x 11' lactation suite accommodates three 4'x 5' milk expression spaces.

Breastfeeding Equipment:

Hospital-grade electric pump; local hospital provides attachment kits when mothers are discharged.

Milk Expression Scheduling:

Supportive managers work with employees on milk expression needs. Maternity leave up to 12 weeks, with up to 70 percent pay for 6 weeks as part of “disability coverage” benefits.

Education:

Onsite Registered Nurse meets with pregnant employees and provides postpartum education once the employee is back at work. Company-wide employee baby showers are held twice a year for pregnant employees and partners.

Support:

Ongoing access to onsite Registered Nurse and local Lactation Consultants once the baby is born. Dependent care referral program enables employees to locate quality childcare providers.

Program Impact:

- Named one of the “100 Best Companies for Working Women” by Working Mother magazine.
- Reduction in newborn health care claims
 - Hospital health care costs for newborns are 2.7 times less for babies whose mothers participate in the program. (\$115,881/year additional cost for non-participants' claims)
 - Per newborn health care claims are \$1,269 for program participants compared to \$3,415 for those who do not participate
- High employee satisfaction

Contact:

Manager, Employee Health Services
Mutual of Omaha
Mutual of Omaha Plaza
Omaha, NE 68175
402.351.2089

PROGRAM OPTIONS



Executive Summary:

- Employees value a private area to express milk comfortably.
- A lactation room can be as small as 4' x 5' and as simple or elaborate as desired.
- Companies can choose from many options to furnish the lactation room and provide appropriate milk expression equipment.
- Mothers need to express milk around 2 to 3 times during the work day for approximately 15 minutes per session.
- Access to educational materials, lactation help, and mother-to-mother support is highly valued by employees.

Privacy During Milk Expression

Of utmost importance to a breastfeeding employee when she returns to work is a location to comfortably and safely express milk during the workday. A safe environment helps a woman physiologically relax for more efficient milk removal. The reality is that many employees today work in open areas or cubicles that are not private. Simple lactation rooms can be created out of little used areas within existing building space. These rooms can be as simple or elaborate as desired. (See Figure 4 “Lactation Room Options” on page 11.) The nominal cost is usually a one-time expenditure (other than costs involved with standard maintenance), and the return on investment is continuous since multiple breastfeeding women can make use of the facility over a long period of time.

Allocating Space

The amount of space needed for a lactation room is minimal. It does not require a full-sized office. The size can be as small as 4' x 5' to accommodate a comfortable chair and a small table or shelf for a breast pump.

Ideally, assign a space that already provides an electrical outlet, can be locked from the inside, and is near a source of both hot and cold water for washing hands, pump attachments, and milk collection containers. Since installing plumbing can be expensive, consider finding little used spaces near a women’s restroom, employee lounge, or other area where a sink is available.

Breastfeeding employees should never be expected to express milk in a restroom! Restrooms are unsanitary, usually lack appropriate electrical connections, and do not provide a place to comfortably operate a breast pump.

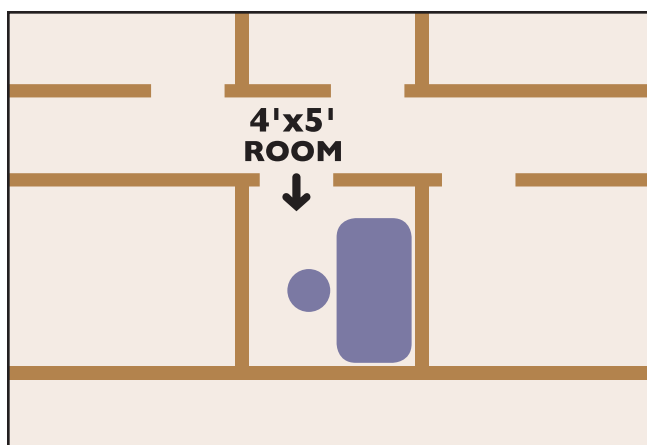


Figure 2

The architectural drawing in Figure 2 is one example of how to set up a lactation room. Space options include:

- A little used existing office space or other room;
- A clean, infrequently used closet or small storage area;
- Sectioning off a small corner of a room with either permanent walls or portable partitions;
- A walled off corner of a lounge adjacent to the women’s restroom; and
- Adapting a “small unused space” that is not utilized well for other needs.

If space is not available, consider allowing employees to express milk in a conference room, a vacant office, a storeroom, or dressing room. For companies with few female employees, using locked office space is an option.

Involve facilities management staff and at least one breastfeeding employee experienced in milk expression as you examine options. This will increase awareness of the importance of allocating space for lactation rooms in future building renovations or additions.

Number of Rooms Needed

The number of rooms needed depends on several factors including the size of the company, the number of female employees of childbearing age, and the number of buildings on campus. For instance, if it will take women a long time to walk to the lactation room, consider providing multiple sites that are more conveniently located. Companies with large numbers of female employees have created lactation “suites” by installing partitions or curtains in the lactation room to accommodate multiple users at one time.

Deciding on Breast Pump Equipment

A quality electric breast pump can help women efficiently remove breast milk. Some women will own their own breast pump. Often, insurance companies will subsidize the cost of a pump. Some companies choose to contract with a breast pump company to purchase or rent a breast pump for their employees. Options include: renting or purchasing a hospital-grade pump that remains in the pump room and can be used by more than one employee, or subsidizing or providing a personal portable electric breast pump that women can bring back and forth to work. (See the “Resource Guide” section in the Tool Kit for examples of electric breast pump manufacturers.)



Hospital-grade electric pump

This sturdy, durable pump is the most efficient system for removing milk and helping a mother maintain her milk supply. The pump operates with a standard 110V electrical outlet and enables women to pump from both breasts at the same time to reduce the amount of time needed to remove milk.

Hospital-grade electric breast pumps are designed specifically to keep milk from going into the pump, so they are sanitary and can be safely used by more than one user. They are also durable and last for many years. Many companies purchase or rent one hospital grade pump for each lactation room. Cleaning the pump is the responsibility of each user after she completes her pumping session.

When providing purchased or rented hospital-grade electric pumps, each breastfeeding employee will also need her own **milk collection kit**. This kit includes tubing that connects to the pump, and containers to

collect the milk. Employers can choose to either provide or subsidize the cost of a milk collection kit for each employee, or simply ask women to purchase their own.

Cost:

Hospital-Grade Pump Purchase: \$750-\$1,500

Hospital-Grade Pump Rental: \$50-80 per month

Milk collection kit: \$30-\$55 per employee

Option	Pump Costs	Attachment Kit Costs	Total Annual Cost
Purchase a multi-user hospital-grade pump	\$1,125 (one time expense)	\$850 per year (\$42.50 x 20 kits)	\$1,975 first year cost \$850 per year thereafter
Rent a multi-user hospital grade pump	\$780 per year (\$65 x 12 months)	\$850 per year (\$42.50 x 20 kits)	\$1,630 per year
Single user portable electric breast pumps	\$5,000 per year (\$250 x 20)	\$0 (attachment kits are included)	\$5,000 per year

Figure 3

*NOTE: Costs are figured as a general average. Actual prices could be more or less, depending on the types of pumps selected and the company from which they are acquired. For exact prices, please check with companies listed in the “Resource Guide” on the Tool Kit CD.

Portable electric breast pump

Portable electric breast pumps are valued by many working mothers because they are light enough to transport to and from work, and can be conveniently used to express milk both at work and at home. The portable electric pumps are often packaged in a discreet business-like carrying case that includes a personal cooler for safely storing the milk collected throughout the day, a milk collection kit, and storage containers for the milk. Because portable electric pumps are designed for personal use, they cannot be safely shared with other women for sanitary reasons. Some businesses choose to provide portable pumps as an employee health benefit; others subsidize the cost of the pump.

Cost:

Portable electric breast pump purchase: \$165-\$350 each (*may be less with some companies depending on whether a tote or other amenities are included*)

See Figure 3 on page 9 for an example of annual capital outlay for breast pump equipment in a company with 20 breastfeeding employees per year.*

Storing Human Milk

Because of the unique antibacterial properties in human milk, breast milk can be safely stored in a refrigerator or personal cooler. Employees should discuss options for storing their milk with their supervisors. These include:

- The mother can elect to use her own personal cooler
- The company can provide a small cooler (or provide the portable electric pump which includes a cooler)
- The company can provide a small “college dorm room” sized refrigerator in or near the lactation room

Milk can also be safely stored in a standard refrigerator at 32-39°F for up to 48 hours, and in the refrigerator freezer at 0°F or below for up to 3 months. The Federal Occupational Safety and Health Administration’s (OSHA) interpretation of regulation 29 CFR 1910.1030 states that breast milk is not an “occupational exposure.” (*See U.S. Dept. of Labor, OSHA’s Standard No. 1910.1030, available at: http://www.osha.gov/pls/oshaweb/owadisp.show_document?p_table=INTERPRETATIONS&p_id=20952*.)

Most women are more comfortable keeping their milk in a safer, more private place than a public shared refrigerator. Occasionally colleagues may not be comfortable with milk

stored in a shared refrigerator. Employers should respect the needs of all employees.

Breast milk should always be labeled with the employee’s name and the date it was collected. Employees take responsibility for storing their own milk and taking it home at the end of each work period to give to childcare providers.

Room Amenities

The lactation room amenities can be as simple or elaborate as desired based on company resources and needs of the employees. Some companies begin with a very simple room and basic furnishings and expand amenities as needs grow. (*See Figure 4 on page 11.*)

Scheduling Room Usage

If large numbers of breastfeeding employees will use the room, companies may want to consider scheduling room usage. A variety of methods can be used:

- Electronic sign-in...a computerized room schedule that allows employees to log in their preferred pumping times daily or weekly.
- Schedule sign-in sheet or dry-erase board kept in the room or by the person who has the key to the room.
- E-mail notices sent to employees who are using the room.
- First-come, first-served basis, with an “Occupied” sign outside the door (this is effective if there are only a few women needing the room).

The lactation room should be kept locked between uses to safeguard equipment, supplies, and milk that may be stored in a refrigerator. Many companies issue a key to each mother enrolled in the lactation support program. Keys can also be retained by the program coordinator, staff nurse, or other designated individual and checked out by mothers as needed.

Cleaning the Room

Lactation program policies should stipulate that individual users take responsibility for keeping the room clean. Disinfectant, anti-microbial wipes, or spray should be provided so that each user can clean the outside of the pump and the area around the pump when she is finished. Wastebasket contents should be removed daily. If your company does not provide a cleaning crew, consider a schedule that assigns users to conduct routine inspection and cleaning of the room. Many companies provide general maintenance oversight of the room within their administrative services department.

Lactation Room Options		
Basic Model	Even Better	State of the Art
Electrical Outlet (standard 110V)	<i>Same as “Basic” model</i>	<i>Same as “Basic” model</i>
Room locks from the inside	<i>Same as “Basic” model</i>	<i>Same as “Basic” model</i>
Comfortable chair	Footstool is included	Recliner
Table or flat surface to hold the breast pump	<i>Same as “Basic” model</i>	<i>Same as “Basic” model</i>
Disinfectant wipes	<i>Same as “Basic” model</i>	<i>Same as “Basic” model</i>
Room is located near a source of running water	Room has a sink with running water in it	<i>Same as “Even Better” model</i>
Employee brings her own breast pump	Employer pays for rental of a breast pump, or provides a hospital-grade multi-user electric breast pump that is purchased or rented	Employer subsidizes or provides a portable electric breast pump, or provides a hospital-grade multi-user electric breast pump
		Breast pumps are also provided for partners of male employees
Employee brings her own attachment kit if hospital-grade pump is used	Employer subsidizes the cost of attachment kits for hospital-grade pump	Employer provides the attachment kit for employees
Employee stores milk in a public area refrigerator or personal cooler	Employer provides personal coolers for storing milk	Employer provides a small refrigerator within the room for storing milk
Room is clean	Attractive wall hangings, floral arrangement, etc.	Soft lighting
	Bulletin board for posting baby photos and notes of support	<i>Same as “Even Better” model</i>
	Educational resources are available.	<i>Same as “Even Better” model</i>
	Desk or table top space is provided	Telephone available for employee to check voicemail messages
		Computer terminal with VS PC/ internet access is available

Figure 4

EMPLOYER SPOTLIGHT

*U.S. Department of Defense/The Pentagon
Washington, D.C.*

“The lactation rooms are smart and professional. The Pentagon is a very male dominated environment, and having somewhere to go not only to pump, but also to talk about babies and motherhood with other employees, has been quite helpful.”

Pentagon Employee



The Pentagon, headquarters of the United States Department of Defense, is a virtual city in itself, with more than 23,000 military and civilian staff. It also houses a highly regarded successful corporate lactation program as part of its employee work-life program.

Despite the enormous size of the Pentagon (with three times the floor space of the Empire State Building and 17.5 miles of corridors!) and predominantly male workforce, the typical lactation support program components used by most companies also work well here. These components include private, comfortable space and leave time to express milk, a refrigerator to store milk, and breastfeeding education and support. Access to the lactation rooms is not a problem; despite the vast size of the Pentagon, it takes no more than 7 minutes to walk between any two points in the building. If usage is an indicator of success, the Pentagon proudly reports a usage average of 667 visits to the rooms per month.

Program Components:

Private Area to Express Milk:

Two Nursing Mothers' Rooms accommodating multiple users through curtained or walled-off areas. Each room provides a refrigerator, sink, an area to store breast pump equipment, and comfortable chairs and tables. Rooms are secured with punch code locks.

Breastfeeding Equipment:

The company provides a hospital-grade electric breast pump; employee purchases her own accessory kit.

Milk Expression Scheduling:

Employees work with individual supervisors to arrange leave time for milk expression.

Education:

Educational materials on breastfeeding.

Support:

Mother-to-mother support in the multiple-user room set-up.

Contact:

Nurse Educator for DiLorenzo Tri-Care Clinic
Corridor 8, Room MG 886A4
5801 Army Pentagon
Washington, D.C. 20310-5801
703.692.8898

This will in no way be used to sell a product or service.



Flexible Breaks and Work Options

A Gradual Transition Back to Work

Ideally, new mothers need at least 6-12 weeks of maternity leave to recover from childbirth and to establish a good milk supply. When a woman is not able to take this time, employer support can help her transition back to work so she can maintain her milk supply. This gradual easing back into the workplace allows time for her to adjust to her body's changing needs. Transition options include:

- Part-time employment or telecommuting for a few weeks before resuming full-time work;
- Working longer hours 4 days of the week and taking off in the middle of the work week to allow a day to rebuild milk supply by being with the baby;
- Returning to work on a Thursday or Friday to allow for the quick weekend to rebuild milk supply before facing an entire week of separation from the baby; or
- Job-sharing, which research shows can be highly effective for both employees and the employer.

Time to Express Milk

Many employers are surprised to discover that the amount of time a woman needs to express milk is usually handled easily during the regular allowable break times. Women typically require two to three pumping sessions of around 15 minutes each, not counting time to go to and from the

lactation room. As the baby begins eating solid foods around 6 months, pumping sessions often become less frequent. After 12-15 months, most women have ceased expressing milk altogether.

Sometimes it is more efficient for women to simply feed their infants directly. This can work well if the company provides onsite childcare, if the childcare provider is able to bring the baby to the mother during the work period, or if the company allows the employee to bring her infant to work for the first few months.

If extra time is needed for milk expression or direct infant feeding, flexibility to make up the time before or after the usual work schedule helps make this expenditure of time manageable. Organizations that offer a flexible structure report that their employees are so appreciative of the program that abuse of this system of support is rare.

Women should discuss with their supervisors whether the current break schedule is sufficient. (See Figure 5.)

Education Resources

Because breastfeeding is a learned behavior, basic breastfeeding information beginning in pregnancy helps both male and female employees make an informed choice about infant feeding, and builds support among family members and colleagues. A variety of educational options are provided by companies.

Milk Expression/Infant Feeding Options		
Basic Services	Even Better	State of the Art
Milk Expression Breaks Employee takes usual lunch and break times to express milk; extra time needed is considered unpaid leave time	Extra time that may be needed is made up as part of a flexible schedule (coming in early, staying late, etc.)	Break time is considered paid time, whether the employee goes over the allotted break time or not
Direct Infant Feeding <i>Option A:</i> Childcare provider feeds the mother's expressed milk to infant while mother is at work <i>Option B:</i> Childcare provider brings baby to mother to feed at lunch and other designated break times	Company provides onsite childcare for quick and easy direct access to the baby during breaks	Company allows mother to bring the baby to work during the first few months

Figure 5

Prenatal Education

Prenatal classes for both mothers and fathers can be provided during the lunch break to educate families about infant feeding options and the breastfeeding support they can expect in their workplace. Even in companies with predominantly male employees, classes for both expectant fathers and their pregnant partners are a valued health benefit that can result in higher rates of breastfeeding.

Brown-bag “lunch and learns” can be taught by a staff nurse, an International Board Certified Lactation Consultant (IBCLC) from the community, a WIC breastfeeding coordinator or nutritionist, a local La Leche League Leader, or other health professional from a hospital or doctor’s office. A local breastfeeding coalition can also provide names of qualified instructors. (See “Resource Guide” section in the Tool Kit for sources of instructors.)

Topics for classes often include reasons to breastfeed, basic breastfeeding techniques, and tips for balancing work and breastfeeding, along with proper procedures for expressing and storing human milk.

Another option for education is to allow employees to take leave to attend classes available in the community. Classes are often available through local hospitals, private health clinics, WIC, La Leche League, or local breastfeeding groups.

In addition to classes, many companies provide pamphlets, books, and videos for pregnant employees. (See the “Resource Guide” section in the Tool Kit for respected sources of free and low-cost materials and downloadable resources for mothers.) Some companies include a breastfeeding

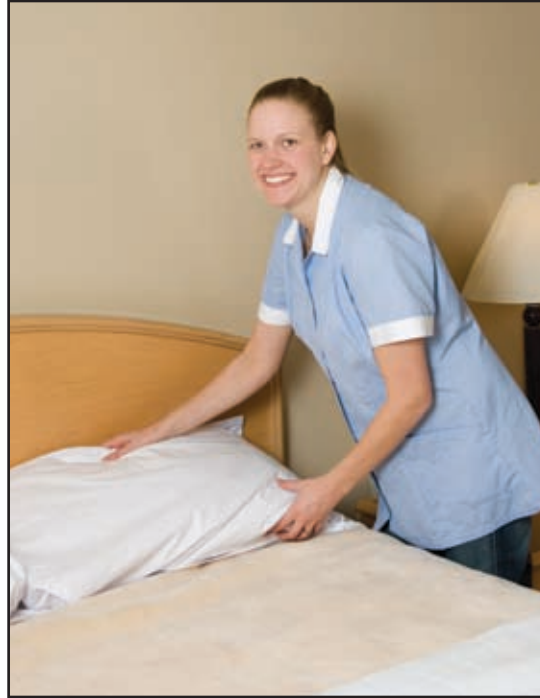
page on their company Web site with downloadable resources and Frequently Asked Questions about working and breastfeeding.

Postpartum Lactation Counseling

Research has shown that lactation support by a qualified expert helps women continue breastfeeding longer, which contributes to the company’s ROI. Postpartum lactation support services often include one-on-one assistance in the hospital or at home to help mothers get breastfeeding off to a good start while mothers and babies are learning.

Some mothers’ insurance companies will pay for up to two visits with an International Board Certified Lactation Consultant (IBCLC). The company benefits coordinator can inform the mother to check with her insurance to see if lactation consults or breast pumps are included health benefits.

Some corporate lactation programs contract with an IBCLC or other health professional to provide lactation support.



Education Options		
Basic Services	Even Better	State of the Art
Education Company makes pregnancy and breastfeeding pamphlets, books, and videos available	Company offers classes on pregnancy and breastfeeding during the lunch hour	Education is available for dads as well as partners of male employees
Lactation Consultations Company provides mothers with names of lactation consultants and other resources in the community	Company contracts with an IBCLC or other lactation expert to assist employees with their questions or concerns	Contract lactation expert services are also available for female partners of male employees

Figure 6

EMPLOYER SPOTLIGHT

CIGNA Corporation Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

“CIGNA Moms is part of our company’s Healthy Life strategy and exemplifies our commitment to improving the health of our employees and their newest family members.”

Vicky Dickson, Director, Employee Health
CIGNA Corporation

CIGNA Corporation (NYSE: CI), headquartered in Philadelphia, and its subsidiaries constitute one of the largest publicly-owned providers of health and related benefits in the United States and selected markets around the world. In 1995, CIGNA implemented a comprehensive program to eliminate worksite barriers that keep women from choosing to breastfeed and continuing to breastfeed after returning to work. Today, for those mothers who choose to breastfeed their baby and will continue to breastfeed after returning to work, CIGNA’s program helps make the transition easier - and healthier - for mothers and children. The program, CIGNA Moms, is designed to help a mother provide the best nutrition for her baby by making it easy to breastfeed before and after return to work.

- Breastfeeding support ensures optimum success for mother and baby. Mothers receive ongoing support from a network of breastfeeding experts before and after the birth of the baby.
- Before delivery, a lactation consultant will talk with mothers about what they can do to prepare for breastfeeding and what to expect when the baby arrives.
- After the baby arrives, during a mother’s short-term disability, a lactation consultant will contact mothers at home to answer questions, talk about a healthy nursing diet, discuss proper breast care, and help mothers prepare to return to work while continuing to nurse.
- Before mothers return to work, a consultant will teach them how to properly store milk, give tips on maintaining milk supply, and demonstrate the use of the breast pump.
- After mothers return to work, during the next 6 months, a consultant will contact mothers every few weeks to answer questions and ensure they are doing well.

When mothers enroll in CIGNA Moms, the following services are offered at no charge:

- Ongoing advice and help from a professional lactation consultant
- Access to Nursing Mothers’ Rooms at CIGNA office sites
- Breast pump
- A milk storage system and carrying case and a personal set of bottles, pump shields and tubing to ensure proper hygiene when expressing milk
- Literature on breast engorgement, breastfeeding and working, milk storage and collection, and sore nipple management

With an employee pool of approximately 24,000, company officials believe the potential cost reductions in health care expenses and employee turnover more than offset the nominal expenses to implement and maintain a program that supports an employee’s decision to breastfeed. The CIGNA Moms program is now available at all CIGNA offices nationwide, with more than 400 employees participating annually.

Program Components:

Private Area to Express Milk:

Onsite Nursing Mothers’ Rooms

Breastfeeding Equipment:

Breast pumps, carrying case, and all supplies needed

Milk Expression Scheduling:

Flexible scheduling for milk expression needs during regular break times

Education:

Prenatal education kit, classes, and consultation with a lactation consultant before and after giving birth

Support:

Telephone support for breastfeeding women during maternity leave, and return-to-work consultation and ongoing support from a lactation consultant

This Employer Spotlight is continued on page 16

Employer Spotlight | CIGNA continued from page 15

Program Impact:

- Annual savings of \$240,000 in health care expenses for breastfeeding mothers and children
- 77 percent reduction in lost work time due to infant illness, with annual savings of \$60,000
- Lower pharmacy costs due to 62 percent fewer prescriptions
- Increased breastfeeding rates – 72.5 percent at 6 months compared to national average of 21.1 percent for employed mothers
- Recognized as a Workplace Model of Excellence by the National Healthy Mothers/ Healthy Babies Coalition

- A formal study conducted by the UCLA Centers for Healthy Children found that the program enabled mothers to efficiently express breast milk without impacting workplace productivity, and did indeed result in substantial cost savings to the company. The program also accomplished its goal of improving breastfeeding rates, which are now significantly higher than the national average.

Contact:

Director, Employee Health
CIGNA Corporation
1601 Chestnut St., TL 37B
Philadelphia, PA 19192
215.761.3921

They may also inform employees about lactation consultants in the community, hospital or private clinic nurses, the WIC Program, La Leche League breastfeeding counselors, 24-hour breastfeeding hotlines, and support groups that can help women deal with early challenges of breastfeeding. (See the “Resource Guide” Section in the Tool Kit for ways to contact qualified groups.)

Back to Work Education

The company contract with an IBCLC or other health professional often includes a personalized “Back to Work Consult” as a company health benefit. This consult can help mothers make the transition back to work, assist with using a breast pump, and answer common questions. This session includes specific information tailored to the employee’s unique situation, including:

- Setting up a milk expression schedule at home and work to fit her unique job situation;
- Identifying places to express milk at work;
- Effective techniques for milk expression;
- Storing and handling human milk specific to the employee’s situation;
- Maintaining and building milk supply;
- Talking with the supervisor about her needs; and
- Adjusting to the physical and emotional needs of returning to work.

Ongoing Education

The company contract with a lactation consultant can also include ongoing access to a lactation consultant to

help employees address the challenges of maintaining and building their milk supply while continuing to work, and as babies grow. A resource library of materials on working and breastfeeding can be a valuable asset for employees. (A list of potential resources is available in the “Resource Guide” Section in the Toolkit.)

Workplace Support

Nearly all breastfeeding employees report that what they value most about their company’s lactation program is company support, including verbal and written support from supervisors, colleagues, and other breastfeeding employees. Although a written worksite policy can help ensure supportive practices, many companies do not have written policies but have excellent lactation support programs that are highly valued by employees.

Support from Supervisors

Employees appreciate the verbal support they receive and the tangible results of that support in the form of policies, programs, and facilities that support regular milk expression at the workplace. This support can be enhanced in a variety of ways:

- Incorporate information about the basic needs of breastfeeding employees in established company training programs for managers and supervisors.
- Establish program policies that recognize the needs of breastfeeding employees in the workplace. (See a sample policy in the Tool Kit portion of the CD.)

Mother-to-Mother Support Options

Basic Model	Even Better	State of the Art
Names of local support group meetings are available to employees; a bulletin board for sharing notes of encouragement provided in lactation room	Company hosts regular support group meetings	In addition to the basic and better options, company also provides electronic options for staying connected

Figure 7

- Encourage supervisors to offer breastfeeding employees the flexibility to adjust meeting times around their scheduled pumping sessions, and to provide positive feedback on their choice to breastfeed.
- Disseminate information about the designated room, or any other aspects of the lactation support program including any prenatal classes, support groups, etc.

- Promoting the program as a company health benefit;
- Communicating ways the company accommodates other employee needs (ex: fitness program breaks, etc.);
- Communicating the positive reasons for the program that will speak to colleagues, including lower absenteeism rates, lower turnover rates, higher productivity, and faster return to the workplace;
- Maintaining ongoing communication with both the breastfeeding employee and her co-workers to ensure that the program is working well.

Co-Worker Support

Research shows that most coworkers, particularly both male and female employees who have children of their own, support company health benefit programs that include lactation support. Occasionally, however, some co-workers might view these services as unfair, particularly if they perceive that they will be required to cover the breastfeeding mother's tasks or shifts. Mothers who worry about co-worker resistance sometimes discontinue breastfeeding earlier than planned, or hesitate to request lactation support from their supervisors.

Successful company lactation programs consider the needs of both the breastfeeding employee and her co-workers. Some strategies to gain buy-in include:

- Involving co-worker representatives as part of the initial planning phase to identify and address potential concerns;



Formal and informal guidance from company managers and appropriate consultants can help with any adjustments that might be needed during the program's implementation.

Mother-to-Mother Support

Women value sharing successful strategies for managing breastfeeding and working with other breastfeeding employees who experience similar circumstances. Some companies help facilitate mother-to-mother support opportunities by providing a monthly mothers' meeting during the lunch period, or facilitating an electronic discussion board

on the company's Web site. Some lactation rooms provide a bulletin board or photo album for women to post photos of their babies and to share notes of encouragement. (See Figure 7 above.)

PROMOTING THE PROGRAM

Once the program is in place it should be widely promoted with potential users (both breastfeeding employees and male employees whose partners may be pregnant), as well as colleagues, supervisors, and managers. Promotion builds interest and needed support for the program. Promoting the program outside the company also helps improve the company's positive image within the community.

Some companies believe that integrating it with existing work-life programs provides a ready-made avenue for internal promotion because it can be integrated in the widespread promotion of other programs. However, there are many other ways to build interest, including:

- Employee wellness or health fairs;
- Staff meetings;
- Open-house for the lactation room (serve refreshments and invite the media!);
- Articles in internal print or web-based newsletters;
- Outreach tables set up in prominent areas, with lactation consultants from the program on hand to answer questions and distribute materials to employees;
- Promotional packets for pregnant employees and partners;
- Word of mouth;
- "Lunch and Learn" sessions;
- Baby shower for expectant employees and partners;
- Posters and bulletin board displays;
- Employee health benefits mailings;
- Company-wide mailing or e-mail; and
- Paycheck stuffers promoting the program.



EVALUATING THE PROGRAM'S ROI

Collecting simple feedback about the value of the program can help quantify the Return on Investment. This data can be useful in securing ongoing funding and support for the program.

Simple Process Evaluation

Begin with a simple process evaluation to obtain feedback from women who utilize the program to aid in ongoing program improvement. Options include:

Usage Logs – A record kept in the lactation room for users to record the hours the room is in use and to communicate any needs that may arise. Usage logs are valuable in demonstrating use and determining the need for additional rooms.

Lactation Support Program Exit Surveys

– These provide feedback from the women who benefited from the program regarding what they valued most and recommendations for improving the program. Feedback forms are included on the CD.

Standard Employee Satisfaction

Surveys – These include questions pertaining to

the lactation support program. Typical questions measure satisfaction with the lactation room accommodations, availability of the room when needed, willingness of supervisors to provide needed flexibility for milk expression breaks, and usefulness of resources or materials, as well as length of time the employee breastfed. If the company program is provided for partners of male employees, as well, they should be included in the employee satisfaction survey, even if they are only participating in some of the services.

Standard Co-Worker Satisfaction

Surveys – A survey of co-workers can provide insight into how well the program is being accepted, and what concerns might need to be addressed.

Other Helpful Data

It may also be helpful for the company to collect simple data to track the progress of the lactation support program. This can include collecting information on rates of absenteeism, turnover, health care costs, and breastfeeding duration among employees utilizing the program.