



Storage/Handling/Feeding

Implement Proper Storage, Handling, and Feeding of Breast Milk

During training, childcare providers learn the basics of how to properly store, handle, and feed breast milk. Assist childcare providers in creating a plan to put their knowledge into action.

Provide refrigeration and freezer space for storage of breast milk.

Ensure childcare providers implement proper storage.

- **Determine a space to store breast milk.** Breast milk can be stored in refrigerators and freezers appropriate for food storage along with any other foods and beverages.
- **Organize the storage space.** Designate a space in the refrigerator where families can leave their breast milk.

Breastfeeding families are instructed on how to properly label and store breast milk.

To guarantee proper handling, encourage childcare providers to ensure a safe storage environment and ask families to label milk properly.

- **Discuss proper labeling of breast milk with families.** Ask families to label bottles or bags of breast milk with the infant's name, date, and time the milk was expressed.
- **Follow storage guidelines.** Childcare providers are encouraged to utilize conservative storage guidelines such as those from the [Child and Adult Care Food Program \(CACFP\)](#). See Table 2 for the recommended storage guidelines per CACFP, as of 2018. In addition, encourage childcare providers to check with local licensing agencies or other affiliated programs, as they may also have storage guidelines.

Table 2 CACFP Storage Guidelines

	Temperature	Guidelines
Refrigerator	39°F (3.9°C) or below	Freshly expressed breast milk may be refrigerated for up to 72 hours. Return unused refrigerated breast milk to family after 72 hours.
Freezer	0°F or below	Frozen breast milk should be provided in single-use plastic bags. Frozen breast milk may be stored for up to three months. Once thawed, use within 24 hours.

An individual feeding plan exists for every infant under 18 months.

Infant feeding plans are an important communication and planning tool. Feeding plans guarantee that the childcare provider is following the families' preferred feeding style.

- **Record feeding patterns.** Keep records of the time and amount baby drinks. Share the feeding patterns with families.
- **Update feeding plans.** Feeding plans should be updated every three months or as feeding patterns change, such as with the introduction of solids.
- **Utilize a standard form.** Utilize an infant feeding plan form such as the [BFSD Infant Feeding Plan](#).

BREASTFEEDING-FRIENDLY FEEDING STRATEGIES

- **Color code bottles.** Consider marking each infant's bottle with a different piece of colored tape. That way, a baby's bottle is quickly identified.
- **Post infant feeding plans.** Post the infant feeding plans close to the kitchen, making paperwork an easy process after feeding.
- **Make rotating bottles easy.** Use small plastic containers in the refrigerator to separate each baby's bottles.