

Workplace Breastfeeding Support Guidelines

Human milk is the ideal choice for feeding infants. Numerous studies have shown that children who consume breast milk have advantages with regard to general health, growth, and development over children who are not breast fed. Additionally, breastfed children have a significantly lower risk of developing a large number of acute and chronic diseases. Mothers who breastfeed reduce their risk for breast cancer, ovarian cancer, osteoporosis and obesity.

Because common childhood illness such as diarrhea, ear infections and the common cold are less frequent and less severe among infants who are breastfed, mothers and fathers of breastfed infants miss less work than those parents whose children are formula fed.

The American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) recommends that breastfeeding continue for at least 12 months, and thereafter as mutually desired. The AAP also encourages employers to provide appropriate facilities and adequate time in the workplace for breast-pumping.

In order to promote optimal employee and family health and wellness, reduce absenteeism and improve employee morale and loyalty, Umatilla-Morrow Head Start, Inc., will support breastfeeding employees as follows:

1. A breastfeeding employee will be allowed a flexible schedule for nursing or pumping to provide breast milk to her child to the extent that it does not prevent her from performing her primary job duties. Per Oregon State law (ORS 653.077), breastfeeding employees are entitled to 30 minutes to express breast milk for every four hours worked, taken in about the middle of each work period. If possible, employees should use their regular rest and meal periods, but if they're unable to pump milk during their regular break, then women are entitled to additional, unpaid rest periods of up to 30 minutes per four hours. For time above and beyond normal lunch and breaks, employees may use leave, have unpaid time or work longer hours. Unpaid time and any schedule change must be approved by the employee's supervisor, the Executive Director and the Human Resources Director. The state law governing time for expressing breast milk applies to women with breastfeeding infants up to 18 months old.
2. A private space (not a toilet stall or restroom) will be available at the employee's work site so she can nurse an infant brought in during lunch and breaks or pump breast milk to be stored for later use.

The room shall have a chair, accessible electrical outlets for electric breast pump use and a sink close by for hand washing and rinsing out the breast pumping equipment.

Because of the large number of worksites of UMCHS, Inc., any employee who plans to breastfeed will notify their team leader/supervisor and the Human Resources Director at least 2 weeks prior to their return from maternity leave, so that an available space,

meeting the aforementioned conditions, is available for the employee to use upon their return to work.

3. A refrigerator may be available for safe storage of breast milk. Breastfeeding women will provide their own containers and all milk stored in the refrigerator will be clearly labeled with name and date. Those who use the refrigerator shall be responsible for keeping it clean. For areas without a refrigerator, a secure area will be available to store a personal cooler for the pumped breast milk.