



Breastfeeding 101 for employers

The American Academy of Pediatrics, the World Health Organization and the National Institutes of Health recommend exclusive breastfeeding for six months, with continuation for one year or longer as mutually desired by the mother and infant. As an employer, you have the opportunity to support your employees who are breastfeeding.

The Business Case for Breastfeeding, published by the U.S. Maternal and Child Health Bureau, is a comprehensive program designed to educate employers about the value of supporting breastfeeding employees in the workplace. It shows that investing in a breastfeeding support program has proven to produce a 3-to-1 return on investment through greater employee retention, increased productivity, lower health care costs and decreased sick days. It also offers tools to help employers provide worksite lactation support and privacy for breastfeeding employees to express milk.



Breastfeeding support in the workplace comprises all elements that enable employees to both work and meet their breastfeeding goals. Recommendations include:

- Develop workplace policies to support breastfeeding employees.
- Proactively advise employees of their rights and how accommodation may be met.
- Provide designated private space for women to breastfeed or express milk.
- Give mothers options for returning to work, such as teleworking, part-time work or extended maternity leave.
- Allow flexible scheduling to support milk expression during work or working from home.
- Allow babies at the workplace.
- Offer professional lactation management services and support.

Accommodation for breastfeeding can be made for every worksite.

- Employees can be trusted to take breaks and complete their work.
- Privacy can be provided using flexible space that can be barred from intrusion.
- Employers and employees can plan ahead.

Fact sheets, accommodation solutions and brief videos showing how lactation break time and space can be created in all types of jobs and workplaces can be found at [womenshealth.gov/breastfeeding*](https://www.womenshealth.gov/breastfeeding).

Sources: [cdc.gov](https://www.cdc.gov)*, [michigan.gov](https://www.michigan.gov)*

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