



SECTION: HR
TOPIC: SUPPORT FOR
BREASTFEEDING
EMPLOYEES
AUGUST, 2012

ADMINISTRATIVE PRACTICES MANUAL

SUBJECT: SUPPORT FOR BREASTFEEDING EMPLOYEES

Purpose:

The County as an employer wants to offer support for employees who are breastfeeding. The County recognizes that guaranteeing breaks and providing space that can offer privacy for expressing breast milk or nursing supports breastfeeding employees. This support has been shown to reduce absenteeism, turnover and improves employee morale among other benefits. It also acknowledges the County's interest in complying with the federal Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) rule requiring accommodation of breastfeeding employees through breaks and space.

Policy:

County facilities to which female employees are assigned shall assure availability of space for breastfeeding employees to express breast milk or nurse her baby after returning to work. Such a room will be separate from toilet facilities. The space will include a surface such as a table to set the pump, a chair, and access to an electrical outlet for a breast pump. The door to the room will be capable of being closed, preferably lockable, and a sign will be provided that identifies whether or not the room is in use and its occupant should not be disturbed. The room does not need to be designated for this purpose only; for example, an office or conference room is acceptable.

Supervisors are required to assure scheduled breaks and lunch periods. When needed, flexibility in work schedules, such as longer breaks and extending the work day, are encouraged. When the employee needs to express breast milk in the course of her workday and does not have access to a fixed worksite, she will be allowed time to investigate acceptable locations within the community that can meet her needs. She will be supported in finding a way to make these community solutions work for her.

Breastfeeding employees are required to give at least two (2) weeks advance notice (verbal or written) to her supervisor as needed of her intent to take breaks to express milk at work in order to assist with planning as needed. The employee or supervisor may consult with the health department to help problem solve individual situations by calling Public Health intake at 243-0449. With creative thinking, flexibility, and teamwork most challenges can be overcome.

Additional Search Terms: lactation; maternity leave; FMLA