





Breastfeeding in the Workplace – Promoting, Protecting and Supporting

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Intranet location/s	Corporate: Workforce – Industrial and Employee Relations / Conditions of Employment		
Author's Position	HR Business Partner, People & Culture CCLHD Public Health Nutritionist, Nutrition Services CCLHD Clinical Midwifery Consultant, Lactation and Infant feeding, CCLHD.		
Purpose	<p>To ensure a flexible, consultative and sensitive approach to support employees within CCLHD to balance continuing breastfeeding and work responsibilities¹.</p> <p>To improve the retention rate of female employees in the workforce, maintain the workforce skill base, and lower staff turnover after maternity leave¹.</p> <p>To contribute to increasing breastfeeding duration rates.</p> <p>To provide a positive role model to the community on being a breastfeeding friendly workplace.</p>		
Audience	This procedure applies to all Central Coast Local Health District (CCLHD) staff, particularly those that currently are or intend to breastfeed their infant or child.		
Review due date	May 2029		
Related policy/procedure	PD2018_034 Breastfeeding in NSW – Promotion, Protection and Support.		
National Standard/s	NS1 - Clinical Governance		
	NS3 - Healthcare Associated Infections		
	NS5 - Comprehensive Care		
	NS6 - Communicating for Safety		

1. Applicable to

Role	Additional Scope of practice/training requirements
All staff	Nil

2. Risk Management

Contraindications	Nil
Alerts	Nil

3. Procedure

<p>Step 1</p>	<p>CCLHD will provide workplace facilities for employees who continue to express breastmilk or breastfeed their babies after returning to work. The provision of facilities will vary for individual employees and workplace requirements due to the diverse nature of both the workforce and the business of CCLHD. Consideration is to be given to space and logistic restrictions.</p> <p>The provision of workplace facilities is to include the following² (where possible).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A private, hygienic and secure space that is kept clean and suitably sign posted. • Comfortable and appropriate seating. • A table or bench to support breastfeeding and/or lactating equipment. • A power point suitable for the operation of a breast pump. • Access to facilities for nappy changing, washing or equipment and hand hygiene purposes. • Access to existing refrigerators (in appropriate locations) for storage of breastmilk. • Facilities for storage of breast pump and other equipment (e.g. A cupboard or locker). • An appropriate container for rubbish disposal (including nappy disposal).
<p>Step 2</p>	<p>Lactation Breaks</p> <p>Lactation breaks are available for employees who are returning to work and are combining work and breastfeeding³. These breaks are essential for maintaining breastmilk supply. Lactation breaks are specifically for employees who need to breastfeed (go to the baby or have the baby brought into the workplace) or express breastmilk during work hours. Lactation breaks are available in addition to normal breaks.</p> <p>A full-time employee or a part-time employee working more than four hours per day is entitled to a maximum of two paid lactations breaks of up to 30 minutes each per day or per shift. A part-time employee working four hours or less on any day or shift is entitled to only one paid lactation break of up to 30 minutes each per day or per shift worked. The period of paid lactation breaks includes all travelling time for employees who take their lactation breaks off the work site.</p> <p>A flexible approach to lactation breaks is needed with mutual agreement between an employee and their manager provided the total lactation break time entitlement is not exceeded. For example, some breastfeeding employees may require two 30 minute paid lactation breaks, whereas a break of one hour or even less may be required by other employees.</p> <p>The timing of lactation breaks is to take both the organisation and employee needs into account, with a focus on minimising disruption in the workplace. Where emergency situations or client service/patient care issues delay the</p>
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	taking of lactation breaks, efforts should be made to ensure that employees are able to take the lactation breaks as soon as it is practicable to do so.
Step 3	<p>Manager Responsibility</p> <p>Managers have a responsibility to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discuss the paid lactation break needs of the employee and together complete a written agreement that clearly outlines the agreed work and breastfeeding arrangements (frequency and duration of breaks), before the first lactation break is taken. This agreement is to be signed by both the manager and the employee. • Discuss the support that is available to employees should they experience difficulties in effecting the transition from home-based breastfeeding to the workplace. Inform them of the free telephone breastfeeding consultative service, which is available for them to access in paid time and potential leave options during this time. • Note: This is provided by the Australian Breastfeeding Association's Breastfeeding Helpline Service 1800 686 268. Advice and support is also available at the Child & Family Health breastfeeding support clinics, phone 4328 7900. • Agreement for lactation breaks is to be reviewed on a monthly basis and a copy of written agreements is to be given to the employee and also stored by the manager. • Discuss suitable locations for breastfeeding and "lactation breaks" with the employee. • Assess and document any identified risks associated with providing facilities for the purpose of this policy. <p>Factors managers are to take into account are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Availability of a suitable facility • The identified risks associated with the workplace • The adjustments that may need to take place in the workplace to meet the needs of the breastfeeding employee.
Step 4	<p>Employee Responsibility</p> <p>Employees have a responsibility to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide reasonable notice to their manager of their intention to return to work and their decision to continue breastfeeding. • Discuss their specific needs and current situation with their manager. • Negotiate lactation break times with manager and complete written agreement before the first lactation break is taken. • Supply appropriate storage containers for expressed breastmilk and clearly label these containers with their name and date before placing it in the specified refrigerator. • Provide personal breastmilk expressing equipment. <p>Employee's obligation under the Work Health and Safety Legislation include:</p>

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure caregivers entering the workplace do so on the understanding that restricted access will apply. • Children are delivered directly to the workplace facility designated for the purpose of each lactation break. <p>Caregivers and the child or children in their care vacate the workplace promptly at the completion of each lactation break.</p>
Step 5	<p>Responsibility of All CCLHD Employees</p> <p>All CCLHD employees are to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Treat employees who are breastfeeding with respect and dignity <p><i>Refrain from behaviours that may constitute unlawful discrimination⁴.</i></p>

4. Definitions

Breastfeeding	<p>Is the biological norm for providing an infant or child with the nutrients they need for healthy growth and development with milk from a woman's breast.</p> <p>The World Health Organisation (WHO) and National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC) recommend that babies be breastfed until two years of age and beyond. The first six months of which should be exclusive breastfeeding followed by gradual introduction of solids⁵.</p>
Child(ren)	refers to the breastfed infant or child of the employee.
Caregiver	is a person, chosen by the parent to care for the child while they are at work.
Lactation Break	is a break from work responsibilities for the purpose of an employee expressing their breasts and/or to breastfeed.

5. References

1. [NSW Health Policy Directive. PD2018_034: 'Breastfeeding in NSW – Promotion, Protection and Support'.](#)
2. [Australian Breastfeeding Association Breastfeeding Friendly Workplace Accreditation](#)
3. [Leave Matters for the NSW Health Service PD2023_045](#)
4. [Sex and Age Discrimination Legislation Amendment Act 2011, No.40, 2011, section 7AA.](#)
5. [National Health and Medical Research Council \(2013\) Infant Feeding Guidelines. Canberra: National Health and Medical Research Council.](#)

6. Related resources

1. A guide to Breastfeeding in the Workplace for Staff, CCLHD.
2. Directory of Breastfeeding Facilities for CCLHD Staff.

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7. Revision History

Date	Revision No.	Author and Approvers
February 2024	2	K Haines, HR Business Partner, People and Culture L. Marshall, Public Health Nutritionist, Nutrition Services, Catherine Palmer, Clinical Midwifery Consultant, Maternity Services.

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