

	<h1>Staff Breastfeeding Procedure</h1>	Policy Number <i>WCDHB-HR-0035</i>	Version Nos: 3
-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------	----------------------------------------	----------------------------------------------	---------------------------------

1. Policy Statement

The West Coast District Health Board (WCDHB) recognises the importance of breastfeeding for both mother and infant and supports, protects and promotes breastfeeding.

The WCDHB will provide the support necessary to enable mothers in the DHB employment to balance breastfeeding/ breast milk expression with carrying out their work.

2. Purpose

This Procedure outlines a process that will:

- Create supportive environments to protect, promote and support breastfeeding;
- Ensure arrangements that are made are reasonable and practicable in the circumstances;
- Promote a philosophy of care that supports the normal physiological pattern of breastfeeding;
- Follow the principles of the Treaty of Waitangi of protection, partnership and participation while also recognising individual cultural needs, and where staff members and their family needs are respected and non-judgmental attitudes are applied;
- Enable staff members to return to work whilst balancing their breastfeeding commitments;
- Enable mothers and babies to have satisfying breastfeeding experiences.

3. Application

This Policy applies to all WCDHB staff members.

4. Definitions

There are no definitions associated with this Policy

5. Responsibilities

For the purpose of this Policy and Procedure:

General Managers shall:

- monitor the implementation of this Procedure throughout their service;
- ensure all new employees to their service are made familiar with the requirements of this Procedure;
- receive, investigate and resolve complaints made regarding breaches of this Policy and Procedure;

All **Heads of Departments/Clinical Nurse Managers** shall:

- monitor the implementation of this Procedure within their area of responsibility;
- encourage and support breastfeeding in the workplace ensuring a positive outcome for the employee and the organisation;
- forward any documentation regarding the agreements to HR Department for filing;
- ensure all new employees to their service are made familiar with the requirements of this Policy and Procedure;



Staff Breastfeeding Procedure

Policy Number

WCDHB-HR-0035

Version Nos:

3

All *Staff Members* shall:

- support colleagues breastfeeding in the workplace;
- communicate breastfeeding intentions to Managers as soon as is practicably possible
- inform their manager of any breaches of this Procedure.

6. Resources Required

This Procedure requires no specific resources.

7. Process

- 1.00 A breastfeeding staff member may breastfeed their baby in any WCDHB facility where the staff member is authorised to be.
- 1.01 Where possible an appropriate room will be provided where breastfeeding staff members can:
 - Breastfeed an infant brought in during lunch or breaks; and/or
 - Pump breast milk to be stored for later use.
- 1.02 Where possible the breastfeeding area / room will contain a chair for nursing mothers that is comfortable and has arms for support, a small low table and a changing table.
- 1.03 Where possible:
 - This room will be made available as a private area for breastfeeding or pumping.
 - There will be an area where employees can store their breast pumps.
 - The room is located in an area where a crying infant will not be disruptive to other employees.
 - The room has accessible electrical outlets for electric breast pump use and a sink close by for hand washing and for rinsing out of storage containers.
 - Cultural considerations are important. For example for Maori staff it is not deemed appropriate to have a door leading from a breastfeeding/expression room into a toilet.
- 1.04 A refrigerator will be made available for safe storage of breast milk. Breastfeeding staff will provide their own containers and all milk stored in the refrigerator will be clearly labelled with name and date. Breastfeeding staff who use the refrigerator are responsible for keeping it clean.
- 1.05 Staff members who bring their infant in to a WCDHB facility to breastfeed are to store nappies in an appropriate container, away from other staff members and take them home each day.
- 1.06 The breastfeeding staff member will be allowed a flexible working schedule for breastfeeding or pumping to provide breast milk to her child (as far as is reasonable and practicable in the circumstances). A staff member (or their representative) can negotiate flexible work options (such as flexi time, part time, home based work) with her line manager taking into account both the employee's and the organisations needs.

- 1.07 The agreed arrangement should be placed in writing and forwarded to HR to be placed in the employees personnel file. (*See WCDHB Good Employer Procedure*).
- 1.08 The breaks are unpaid unless the staff member and their manager agree otherwise.
- 1.09 The breastfeeding breaks are to be provided in addition to the standard paid rest breaks and unpaid meal breaks.
- 1.10 The rest and meal breaks can also be used as breastfeeding breaks if this is agreed to by both the staff member and their manager
- 1.11 Staff members who apply for parental leave will be referred to this policy and the parental leave policy by the HR Department.
- 1.12 Each WCDHB Facility will be as clean and safe as possible to allow for a baby to be at work. It is expected that staff utilizing any facilities will ensure that this occurs and will approach their direct line manager with any concerns that they have.

8 Legislative Requirements

Employment Relations (Breaks, Infant Feeding, and Other Matters) Amendment Act 2008

9 Related Documents

WCDHB Parental Leave Procedure

WCDHB Good Employer Procedure

Department Of Labour Factsheet - Infant Feeding — Employers

Department Of Labour Factsheet - Infant Feeding — Employees

Revision History	Version:	2
	Developed By:	Human Resource Department
	Authorised By:	Executive Management Team
	Date Authorised:	October 2009
	Date Last Reviewed:	October 2009
	Date Of Next Review:	October 2011

	<h2>Staff Breastfeeding Procedure</h2>	Policy Number <i>WCDHB-HR-0035</i>	Version Nos: 3
-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------	----------------------------------------	----------------------------------------------	---------------------------------

Breastfeeding in the Workplace

Enabling your employee to breastfeed at work just takes four simple things:

1. **Talking with your employee**
2. **Time**
3. **Space (facilities)**
4. **Support**

1. TALKING WITH YOUR EMPLOYEE

- Start early
- Be flexible and open
- Be supportive
- Be clear

Good communication is the key

Talking with your employee early may assist you and your employee to develop practical solutions that meet both of your needs.

The effectiveness of any support you can provide to your employee depends on your employee knowing about the options available, or knowing where to get information about it (including from her union). Make sure your employee knows about any existing rights to breastfeeding breaks or facilities that are provided in your employment agreements.

If there are any concerns from staff you may wish how to discuss these issues with a Plunket Society Kaiawhina or Nga Maia, the organization for Maori midwifery and traditional childbirth. Cultural considerations are vital.

- **Start early –**
Talk with your employee about her needs at an early stage.
- **Be flexible –**
Be open to considering different or creative options. People's need vary and may change over time. What suits one person may not suit another, and an individual's arrangements may need to be renegotiated if they're not working out, or as time goes. Also, in some circumstances, a creative approach might help to find solutions.
- **Be supportive –**
Knowing that her employer is supportive of her decision to combine breastfeeding and work is important in helping an employee's transition back to work. This also mean encouraging a positive attitude among other staff. If you are unable to provide breaks or space for breastfeeding, listening and openly considering all options is showing support.
- **Be clear –**
Make sure you are both clear about what is agreed, and your obligations towards each other. If your employee is a member of a union, she should have the opportunity to talk with her union before making any formal changes to her employment arrangements. If you are unable to accommodate all of an employee's needs, or are unable to provide breaks or facilities for breastfeeding or for expressing breast milk, make sure the employee understands the reason for this.



2. TIME

This means the time needed to breastfeed, either at the workplace or off-site, or to express breast milk.

Some of the things you may wish to discuss with your employee include:

- What hours she will work on her return to work
- Timing and frequency of breaks, and
- whether these breaks are paid or unpaid.

Hours on return to work

An employee returning from parental leave is entitled to return to the same role and under the same terms and conditions of work (including pay) that she had before taking leave (**subject to this position not being determined a key position in the organization that was agreed to be filled, and that she has given the legal requirements for noting her return from parental leave**).

While an employee may want to return to work under the same terms and conditions, she might also want to return to negotiate a change in her terms and conditions to help her combine working and family responsibilities or breastfeeding. If reasonable and practicable, options to consider include working part-time, job sharing, flexi-time, changing shifts, working from home, or changing roles.

Under the Human Rights Act, an employer may give preferential treatment to an employee because of her pregnancy or childbirth.

It is good employment practice to be open to considering such changes (any changes agreed to would need to be set out in her written employment agreement, specifying whether these changes were for a defined period or permanent).

Timing and frequency of breaks

The timing and frequency of breaks should be sufficient to enable a baby to be breastfed adequately at work (or sufficient milk to be expressed), and enable the mother to successfully combine breastfeeding and paid work.

By the time your employee returns to work, she is likely to have established breastfeeding routines and may already have some idea about what works for her and her baby. Remember that the mother's and baby's needs may change over time. (She may need fewer breaks as time goes on, but this isn't always the case).

Plunket recommends that the overall duration of arrangements around breastfeeding or expressing milk at work is left open-ended, as it is difficult (and even unhelpful) to try and estimate the number of months a woman and her baby may require for breastfeeding.

You'll need to think about what can be accommodated given the particular work conditions of that service.

You and your employee will need to agree on how many breaks for breastfeeding or expressing milk she can take each working day, and, the length of time of these breaks. For example, 1 x 60-minute break, 2 x - 30 minutes breaks, 3 x 20-minute breaks, or 3 x 30-minute breaks (and reducing over time as needs be), or if your particular workplace arrangements allow, you may be able to be as flexible as "3 breaks a day for as long as is needed".

Whether the time agreed on is an adjustment to existing breaks (paid or unpaid), or additional paid or unpaid breaks, is a matter you should discuss with your employee. The International Labour Organization (ILO) recommends at least 90 minutes of paid breastfeeding breaks per working day. However the time required to breastfeed (or express breast milk) will vary between different mothers and babies and should be sufficient to ensure the baby is fed adequately.



Staff Breastfeeding Procedure

Policy Number

WCDHB-HR-0035

Version Nos:

3

Some ideas to consider:

- can she use her existing lunch and tea breaks and take them at one time (e.g have 1 x 90-minute break per day)? This might suit someone who is breastfeeding off-site.
- providing additional paid or unpaid breaks.
- if the employee prefers to breastfeed at home, she may want to do without one break and go home slightly earlier (say 4.30 pm rather than 5 pm), or she may want to start later and finish earlier
- changing shifts (see also above under 'Time').

Important

Your employee needs to know if breaks are paid or unpaid, and this needs to be negotiated between both of you (or between you and her representative).

3. SPACE (FACILITIES)

The West Coast DHB has allocated a breastfeeding room located in McBrearty Ward at Grey Base Hospital. Staff who work at other DHB locations are encouraged to speak to their direct line manager about any suitable facilities available for them to breastfeed. It pays to have a conversation with your employee confirming if they will be using this room, or would like to use their own office (if applicable). For employees in different locations the following needs to be considered:

To set up an appropriate place for employees who are breastfeeding you need:

- a private, clean, quiet, warm room or space – such as a screened off area (spaces don't need to be sterile, just clean), which needs to be big enough to manoeuvre a pram.
- a low comfortable chair.

To ensure privacy, windows or glass walls may need to be screened.

If an employee is expressing breast milk, in addition to the things listed above you will need:

- a lockable door
- a washbasin
- a fridge (or chilly bin with ice packs) for storing expressed breast milk. (A communal fridge is acceptable, because breast milk is considered food, not a body fluid, so can be readily stored in a labeled container in the fridge.) If a fridge or chilly bin is not available, breast milk can safely be stored at room temperature (19 -22 °C) for up to two hours
- a table
- a clean space to store equipment (e.g. small locker or cupboard)
- power point (if using electric pump).

Toilets are not acceptable places to breastfeed or express breast milk.

Toilets are not only unsanitary, but are also inappropriate for some cultures. While it is not a great option (because a mother will need daily and regular access to whatever room is set up for her), a sick room could be used as a breastfeeding/expression room when not otherwise being used. (Note – a chair is still needed as well as the bed).

The following things are nice to have but not essential:

- a two-seater sofa is preferable, with a low table beside it. The chair's arms should be low, soft and wide enough to accommodate and support a feeding baby comfortably
- a tri-pillow
- a foot stall
- a changing pad or table

	<h1>Staff Breastfeeding Procedure</h1>	Policy Number <i>WCDHB-HR-0035</i>	Version Nos: 3
-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------	----------------------------------------	----------------------------------------------	---------------------------------

You may also wish to consider providing a carpark near work for the mother to use, particularly if she is breastfeeding off-site, or for the baby's carer to use when bringing the baby to work for breastfeeding.

4. SUPPORT

Providing space and time for breastfeeding is great, but breastfeeding in the workplace also needs a supportive environment.

Knowing in advance that she has an understanding boss and workmates can positively influence a pregnant employee's decision about whether to breastfeed.

Combining breastfeeding and work isn't always easy for an employee.

Having a supportive boss and workmates is essential.

This support can be as simple as ensuring that people don't make inappropriate remarks or jokes and that they are co-operative about any temporary work changes made to accommodate breastfeeding.

Support could include:

- making sure other staff know the workplace is breastfeeding-friendly and, if necessary, encouraging tolerance around any additional noise or disruption associated with having a baby at work.
- making sure the employee is comfortable with the arrangements and is able to raise any issues.
- checking with the employee every so often to make sure arrangements are working effectively
- making sure any caregiver, partner and baby is welcome in the workplace.

IDEAS IF SPACE IS A PROBLEM

- If you can't provide the space, can you provide the time e.g. flexible working hours, reduced hours, longer lunch hours and working from home?
- Make one or more offices available at intervals during the day. They might need blinds installed for privacy, or a comfy chair added.
- If a room isn't available, look at the different spaces you have and consider whether anything could be reorganized or stored off-site to create a suitable space, even if only temporarily.
- Could a sick room be adapted?
- Use screens and 'do not disturb' notices to make a cubicle private