

BREASTFEEDING SUPPORT

Why is it important to support breastfeeding at the workplace?

The longer a woman breastfeeds her child, the lower her risk of serious diseases such as diabetes, heart disease and breast cancer, and the lower the child's risk for infections, obesity, diabetes, and other diseases and conditions. Mother-child separation due to work presents a serious challenge in meeting the Department of Health and Human Services recommendation of exclusive breastfeeding for six months and continued breastfeeding for the first year of life and beyond. Women now comprise half of the U.S. workforce and the fast growing segment is women with children under age three.

What does support look like?

There are a variety of levels of breastfeeding support that a business can provide for their employees.

Basic Level of Support

Lactation Room – There is no requirement of what must be included in a lactation room but here are a few ideas for an optimal room:

- Quiet, clean, private room
- Ample electrical outlets
- Lock
- Comfortable seating
- Table or desk
- Soft lighting
- Clock

This level of support normally sees a 1:2 return on investment (for every one dollar invested, two is returned).

Comprehensive Level of Support

Breastfeeding support policies, lactation consultations, pump rental or usage programs, flexible scheduling, and on-site childcare.

This level of support typically sees a 1:3 return on investment (one dollar invested equals a three dollar return).

What are the benefits for an employer?

There is an impressive return on investment for employers that provide workplace lactation support which also includes lower health care costs, absenteeism, and turnover rates. Employees whose companies provide breastfeeding support consistently report improved morale, better satisfaction with their jobs and high productivity.



For more information on how to support breastfeeding in your organization, visit partnersforahealthycity.org/policy-center/