

Maine Workplaces Support Nursing Moms

In September 2009, Maine's labor law was amended to include the following:

(a) For an employee who is a nursing mother, the employer shall for three years after the birth of a child:

- * provide adequate unpaid break time, or permit an employee to use paid break time or meal time each day to express breast milk for her nursing child.
- * make reasonable efforts to provide a clean room or other location, other than a bathroom, where an employee may express breast milk in privacy.

(b) An employer may be exempted from this section if providing time or an appropriate private space for expressing breast milk would substantially disrupt the employer's operations.

(c) An employer shall not retaliate or discriminate against an employee who exercises the right provided under this section.

What can Employers do to support nursing mothers in the workplace?

- Develop workplace policy and determine who oversees implementation
- Inform employees of new policy
- Determine clean, private place with access to electric outlets and a chair. Consider a walk through with your employee
- Offer flexible breaks



Why do Maine workplaces support nursing moms?

- Average annual savings equal \$400 per breastfed baby (lower medical costs with fewer health insurance claims)
- Reduces employee turnover
- Lowers employee absenteeism
- Improves employee productivity
- Raises employee morale and company loyalty
- **It's the Law**

What can Employees do to make nursing in the workplace easier?

- Understand Maine's Nursing Mothers In The Workplace Law
- Create "back to work" plan before your baby is born
- Exclusively breastfeed during maternity leave
- Determine scheduling and support needs and talk to your employer as soon as possible
- Do a workplace walk-through, and suggest ideas

What can employees do if they feel their rights have been violated?

An employee who believes her right to express milk has been violated should contact: **The Maine Department of Labor Wage and Hour Division**
207-623-7900 or (TTY) 1-800-794-1110
www.maine.gov/labor

Maine Human Rights Commission
207-624-6050 or TTY: 1-888-577-6690
www.state.me.us/mhrc/

An employer who is found to have violated this law through a hearing process must pay a civil penalty of \$100-\$500 for every violation.

Additional Breastfeeding Protection in Maine: The Nursing in Public Law

Maine law (5MRS §4634) provides protection for women who nurse in public. A mother may breastfeed her baby in any location, public or private, where the mother is otherwise authorized to be.

For More Information on Working and Pumping Visit:

www.wicforme.com
www.workandpump.com
www.lli.org



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