

Maine Supports Nursing Moms



Department of Health
and Human Services
*Maine People Living
Safe, Healthy and Productive Lives*

MAINE
DEPARTMENT OF
LABOR
Bureau of Labor Standards

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.



This document is a collaborative effort of the Maine WIC Nutrition Program and the Maine Department of Labor.

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Employers of nursing mothers, for three years after the birth of a child, must:

- provide adequate unpaid break time, or permit an employee to use paid break 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.

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.

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

How can employers support nursing mothers?

- Develop a workplace policy, including identifying who oversees implementation, and inform employees of new policy.
- Identify a clean, private place with access to electric outlets and a chair.
- Offer flexible breaks.

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

- Understand Maine's Nursing Mothers in the Workplace Law.
- Create a "back to work" plan before your baby is born.
- Determine scheduling and support needs and talk to your employer as soon as possible.
- Do a workplace walk-through and suggest ideas.

Why do Maine workplaces support nursing moms?

- Average annual savings equals \$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.

Additional breastfeeding protection in Maine:

The Nursing in Public Law (5MRSA §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

For more information or if you believe that your rights have been violated, contact:

Maine Department of Labor
Bureau of Labor Standards
45 State House Station
Augusta, Maine 04333-0045
www.maine.gov/labor/bls
207-623-7900 or 207-623-7930

Maine Human Rights Commission
www.state.me.us/mhrc/ or 207-624-6290
TTY users call Maine Relay 711

The Maine Department of Labor provides equal opportunity in employment and programs. Auxiliary aids and services are available to individuals with disabilities upon request.