



ACT
Government

Environment and Planning

EPD Policy

Workplace

Breastfeeding Policy

Policy – Workplace Breastfeeding

Table of Contents

Policy – Workplace Breastfeeding	2
Purpose	3
Scope.....	3
Introduction	3
References and Resources	3
Lactation Breaks.....	3
Facilities	4
Flexible Work Options.....	4
Other Support.....	5

Purpose

This policy outlines the commitment by the Environment and Planning Directorate (EPD) to providing a supportive environment to breastfeeding women.

Scope

This policy applies to all EPD employees including permanent, casual, temporary and contract staff as well as visitors to our worksites.

Introduction

EPD recognises that the needs of the breastfeeding employee are minimal and for a short time. We also recognise the importance of breastfeeding for both carers and babies and aim to provide a family friendly workplace that enables mothers to balance breastfeeding and their work responsibilities.

As individual needs of a mother, carer and baby will vary, we are committed to offer flexible work arrangements that will meet the needs of the employee as well as operational requirements.

To ensure we continue to provide a supportive environment for breastfeeding women, we have gained accreditation from the Australian Breastfeeding Association as a Breastfeeding Friendly Workplace.

References and Resources

- *Enterprise Agreements covering EPD staff*
- *Work Health and Safety Act 2011*
- *Discrimination Act 1991*
- *Sex Discrimination Act 1984 (C'wlth)*
- *Fair Work Act 2009 (C'wlth)*
- *UN Convention on the Rights of the Child 1989*
- *ILO C156 Workers with Family Responsibilities Convention, 1981;*

Lactation Breaks

Breastfeeding employees may breastfeed (go to the baby or have the baby brought into the office) or express breast milk during work hours. Employees are entitled to a one hour paid lactation break per day/shift as per the relevant Enterprise Agreement.

Employees wishing to utilise lactation breaks have the responsibility to:

- (a) discuss and agree with their manager the duration and timing of lactation breaks before the first lactation break is taken;
- (b) if an agreement to leave the workplace for a lactation break has been arranged, notify their manager when they depart and return;
- (c) take both the organisational and personal needs into account, with a focus on minimizing disruption in the workplace, when determining the timing of lactation breaks; and
- (d) notify their manager if their breastfeeding needs change, or cease, so any agreement (work plan) can be amended as required as the needs of the organisation changes.

Facilities

EPD will, where practicable, provide access to suitable facilities in which women can express breast milk or breastfeed their babies if the baby was brought to the workplace.

Suitable facilities will include:

- A private, hygienic, clean, lockable space;
- Power point;
- Appropriate seating close to power point;
- A table;
- Hand washing facilities close by (but not in the toilets);
- Access to existing refrigerators for storing breast milk; and
- Facilities for storage of breast pump and other equipment.

For staff based at Dame Pattie Menzies House, 16 Challis Street Dickson ACT 2602, there is a breastfeeding/carer's/first aid room on the ground floor of the North and South buildings.

If there are work health and safety issues that prevent the baby being brought to the workplace, or permanent facilities are not currently available on site, staff should discuss their individual needs with their manager who will assist to find a suitable solution.

If the breastfeeding/expressing room has a shared function a protocol will be in place to handle those instances when the room is occupied or in use when needed by the breastfeeding employee. This protocol should specify who has occupancy priority and the alternative facilities available to the breastfeeding employee if for any reason the designated breastfeeding/expressing room is temporarily unavailable.

If a dedicated breastfeeding/expressing room is not available at a site and a suitable shared use room is not available, other suitable arrangements will be negotiated taking into consideration the operational needs of the organisation and the lactation needs of the employee. These may include: flexible/shorter working hours to accommodate the lactation needs of the employee; working from home options; the employee moving temporarily to a site with suitable facilities; the employee being allowed to go to the baby to breastfeed; or the employee being allowed to go to another venue to express.

When new facilities are being planned consideration will be given to the provision of facilities for breastfeeding employees as detailed in this policy.

Employees wishing to utilise breastfeeding facilities have the responsibility to:

- (a) supply their own expressing equipment and appropriate storage containers for expressed breast milk;
- (b) clearly label these containers with their name and date before placing them in the designated refrigerator;
- (c) if applicable, ensure that their child is delivered directly to the space designated for the purpose of lactation breaks and the child leave the workplace at the completion of each lactation break; and
- (d) observe any other guidelines for the use of the designated room.

Flexible Work Options

Following maternity leave employees have access to:

- Part time employment as per the applicable Enterprise Agreement; and
- Lactation breaks for nursing mothers as per the applicable Enterprise Agreement.

Other Support

- Support from colleagues is crucial to providing a supportive workplace environment for breastfeeding employees. All employees have a responsibility to treat employees who are breastfeeding with respect and dignity.
- To ensure all EPD staff are aware of this breastfeeding policy it will be communicated to all new staff during their induction program.
- Breastfeeding information will be provided to staff when they request maternity leave.
- The Australian Breastfeeding Association has trained volunteer breastfeeding counsellors available on the National Breastfeeding Helpline 24 hours per day for information and support on combining breastfeeding and paid work.
- As an accredited Breastfeeding Friendly Workplace through the Australian Breastfeeding Association's Breastfeeding Friendly Workplace (BFW) Program EPD's employees and managers have access to BFW Consultants to help formulate suitable workplace solutions, including the identification of suitable expressing/breastfeeding facilities, to assist employees returning to work while still breastfeeding
- EPD recognises that the individual needs of a mother, carer and baby will vary, and we are committed to providing work arrangements that will meet the needs of our employee as well as operational requirements. If after discussing your individual needs with your manager a workable solution cannot be found, please contact EPD HR to assist with the facilitation of a suitable arrangement at EPDHR@act.gov.au