

Making Breastfeeding Work for Moms



Breastfeed Boulder County

A project of Boulder County Public Health



Breastfeeding Support at Work is Your Right!

It's the law. Employers **MUST** provide breastfeeding women with private space and time to express milk at work. This right is provided in the U.S. Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act. Under the law, employers must give breastfeeding women:

- **Time to express milk at work.**
- **Private place that is not a bathroom.**

Colorado Laws

Colorado Workplace Accommodations for Nursing Mothers Act

In 2008, Colorado lawmakers passed the Workplace Accommodations for Nursing Mothers Act that requires employers to make breastfeeding accommodations in the workplace by:

- Providing reasonable, unpaid break time or allowing an employee to use paid break and/or meal time to express breast milk for her nursing child for up to two years after the child's birth.
- Making reasonable efforts to provide a nursing mother with a private location in close proximity to her work area (other than a toilet stall) in which to express milk.
- Not discriminating against women for expressing milk in the workplace.

Breastfeeding in Public Act

Colorado Revised Statutes §25-6-302 establishes that a mother may breastfeed in any place she has a right to be. This Act acknowledges that breastfeeding is important for the health of both mother and baby.

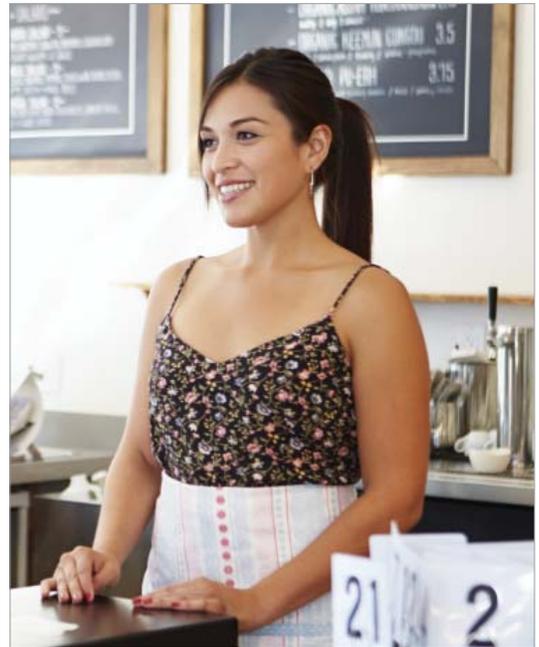
Postponement of Jury Service for a Person Who is Breastfeeding a Child Act

Colorado Revised Statutes §13-71-119.5 (2.5) establishes that a person who is breastfeeding a child is eligible for two 12-month postponements of jury service.

Don't be afraid to ask for support to continue breastfeeding after you return to work. It's your right!

You can learn more about these laws at:

- www.dol.gov/whd/nursingmothers (U.S. Department of Labor)
- <https://www.colorado.gov/pacific/cdle/NursingMothers> (Colorado Department of Labor and Employment)



Breastfeeding is the Gold Standard

Babies do best on their mothers' milk

Formula provides food for the baby. Breastfeeding gives babies and mothers so much more. For example:

- Breastfed babies have fewer sick days and are less likely to get cancer or diabetes.
- Breastfed babies are less likely to die of SIDS.
- Breastfeeding moms are less likely to get diabetes or breast cancer, or to have a heart attack later in life.
- Breastfed babies and their moms are less likely to become overweight.
- Parents of breastfed babies miss less work due to a sick child.

Myths and Facts About Infant Feeding

MYTH: All babies need to get milk in bottles.

FACT: If a breastfeeding mother does not need to be away from her baby for more than a few hours, she may prefer never to use bottles.

MYTH: In hot weather, a baby needs water in a bottle.

FACT: Formula or mother's milk provides all the liquid that a baby needs.

MYTH: Cereal in a bottle will help my baby sleep longer.

FACT: Cereal in a bottle will not help your baby sleep, and it may upset his tummy. Do not feed your baby cereal until he can eat it from a spoon.

MYTH: Solid foods will help my baby grow.

FACT: For babies younger than six months old, breast milk is all they need to help them grow. If solid food is introduced too early, it replaces your milk, causing your baby to get fewer calories - not more.

MYTH: If a mother's diet is poor, she should not breastfeed.

FACT: You do not need a special diet to breastfeed. Even if a mother eats less than a good diet, her milk is still perfect for her baby.

MYTH: I should stop breastfeeding when my baby starts eating solids.

FACT: Six months is a good age to start feeding your baby solids, but a baby's main source of food should still be your milk. It is best to breastfeed until your baby is at least one year old. Continue for as long as you and your baby wish.

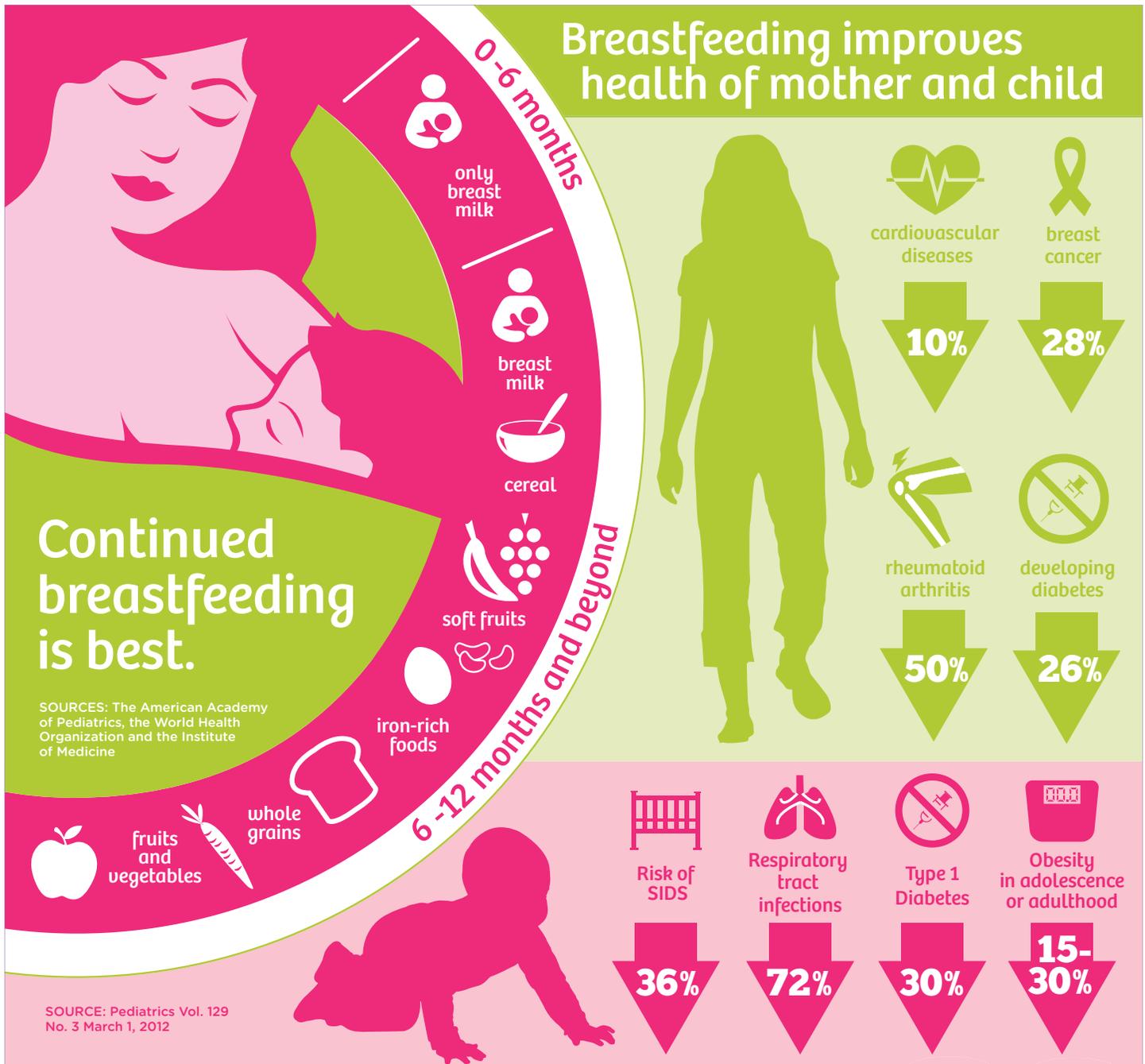
MYTH: If I'm too busy to feed my baby, I should just prop his bottle.

FACT: Propping a bottle is not safe; a baby can choke. Take a break from what you are doing, and enjoy this special time with your baby.

Exclusive Breastfeeding is Best for Baby, Best for Mom

Exclusive breastfeeding means feeding your baby only your milk. This is the healthiest choice for babies until they are six months old because it helps:

- Babies stay healthier.
- Babies grow better.
- Mom to make enough milk for her baby.
- Decrease the chances of another pregnancy while your baby is still small.



You CAN Breastfeed After Returning to Work and School

Lots of moms breastfeed after going back to work or school. Here are some of their tips for making it easier.

During Pregnancy

- Tell your employer or school that you plan to breastfeed.
- Attend a breastfeeding class at the hospital or at a local WIC agency, La Leche League group, or in the community. Invite your partner, mother, and other support people in your family so they'll know how to help.
- Look for a Breastfeeding Friendly certified child care provider. Check the list of Boulder County childcare centers that support breastfeeding moms at BoulderCountyBreastfeeding.org.

During Maternity Leave

Get breastfeeding off to a good start in the first month so you'll have more options later. Here's how:

- Breastfeed exclusively before you return to work or school so your body will build a strong foundation for making milk.
- Learn how to recognize feeding cues, and breastfeed whenever your baby shows feeding cues, or at least 8-12 times every 24 hours.
- Do not use bottles or pacifiers during the first month so baby becomes a pro at breastfeeding.
- Try to take at least six weeks of maternity leave, if possible, so you will fully recover from childbirth, and you and your baby get breastfeeding off to a good start.
- If you must return to work or school sooner, call your WIC peer counselor or a lactation consultant for ways to keep your milk production strong.
- Remember: every drop of your milk is important! Be proud of any amount of breastfeeding you and your baby can enjoy.

Storing Your Milk at Home

- Your milk can be refrigerated or frozen.
- Your milk will stay fresh:
 - Up to 5 days in the refrigerator
 - Up to 6 months in the freezer
- If you will not be using refrigerated milk within five days, put it in the freezer.
- To freeze your milk, place small quantities (1-3 ounces) in BPA-free milk storage bags or glass containers. Label them with the date and use the oldest milk first.
- Place your milk away from the freezer door so it will not thaw when the door opens and shuts.
- If you will be adding fresh milk to a container of frozen milk, refrigerate the fresh milk first since it is warm and can cause the frozen milk to begin thawing.
- Thaw frozen milk under warm water. NEVER microwave breast milk! Fat separation is normal. Swirl (don't shake) to remix it.
- Once milk is warmed, use it immediately and only for that feeding.
- Milk left in the bottle after feeding should be discarded within or after one hour.
- Milk that has been thawed should never be refrozen.

Before Returning to Work or School

- Ask the WIC office, lactation consultant, or health care provider whether you need a breast pump, and which kind is best for you.
- Practice pumping your breast milk during the morning or at other times when your breasts feel fuller.
- Remember that pumping takes practice. Don't be surprised if you only get a little the first few times.
- Babies are usually much better at removing your milk.
- Store any milk you collect in small quantities (1-3 ounces). Baby may not take a large amount at one feeding, and your milk is too valuable to waste!

Preparing Baby

- Wait until about two weeks before you go back to work or school in order to help your baby learn to drink from a bottle. Some ideas to try:
 - » Only put a small amount of breast milk (1-3 ounces) in the bottle. These are practice tries right now.
 - » Offer it when your baby is not super hungry or upset. Some babies are more eager to try something new if they are a little sleepy.
 - » Ask someone else to offer the bottle. Babies often prefer to nurse when they are with their mom.
 - » Don't force your baby to accept a bottle. If your baby refuses, try again later.
 - » Use a bottle with a slow-flow (or newborn) nipple, and experiment with different types of slow-flow nipples. Continue breastfeeding once bottles are started. One of the best ways to keep making enough milk is to nurse your baby often when you are together.
 - » Learn about and try paced bottle feeding, which mimics breastfeeding.
- Some babies prefer a cup, dropper, or spoon. Some babies "reverse cycle feed." This means they switch the times they eat by breastfeeding more when mom is at home and may not take much when mom is away. This is normal, as long as babies get 8-12 feedings within a 24-hour period.
- Find a breastfeeding friendly child care provider. Check the list of Boulder County child care centers that support breastfeeding moms at BoulderCountyBreastfeeding.org. If your child care center is not on the list, Boulder County Public Health can help you find out if they support breastfeeding moms.

Getting Support from Family

- Be sure to let family members know how important it is that you be supported in your decision to breastfeed.
- Connect with friends who are also breastfeeding to get support, or join a mother's group in your community.



Expressing Milk at Work or School

Finding a Place

Some employers or schools have a lactation room already set up. Ask first. If necessary, suggest some places. Remember, by law, employers cannot ask you to breastfeed or pump in the bathroom.

Try these ideas:

- Private office of the manager or another worker
- Conference room or small room not used very often
- Small closet or storage area converted to a lactation space
- Dressing room of a retail store
- Partition in the corner of a room
- Space that can be shared with other offices or stores
- Ask if your baby can be brought to you for feedings

Tips for Pumping

How Often to Pump

If you are going to be away from your baby for more than a couple of hours, you're probably going to want to express (i.e. pump) your milk.

Count the number of times your baby usually breastfeeds every 24 hours. This is your "magic" number to keep steady once you return to work.

For example, if your baby usually breastfeeds 10 times every 24 hours, you will need to either breastfeed or express your milk a total of 10 times every 24 hours once you are back at work. This might mean you breastfeed 6 times and express milk 4 times for a total of 10, or once every 2 hours or so. Keeping your magic number steady will ensure that your milk production stays high, even when you are away from your baby.

(Concept by Nancy Mohrbacher)

Hands-Free Pumping

If you'll be using a double electric pump to express milk from both breasts at the same time, you can keep your hands free to snack or do other things. It's easy!

You can purchase a "hands-free" pumping bra, or make your own by cutting small holes in the middle of an inexpensive sports bra to keep the pump flange next to your breast. Or use a hair tie to keep the pump attached to your breast: knot the hair tie with a figure 8 to your bra strap and then attach it again to the flange.

For occasional expressing, a single manual or electric pump can be a good choice. For regular expressing, a double electric pump is best. Talk to a lactation consultant, La Leche League leader, or WIC staff member about what to use and where to get a pump. Find a consultant at BoulderCountyBreastfeeding.org

Finding Time

- Express your milk every 2-3 hours.
- If you're using a double electric pump that expresses from both breasts at the same time, it may take around 20-30 minutes each time. Expressing by hand or with a manual pump will take longer. Be patient; you will get more efficient with practice.
- Use your regular breaks and meal period to express milk. If you clock in and out and find you need a little extra time, talk with your supervisor about coming in a few minutes early or staying a few minutes later to make up the time. Some moms eat their lunch or dinner while they pump.
- In a restaurant or retail store, express milk when business is slower, or ask about working a "split shift." This means you work during the busiest periods (e.g. lunch and dinner at a restaurant) and go home between those busy periods. Or ask if a family member can bring your baby to you to breastfeed directly.
- In a factory, "floaters" may be used to cover your work station while you are expressing milk.
- If you don't have a coworker who can cover for you while you are taking a break to express your milk, ask if you can post an "I'll Be Back Later" sign while you're away. Or ask if you can bring your young infant to work with you (see www.babiesatwork.org).

Storage

Your milk can be stored in an insulated lunch bag, a small cooler, or in a regular refrigerator until you can take it home to your baby.

Sample Pumping Schedules

Note: These are examples only. Each woman's needs and work schedule will be different. Talk with your supervisor to find a schedule for nursing breaks that will work best for you.

Typical day job

7:15 a.m. Drop baby off with child care provider; feed the baby one last time before leaving.
8:00 a.m. Arrive at work.
10:00-10:20 a.m. Break - express milk (eat a nutritious snack).
12:00-12:30 p.m. Lunch break – express milk while eating.
2:30-2:50 p.m. Break - express milk (eat a nutritious snack).
5:00 p.m. End work.
Feed the baby at child care center before going home.

Job with afternoon/evening shift (e.g. retail)

Morning Feed baby at home.
12:30 p.m. Leave baby with child care provider; feed baby before leaving.
1:00 p.m. Arrive at work.
3:00-3:20 p.m. Break – express milk (eat a nutritious snack).
6:00-6:30 p.m. Meal break – express milk while eating.
8:30-8:50 p.m. Break – express milk (eat a nutritious snack).
10:00 p.m. End work.
Breastfeed baby at child care before going home.

Job with split shifts (e.g. restaurant)

10:30 a.m. Leave baby with child care provider; feed baby before leaving.
11:00 a.m. Arrive at work.
2:00 p.m. Leave work; feed baby at child care center before going home.
4:00 p.m. Feed baby at home.
4:30 p.m. Return to work.
7:00-7:20 p.m. Break – express milk (eat a nutritious snack).
10:00 p.m. End work
Breastfeed baby at child care center before going home.

Tip to Keep Milk Flowing

Many mothers find that their milk flows easier when they are able to feel close to their baby while they are away.

- Bring something with your baby's smell on it, such as a soft baby blanket or baby shirt.
- Record your baby's noises on your phone or take a video.
- Look at photos of your baby (e.g. prints or photos on your phone).

Conversations

Employer or School

- Don't be afraid to talk with your employer or school about your needs. They'll never know if you don't tell them, and most are happy to support you.
- Share "My Lactation and Work Plan" (on the last page of this booklet) to discuss your needs.
- Share a copy of the Boulder County "Making Breastfeeding Work for Employers" toolkit for ideas on how to support breastfeeding employees; available at: www.breastfeedbouldercounty.org
- Tell your employer or school before you have your baby so there is time to make arrangements while you are away.

Below are some examples of things you can say to your employer or school.



“ I am planning to breastfeed my baby because it is so healthy for both the baby and for me. After I come back to work, I plan to continue giving my milk to my baby by expressing my milk every 2 or 3 hours while I am at work. Lots of working women do this every day.”

“ It is important for me to be a good employee and a good mom. Your support will make it easier for me to do both. My doctor recommends that I breastfeed my baby. I've been thinking about this and have some ideas of places where I could express milk. ”



“ I have learned that businesses actually save money when their employees breastfeed because their babies are so much healthier, so this makes breastfeeding good for the company too! ”

“ I will plan to use my usual breaks and lunch period to express milk so that I can express milk. It will take around 20 minutes each time. If I need a little more time while I'm first learning, would you be open to letting me come in a little earlier or staying just a little later to make up the time? ”



“ Breastfeeding is so important there are now laws that ask employers to give time and space for expressing milk at work. I have a handout with more information and names of people who can help us figure this out. ”

If your employer refuses, you can contact the following organizations for help:

- Colorado Breastfeeding Coalition: www.COBFC.org
- Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment: www.BreastfeedColorado.com
- Colorado Department of Labor and Employment: <http://tinyurl.com/286p9r7>
- U.S. Department of Labor: www.dol.gov/whd/nursingmothers

Coworkers

- Bring your baby to meet your coworkers so they can fall in love with your baby too!
- Explain that expressing milk is important so you can give important health benefits to your baby. Let them know their support will make it work for everyone.
- Tell them research shows breastfeeding women miss less work, and companies save on health care costs because babies are healthier.
- Explain that you will be taking your usual breaks to express milk and making up extra time as needed.
- If coworkers need to cover for you while you are out, return the favor when coworkers need your help.
- Listen if coworkers share stories about breastfeeding, even if it did not work out for them. Everyone wants to be heard and to know that they are good moms.

Child Care Provider

- Tell your child care provider it is important for you to continue breastfeeding, and their support will make it easier for you.
- Remind them that breastfed babies are not as sick, which means all of the babies they care for will be healthier.
- Ask if you can breastfeed at the child care facility before and/or after work, or during the meal period.
- Ask your child care provider to try not to feed your baby shortly before you pick the baby up.
- Alert the child care provider that your baby might start nursing more frequently at night and less during the day. This is called “reverse cycle feeding.” This is normal.
- Clearly label your expressed milk that you take to your child care provider with the date and your baby’s name.
- Provide milk in small quantities (1-3 ounces) to reduce waste.
- Tell your child care provider about BoulderCountyBreastfeeding.org so they can get information to support breastfeeding moms.

Family Members

Talk with your partner and family members about ways they can support you. They can:

- Prepare your baby’s diaper bag each day.
- Clean breast pump parts and bottles each day.
- Help with household chores such as laundry, housework, or meals.
- Tell you they are proud of you!



My Lactation and Work Plan

When I return to work from my maternity leave, I want to be a good employee while also providing for my new baby. My health care providers have told me that breastfeeding my baby is one of the most important things I can do for our health. A clean, private space and a little extra break time to express milk for my baby during the workday will allow me to follow my doctor's advice and provide milk for my baby while we are apart.

This helps our company by lowering health care costs and absenteeism. Providing space and time for nursing breaks is also the law in the U.S. and Colorado. Your support is important to me! These simple, temporary accommodations will make it easier for me to give my best to my baby and my company.

RETURN TO WORK. I would like to return to work gradually, if possible, so my baby and I can adjust to being apart. Some options we can discuss include:

- Working part-time or shorter days for a while.
- Working a flexible schedule (e.g. taking Wednesdays off).
- Working from home.
- Other ideas:

TIME. I will need to express my milk every 2-3 hours while at work for around 20 minutes each time, not counting the time to get to the lactation area. I will use my usual breaks and my meal period. This accommodation is valuable to me. I will not abuse this time, and if more time than my usual break is needed, I am willing to:

- Come in early to make up the time.
- Stay later in the day to make up the time.
- Take unpaid time.
- Other ideas:

PLACE. I will need a clean, private area where I can safely express my milk during these nursing breaks. A bathroom is not an appropriate place and is not allowed by law. The area should also be near my work station, and ideally near a sink and refrigerator. The space needs to be large enough for a chair and a flat surface for the pump. I will/will not need electricity for my breast pump. Some options we can discuss include:

- The private office of a manager or supervisor.
- The private office of a coworker.
- A conference or meeting room.
- A small area not in use much that can be secured for privacy.
- Other ideas:

SUPPORT. Support from my supervisor and coworkers will help me feel relaxed and confident. Research has shown this makes milk expression more efficient, and it increases employee loyalty, retention, and team building.

EDUCATION. I would like to participate in any breastfeeding or new parent classes or support group meetings held at my workplace. If my company contracts with a lactation consultant, I would like to use those services during my maternity leave and once I am back at work.

Signature of Employer:

Date:

Signature of Employee:

Date:

Take Care of YOU!

Get Plenty of Rest. Being a mom and working or going to school can be tiring, no matter how you feed your baby. Rest when you can, sleep when the baby is resting, and don't be afraid to ask for help from family members for household tasks so you can focus on you and your baby. GOOD NEWS: research shows lactation hormones give breastfeeding moms up to 45 minutes of extra sleep each night!

Talk with Other Breastfeeding Moms. Seek out other nursing mothers at work, school, or in your neighborhood to share experiences and gain support.

Minimize Leaking. Wear washable or disposable nursing pads inside your bra to help keep milk from leaking onto your clothes. Expressing milk every 2-3 hours will also help. Wear clothes in layers so if you accidentally leak, you'll have a sweater or jacket to wear over your blouse. Cross your arms firmly over your chest if you feel the milk starting to flow when you aren't ready for it. You will likely leak less after about 6-12 weeks, when your milk supply has adjusted to your baby's needs.

Eat Nutritious Foods. Eating good foods will help you feel better about yourself and give you extra energy for handling the tasks of working and motherhood.

WIC Helps!

WIC supports breastfeeding mothers with:

- Ideas for how to breastfeed and work or go to school.
- Extra foods.
- Nutrition staff who can answer your questions.
- Breast pumps.
- Peer counselors (experienced breastfeeding moms just like you)



For more information about WIC, visit www.BoulderCountyWIC.org.



My Checklist for Breastfeeding and Working

During pregnancy and my maternity leave

- Talk with my supervisor about my needs during my pregnancy (see “Conversations”).
- Use “My Lactation and Work Plan” to decide with my supervisor the best time and space options for my nursing breaks.
- Learn all I can about breastfeeding during my pregnancy.
- Ask questions of my WIC peer counselor or lactation consultant.
- Breastfeed exclusively when I am home with my baby.
- Ask my health care provider or WIC if I will need a breast pump and what kind would best meet my needs. Practice during the mornings or when I have the most milk.
- Find a Breastfeeding Friendly child care provider close to where I work. Ask them how they would support my desire to continue feeding my baby my milk and how the staff feed babies on cue, rather than on a strict schedule.
- Talk with my family about how they can help me.
- Do a “trial run” to practice leaving my baby with the sitter and expressing milk during the day.
- Phone my supervisor while I am on maternity leave and confirm my lactation and work plan.
- Return to work proudly!
- Call my WIC peer counselor, lactation consultant, or another mom who has expressed milk at work to share experiences and get support.

My Daily Work Checklist

(Post on Your Refrigerator)

The Night Before

- Pack baby's diaper bag with diapers, 2-3 outfits or body suits, favorite toys, and bottles/nipples for feeding expressed breast milk. (Ask a family member to help!)
- Set out the clothes I will wear to work the next day.
- Clean breast pump parts (ask partner to help!), and set the pump and cooler by the door. Ask questions of my WIC peer counselor or lactation consultant.
- Pack extra nursing pads.
- Prepare my lunch with healthy snacks.

Before I Leave for Work

- Nurse my baby before getting up so the baby is quiet while I shower and dress.
- Leave my baby in his pajamas to save time.
- Grab my expressed breast milk from the fridge and place in the baby's diaper bag.
- Grab my lunch and the cooler.

If I'm Using Child Care

- Make sure my breast milk is properly labeled with the date and my baby's name.
- Provide the milk in small amounts (1-3 ounce servings).
- Coordinate drop-off and pickup times with my baby's feeding schedule.
- If possible, visit the child care center during the day to breastfeed.
- When picking up my baby, allow time to breastfeed before leaving.



Thank you to the New York State Department of Health for information provided in this document.

Breastfeed Boulder County is a project of Boulder County Public Health.

For more information about breastfeeding at work, visit www.BreastfeedBoulderCounty.org or call 303.413.7514



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Opportunity for a healthy life.