

HELP WORKING FAMILIES STAY HEALTHY

Support Workplace Accommodations for Breastfeeding Employees



The Problem:

Employment is the norm for women of childbearing age, yet many breastfeeding employees face challenges securing break time and accessing a clean private space to express milk during the work day. Families of color and low-income women are more likely to return to work earlier and have jobs that make it challenging to continue breastfeeding, contributing to lifelong health inequities.

The Solutions:

- **Supporting Working Moms Act**

Section 7 of the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) requires employers to provide reasonable break time and a private, non-bathroom place for most hourly wage-earning (nonexempt) workers to express breast milk at work, **but 27.6 million women workers of childbearing age are left without basic protections.** This gap in coverage could be addressed with the simple amendment in the **Supporting Working Moms Act**, introduced in past Congressional Sessions, which would extend FLSA protections to additional workers.

- **Pregnant Workers Fairness Act**

The **Pregnant Workers Fairness Act**, introduced in past Congressional Sessions, would clarify that employers must make reasonable accommodations for workers affected by a known limitation related to pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions. The U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission has consistently interpreted lactation to be a pregnancy related medical condition in recent years.

- **Fairness for Breastfeeding Mothers Act**

The **Fairness for Breastfeeding Mothers Act**, introduced in the House and Senate this session, and referred to the Senate Committee on Environment and Public Works, would require that certain public buildings provide a lactation room that is hygienic and available for use by a member of the public. This would address one of the major challenges faced by breastfeeding employees working in jobs that require travel (police officers, bus drivers, etc.) by ensuring they can access a space to pump during the work day. A U.S. Government Publishing Office Report found that enacting the bill would not affect direct spending or revenues.

Demonstrated Effectiveness & Support:

Research clearly shows that workplace lactation laws increase breastfeeding rates. The HHS *Business Case for Breastfeeding* shows an **impressive return on investment (almost 3:1) for employers that provide lactation support**, including lowering health care costs, absenteeism, and turnover, and improving morale, job satisfaction, and productivity. The HHS Office on Women's Health **Supporting Nursing Moms at Work: Employer Solutions** resource provides businesses with cost-effective tips and simple solutions to meet the needs of businesses *and* their employees.

Please support legislation ensuring that breastfeeding employees have the support they need to succeed.

U.S. Breastfeeding Committee • www.USBreastfeeding.org

