

Procedures for Nursing Mothers in Columbia Public Schools

Purpose:

The district recognizes that many women choose to breastfeed their children for a variety of reasons and will attempt to accommodate women who are breastfeeding or need to express milk while on district property as long as such actions do not disrupt the education environment.

For Employees:

1. The district will provide reasonable break time for an employee to express breast milk each time the employee has a need to express. To the extent possible, such break times will run concurrently with the break times already provided to the employee.
2. Employees are encouraged to notify their supervisors in advance of their intent to make use of this policy. Advance notification allows supervisors and employees greater opportunity to discuss break scheduling and any other issues related to milk expression during work hours.
3. The supervisor will work with the employee to address arrangements and scheduling to ensure that the employee's duties are covered during the break time and to minimize disruptions to the school day.
4. Providing breaks to classroom teachers and other employees who directly supervise and educate students is particularly challenging since students cannot be left unsupervised and learning cannot be disrupted. The district expects these employees to be particularly flexible and, whenever possible, to use planning periods, lunch breaks, routine breaks in their class schedules or other free time to meet their needs.
5. In accordance with law, the district will provide a location, other than a bathroom, that is shielded from view and free from intrusion from coworkers and the public to express breast milk. Employees will also have access to refrigerated storage.
6. Employees are not entitled to bring or keep their infants in district buildings during times when the employees are expected to be working. However, if the infant is present during an employee's break or at other times when the employee is not expected to perform work or otherwise supervise students, the employee may nurse the child.
7. Procedures regarding breast milk expression at work will be communicated to all current employees and included in new employee orientation training.

For Students:

1. Students will be allowed to express breast milk while on district property, and the district will attempt to accommodate these activities during the school day.
2. Students who wish to express milk during the school day should contact their schools' guidance counselor, who will work with students to address arrangements and create a schedule that results in the least amount of missed class time.
3. When possible, students will be allowed to make up work missed when they were away from class to express milk.
4. The district will provide a location, other than a bathroom, for students to express breast milk. The locations will be shielded from view and free from intrusion from others, except that when scheduling does not permit the use of a private location at the time the student has a need to express, students who need to express may opt to share space (with other students and/or lactating staff) rather than wait for a private space. Students will also have access to refrigerated storage.
5. Students are not entitled to bring their infants to school during the school day when they are required to be in class. However, if the infant is present during a break or at other non-instructional times, the student may nurse the child while at school.

For Members of the Public:

1. Members of the public will be allowed to nurse or express breast milk while on district property.
2. If additional privacy is desired or necessary, district staff will provide direction to the designated locations for these activities.