Maine Workplaces Support Nursing Employees

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.

This poster is available online at no charge and may be copied: https://www.maine.gov/labor/posters/

Employers of nursing employees, 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 a 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 shall not retaliate or discriminate against an employee who exercises the right provided under this section.

How can employers support nursing parents?

- 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 26MRS §604.
- 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 employees?

- 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 parents who nurse in public.

A parent may breastfeed in any location, public or private, where the parent is otherwise authorized to be.

For more information on working and pumping visit:
WIC Nutrition Program: www.maine.gov/WIC
or 1-800-437-9300

www.workandpump.com
www.llli.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

Maine Human Rights Commission
www.maine.gov/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 people with disabilities upon request.

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