



Making it

**WORK**

**F O R M O M S**



**NEW YORK**  
state department of  
**HEALTH**

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**WIC**  
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## **Making it Work:** For Moms

You CAN breastfeed after you return to work.

Here's How!

## 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

New York State also has labor laws that require employers to give you time and private space to express milk at work. Section 206c of the New York State Labor Law requires employers to:

- Provide a space to express milk that is close to your work station, if possible
- Give time and space to express milk for up to 3 years after your baby is born
- Not discriminate against you for choosing to breastfeed

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](http://www.dol.gov/whd/nursingmothers) (U.S. Department of Labor)
- [www.labor.ny.gov/workerprotection/laborstandards/pdfs/guidelinesexpressionofbreastmilkfinal.pdf](http://www.labor.ny.gov/workerprotection/laborstandards/pdfs/guidelinesexpressionofbreastmilkfinal.pdf) (New York State Department of Labor)



## You CAN Breastfeed and Work

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

### During Pregnancy:

- Tell your supervisor you plan to breastfeed (*See "My Lactation and Work Plan"*).
- Attend a breastfeeding class at the hospital, 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 will know how to help.

### 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 go back to work so your body will build a strong foundation for making milk.
- 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 6 weeks 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 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.

### Before Returning to Work:

- Ask the WIC Office, lactation consultant, or healthcare provider whether you need a breast pump, and which kind is best for you.
- Practice pumping your breast milk during the morning or 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 milk.
- Store any milk you collect in small quantities (1-2 ounces). Baby may not take a large amount at one feeding, and your milk is too valuable to waste!



## Storing Your Milk

- Your milk can be refrigerated or frozen.
- Your milk will stay fresh:
  - **Up to 2 days in the refrigerator**
  - **Up to 6 months in the freezer**
- If you will not be using refrigerated milk within 48 hours (or 2 days) put it in the freezer.
- To freeze your milk, place small quantities in BPA free milk storage bags or glass containers. Label it 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 it first since fresh milk is warm and can cause frozen milk to begin thawing.
- Thaw frozen milk under warm water. NEVER microwave breast milk!
- Once milk is warmed, use it immediately, and only for that feeding.
- Milk left in the bottle after feeding should be discarded.
- Milk that has been thawed should not be refrozen.



## Preparing Baby

- Wait until about 2 weeks before you go back to work to help your baby learn to drink from a bottle. Some ideas to try:
  - Only put a small amount of breast milk (around 1 oz.) in the bottle. These are practice tries right now.
  - Offer it when 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 mom.
  - Don't force baby to accept a bottle. If the baby refuses, try again later.
- Some babies prefer a cup, dropper, or spoon. Some babies "reverse cycle feed." This means they reverse 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 in a 24-hour period.
- Find a breastfeeding-friendly childcare provider. Check the list of New York childcare centers that support breastfeeding moms at [www.health.ny.gov/prevention/nutrition/cacfp/bfmap.htm](http://www.health.ny.gov/prevention/nutrition/cacfp/bfmap.htm).
- If your childcare center is not on the list, the childcare assessment at [www.health.ny.gov/prevention/nutrition/cacfp/docs/cacfp-177.pdf](http://www.health.ny.gov/prevention/nutrition/cacfp/docs/cacfp-177.pdf) will 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.
- Share the booklet, "Making it Work: For Family Members" available at: [www.breastfeedingpartners.org](http://www.breastfeedingpartners.org).
- Connect with friends who are also breastfeeding to get support, or join a mother's group in your community.

## **My Checklist for Breastfeeding and Working**

During pregnancy and your maternity leave

- Talk with my supervisor about my needs during my pregnancy (see “How to Talk with Your Supervisor”).
- Use “My Lactation and Work Plan” to decide with my supervisor the best options for time and space for 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 WIC about whether I will need a breast pump, and what kind will best meet my needs. Practice during the mornings or when I have the most milk.
- Find a Breastfeeding-Friendly childcare provider close to where I work.
- 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 clothes I will wear to work the next day.
- Clean breast pump parts (ask partner to help!) and set pump and cooler by the door.
- Pack extra nursing pads.
- Prepare my lunch with healthy snacks.

### Before I Leave for Work:

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



## Expressing Milk at Work

### Finding a Place to Express Milk

Some employers have a lactation room already set up. Ask first. If necessary, suggest some places. Remember: your employer cannot ask you to breastfeed in the bathroom. Laws are intended to protect you and your baby. Try these ideas:

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

### Special Tip to Try: Finding Space

Look for a “funny little space” in your work area. This might be an odd-shaped area that is not used much, but could easily be sectioned off with a partition or wall as a small lactation area.



### Special Tip to Try: 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 simple hair tie to keep the pump attached to you breast: knot the hair tie with a figure 8 to your bra strap and then attach it again to the flange.



## Where to Store Your Milk

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.

## 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 (ex: 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'll be away. Or ask if you can bring your young infant to work with you. (See [www.babiesatwork.org](http://www.babiesatwork.org).)



## Special Tip to Try: How Often to Pump

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 your milk production stays high, even when you are away from your baby.

*(Concept by Nancy Mohrbacher)*

## Special Tip to Try: Finding Space

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 the baby's smell on it, such as a soft baby blanket or a baby shirt
- Record your baby's noises on your phone
- Look at photos of your baby (prints or photos on your phone)

## Sample Pumping Schedules

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

### Typical day job

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

### Job with afternoon/evening shift (Ex: Retail)

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

### Job with split shifts (Ex: Restaurant)

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



## How to Talk with Your:

### Supervisor

- Don't be afraid to talk with your supervisor 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" to discuss your needs.
- Share a copy of "Making it Work: For Employers" for ideas on how to support breastfeeding employees, available at: [www.breastfeedingpartners.org](http://www.breastfeedingpartners.org)
- Tell your supervisor before you have the baby so there is time to make arrangements while you are away.

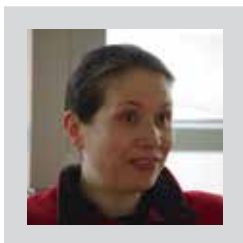
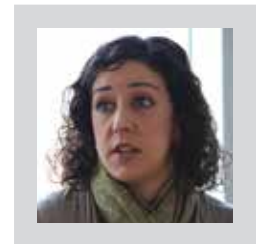


“ I am planning to breastfeed my baby because it so healthy for both the baby and for me. After I come back to work, I plan to continue giving my milk to my baby by expressing my milk every 2 or 3 hours while I am at work. Lots of working women do this every day.

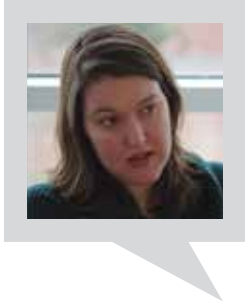
“ It is important for me to be a good employee and a good mom. Your support will make it easier for me to do both.

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 (See “*Making it Work: For Employers*,” available at [www.breastfeedingpartners.org](http://www.breastfeedingpartners.org)) with more information and names of people who can help us figure this out.



### Some things you can say to your supervisor:

If your supervisor refuses, you can file a complaint with the New York Department of Labor at : [www.labor.ny.gov/equal-opportunity/how-to-file-a-discrimination-claim.shtm](http://www.labor.ny.gov/equal-opportunity/how-to-file-a-discrimination-claim.shtm)

### Co-Workers

- Bring the 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. (See “*Making it Work: for Employers*” available at [www.breastfeedingpartners.org](http://www.breastfeedingpartners.org)).
- Explain that you will be taking your usual breaks to express milk and making up extra time 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.



## Childcare Provider

- Tell your childcare provider it is important for you to continue breastfeeding. 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 childcare facility before and/or after work, or during the meal period.
- Ask your childcare provider to try not to feed the baby shortly before you pick up baby.
- Alert the childcare provider that baby might “reverse cycle feed” and not eat much when you are away. This is normal.
- Expressed milk that you take to your childcare provider should be clearly labeled with the date that the milk was expressed, and clearly labeled with your child’s name.
- If your family members will be caring for your baby, give them the handout, *Making it Work: For Family Members*.
- Give your childcare provider information about supporting breastfeeding moms at [www.health.ny.gov/prevention/nutrition/cacfp/breastfeedingspon.htm](http://www.health.ny.gov/prevention/nutrition/cacfp/breastfeedingspon.htm).



## Family Members

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

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



## Take Care of YOU !

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**Get Plenty of Rest.** Being a mom and working 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 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.

**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. See "Tasty Food to Eat While You Pump." They can all be eaten with one hand so you can eat and express milk at the same time!



## WIC Helps!

WIC supports breastfeeding mothers with:

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

For more breastfeeding information, visit:

[www.breastfeedingpartners.org](http://www.breastfeedingpartners.org)



## 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 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 New York.

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:

- Working part-time for a while
- Working from home
- Working a flexible schedule (ex: taking Wednesdays off)
- Other ideas:

**TIME.** I will need to express my milk every 2-3 hours at work for around 20 minutes each time, not counting 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
- Take unpaid time
- Stay later in the day to make up the 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:

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

**SUPPORT.** Support from my supervisor and coworkers will help me feel relaxed and confident. Research has shown this makes milk expression more efficient, and 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:





## Putting Tasty Foods Together

- Guacamole dip with diced tomatoes spread on a whole grain tortilla, closed in half and sliced
- Cold slice of thin-crust cheese pizza (preferably whole grain crust with vegetable toppings)
- Peanut butter spread on a corn tortilla and rolled around a banana (sliced)
- Quartered cheese or peanut butter sandwich on whole wheat bread
- A mixture of cereal in a bag (such as wheat chex and toasted oats)
- One glass of low-fat milk with cut-up melons and grapes
- Cheese cubes with dried fruits such as apricots
- Hard-boiled egg with a handful of cherry tomatoes
- Whole grain pita with Baba Ghanouj or peanut butter
- Slices of deli turkey rolled-up with a handful of grapes
- A handful of almonds with dried raisins
- A rice cake with cheese spread
- Carrot and cucumber slices with hummus dip
- Vegetable sushi rolls
- Whole wheat English muffin with peanut butter
- Whole grain crackers with cheese slices
- Falafel patties with hummus dip
- Boiled pork dumplings with apple slices
- Sunflower seeds with dried plantains and a slice of cheese
- Strawberries and apple slices with yogurt dip
- Slice of cheese on a pita and rolled around a cucumber (sliced)
- Slice of cornbread with a glass of low-fat milk
- Pretzel sticks with hummus
- Apple and celery slices with peanut butter used as a dip



## Easy Tasty Foods to Eat While You Pump!

Choose from each group

### Group 1: Foods High in Protein

Cheese cubes or slices	Thicker yogurt to use for dip	Peanut butter	Falafel balls or patties	Meat stuffed boiled dumplings	Hummus or Baba Ghanouj (Eggplant dip)	Glass of low-fat milk	Nuts and seeds: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>almonds</li> <li>walnuts</li> <li>sunflower seeds</li> </ul>	Deli meat slices: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>turkey</li> <li>chicken</li> <li>roast beef</li> <li>low-sodium ham</li> </ul>
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### Group 2: Foods with Grains

Whole grain crackers	Pretzel sticks	Sliced Pita	Whole-grain rice cakes	Whole grain English muffin or bagel	Unleavened crackers such as matzah	Whole grain flour or corn tortilla whole grain bread	Mixed finger-food cereal in a bag: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>wheat chex</li> <li>toated oats</li> <li>mini wheats</li> </ul>
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### Group 3: Fruits and Vegetables

Any combination of prepared vegetables: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>celery sticks</li> <li>carrots sticks</li> <li>pepper slices</li> <li>cucumber slices</li> <li>tomato slices</li> <li>radishes</li> <li>olives</li> </ul>	Any combination of prepared fruit: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>apple slices</li> <li>peach slices</li> <li>cut-up cantaloupe</li> <li>cut-up watermelon</li> <li>orange slices</li> <li>hulled strawberries</li> <li>seedless grapes</li> <li>banana or plantain slices</li> </ul>	Dried fruits with no added sugar: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>raisins</li> <li>apricots</li> <li>craisins</li> <li>prunes</li> <li>plantains</li> </ul>	Any combination of canned, frozen, soaked or dried beans: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>kidney beans</li> <li>pinto beans</li> <li>chickpeas</li> <li>lima beans</li> <li>soy beans</li> <li>fava beans</li> </ul>
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## **Making it Work:** For Moms

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