

# Life with Breastfeeding



A Guide for Parents and Families



# Breastfeeding Support at Work is Your Right!

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

- **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 §8-13.5-104 that requires all 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 up to two years after the child's birth.
- Making reasonable efforts to provide a breastfeeding employee with a private location in close proximity to their work area (other than a toilet stall) in which to express milk.
- Not discriminating against employees for expressing milk in the workplace.

### Breastfeeding in Public Act

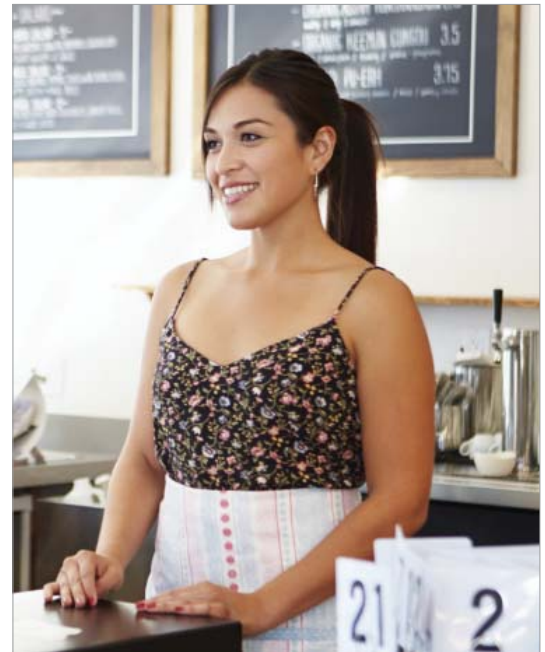
Colorado Revised Statutes §25-6-302 establishes that a mother may breastfeed in any place she has a right to be. This Act acknowledges that breastfeeding is important for the health of both mother and baby.

### 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 up to 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:

- Colorado Breastfeeding Coalition: [www.cobfc.org](http://www.cobfc.org)
- U.S. Department of Labor: [www.dol.gov/whd/nursingmothers](http://www.dol.gov/whd/nursingmothers).
- Colorado Department of Labor and Employment: [www.colorado.gov/pacific/cdle/NursingMothers](http://www.colorado.gov/pacific/cdle/NursingMothers)



## Babies Thrive on Breast Milk

All major medical organizations promote breastfeeding for optimal child health and development and recommend breastfeeding for as long as both mom and child want to continue. The longer breastfeeding occurs, the more health benefits mom and baby receive. Breast milk contains nutrients, vitamins, growth factors, antibodies, hormones, and much more that is not available in formula. For example:

- Breastfed babies have fewer sick days and have a lower risk of leukemia, some childhood cancers and 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 are less likely to become obese.
- Parents of breastfed babies miss less work due to a sick child.
- Breastfed babies have lower risk of respiratory tract and ear infections; diarrhea and other stomach problems; and allergies, asthma, and eczema.
- Breastfeeding enhances bonding between parent and baby, which can help manage stress.

## 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. If bottles are preferred, mom can pump and feed the baby breast milk in bottles.

**MYTH:** In hot weather, a baby needs water.

**FACT:** Breast milk or formula 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 cause tummy upset. Do not feed your baby cereal until baby 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 breast 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 the bottle.

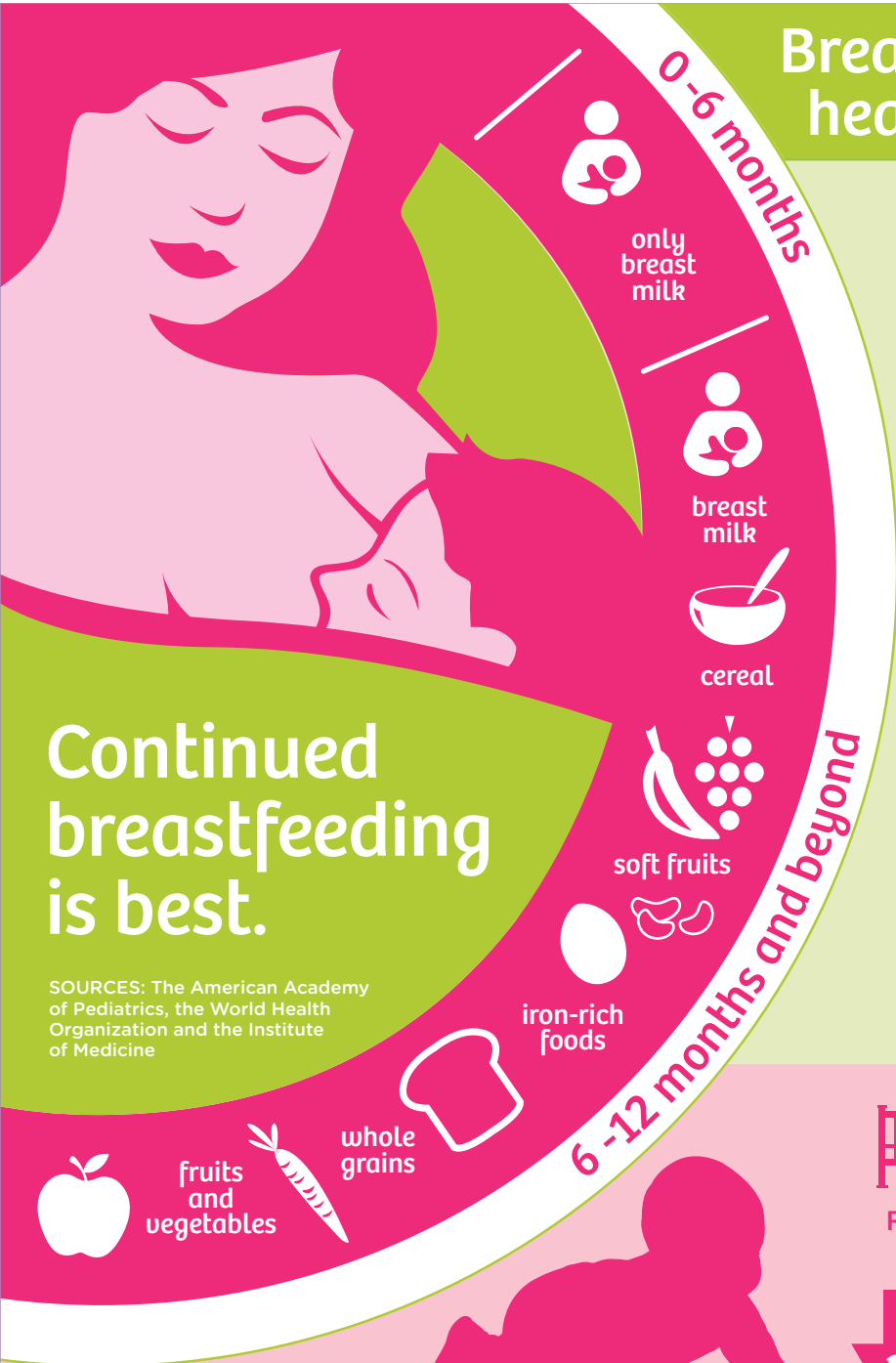
**FACT:** Propping a bottle is not safe; a baby can choke. Take a break from what you are doing, and enjoy this special time with your baby.

# The Importance of Exclusive Breastfeeding

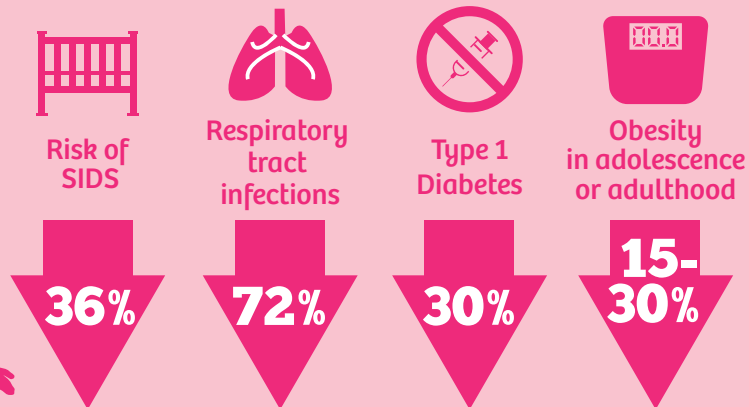
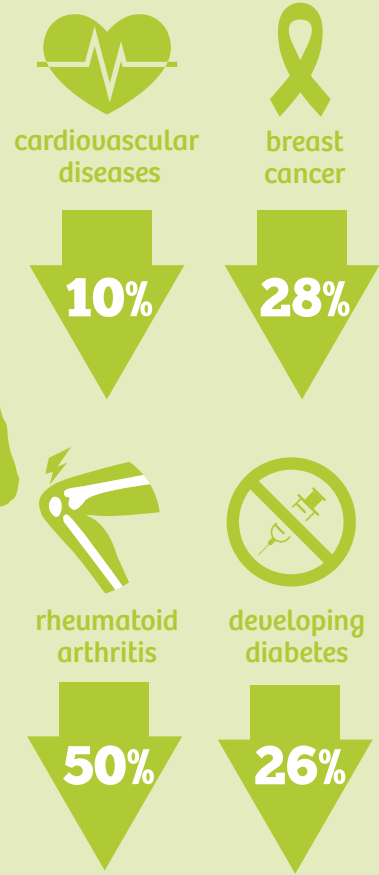
Exclusive breastfeeding means feeding your baby only breast milk. This means baby receives no formula, solid foods, or water. This is the healthiest choice for babies because it helps:

- Babies stay healthier.
- Babies grow better.
- Mom to make enough milk for her baby.

## Breastfeeding improves health of mother and child



SOURCES: The American Academy of Pediatrics, the World Health Organization and the Institute of Medicine



SOURCE: Pediatrics Vol. 129 No. 3 March 1, 2012

# You CAN Breastfeed After Returning to Work and School

Many parents find it challenging to breastfeed after going back to work or school, but it doesn't have to be that way. Here are some tips for making breastfeeding easier.

## During Pregnancy

- Tell your employer or school that you plan to breastfeed.
- Attend a breastfeeding class at a hospital or at a local WIC agency, La Leche League group, or in the community. Invite your partner, mother, friends, and other support people in your family so they'll know how to help.
- Look for a Breastfeeding Friendly certified child care provider. Check with your local public health agency or breastfeeding coalition to find one near you.

## During Maternity Leave

Getting breastfeeding off to a good start in the first month will give you 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 hunger signs, 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 4 days in the refrigerator
  - Up to 6 months in the freezer (12 months if in a deep freezer).
- If you will not be using refrigerated milk within four 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.
- Thaw frozen milk under warm water. NEVER microwave breast milk! Fat separation is normal.
- 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.
- Pumping takes practice. Don't be surprised if you only get a little the first few times. Moms typically make 1/2 to 1 ounce of breast milk per hour.
- Babies are usually much better at removing your milk compared to a pump. Consider using breast massage techniques to improve your pumping sessions. For information and videos visit [Breastfeedcolorado.com](http://Breastfeedcolorado.com) under the Parents tab.
- 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!

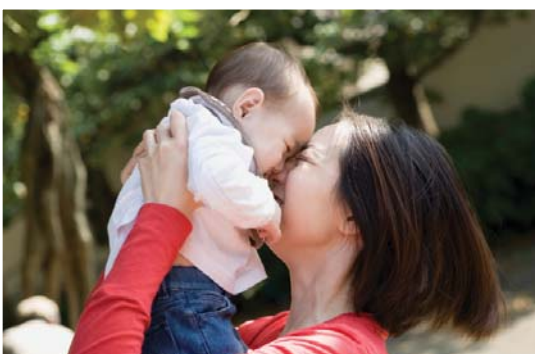
## Preparing Baby

Many breastfed babies may not be willing to eat from a bottle at first. Try to give your baby a bottle regularly for at least two weeks before you start back to work or school. 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 with your local public health agency or breastfeeding coalition to find one in your area.

## Getting Support from Family and Friends

- 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 parent's group in your community.
- Ask your local public health agency, provider, or hospital if they have lactation groups, often these are free and open to the public.



# Expressing Milk at Work or School

## Finding a Place

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

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

## 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 may 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.
- 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 baby to work with you (see [www.babiesatwork.org](http://www.babiesatwork.org)).

## Storage

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

## 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, do breast massage, or do other things.

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.



## 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 milk expression 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 (drink water and 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 (drink water and eat a nutritious snack).  
5:00 p.m. .... End work.  
Breastfeed the baby at child care 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 (drink water and 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 (drink water and 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; breastfeed baby at child care 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 (drink water and eat a nutritious snack).  
10:00 p.m. .... End work  
Breastfeed baby at child care before going home.

## Tips 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 "Making Breastfeeding Work for Employers" toolkit for ideas on how to support breastfeeding employees; available at [www.breastfeedcolorado.com](http://www.breastfeedcolorado.com)
- 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 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](http://www.COBFC.org)
- Colorado Department of Labor and Employment: [www.colorado.gov/pacific/cdle/NursingMothers](http://www.colorado.gov/pacific/cdle/NursingMothers)
- U.S. Department of Labor: [www.dol.gov/whd/nursingmothers](http://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 of a possibility 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 expressed and your baby’s name.
- Provide milk in small quantities (1-3 ounces) to reduce waste.
- Tell your child care provider that training is available to become breastfeeding friendly. To find trainings visit [www.breastfeedcolorado.com](http://www.breastfeedcolorado.com) under the Child Care tab.

## 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 milk expression 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.
- Bringing my young baby with me and referencing [www.babiesatwork.org](http://www.babiesatwork.org).
- 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 space. 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 the workday. A restroom 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 or storage closet 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 parent 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 and friends 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 Parents.** Seek out other parents 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 after your baby is born, when your milk supply has adjusted to your baby's needs.

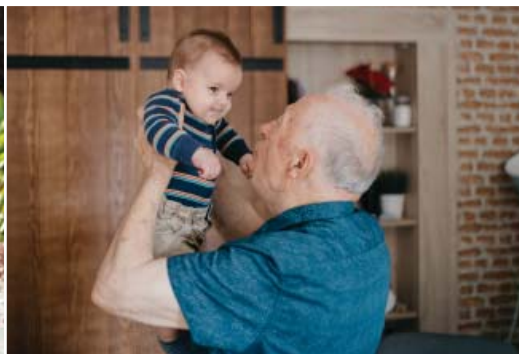
**Eat Nutritious Foods.** Eating good foods will help you feel better about yourself and give you extra energy for handling the tasks of working and parenthood.

## WIC Can Help

WIC (Women, Infants, and Children Program) supports breastfeeding by providing:

- Breastfeeding information
- Breast pumps
- Baby feeding classes
- Breastfeeding support groups
- Breastfeeding peer counselors
- Extra foods and personalized nutrition information
- Individual care
- Community resource

For more information about WIC, visit [www.ColoradoWIC.org](http://www.ColoradoWIC.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 lactation breaks.
- Learn all I can about breastfeeding during my pregnancy.
- Ask questions of my WIC peer counselor, lactation consultant, or health care provider.
- 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 how they would support my desire to continue feeding my baby breast milk and how the staff feed babies on cue, rather than on a strict schedule.
- Talk with my family and friends 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 (with my pump supplies and baby photos)!
- 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, 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 cooler bag.
- Grab my lunch, baby's diaper bag and the cooler.

## If I'm Using Child Care

- Make sure my breast milk is properly labeled with the expression 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 during the day to breastfeed.
- When picking up my baby, allow time to breastfeed before leaving.



This toolkit is sponsored by the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment through the Cancer, Cardiovascular, and Pulmonary Disease (CCPD) Grants Program.

This toolkit was created by Boulder County Public Health and adapted for statewide use throughout Colorado.

For more information and resources, visit [www.breastfeedcolorado.com](http://www.breastfeedcolorado.com).



Colorado Breastfeeding Coalition | [www.cobfc.org](http://www.cobfc.org)



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