

Breastfeeding Friendly Worksite Program

The more that is learned about the benefits of breastmilk, the more breastfeeding is recommended as the optimal feeding method for infants. Federal law has increased support for breastfeeding women in the workplace, however returning to work often remains a barrier to continuing breastfeeding for many women. The latest Breastfeeding Report Card for the state of Wisconsin continues to reflect high initiation but low duration of breastfeeding. The following “Breastfeeding Friendly” suggestions can help employees transition “back to work” while continuing to breastfeed.

Options for a Breastfeeding Friendly Worksite Program

- **Privacy for milk expression:** Basic lactation room accommodations include a clean private area with a door that locks (a bathroom is not appropriate), an electrical outlet, a comfortable chair, a table or a flat surface for a breast pump, and access to a sink/running water. In this case the employee would bring her own breast pump and attachments and store the milk in a personal cooler or a common area refrigerator. Improved accommodations can be offered as available and over time. Rooms that are identified as “lactation rooms” can be used for other purposes when not needed by the breastfeeding employee.
- **Flexible breaks and work schedule:** Typically women need to pump 15 minutes, 2-3 times per average work day.
- **Education:** Handouts or online links, related to continuing breastfeeding upon returning to work, can be available prenatally or in the lactation room.
- **Support:** Including information about the Breastfeeding Friendly Worksite Program within the employee handbook and health benefits resources encourages co-worker support and ensures access for all breastfeeding employees. Adopting a policy helps clarify details and employee/employer responsibilities.

Support for Breastfeeding Employees is “Good for Business”

Employers who provide a supportive environment to help women continue breastfeeding after childbirth enjoy many proven benefits that directly affect the financial bottom line.

- Lower health care costs
- Lower turnover rates
- Lower absenteeism rates
- Higher employee productivity and morale
- Positive public relations in the community as a “family friendly” business

Even a small change, which increases support for breastfeeding employees, is a positive way to impact the health of the families in St. Croix County Communities.

Support from St. Croix County DHHS-Public Health (in conjunction with the St. Croix County Breastfeeding Coalition) is available. You are encouraged to contact 715-246-8263, with questions or for more information including training/resources, or breastfeeding handouts.