



HUMAN RESOURCES Policy

Name:	WORKPLACE BREASTFEEDING	Effective Date:	JUNE 17, 2014
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Approved By:	CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER	Signature:	<i>Original signed by H. Bryant</i>
Managed By:	VP HUMAN RESOURCES & CHIEF HUMAN RESOURCES OFFICER		

1.0 PURPOSE:

To promote and support breastfeeding and the expression of breast milk by clients and/or by employees. This policy outlines the support and accommodations that shall be provided to breastfeeding mothers who are clients of the Northern Health Region and to employees upon their return from maternity leave.

Background:

- Breastfeeding in public and provisions for employees who are breastfeeding are rights protected under the Manitoba Human Rights Code.
- There are existing workplace breastfeeding policies in place in Manitoba in a number of provincial and private workplaces.
- Evidence indicates that organizations which support breastfeeding mothers on their return to work can benefit through reduced parental absence, higher rate of return to work following maternity leave, increased staff loyalty and improved staff continuity.

2.0 DEFINITIONS:

- 2.1 Breastfeeding: Breastfeeding is the practice of a woman feeding an infant (or sometimes a toddler or a young child) with human milk produced from her mammary glands (via lactation), usually directly from the mother's nipples.
- 2.2 Expression of breast milk: When direct breastfeeding is not possible, a mother can express (artificially remove and store) her milk. With manual massage or using a breast pump, a woman can express her milk and keep it in freezer storage bags, or other containers.
- 2.3 Storage of breast milk: Breast milk may be stored at room temperature for up to four hours, refrigerated for up to three days or frozen for up to four to six months. In order to express her milk, a mother needs her breast pump, a refrigerator for storage, a sink for cleaning her equipment, cleaning her supplies, table, and comfortable chair.

3.0 POLICY:

3.1 Breastfeeding at the Northern Health Region – Clients/Visitors

- Breastfeeding is welcome at NHR. Employees shall be courteous and respectful towards all breastfeeding mothers, their infants/children, and their families.
- Employees shall not ask the mother to leave the premises, cover up, or suggest

- using a restroom.
- In the event a customer or visitor objects to the presence of a breastfeeding mother on NHR premises, employees shall respond in a courteous and respectful manner and inform the objective customer/visitor of NHR's policy requiring a demonstration of support for breastfeeding mother, allowing breastfeeding undisturbed in a public place, and prohibiting a requirement that breastfeeding mothers cover up or move to another area.
- Clients who request a more private space to breastfeed will be reasonably accommodated by staff.
- A statement of support for clients/visitors who breastfeed, the "breastfeeding friendly" signs will be clearly displayed in all public areas.

3.2 Breastfeeding at the Northern Health Region – Employees

- Employers and employees shall be courteous and respectful toward all breastfeeding employees of NHR. Employers shall work with breastfeeding employees to determine mutually acceptable flexibility in work schedules to accommodate breastfeeding or breastmilk expressing needs. If desired, a caregiver may bring the infant to the workplace at a designated time to breastfeed.
- Employees shall have access to an identified appropriate area at their workplace site and as near as practical to their work area to breastfeed or to express milk.
- The designated area shall have proximity to hand washing facilities, and include a chair, small table, and electrical outlet. Although every effort will be made to provide a separate room with a door and "temporarily in use" signage, where such facilities are not possible, a well screened area may be used until a more suitable area is available.
- Washrooms are not to be suggested as an accommodation for an appropriate breastfeeding area.
- Employees who require breaks to breastfeed or for breast milk expression should normally be allowed those breaks and not be asked to forgo the normal meal break or work additional time to make up for breaks.
- The employee shall be responsible for all equipment required for the expression and storage of expressed breastmilk. If an employee is storing expressed breastmilk in a workplace fridge it should be clearly labeled.
- Employees taking maternity/parental leave will be provided with a copy of this Workplace Breastfeeding policy by their manager and are encouraged to access the resource documents listed below prior to departure:

4.0 PROCEDURE:

N/A

5.0 REFERENCES:

- 5.1 The Manitoba Human Rights Commission has produced a pamphlet to assist employers, housing and hospitality services to understand their obligations to support these rights.
http://www.gov.mb.ca/hrc/publications/guidelines/parents_and_pregnant_women.html

6.0 RELATED DOCUMENTS:

None