



California Breastfeeding Coalition

Working Together For A Healthier California

Mother-Baby Friendly Workplace Fact Sheet

What Is a “Mother-Baby Friendly Workplace?”

- A Mother-Baby Friendly Workplace provides support for employees (or their partners) who want to provide breast milk for their babies while they are at work.
- The US Breastfeeding Committee has created criteria for workplace support programs (<http://www.usbreastfeeding.org/Workplace/WorkplaceSupport/tabid/105/Default.aspx>). Workplaces selected for the Mother-Baby Friendly Workplace recognition meet the “adequate” criteria listed in the committee’s publication titled “Workplace Breastfeeding Support.” These criteria ensure compliance with existing California and Federal laws requiring employers to provide time and space for employees who want to express their milk.

Why Is this Employer Recognition Important?

- In California, more than 89% of mother’s breastfeed their babies at hospital discharge. By supporting a mother’s decision to give her baby breastmilk, employers can reduce health care costs, decrease absenteeism and increase employer morale.
- Breastfeeding reduces the number of sick days that families must use to care for sick children. In a study of two Southern California corporations, breastfeeding employees had half as many absences due to infant illness as did formula-feeding employees.
- Breastfeeding reduces employee health care costs. Aetna estimates savings of \$1435 on medical claims *per breastfed baby* per year. CIGNA has reported annual savings of \$240,000 per year in health care costs and \$60,000 per year through reduced absenteeism.
- *It’s the Law!* California is one of the first states to enact legislation requiring employers to provide break time and space to express breast milk during the workday. In the past, mothers desiring to pump milk at work may have resorted to pumping in bathrooms.
- As part of health care reform legislation, federal law now requires employers to provide breastfeeding employees with a “reasonable break time” and a private, non-bathroom place to express breastmilk during the workday, up until the child’s first birthday. This law does not preempt California’s stricter law.

Which Businesses Will Be Recognized this Year?

- Workplaces across California are being recognized by local breastfeeding coalitions, members of the California Breastfeeding Coalition. The businesses vary in size from 3 to more than 10,000 employees and vary in type of workplace.
- Every August, special statewide recognition awards are given by the California Breastfeeding Coalition in collaboration with other state agencies at the Capitol steps.

The California Breastfeeding Coalition

The California Breastfeeding Coalition (CBC), formed in May 2003, serves as an umbrella organization for the 43 regional breastfeeding coalitions located throughout California. The CBC aims, through collaborative efforts, to create a more healthful California through the promotion, protection, and support of breastfeeding.