

LEGAL AUTHORITY

Presidential Memorandum dated June 21, 1996, subject; Implementing Federal Family Friendly Work Arrangements.

U. S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE POLICY

U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Secretary's Memorandum - Supporting Nursing Mothers in the USDA Workplace dated January 21, 1998, established Nursing Mothers Room facilities in the National Capital Region.

EXPECTANT MOTHERS

Are you expecting a baby and considering breastfeeding? Are you a new mother who wants to continue breastfeeding after returning to work? USDA has a service to help you combine the demands of working and breastfeeding so that your experience is as pleasant and convenient as possible...The USDA Nursing Mothers Room.

NURSING MOTHERS ROOM DEFINITION

It is a private facility where nursing mothers can pump their breast milk, store it safely while at work, and take it home to their babies. The room is equipped with a sink

area for clean up, a refrigerator for storage of breast milk, a mirror, a reference and/or video center, and a bulletin board for sharing information and advice.

In addition, the Nursing Mothers Room has a private area with comfortable chairs, a breast pump for expressing milk, and hooks for hanging clothing and/or breast pump accessory kits.

BENEFITS

Breastfeeding provides important benefits to mothers, babies and employers. Breast milk is the most complete infant food and also protects the infant against infections and allergies. Breastfeeding is also the most economical and convenient way for a mother to feed her baby. Women who breastfeed share a special bond with their babies. Providing working mothers this type of facility gives them the opportunity to extend this bonding period. An intangible benefit is the information on breastfeeding and the informal support system between prospective and continuing breastfeeding mothers. The employer also benefits from supporting breastfeeding in the workplace. USDA research has documented the benefits of breastfeeding to include reduced occurrences for certain illnesses; therefore, new mother may miss less time from work because of improved health of babies. Also, enabling nursing mothers to continue lactation at work may enable them to return

to work sooner. Thus creating an ideal situation for both the employer and new mother.

EQUIPMENT

Mothers may bring their own breast pump to use in the Nursing Mothers Room. The room also is equipped with Medela electric, hospital grade pumps. Each mother needs to purchase her own accessory kit prior to using the pump. The accessory kit includes all parts that touch the mother or the mother's milk. This ensures that there is no cross-contamination of the milk. Nursing mothers may be able to obtain accessory kits from the hospital when they deliver, in which case the cost may be covered by insurance. Otherwise, mothers may call Medela at 1-800-835-5968 for information on their nearest distributor. A Medela single-or double-pumping kit is recommended, as well as a spare accessory kit, extra filters, and washers.

USER RESPONSIBILITIES

A sign-up sheet is generally used to schedule times. It can take 15-30 minutes per setting. The room is locked to ensure the mother's security and privacy. The successful operation of the room depends on the voluntary efforts of the mothers. Each mother is responsible for cleaning her own accessory kit and for the overall maintenance of the room.

LOCATIONS OF ROOMS

To obtain locations for headquarters and field go to

<http://www.usda.gov/da/shmd/mothers.html>

POINT OF CONTACTS

To obtain more information contact the designated mission area/agencies/staff offices Work/Life Program Manager at

<http://www.usda.gov/da/shmd/worklifecoord.html>

WEB SITES

Laleche League:

<http://www.lalecheleague.org>

Medela: <http://www.medela.com>

Lactation: <http://www.lactations.com>

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services: Office on Women's Health:

<http://www.4women.gov/pub/breastfeeding.htm>

(Available in multiple languages)



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NURSING MOTHERS

PROGRAM



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