

Promotional Letter to Employers

[Send on appropriate letterhead under the signature of your State Health Commissioner or other respected individual in your state or community.]

Dear *[name of state or city]* Employer,

I am inviting all *[name of state or city]* employers to participate in an important worksite initiative that can be a win-win for both your company and your employees: establishing a worksite lactation support program as part of your company's health benefit program.

Supporting 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 your bottom line. These include:

- 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

Supporting breastfeeding is good for employees and their families.

When an employee returns from maternity leave, she wants to be a productive and profitable employee *and* a good mother. The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends that babies exclusively receive their mother's milk for the first six months, and continue breastfeeding for at least a year or more. Breastfed babies are healthier, and have fewer infections and illnesses. Mothers who breastfeed also experience significant health benefits, including lower risk of breast cancer. It's no wonder that 70 percent of new mothers today choose to breastfeed. Yet many of these mothers are concerned that returning to work will be an obstacle to continuing to breastfeed.

Providing a lactation support program involves little investment of time and resources

Because the needs of breastfeeding employees are simple, a lactation support program can be implemented inexpensively. These four simple components can make a world of difference:

1. A private place for employees to be able to express milk in privacy during the work period
2. A flexible schedule to express milk two or three times a day (primarily using allotted breaks)
3. Information on how to combine employment with breastfeeding
4. Supportive supervisors and staff

We invite your company to join the hundreds of breastfeeding-friendly companies across the United States that have implemented lactation support programs and experienced bottom-line benefits. A representative from [name of organization] will be contacting you soon to share more information about how you can become a breastfeeding-friendly business, and to share a copy of *The Business Case for Breastfeeding*, a new turnkey program kit produced by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Health Resources and Services Administration.

In the meantime, I encourage you to institute breastfeeding-friendly policies in your workplace, and to seek ways to provide verbal and practical support. It's an investment that will multiply for years to come in better health for children of our city/state!

Sincerely,

[Name of Health Commissioner or other official]
[Title]