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Public Health
Wales

Reference Number: PHW-SCD11
Version Number: 2
Date of Next review: March 2027

BREASTFEEDING GUIDELINES

Introduction and Aim

These guidelines aim to ensure there is a consistent approach in place that welcomes employees who wish to breastfeed or express in the workplace.

Linked Policies, Procedures and Written Control Documents

[All corporate policies and procedures are available on the Public Health Wales website.](#)

- [Family Leave Policy](#)
- Risk Assessment – New and Expectant Mothers
- [Flexible Working Policy](#)
- [Violence Against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence Procedures](#)
- [Work How It Works Best \(intranet site\)](#)

Scope

These guidelines apply to all Public Health Wales employees wishing to breastfeed or express in the workplace.

Equality and Health Impact Assessment

An Equality, Welsh Language and Health Impact Assessment has been completed and can be viewed on the policy webpages.

Approved by

Leadership Team

Approval Date

21 March 2024

Review Date

21 March 2027

Date of Publication:

17 April 2024

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Summary of reviews/amendments				
Version number	Date of Review	Date of Approval	Date published	Summary of Amendments
1		19.03.18		New Guidelines
1.1		19.03.18	05.09.22	Change of naming convention to PHW-SCD11. All else remains the same.
2		21.03.24	17.04.24	Guidelines due for review

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1 Introduction

Public Health Wales aims to provide a workplace environment that supports breastfeeding employees in continuing to breastfeed their infants following their return to work and develop a culture that supports breastfeeding as an accepted part of work-life balance.

Public Health Wales welcomes employees who wish to breastfeed and will maximise opportunities for breastfeeding in public areas of the premises and provide private areas.

These guidelines have been developed in light of good practice guidelines, recognising the value and health benefits of breastfeeding.

This policy will be communicated to all current employees and will be included in new employee orientation/induction training and on application for maternity leave.

2 Roles and responsibilities

This section outlines the roles and responsibility for:

- The Organisation
- Line Managers
- Employees
- Work Colleagues
- People and OD Directorate

2.1 The Organisation

Public Health Wales acknowledges that providing support for breastfeeding has benefits to the organisation, such as a reduction in absenteeism and staff turnover, and important health benefits. The organisation will ensure all employees will have access to consistent support.

This policy will be communicated to all current employees and will be included in new employee orientation/induction training and on application for maternity leave.

2.2 Line Managers

Line managers are responsible for signposting pregnant and breastfeeding employees about the breastfeeding guidance and for negotiating breaks and practices that will help facilitate each employee's infant feeding goals.

Line managers will signpost pregnant employees and returning employees to available information and support on breastfeeding and returning to work.

2.3 Employees

Employees who intend to continue to breastfeed or express milk after their return to work should inform their managers on their return to work so that the breastfeeding employee is supported in the workplace.

Staff should also make themselves aware of the facilities available within their service to support breastfeeding mothers.

2.4 Work Colleagues

It is expected that line managers and work colleagues will assist in providing a supportive and understanding approach to facilitating breastfeeding employees.

All work colleagues and line managers are expected to be supportive and sensitive to the needs of breastfeeding employees returning to work.

2.5 People and OD Directorate

The People and Organisational Development directorate will support line managers and employees with signposting to information and promoting a supportive environment.

3 Process

3.1 Breaks for Breastfeeding or Expressing Milk

Breastfeeding employees can breastfeed or express milk during work hours using their normal breaks and as part of additional lactation breaks (usually 20 minutes once or

twice a day for at the least the first year after childbirth and flexibly thereafter) as agreed with their line manager.

3.2 A Private Place to Express Milk

A private space (not a toilet) shall be available for employees to breastfeed or express milk. Some Public Health Wales locations have dedicated rooms for this and can be identified by line managers. The space will be private, lockable, warm and clean, ideally located near a sink for washing hands and rinsing out breast pump parts, and have an electrical outlet. If employees prefer, they may also breastfeed or express milk in other comfortable locations agreed upon in consultation with the employee's manager.

Employees are responsible for leaving the designated areas clean and tidy.

If more than one breastfeeding employee needs to use the designated expressing room, employees need to work together to facilitate a schedule which is most convenient or best meets their needs.

3.3 Milk Storage

Expressed milk should be stored in a suitable refrigerator, ideally in a dedicated refrigerator. If a refrigerator is not available, speak to your Health Visitor about storage guidance.

Each employee is responsible for proper storage and transportation of their own milk. Employees should label all milk expressed with their name and the date collected so that it is not inadvertently confused with another employee's milk.

3.4 Complaints/Objections

Public Health Wales encourages employees and management to have a positive, accepting attitude toward employees who are breastfeeding and discrimination and harassment of breastfeeding employees in any form is unacceptable and will not be tolerated.

Employees are not expected to place themselves at risk by getting into conflict with an individual. If an employee does

not feel comfortable dealing with the situation, please inform a manager or People and OD of the situation.

If an employee believes they are being unfairly treated as a result of breastfeeding/expressing milk in the workplace, they can contact the People and OD Department and/or Trade Union Representative.

3.5 Legislation

There is legislation in place protecting new and expectant mothers in the workplace. Those wishing to breastfeed are covered under these regulations, namely; the management of Health and Safety Regulations 1999, the Workplace (Health, Safety and Welfare) Regulations 1992 and the Employment Rights Act 1996 (as amended by the Employment Relations Act 1999).

The Equality Act 2010 has clarified that it is unlawful for an organisation to discriminate against a woman because she is breastfeeding a child.

3.6 Breastfeeding Information

There are a number of services that offer advice and guidance about breastfeeding. Listed below are a few contacts:

- National Breastfeeding Helpline on 0844 209 0920 or www.breastfeeding.nhs.uk
- The National Childbirth Trust on 0870 444 8708 or www.nct.org.uk/breastfeeding
- Association of Breastfeeding Mothers – Counselling Hotline
0844 412 2949 or www.abm.me.uk
- The Breastfeeding Network Supporter Line on 0844 412 4664
- La Leche League on 0845 456 1855

4 Training Requirement

There are no training requirements identified. People and OD will provide advice as and when required to managers on specific situations

5 Monitoring Compliance

The guidelines will be reviewed alongside the review process for the following:

- [Family Leave Policy](#)
- Risk Assessment – New and Expectant Mothers
- [Flexible Working Policy](#)
- [Violence Against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence Procedures](#)
- [Work How It Works Best \(intranet site\)](#)

6 Appendices

- Equality Health Impact Assessment