



ACCOMMODATING BREASTFEEDING

PURPOSE

The Government of Nunavut (GN) is committed to providing its employees appropriate accommodations and space in the workplace to breastfeed and/or express breast milk to be stored temporarily at the workplace.

INUIT SOCIETAL VALUES (ISV) GUIDING PRINCIPLES

1. This directive is guided by the following Inuit Societal Values:
 - ***Inuuqatigiitsiarniq*** – respecting others, relationships and caring for people;
 - ***Tunnganarniq*** – fostering good spirits by being open, welcoming and inclusive;
 - ***Pijitsirniq*** – serving and providing for family and/or community;
 - ***Piliriqatigiinniq/lkajuqtiigiinniq*** – working together for a common cause; and
 - ***Qanuqtuurniq*** – being innovative and resourceful.

APPLICATION

2. This directive and procedure applies to all employees of the GN and its public bodies.

DEFINITIONS

3. **Breastfeeding:** The act of providing breastmilk to the child for primary nourishment of the child or along with appropriate complementary foods.
4. **Expressing breastmilk:** The act of either manually expressing breastmilk from the breast or using a pump to express milk from the breast, known as pumping. This is done by the mother, and if a pump is used, the pump is supplied by the mother.



5. **Breastfeeding space:** A private, clean and comfortable, safe space within the work premises to accommodate breastfeeding the child directly or expressing breastmilk. This should include a chair and a table, in a private location, such as an empty office or meeting room, and if possible, a closed door. The bathroom is *not* an appropriate space for breastfeeding or expressing breastmilk and should not be suggested as a space to breastfeed or express milk.
6. **Flex time:** An agreement between the employer and employee to alter the standard work schedule in order to accommodate breastfeeding employees in a mutually agreeable breastfeeding space, or to allow the employee the time to go to the location of the child to breastfeed within reasonable time and expectations. The employee will still work the total required work hours. For further direction on flex time see Human Resource Manual (HRM) Directive 1205: Non Standard Work Schedules.
7. **Breastfeeding needs:** The needs of a breastfeeding employee in order to breastfeed, which may include a flexible time schedule, breastfeeding space, suitable chair/furniture in the breastfeeding space, the ability to store expressed milk, etc.
8. **Accommodation:** An adjustment of a rule, practice, condition or requirement in order to meet specific needs of an individual or group. The GN is committed to accommodating within reason; this includes light or modified duties, modified uniforms (if uniforms are provided), alternate duties, and flex scheduling. The GN will not accommodate a change of positions.
9. **Caregiver:** An individual responsible for the care of a breastfeeding employee's child who may bring the child to the employee's workplace for the purposes of breastfeeding.

PROVISIONS

10. All employees who are breastfeeding, a minimum of 30 days before returning to work, or as soon as reasonably possible, should contact their direct supervisor in writing and indicate they will be breastfeeding their child following their return to work. The employee should propose an approximate flex time schedule for breastfeeding needs. Flex time or accommodation related to breastfeeding



should be discussed a minimum of 30 days prior to the employee returning to work.

11. Supervisors shall allow employees to make flex time schedules to accommodate breastfeeding/expressing breastmilk where operational requirements permit. This will be done through written agreement signed by both employee and supervisor, and a copy provided to Human Resources division within the department.
12. If operational requirements prevent a mutually agreeable flex time schedule to be created, the supervisor must contact the Employee Relations division of the Department of Finance for further guidance.
13. Supervisors will allow time and a breastfeeding/breast-milk expressing space. If there is a need for a caregiver to bring the child to the workplace of the employee, the caregiver should be allowed authorized visits to the work premises where appropriate.
14. If the work environment or premises does not have a suitable space to accommodate breastfeeding, or the caregiver is not able to attend the work premises for purposes of breastfeeding, alternate arrangements should be explored and supervisors must contact Employee Relations division for further guidance.
15. Supervisors shall also provide a suitable space for the employee to store expressed breast milk at the workplace.
16. Discrimination or harassment towards breastfeeding employees will not be tolerated. Employees who witness or experience this type of discrimination are encouraged to report in accordance with HRM 1010: Harassment Free Workplace.



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Building *Nunavut* Together
Nunavut liuqatigiingniq
Bâtir le *Nunavut* ensemble

AUTHORITIES AND REFERENCES

17. *Public Service Act*

18. Collective Agreements with Nunavut Employees Union (NEU)

19. *Senior Managers' and Excluded Employees' Handbooks*

20. *Nunavut Human Rights Act*

21. *Canadian Human Rights Act*

22. Human Resource Manual

HRM1003: Protective Clothing and Safety Equipment

HRM1010: Harassment Free Workplace

HRM1205: Non-Standard Work Schedules

HRM1308: Maternity Leave

CONTACTS

23. For further information or clarification, please contact:

Director, Employee Relations and Job Evaluation
Department of Finance
Iqaluit, Nunavut
867-975-6211