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## **Nursing Mothers in the Workplace**

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The University of Akron, in compliance with the Federal Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act, adopts this policy to provide a workplace that supports a decision of an employee to breastfeed. The University supports the practice of breastfeeding and the expression of breast milk by employees who are breastfeeding when they return to work. Additionally, it is the policy of the University of Akron to prohibit discrimination and harassment of breastfeeding employees who exercise their rights under this policy.

### **Reason for the Policy**

Research has demonstrated that policies that support an employee's decision to breastfeed result in reduced employee turnover, lower employee absenteeism, improved productivity and higher morale. The University wishes to ensure that employees and management are aware of the necessity to communicate and provide reasonable modifications to work schedules that will support an employee's decision to continue to breastfeed upon returning to work after the birth of a child. This policy establishes standards and protocols designed to protect a woman's right to express breast milk for a nursing baby while at work.

### **Applicability of the Policy**

This policy applies to all University employees.

### **Policy Elaboration**

Upon return to work after the birth of a child and for 12 months thereafter, breastfeeding employees are allowed a flexible schedule that will provide reasonable time to express milk during work hours.

Role of the employee – The employee shall be responsible for the following:

- 1) Contact Student Health Services at 330.972.7808 to obtain available time periods of designated private spaces for expression of milk on campus, if needed. If an employee needs assistance finding another designated area on campus, please contact the Office of Benefits Administration at 330.972.7092.
- 2) Requesting and arranging with their supervisor appropriate and reasonable break times or flexible scheduling for expressing milk.

Role of the Supervisor - The supervisor shall be responsible for the following:

- 1) Providing reasonable break times each day or make reasonable accommodations for flexible work schedules for employees wishing to express breast milk.
- 2) Providing a private space with a lock on the door for expressing milk. A bathroom stall or storage area shall not serve as a lactation space. If employees prefer, they may also express milk in their own private offices.
- 3) Assisting in providing a positive atmosphere of support for breastfeeding employees.

## **Contacts**

Questions related to the daily operational interpretation of this policy should be directed to:

Employee Benefits: 330.972.7092

## **Effective Date**

October 1, 2010