

ABILENE-TAYLOR COUNTY PUBLIC HEALTH DISTRICT'S

BREASTFEEDING FRIENDLY WORKSITE TOOLKIT



PUBLIC HEALTH
CITY OF ABILENE TEXAS

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**How has being a breastfeeding friendly
worksite helped your business?**

Introduction

“The Texas Mother-Friendly Worksite Program”

The Texas Department of State Health Services (DSHS) created the Texas Mother Friendly Worksite (TMFW) program in 1995 according to the [Breastfeeding Health and Safety Code 165](#).¹

TMFW program aims to decrease barriers associated with infant nutrition and employee lactation needs by increasing the percentage of mother friendly designated employers. The program is designed to provide technical assistance and support for employers, employees, and local level community partners.

In 2013, the TMFW program was evaluated, received national recognition, and was acknowledged as a practice-tested obesity prevention initiative by both the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention \(CDC\)](#) and the US Department of Agriculture (USDA) and listed with-in the [SNAP-Ed Toolkit](#).²

Program evaluation revealed an overall increase in the following:

- worksite employee satisfaction in regard to implemented program materials
- number of designated sites over a two-year period
- degree of program element adherence



Allowing mothers to bring their infant to work for the first 2 months after returning can be beneficial to their continued breastfeeding efforts (but it is not a requirement of Texas Mother Friendly Worksite designation).

Breastfeeding Is a Business Investment

Benefits Include:

Employer

- Higher employee satisfaction
- Reduced employee absenteeism due to self or child illness
- Increased employee retention and decreased turnover
- Reduced insurance and healthcare cost

Employee

- Increased access to employment
- Ability to return to work after maternity leave
- Ability to maintain breast milk supply

Community

- Stronger, healthier workforce
- Increased access to family oriented employment opportunities
- Increased access to infant nutrition
- Decrease in obesity, disease, and chronic illness rates

Applying for designation is free and expenses associated with implementing basic designation requirements are minimal. Research reveals that for every \$1 invested in lactation support programs there is an estimated \$3 return of investment for the employer.³

Apply for Designation

It's as simple as 1-2-3 to become a Texas Mother-Friendly Worksite (TMFW) :

- 1: [Develop](#) or review your worksite lactation support policy
- 2: [Schedule](#) via email a visit with a TMFW technical assistant (if needed)
- 3: [Apply](#) for worksite designation

Your business may already have lactation support services in place. Next you would need to create and implement a lactation support policy. Once a qualifying policy has been designed, next steps would be to apply for designation with TxDSHS. Source: [Texas Mother Friendly Worksite Program](#)

Basic policy requirements for TMFW designation include:

- Schedule flexibility to allow breaks or work shifts that provide adequate time for milk expression needs
- Access to a private location that is not a bathroom
- Access to clean, safe water to allow for sanitation purposes (hand and breast pump washing)
- Storage options for storing breast milk while at work (refrigerator, freezer, or personal cooler)



This image depicts the Abilene City Hall Lactation Lounge

Why have a Lactation Policy?

What is it?

A lactation policy is an action plan based on a set of rules or guidelines for your organization and employees to follow that are designed specifically to provide support for employee lactation needs.

Purpose

- Provide employee guidance and support
- Increase access to infant nutrition
- Assure employer compliance with government employee lactation laws

Worksite Lactation Laws and Support Policies

Texas

Breastfeeding in Public [Texas Health and Safety Code Chapter 165](#)

All Texas public employers are required to have a breastfeeding support policy:

[Texas Government Code Chapter 619](#)

TMFW Designation: [Texas Administrative Code](#)

Federal

Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA): [Breaktime for Nursing Mothers Provision](#)

The Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2023 includes:

[PUMP for Nursing Mothers Act \("Pump Act"\)](#)

Have questions about the Federal Law?

U.S. Department of Labor's Wage and Hour Division [Pump at Work website](#)

Help line: 1-866-4USAWAGE (1-866-487-9243)

Policy Development

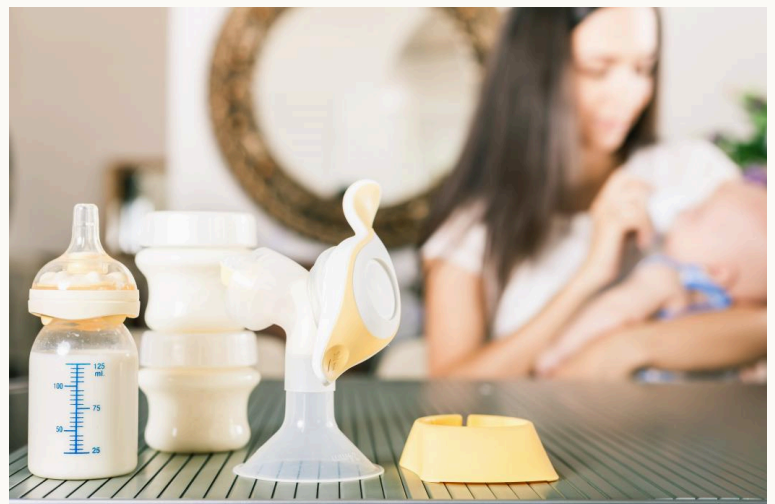
The TMFW Policy Development Guide can be accessed [here](#) to assist you in developing the first three steps of your draft policy to propose to organizational leadership.⁴ Next steps would include the involvement of organizational leadership to complete a finalized policy according to your organizational needs.

First three steps include:

- Information gathering (e.g., best practices, legal requirements, and employee feedback)
- Determining policy goals
- Development of a draft policy

Final steps include:

- Peer policy review
- Gain support and buy-in from leadership
- Policy communication plan
- Policy Implementation and evaluation



Policy Example

Purpose Statement

Note: TMFW designation does not require the inclusion of a purpose statement

This policy provides guidance for leadership and employees of the [Insert name of your organization] to support the lactation needs of breastfeeding employees and their infants from birth to one year or beyond. This program was designed with the intent to increase access to infant nutrition by enabling breastfeeding employees to express milk during working hours in accordance with the Texas Health and Safety Code §165.003.

Employee Notification (communication plan)

[Insert organization name] will post this policy to a specified location that will enable all employees to have direct access to the program policy at all times.

Program Policy

Time

Flexibility with regard to work schedule and pattern will be offered to enable employees to take adequate break times for the purpose of expressing breast milk or breastfeeding whenever necessary for a year following the child's birth. With regard to individualized milk-expression needs of employees, scheduling will be arranged on a case-by-case basis without compromising the integrity of program services, otherwise milk expression will/should take place during regularly scheduled break times and lunch hours.

Private Place for Milk Expression

Employees may use designated lactation room(s) for the purpose of expressing breastmilk or breastfeeding which will offer the following accommodations:

- A clean private room with an electrical outlet and comfortable seating
- Access to a safe, clean, nearby water source for hand and breast pump washing
- A hospital-grade electric breast pump. Employees must use their own personal-use milk collection kit.
- Hygienic storage (refrigerator, freezer, or portable cooler) for expressed milk

Right to Breastfeed in Public Spaces

[Insert name of organization] recognizes a mother has a right to breastfeed or express breast milk in any location they have an authorized presence. This organization and its employees shall welcome the attending customers/clients to breastfeed and/or utilize our lactation rooms.

Evaluation

The [Insert name of responsible party] will monitor organization leadership and employee adherence to this policy on a [Insert timeline] basis.

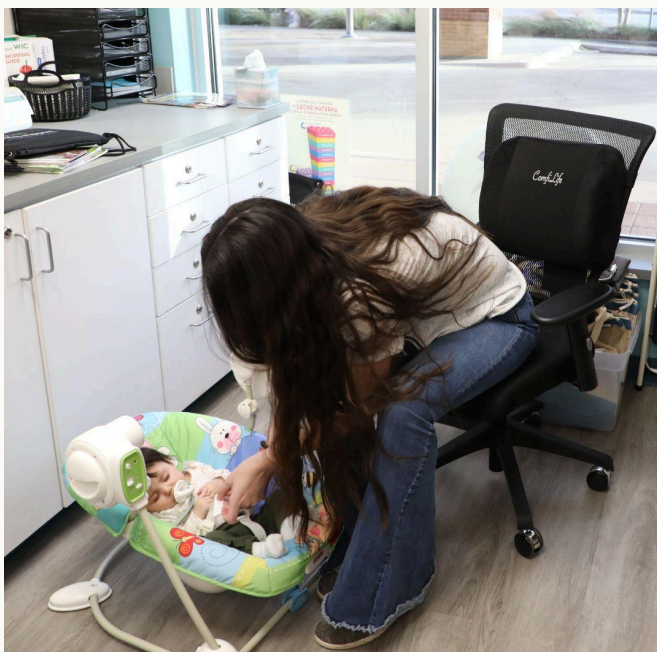
Advanced Lactation Support Services and Leveling Up

- Employer provided prenatal education materials and post pregnancy counseling
- Onsite/phone accessible Lactation Specialist services
- Informational materials for both the father and the mother

Employers may also be qualified to obtain the esteemed silver and gold TMFW designations if they offer these extra services.⁵

Although these extra elements are not required for TMFW basic designation, companies who have gone above and beyond the essentials report higher employee retention, lower absenteeism, more loyalty, and lower health care costs. To find out more on how to achieve *Silver* or *Gold* designation status click on the following link.

[TMFW Silver and Gold Designation Checklist](#)



Available Resources



Office on
Women's Health



References

1. Texas DSHS. About the Texas Mother-Friendly Worksite Program. Accessed January 24, 2024.
<https://www.dshs.texas.gov/maternal-child-health/programs-activities-maternal-child-health/texas-mother-friendly-worksite/about>.
2. State and local strategies. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. January 13, 2023. Accessed January 24, 2024.
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3. Texas Mother Friendly Worksites. Breastmilk Counts. Accessed January 24, 2024.
<https://breastmilkcounts.com/back-to-work/texas-mother-friendly-worksites/>.
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**SCAN HERE
TO GET
ACCESS TO A
DIGITAL
VERSION OF
THIS TOOLKIT**



Or visit abirebuildhealth.org and click on the Texas Mother - Friendly Worksite page.