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SUBJECT: Lactation Support Policy
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Policy for: All Campuses
Procedure for: All Campuses
Authorized by: Chris Byrd
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I. Policy

The University of South Carolina recognizes the importance of supporting faculty, staff and students who choose to breastfeed. The following policy is in accordance with the workplace breastfeeding support provision in the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (Section 4207 found at <http://docs.house.gov/energycommerce/ppacacon.pdf>), which states that: “employers shall provide reasonable, unpaid break time and a private, non-bathroom place for an employee to express breast milk for her nursing child for one year after the child’s birth,” and current South Carolina state law (SC Act 269 of 2006), which states that a woman may breastfeed her child in any place open to the public.

The University, which promotes a family-friendly work and study environment, acknowledges the significant health benefits of breastfeeding for mothers and their infants. Therefore, the University of South Carolina acknowledges that 1) the University shall provide sanitary and private space, other than a toilet stall or locker room, to be used as a lactation room by employees or students who are breastfeeding and/or expressing milk, and 2) supervisors, chairs and managers are requested to work with employees and students who are breastfeeding to schedule reasonable and adjustable break times each day for this activity.

A. Accommodations

Colleges and departments should make a reasonable effort to find and provide space for a lactation room (i.e. nursing mothers’ lounge). This room can be used for breastfeeding and/or the expression of milk.

1. A nursing mothers' lounge is a space that is a room above and beyond a bathroom stall or locker room. It is a comfortable private room that can be locked from the inside. When a designated lactation room is not available in the building, temporary "in-use" signage can be provided to the mother for vacant rooms that meet the requirements (e.g. a conference room that is infrequently used).
2. A nursing mothers' lounge should contain the following basic items:
 - a supportive chair
 - a table
 - easily accessible electrical outlet
 - a door that can be locked from the inside for mothers' privacy

B. Location

Access to lactation rooms is set-up to meet specific departmental needs. A list of current nursing mothers' lounges is located at <http://sc.edu/healthycarolina/lsp.html>. Keys to these lactation rooms are available through the building managers or by contacting Healthy Carolina. Departments are encouraged to contact Healthy Carolina to add lactation rooms to this list as such rooms are identified.

C. Flexible Break Times

Breastfeeding mothers must request and arrange with their supervisor appropriate and reasonable break times for breastfeeding or expressing breast milk for up to one (1) year after the child's birth. Supervisors should attempt to provide reasonable break time to accommodate their needs.

1. Employees must be allowed to take reasonable breaks during the work day to express milk.
2. Employees may request to adjust their work schedules for the purposes of lactation.
3. Supervisors and employees shall work together to establish mutually convenient times for milk expression. Employees should discuss the frequency and duration of the breaks with their supervisors.
4. Supervisors are requested to work to ensure that there are no negative consequences to nursing mothers who need lactation break times.
5. Employees should contact the next level of supervisor or Human Resources if their immediate supervisors do not allow reasonable breaks or if their unit does not make arrangements for appropriate and/or adequate space for lactation breaks.

II. Procedure

- A. The breastfeeding mother is responsible for contacting her supervisor to request space and time to express milk. Healthy Carolina has resources on its website that provide guidance for this conversation at <http://sc.edu/healthycarolina/lsp.html>.

- B. Supervisors who receive a lactation accommodation request are asked to review available space in their department/unit and make efforts to provide appropriate nearby space and break time.
- C. Departments that establish lactation rooms should notify Healthy Carolina, which helps direct mothers to the most appropriate lactation room.
- D. Mothers may obtain keys to the lactation rooms through the Healthy Carolina office or through the appropriate building representative listed on the website. (Refer to # IB.)
- E. After using a lactation room, mothers who are expressing milk shall be responsible for keeping the room clean.
- F. If an employee has comments, concerns, or questions regarding the USC Breastfeeding and Lactation Support Program Policy, please contact Human Resources or Healthy Carolina.