

SESLHD POLICY COVER SHEET



Health
South Eastern Sydney
Local Health District

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KEY TERMS	Breastfeeding lactation
SUMMARY	To define the procedure for supporting breastfeeding employees. Outlining the rights and responsibilities of manager, supervisors and employees in the workplace in effectively supporting breastfeeding employees in the workplace within SESLHD.

COMPLIANCE WITH THIS DOCUMENT IS MANDATORY
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**Support for Breastfeeding Employees in
SESLHD****SESLHDPR/413****1. POLICY STATEMENT**

To support Local Health District employees who wish to continue to breastfeed their babies after returning to work from maternity leave. South Eastern Sydney Local Health District (SESLHD) is committed to ensuring that female employees who are breastfeeding are not unlawfully discriminated against in employment under the NSW Antidiscrimination Act (1977). World Health Organisation (WHO) and National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC) recommend exclusive breastfeeding for six months and continued breastfeeding with appropriate complementary foods until 12 months and beyond.

2. AIMS

- To provide guidance to assist managers and principals in effectively supporting employees who are breastfeeding
- To improve retention rate of female employees after maternity leave
- To allow earlier return to work as a choice should they choose to so
- To improve employer – employee relations by acknowledging needs of employees who are breastfeeding
- To extend duration of breastfeeding
- To provide low cost intervention that supports a family friendly work culture.

3. TARGET AUDIENCE

- Human Resource Departments
- Managers
- Employees combining breastfeeding and work
- All employees

4. RESPONSIBILITIES

The International Labour Organisation Employees recommends up to two thirty minute breaks in an eight hour shift in addition to normal breaks. Lactation enables the mother to express breastmilk, have her infant brought to her or attend the onsite childcare centre to breastfeed

Human Resource Departments are to:

- Ensure information and the procedure is available and communicated to managers and employees
- Provide support for managers in interpretation and application of this policy

**Support for Breastfeeding Employees in
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- Ensure all employees are familiar with the procedure
- Discuss breastfeeding support prior to maternity leave
- Consider and provide suitable breastfeeding facilities
- Consider and implement flexible work practices
- Ensure breastfeeding employees are not unlawfully discriminated in their employment and informed of known risk of exposure to chemicals that may affect breast milk (Pregnancy and Work Cover)
- Identify appropriate spaces and facilities in the local workplace for employees who need to breastfeed and/or express and store breastmilk.

It is recommended that identified spaces include as many of the following amenities as possible:

- A convenient, clean, quiet and private (lockable) space to feed or express
- Comfortable seating (e.g. armchair)
- Power point for electric breast pump
- Access facilities for washing of hands and equipment
- Waste disposal
- Any cost associated with providing facilities for individual employees in their workplace will be covered by local budgets.

Employees combining breastfeeding and work are to:

- Notify their managers of their breastfeeding requirements (i.e.; seeking to breastfeed at work, express breastmilk to feed their baby) in advance of returning or commencing work
- Negotiate access to breastfeeding facilities and lactation breaks
- Negotiate the required frequency and duration of lactation breaks

Employees using the breastfeeding facilities are responsible for providing their own expressing equipment, securely storing expressed breastmilk in sealed containers, clearly labelled with the employee's name or employee's number, in the designated refrigerator, and ensuring the breastfeeding facilities are left in a clean condition.

All employees are to:

- Treat breastfeeding employees with respect
- Refrain from behaviour that constitutes unlawful discrimination

All staff are mandated to comply with [NSW Ministry of Health Policy Directive PD2011_069 - Aboriginal Cultural Training Framework: Respecting the Difference.](#)

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5. DEFINITIONS

Exclusive breastfeeding: An infant receives only breastmilk from his/her mother, breast milk donor or expressed breastmilk and no other liquids or solids, with the exception of drops or syrups consisting of vitamins, mineral supplements or medicines.

Breastfeeding: An infant receives any breastmilk, including expressed breastmilk or breast milk donor (can be in combination with other food and drink).

Expressed breastmilk: Milk expressed from a lactating/breastfeeding woman’s breast for feeding to an infant/child via cup/bottle.

6. CONTACT NUMBERS

Advice and assistance on breastfeeding:

Australian Breastfeeding Association-Breastfeeding Helpline (24 hour telephone advisory service) 1800 686 268. Website: www.breastfeeding.asn.au

Private Lactation Consultant Website: www.lcanz.org

7. REFERENCES

- [Antidiscrimination Act 1977](#)
- [NSW Ministry of Health Policy Directive PD2018_034 - Breastfeeding in NSW: Promotion, Protection and Support](#)
- [COAG Health Council \(2019\); Australian National Breastfeeding Strategy 2019](#)
- [NHMRC - Infant Feeding Guidelines 2012](#)
- [SESLHDPD/251 - Breastfeeding Women: Support in Non- Maternity Facilities in SESLHD](#)
- [Australian Government: Fair Work Ombudsman, Breastfeeding in the workplace](#)
- [The World Health Organisation \(WHO\)](#)

8. REVISION & APPROVAL HISTORY

Date	Revision No.	Author and Approval
June 2015	1	Document revised. Endorsed by Executive Sponsor
February 2021	2	Minor review by Katy Hunt A/CMC Lactation RHW, Alison Brown CMC WCCS, SESLHD Lactation Group. References and links updated. Approved by Executive Sponsor.