



WORKPLACE AND COLLEGES

How to support employees or students back to work and college

Returning to work or study is a common reason why people stop breastfeeding, often before they would like to. Supporting women to continue breastfeeding at work or college has benefits for the infant, employee or student and organisation. It's a good idea to have a chat with employees and students who are still breastfeeding to see what support can be offered to help them return to work or study and continue breastfeeding.

Simple ways to create a breastfeeding friendly workplace or college include:

- A private space to express milk, e.g. an unoccupied office or an area used for meetings that can be discreetly screened. If in doubt discuss with the employee or student to see what is most appropriate.
- Facilities to express and store milk e.g. most businesses and organisations have refreshment areas that contain a fridge or cool area. Employers should consider enabling expressed milk to be stored there, perhaps secured in a re-sealable container for hygiene purposes.
- Breastfeeding breaks e.g. consider slightly extending normal breaks for the employee such as a mid-morning coffee / lunch break or leaving earlier in the day to minimise any disruption to the business.
- Ensure staff are positive and supportive about breastfeeding
- Consider developing a breastfeeding support policy when women return to work, this can be shared with women prior to maternity leave. Policies should include some of the above points such as flexible working arrangements, facilities for expressing and storing breastmilk and breastfeeding breaks

Breastfeeding can be a sensitive issue for employees to discuss with their employer, but it is an important one to help their transition back to work or study after maternity leave.

www.acas.org.uk/media/pdf/b/s/Acas-guide-on-accommodating-breastfeeding-in-the-workplace.pdf

Breastfeeding awareness sessions or training is available depending on the needs of your organisation. Please see our website **www.wakefield.gov.uk/breastfeeding** for more information