



POLICY	
Employee Breastfeeding	
Scope (Staff):	All employees who are breastfeeding or expressing breast milk
Scope (Area):	CAHS (including PMH/PCH, CACH, CAMHS)

Aim

The Child and Adolescent Health Service (CAHS) recognises the importance of breastfeeding for the wellbeing of both the mother and infant and acknowledges its short and long term health benefits.

This policy:

- clarifies breastfeeding break requirements;
- details employee and management responsibilities; and
- provides an overview of the breastfeeding facilities requirements in or near the workplace.

Risk

Under the [Sex Discrimination Act 1984 \(Commonwealth\)](#)¹ and the [Equal Opportunity Act 1984 \(WA\)](#)² it is unlawful to discriminate on the grounds of breastfeeding.

Definitions

Breastfeeding: Includes the physiological process of milk being produced to breastfeed or express breast milk for an infant or young child up to two years of age (and beyond if mother and infant desire).

Breastfeeding breaks: Paid breaks negotiated between the employer and employee for the sole purpose of enabling an employee to express breast milk or breastfeed an infant or young child offsite or at the workplace.

Caregiver: Any person who assumes responsibility for bringing an infant or young child (up to two years of age) onto CAHS premises with the intent of delivering the infant or young child to an employee for the purpose of breastfeeding.

Principles

CAHS supports employees who are breastfeeding by providing:

- flexible work options to employees through breastfeeding breaks;
- a work environment that supports breastfeeding; and
- wherever reasonably practicable, breastfeeding facilities and resources in or near the workplace.

Breastfeeding Break Arrangements

Employees requesting access to breastfeeding breaks will be provided with no more than two breastfeeding breaks of up to 30 minutes each (a total of 60 minutes) per 7.6 or 8 hour shift.

Employees working greater shift lengths will be provided, where required, an additional break of up to 30 minutes.

Employees working less than a 7.6 or 8 hour shift will be assessed on a case by case basis according to circumstances.

Where the child or infant is breastfed offsite, the breastfeeding break is inclusive of the time needed to travel directly to and from the agreed location. Where this cannot be achieved within the break of 30 minutes, alternative arrangements may be negotiated.

Requesting a Breastfeeding Arrangement

Employees wishing to breastfeed or express breast milk must discuss their requirements with their manager.

Managers must give due consideration to all requests and, in consultation with the employee, consider ways to accommodate them and where reasonably practicable, implement appropriate arrangements. When negotiating the breastfeeding arrangement, consideration must be given to:

- the employee's needs;
- CAHS's service delivery requirements, in particular, client service/patient care issues;
- appropriate coverage for employee's while they are on breastfeeding breaks if required; and
- relevant safety factors.

At the time of negotiating a breastfeeding arrangement, the manager and employee must discuss and agree on:

- the frequency, duration and timing of breastfeeding breaks – where agreed between parties, breastfeeding breaks can be added to other forms of leave such as flexi leave or in addition to meal breaks;
- the most suitable location to be used for breastfeeding or expressing milk and take into account issues such as travel time to and from the location and how this will be managed;
- employee and manager responsibilities; and
- scheduled review date/s (arrangements must be reviewed and revised where any change of circumstances result in a change to the agreement subject to appropriate notification and renegotiation by both parties).

Decisions made regarding requests for breastfeeding breaks must be impartial, transparent and capable of review. Where, having considered all options, a manager anticipates that it will not be possible to accommodate breastfeeding breaks, advice must be sought from Workforce Services/Human Resources.

An agreed breastfeeding arrangement must be documented, signed and dated by both the manager and employee. A link to the *Sample Breastfeeding Agreement Template* is provided in [Appendix 1](#). A copy of the agreement must be retained by each party. Documents detailing breastfeeding arrangements must be stored in a secure location in accordance with record keeping requirements.

Breastfeeding Facilities

CAHS must endeavour to provide reasonable access to a clean, hygienic and private area for the purpose of breastfeeding or expressing milk. The facilities provided for breastfeeding or expressing milk will vary according to the needs of the employee and the availability of space in the workplace.

In consultation, the employee and manager must identify practical and reasonable ways to meet the employee's needs for access to:

- a secure area that is clean, hygienic and private;
- a power point for breast pumps and other equipment;
- comfortable seating;
- a clean and private storage area for breast pumps and other equipment;
- access to a staff refrigerator/freezer for storing milk; and
- access to a sink with hot water for washing hands and equipment.

It is not appropriate for employees to breastfeed or express breast milk in toilet facilities.

Equipment required for expressing milk is to be provided by the employee and stored at their own risk.

Where it is not practicable to provide these facilities, the manager and the employee must explore reasonable alternatives such as:

- using suitable workplace facilities provided by another Government department or agency;
- using a carer's room, parents' room or similar facilities located offsite; and
- going home or to a caregiver's home or accessing a child care centre.

Responsibilities

Managers and employees are required to consider relevant safety factors when an employee requests a breastfeeding arrangement. This includes the types of issues that might arise and how they will minimise or eliminate these where reasonable and practicable to do so.

Employee responsibilities

The employee has a responsibility to ensure:

- the safety and supervision of the infant and/or young child whilst in the workplace;
- stored breast milk is properly secured, labelled and safely stored in a sealed receptacle;

- universal precautions such as washing hands, hygienic nappy changing and disposal, ensuring the workplace facility is left clean and tidy and infection control procedures are followed;
- participation in the development of a risk assessment if requested by the manager;
- they monitor the increased risk of illness or infection in the work environment and where appropriate, make alternative arrangements; and
- infants or young children who are ill are not brought into the workplace.

In addition, the employee is responsible for ensuring the caregiver:

- respects the privacy of patients that they may see or hear in the workplace;
- is aware their access to the workplace is restricted to delivering an infant or young child to an employee for the purpose of breastfeeding;
- takes the infant and/or young child directly to the designated breastfeeding facility;
- avoids environments in the workplace where there is a risk of cross infection or injury;
- vacates the workplace with the infant and/or young child at the completion of each breastfeeding break; and
- supervises the infant and/or young child at all times in the workplace.

Manager's responsibilities

Managers will consult with the employee to consider the types of issues that might arise under a breastfeeding arrangement and how they will minimise or eliminate these issues where reasonable and practicable to do so.

Resolution of issues


Employees who wish to raise an issue about their breastfeeding arrangement must contact their manager or refer to the [CAHS Grievance Resolution Guideline](#).

Related internal policies, procedures and guidelines
Breastfeeding Protection, Promotion, Support and Monitoring Policy (CAHS Policy)
Employee Grievance Resolution (CAHS Guideline)
Children in the Workplace (CAHS Policy)

References
1. Sex Discrimination Act 1984
2. Equal Opportunity Act 1984

Useful resources (including related forms)
Australian Breastfeeding Association
Public Sector Management Act 1994
Occupational Safety and Health Act 1984

This document can be made available in alternative formats on request for a person with a disability.

File Path:	W:\Safety & Quality\CAHS\Policy\POLICY MANAGEMENT - Area Health Service\CAHS Policy_Word\CAHS.HR.EmployeeBreastfeeding.docx				
Document Owner:	Executive Director, Corporate Services				
Reviewer / Team:	Workforce Services				
Date First Issued:	NEW	Last Reviewed:	May 2018	Review Date:	May 2021
Approved by:	Corporate Governance Committee			Date:	May 2018
Endorsed by:	Executive Director, Corporate Services			Date:	May 2018
Standards Applicable:	NSQHS Standards:  NSMHS: 8				
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Appendix 1 – Sample Breastfeeding Agreement Template

Breastfeeding Agreement

Between

Employee

Position Title and Department

and

Line manager

Position title and Department

The purpose of this agreement is to outline work and breastfeeding arrangements agreed between the above parties. The agreement is in line with the CAHS Employee Breastfeeding Policy.

Commencement Date: _____

1. Location of breastfeeding breaks:

For example Childcare Centre or Parenting Rooms at PCH;

- *Level 1 Clinic F*
- *Ground floor Clinic C*
- *Ground floor Security*
- *Ground floor Family Resource Centre*
- *Level 5 Collegiate Lounge*

2. Times and frequency of breastfeeding breaks:

3. Additional comments (including employee requirements and/or health and safety requirements):

We have read and understood the Employee Breastfeeding Policy and the arrangements detailed in this agreement.

We acknowledge that this agreement will be reviewed at the scheduled review dates indicated below.

We will ensure consideration is given to the operational effectiveness of the agreement including the impact on CAHS, the work unit and the employee.

Breastfeeding Agreement Review Dates:

Employee signature: _____

Date: _____

Line manager signature: _____

Date: _____

A copy of the agreement is to be retained by each party.