

TIMELINE FOR IMPLEMENTING A LACTATION SUPPORT PROGRAM

Note: The actual time frame for implementing a lactation support program varies, and can be much shorter or longer depending on the size of the company and other internal or external factors. The steps of this process, however, are applicable to most companies.

MONTH 1

Initial Program Planning

- Review existing research about the value of a lactation support program.
- Talk to other employers who have implemented successful lactation programs.
- Identify potential stakeholders within the company and initiate dialogue about the program.
- Contact community resources to identify options for
 - Consultation in establishing the corporate program;
 - Formal and informal education for employees;
 - Direct lactation assistance for breastfeeding employees; and
 - Acquisition of breast pump equipment.

MONTH 2

Research

- Examine any company data related to employee absenteeism and turnover rates, numbers of female workers of childbearing age, maternity leave policies, etc.
- Identify employee needs and environmental constraints to breastfeeding within the company (either through a formal needs assessment or through dialogue with pregnant employees and women who are currently or were previously breastfeeding).

MONTH 3

Strategy Planning

- Convene a stakeholders' meeting with representatives from diverse departments to discuss the results of the data collection process and review options for
 - Milk expression break policies;
 - Constructing, renovating, or converting a designated space in the office into one or more lactation rooms;
 - Breast pump equipment;
 - Storage and handling of human milk; and
 - Gaining buy-in from other employees.
- Establish a mechanism for gathering baseline data that can later be used as a comparison for tracking program success.

MONTH 4

Program Development

- Present the program strategy to management and appropriate departments to gain approvals and buy-in.
- Assign a task force to begin program development.
- Begin development of a company-wide breastfeeding support policy.
- Process contracts and purchase orders required for program components, including
 - Facilities contractors;
 - Breast pumps;
 - Amenities for the lactation room;
 - Lactation consultation services; and
 - Educational and promotional materials.
- Complete the physical improvements needed for a lactation room.

MONTHS 4-5

Program Implementation

- Plan a coordinated approach to announce and promote the program.
- Inform department heads, managers and supervisors about the program.
- Conduct a brief training orientation about the program with current employees.

ONGOING

Program Tracking and Evaluation

- Establish a feedback system for breastfeeding employees, co-workers, and supervisors in order to gather ongoing input to help streamline the program.
- Communicate with supervisors and managers regarding the impact of the program.
- Review company absenteeism and turnover rates periodically to track the potential impact of the program.