

# Sample Breastfeeding Policy for Child Care Programs

**NOTE:** This is a sample policy, please read through it and take time to create this policy for your business.

\_\_\_\_\_(Insert child care program name)\_\_\_\_\_ is committed to encouraging breastfeeding and providing ongoing support to breastfeeding mothers and employees. Our breastfeeding policy is as follows:

## 1. Breastfeeding mothers and employees will be provided a place to breastfeed or express their milk.

Breastfeeding mothers and employees shall be provided a private and sanitary place (other than a restroom) to breastfeed their babies or express milk. If a place is not available, a portable divider/partition will be used to create a place. This area will have an electrical outlet (if needed for pumping), comfortable chair, and nearby access to a **“clean sink”** for washing hands and cleaning breast pump equipment.

**NOTE:** A “clean sink” is defined as a sink that is not used for diapering/toileting or a sink that has been disinfected.

- Mothers and employees are welcome to breastfeed in the classroom as well.

## 2. A refrigerator/freezer will be made available for storage of expressed breastmilk.

- Breastfeeding mothers and employees may store their expressed breastmilk in the refrigerator and in the freezer.
- Bags of breastmilk will be stored separately for each child. Bags of breastmilk for each child will be placed in a separate labeled sealed plastic bag or in a separate labeled hard-sided container as bags tend to spill or leak.
- Mothers must provide their own containers, clearly labeled with the child's name and date milk was expressed. Unlabeled containers of breastmilk will not be used or accepted.
- Breastmilk will be stored in the refrigerator/freezer according to the guidelines from the Academy of Breastfeeding Medicine:

### **Milk Storage Guidelines**

- Freshly expressed milk may be kept at room temperature (up to 77°F/25°C) for 6 to 8 hours. Temperatures greater than 77°F/25°C may not be safe for room temperature storage. Containers should be covered and kept as cool as possible; covering the container with a cool towel may keep milk cooler.
- Milk may be stored in an insulated cooler bag with ice packs for 24 hours.
- Milk may be safely refrigerated (39°F/4°C) for up to 72 hours. Store milk in the back of the main body of the refrigerator, where the temperature is the coolest.
- The type of freezer in which the milk is kept determines timetables for frozen milk. Generally, store milk toward the back of the freezer, where the temperature is most constant.
  - Freezer compartment located inside the refrigerator (5°F/-15°C): 2 weeks
  - Refrigerator/freezer with separate doors (0°F/-18°C): 3 to 6 months
  - Chest or upright manual defrost deep freezer that is opened infrequently and maintains ideal temperature (-4°F/-20°C): 6 to 12 months

### 3. Sensitivity will be shown to breastfeeding mothers and their babies.

- We will work with parents prior to their infant's first day in child care to transition their infant to a bottle or cup feedings.
- We will work with parents to make an emergency plan for feeding their infant in the unexpected event that there is no breastmilk available at the child care program.
- We will develop a feeding plan with each family including feeding infants on demand as we observe hunger cues and coordinating the last feeding of the day to meet the mother's feedings needs (either to feed or await mother's feeding), with the understanding that we will feed the infant if the infant is inconsolable and in distress.
- Infant formula and solids foods will not be provided unless requested by the mother.
- We will feed an infant in a way that mimics breastfeeding. Infants will be held closely and upright. We will switch infants from one arm to the other midway through a feeding to provide equal eye stimulation and facial muscle development, help pace feedings, and prevent infants from developing a preference for one side. Bottles will never be propped.
- We will communicate the infant's changing schedule so a mother can adjust her schedule for pumping and/or visiting to feed her infant.
- We will provide daily communication sheets for parents that document times/amounts of each feeding, along with diaper changes, naps, etc.

### 4. Staff will be trained in handling, storing, heating, and feeding breastmilk.

- We will follow the breastmilk guidelines from the Academy of Breastfeeding Medicine ([www.bfmed.org](http://www.bfmed.org)) and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention ([www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov)):

#### **Thawing or Warming Milk**

- The oldest milk should be used first.
- The baby may drink the milk cool, at room temperature, or warmed to body temperature.
- Thaw milk by placing it in the refrigerator or in cold water.
- Heat breastmilk separately from other bottles in a container of warm water or in a bottle warmer. Microwaves and crockpots will not be used.
- Milk may be kept in the refrigerator for 24 hours after it is thawed.
- Swirl the container of milk to mix the cream back in, and distribute the heat evenly. Do not shake the milk.
- Milk left in the bottle after a feeding should be discarded and not used again.
- Do not re-freeze breastmilk once it is thawed or partially thawed.

- Gloves are not required when handling breastmilk, but are recommended if staff have open wounds on their hands. Waterproof bandages can also be used to cover open wounds.
- Staff will prepare a clean work space to prepare a bottle by sanitizing the counter or by placing a clean paper towel on the counter.
- Staff will wash their hands at a **"clean sink"** before and after handling or feeding breastmilk.  
**NOTE:** A "clean sink" is defined as a sink that is not used for diapering/toileting or a sink that has been disinfected

- Bottles will be labeled with the infant’s name and time served to the infant.
- All containers/bags/ bottles of breastmilk will be checked closely before serving to ensure the correct breastmilk is given to the correct child.
- Infants will be held when given a bottle, or if they are able to hold their bottle themselves, they will be kept within an arm’s reach to ensure other infants do not have access to their bottle. Special attention will be given to ensure no bottle is left within reach of children.
- If breastmilk is mistakenly given to the wrong child, the program will follow the protocol recommended by Caring for Our Children: National Health & Safety Performance Standards; Guidelines for Early Care and Education Programs, Third Edition (Standard 4.3.1.4: Feeding Human Milk to Another Mother’s Child, page 167, [www.cfoc.nrckids.org](http://www.cfoc.nrckids.org)).
- If parents request that breastmilk is served to their child once the child is no longer bottle fed, it must be served in a controlled manner to prevent an exposure incident. Breastmilk will be served in a sippy cup and kept out of the reach of children. The cup will be given directly to the child and immediately returned to a place out of reach when the child is finished drinking.
- Breastmilk that is in an unsanitary container, is curdled, smells rotten, and/or has not been stored correctly, will not be served and will be returned to the infant’s mother.
- **Breastfeeding employees will be provided flexible breaks to accommodate breastfeeding** Breastfeeding employees shall be provided a flexible schedule for breastfeeding or pumping to provide breastmilk for their child(ren). The time allowed would not exceed the normal time allowed to other employees for lunch and breaks. For time above and beyond normal lunch and breaks, sick/annual leave may be used, or the employee can come in a little earlier or leave a little late to make up the time.

**5. Breastfeeding promotion information will be displayed.**

- Information on breastfeeding will be provided, including the names of area resources should questions or problems arise.
- Positive promotion of breastfeeding will be displayed in the child care program.

**SOURCES:**

*Ten Steps to Breastfeeding-Friendly Child Care Centers Resource Kit, Wisconsin Department of Health Services*  
*Sample Childcare Center Breastfeeding Policy, Vermont Department of Health*  
*Sample Child Care Center/Family Child Care Home Model Breastfeeding Policy, Colorado Department of Health and Environment*  
*CFOC, 3<sup>rd</sup> Edition, 2011.*  
*Academy of Breastfeeding Medicine, Protocol #8: Human milk storage information for home use for healthy full-term infants.*  
 USDA

