



Becoming a Breastfeeding Friendly Business/Workplace

A Toolkit



**Health and
Social Services**
Haldimand and Norfolk



The **Haldimand-Norfolk Health Unit** supports the Baby-Friendly Initiative. The purpose of this tool kit is to provide education and support promotion of breastfeeding practice among families, health care providers, businesses and communities.

Working towards a **Breastfeeding Friendly Haldimand and Norfolk** involves creating a community where breastfeeding for health and food security is recognized, and appropriate breastfeeding supports are available.

This kit is created to help local businesses/workplaces build their knowledge about breastfeeding and provide tools to better support breastfeeding women and their families. As a result, breastfeeding will become normal practice within our community. We encourage you to publicly display the provided signs to demonstrate that you support a **Breastfeeding Friendly Haldimand and Norfolk**. Any venue can participate: restaurants, indoor play centres, pharmacies, local government services, shops, banks and so on.



Acknowledgment

This toolkit was modified from the **Make Breastfeeding Your Business: An Action Support Kit** (Nova Scotia) by JustFood Ottawa, supported by Ottawa Public Health and the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care Healthy Communities fund. The intent of the **Becoming a Breastfeeding Friendly Business/Workplace: A Toolkit** is that it be used in the spirit of the Baby-Friendly Initiative, in building community support for breastfeeding families.

The **Haldimand-Norfolk Health Unit's** mission is to work with the **Haldimand and Norfolk** community to protect and promote health.

Table of Contents

Project Overview	2
Table of Contents	3
Becoming a Breastfeeding-Friendly Business/Workplace	4
The Importance of Breastfeeding	5
Creating a Breastfeeding Friendly Business/Workplace	6
Tips: Breastfeeding Friendly Business/Workplace	7
Creating a Breastfeeding Friendly Business/Workplace for Employees	8
Additional Links and Resources	9
Resources	10
Breastfeeding Friendly Business/Workplace Signs.....	10
Breastfeeding Friendly Employer Checklist	12
Tips for Staff	14
Info for Breastfeeding Employees	15
Sample Breastfeeding Policy	16



HALDIMAND-NORFOLK
Baby-Friendly
Initiative

Becoming a Breastfeeding Friendly Business/Workplace

Congratulations on being a progressive leader in recognizing the importance of supporting breastfeeding families in Haldimand and Norfolk Counties!

By choosing to develop an atmosphere that supports breastfeeding mothers and families within your business/workplace, you are helping to remove barriers that can influence a woman's decision to begin and/or continue breastfeeding.

How to participate in the Breastfeeding Friendly Business/Workplace Project

I. Print the following materials from this kit or download and print from our website:

- **Breastfeeding Friendly Business/Workplace Signs:** Please post at least one sign in your business. Consider posting additional signs at your entrance, cash, and reception and on your menus and flyers. By posting signs you are working towards normalizing breastfeeding in Haldimand and Norfolk Counties and showing your customers that you care.
- **The Breastfeeding Friendly Business/Workplace Toolkit:** Leave this toolkit in a place where it is accessible to all staff.
- **Tips for Staff Poster:** Display this poster in an area accessible by all staff members; train your staff; talk with them about how to create a supportive environment; encourage staff to tell mothers with babies that they are welcome to breastfeed in your business if they wish.

2. Create a supportive environment for customers: Every business/workplace is different. It is understood that most businesses/workplaces cannot create a room specifically for breastfeeding and this is not necessary. Supporting breastfeeding families means they are welcome to breastfeed anytime, anywhere. Talk to your staff - they may have great ideas about how you can create a more breastfeeding friendly environment for your clients.

For more information or help to implement this toolkit contact the health unit at:
519-426-6170 or 905-318-6623 ext 3250





The Importance of Breastfeeding

Breastfeeding is important for the baby, the mother, the community and the employer.

The Baby

Breastfeeding provides a unique combination of nutrients and antibodies essential to a baby's health and can lower the chance that the child will have:

- Asthma, respiratory infections, ear infections, obesity, diabetes and sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS).

Breastfeeding also helps with mother-child bonding because it gives the baby time for close contact with the mother.

The Mother

Breastfeeding is also good for the mother. It lowers a woman's risk of:

- Breast cancer, ovarian cancer and heart disease.

Breastmilk is free and takes no time to prepare. As a result, a mother will save money and have more time to spend with her family. Commercially sold baby formulas are expensive and must be carefully prepared to avoid contamination.

The Community

When you support breastfeeding in your business, you show the community that breastfeeding and providing a child with breastmilk is important.

Breastfeeding is environmentally friendly and is a natural use of resources. There is no waste from packaging, preparation or leftovers.

As a business/workplace that supports breastfeeding, you are a vital part of creating a community that supports breastfeeding.

Businesses/Workplaces and communities benefit from mothers continuing to breastfeed their babies. Make it a part of our culture. Healthier people, healthier relationships and a healthier community will be the result.



Creating a Breastfeeding Friendly Business/ Workplace

Breastfeeding is a normal way of providing young infants with the nutrients they need for healthy growth and development. Health Canada recommends that babies be fed only breastmilk for the first six months of their lives. Breastfeeding is recommended to continue after solid foods are introduced, up to 2 years of age or longer.

Community members have identified that there is a need to support breastfeeding families who are using services in the community. Some mothers are concerned that if they breastfeed in public, it may make others feel uncomfortable. This may keep mothers away from entering businesses and may influence their decision to breastfeed at all.

The rights of breastfeeding women are protected under the Federal Labour Standards Maternity-Related Reassignment and Leave, Maternity Leave and Parental Leave (Publication 5). The Ontario Human Rights Commission recognizes breastfeeding as a human right as outlined in the Policy on Discrimination because of Pregnancy and Breastfeeding. This means that women have the right to breastfeed their babies anytime, anywhere.

We recognize that policy development and implementation can be a lengthy process and at times complicated. The intent of this toolkit is to ease employers and businesses through the process of developing breastfeeding friendly policies and provide the supports for their employees and clients who are breastfeeding that are feasible and realistic to implement.

We encourage you to post the **Breastfeeding Friendly Business/Workplace** sign, also available for download on the website. Displaying a Breastfeeding Friendly Sign tells people that your business/workplace is a friendly or welcoming environment for breastfeeding families. It also tells mothers that you and your staff respect the decision to breastfeed and will do your best to support breastfeeding mothers' rights both as an employee and client.



Tips: Breastfeeding Friendly Business/Workplace

Management Tips for Creating a Breastfeeding Friendly Business/Workplace

Business owners and managers can help a woman be more comfortable breastfeeding in her community. The following tips can help create a breastfeeding friendly place:

- Make use of the materials provided in this kit. After your employees have learned how to support breastfeeding, display the **Breastfeeding Friendly Business/Workplace** sign and/or decal to show the public that breastfeeding is welcome on your premises.
- Make your workplace family friendly by having a place for parents to change diapers.
- If there is room, provide a breastfeeding area for a woman who chooses to breastfeed in private. A small, clean space (Separate from the bathroom) with a chair is all that is required.
- Hang the **Tips for Staff** Poster in a central area where staff can find it and use it when needed. This poster can be found in the resources section of this document and can be downloaded from the website.
- Use your efforts to your advantage. Advertise your business/workplace as **Breastfeeding Friendly**. Research shows that families go to public places that are welcoming and supportive to families and breastfeeding mothers.
- Help create policies and procedures specific to your business/workplace that will help your employees support woman who are breastfeeding. It is also important to support your own employees who are breastfeeding.
- Use the **Breastfeeding Friendly Employer Checklist** to make changes to the workplace to support all mothers who are breastfeeding their babies.
- Make this toolkit accessible to all employees including those who are pregnant or returning to work.
- Direct families to beststart.org for additional resources on parenting and family support.
- Participate in local activities for World Breastfeeding Week. Check with the Haldimand-Norfolk Health Unit and local breastfeeding support groups regarding local events and promotion.



Creating a Breastfeeding Friendly Business/ Workplace for Employees

Stay in step with your competition and be recognized as a progressive employer. Communicate support for the health of your employees and their families and become a Breastfeeding Friendly Business/Workplace.

- Develop a welcoming and supportive work environment
- Promote Breastfeeding Friendly policies and practices in the workplace

For information on how to support breastfeeding in your community:

- Use the **Breastfeeding Friendly Employer Checklist** in the toolkit to determine your level of participation.
- You can also find the checklist on the Haldimand-Norfolk Health Unit website including **sample policies**, resources and supports.

Some of the associated benefits include:

- Less absenteeism - mothers and fathers are less likely to miss work with a sick child.
- Improved productivity, morale and loyalty - due to increased work satisfaction.
- Less staff turnover - breastfeeding women are more likely to return to work; keep trained, experienced and motivated staff on the payroll.
- Expanded and strengthened ties in the community and with future employees.

How to Become a Breastfeeding Friendly Employer

- **Complete the Checklist:** Use the Breastfeeding Friendly Employer Checklist to assess your premises.
- **Info for Breastfeeding for Employees:** Post this info in an area accessible by all staff members; talk with employees about how to create a supportive environment for breastfeeding; explain your work site lactation program; and share resources with working moms, such as Best Start and the Public Health Agency of Canada website.
- **How to be a Family Friendly Workplace Booklet:** Use this booklet to learn more about education, practices and policies that can make a difference to help both men and women have the healthiest family possible even before conception.
www.beststart.org/resources/wrkplc_health/pdf/preg_work_16pg_FNL.pdf

Create a supportive environment for your staff by providing privacy and flexibility to express and store breast milk. Every establishment is different. Talk to your staff - they may have great ideas about how you can create a more **Breastfeeding Friendly** environment.



Additional Links and Resources

Ontario Human Rights Commission

www.ohrc.on.ca/en/preventing-discrimination-because-pregnancy-and-breastfeeding

Federal Labour Code: Recommendations 7.59; “Part III should provide for short breaks during working hours to afford nursing employees reasonable time off, without pay, to breastfeed a child and/or to express milk on the work site. Similar breaks should also be available to employees who need them to inject medications or for similar medical purposes. Such breaks should be subject to operational considerations, but should not be unreasonably denied.” www.canada.ca/en/employment-social-development/services/labour-standards/reports/maternity-leave.html

Service Canada: Offers information on maternity and parental leave including employment insurance information. www.canada.ca/en/services/benefits/ei/ei-maternity-parental/apply.html

Telehealth Ontario: Offers new and expectant moms 24/7 access to free, confidential, expert advice and support for breastfeeding. Family, friends and caregivers who are supporting new and expectant moms are also encouraged to call if they have any questions: **Phone: 1-866-797-000 TTY: 1-866-797-0007**
www.themothersprogram.ca/resources-and-information

Haldimand-Norfolk Health Unit: Offers information about breastfeeding and local breastfeeding supports. www.hnhu.org/breastfeeding

Public Health Agency of Canada: Supports and promotes breastfeeding and provides resources, posters, booklets and information on the nutritional, immunological and emotional nurturing of infants and toddlers. www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/hp-ps/dca-dea/stages-etapes/childhood-enfance_0-2/nutrition/index-eng.php#s

La Leche League: Offers breastfeeding information, free monthly meetings, telephone support, a resource library, and community breastfeeding support circles. www.lllc.ca/

Free, bilingual online course on breastfeeding: If you are interested in learning more about breastfeeding, this course is set up in an easy access format. Once you successfully complete the course, you can request a Completion Certificate. www.beststart.org/courses/

The Baby-Friendly Initiative: A world-wide program to help hospitals and community health agencies adopt best practices to protect, promote and support breastfeeding. <http://breastfeedingcanada.ca/BFI.aspx>



**Anytime.
Anywhere.**

**We are a
baby-friendly
place.**

You are welcome to breastfeed here.

If you would prefer privacy, please ask a staff member.

**Anytime.
Anywhere.**

**We are a
baby-friendly
place.**



You are welcome to feed here.

If you would prefer privacy, please ask a staff member.



Breastfeeding Friendly Employer Checklist

Good

- ☐ Verbal agreement between mother and her direct supervisor regarding her break times and space to pump
- ☐ Private room with a lock on the door
- ☐ Flexible breaks (at least 15-20 minutes in the morning and afternoon as well as a lunch break) during which the employee can express milk or nurse her infant.

Better

- ☐ Written breastfeeding support policy
- ☐ Education about policy provided to all employees
- ☐ Private room with a lock on the door
- ☐ Comfortable chair for pumping and/or nursing
- ☐ Refrigerator for milk storage
- ☐ Nearby sink with running water
- ☐ Flexible breaks

One of the following:

- ☐ Ability to work part-time or some hours from home
- ☐ Flex-time offered
- ☐ Job-sharing offered
- ☐ Extended maternity leave offered
- ☐ On-site childcare

One of the following:

- ☐ Lending library of Breastfeeding Resources or
- ☐ List of local breastfeeding resources*



Best

- ☐ Written breastfeeding support policy with education provided for all employees
- ☐ Educational resources about breastfeeding given to all expectant parents*
- ☐ Breast pump provided by the employer

Private room with all of the following:

- ☐ Lock on door
- ☐ Comfortable chair
- ☐ Nearby sink with running water
- ☐ Small table
- ☐ Electrical outlet

One of the following:

- ☐ Ability to work part-time or some hours from home
- ☐ Flex-time offered
- ☐ Job-sharing offered
- ☐ On-site childcare

One of the following:

- ☐ Lending library of Breastfeeding Resources
- ☐ Lactation consultant services provided for employees (via insurance or paid by employer)

Optional items:

- ☐ Radio/CD or iPod player; telephone; charging station; breastfeeding art; foot rest





Creating a Breastfeeding Friendly Business/ Workplace

Tips for Staff

The following are some ways that you can make a mother who is breastfeeding feel more comfortable:

- Talk to her in a friendly manner. Ask her about her baby.
- Making eye contact with a mother who is breastfeeding shows her that you are comfortable with it and that you support her.
- If a customer expresses a concern about a woman breastfeeding in the public:
 - Explain that you are a **Breastfeeding Friendly Business/Workplace** and it is your policy to support breastfeeding.
 - Explain that the Ontario Human Rights Commission recognizes breastfeeding as a human right as outlined in the *Policy on Discrimination Because of Pregnancy and Breastfeeding*. This means that women have the right to breastfeed their babies anytime, anywhere.
 - Offer to move the concerned customer to another seat instead of offering another seat to the breastfeeding mother. This supports the fact that breastfeeding her baby is a right.

Please do not ask a nursing mother to breastfeed in the washroom. It is uncomfortable and most mothers will find it offensive.





Info for Breastfeeding Employees

Mothers can continue to be committed to their jobs, return to work and meet their breastfeeding goals.

Your baby can have all the benefits of your milk even while you work:

- If your childcare facility is nearby, you can breastfeed your child on your breaks.
- Continuing to breastfeed is a wonderful way to reconnect with your baby after hours of separation.
- You can express milk by hand or with a breast pump to feed to your baby later.
 - When you are pumping milk for a full-term, healthy baby, you do not need to worry about sterilizing storage containers or pump parts.
www.resources.beststart.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/12/B35-E.pdf
 - You can store your milk in the refrigerator space available until the workday is over, or use an insulated container with reusable ice packs to keep it cool. Breastmilk keeps safely at room temperature for 4 to 6 hours.
- Breastfed babies are healthier, so mother and parents will miss fewer work days to stay home with a sick baby.
- For more information and support on returning to work.
www.beststart.org/resources/wrkplc_health/pdf/Return_to_Work_ENG_Final.pdf



Sample Breastfeeding Policy

Having a breastfeed policy is an effective way to ensure that all staff are aware that the organization supports breastfeeding.

We at (name of business/organization) _____ recognize:

- That breastfeeding is a protected human right and women in Ontario have the right to breastfeed everywhere
- That breastmilk is the optimal food for healthy growth and development of infants
- That breastfeeding benefits infant and maternal health
- That breastfeeding contributes to the overall health of the community

We promote and support breastfeeding and the expression of breastmilk:

- By managers, staff, clients, customers, and volunteers

Management and staff are committed to:

- Educating new managers, staff and volunteers about this policy
- Working with breastfeeding managers and staff to determine mutually agreeable hours of work, assignments and breaks which support breastfeeding practices

Thank you for supporting breastfeeding

Working towards a Breastfeeding Friendly Community

For more information please visit: www.hnhu.org/breastfeeding

Updated Aug 2019



Email: info@hnhss.ca
Web: www.hnhss.ca



Simcoe:
P.O. Box 570,
12 Gilbertson Dr.,
Simcoe, ON N3Y 4N5
519-426-6170 or 905.318.6623

Caledonia:
282 Argyle St. S,
Caledonia, ON N3W 1K7
905.318.6623



www.hnhu.org