

**Supporting breastfeeding mothers on their return to work: Advice**

**for line managers**

Many women will return to work from maternity leave whilst they are still breastfeeding. They may need the opportunity, and an appropriate place, to express milk during their working day. The Workplace Regulations (1992) require employers to provide a rest area for new mothers. The Equality Act (2010) means that women’s working conditions will need to be sufficiently flexible to enable women to continue to breastfeed. Women who intend to continue to breastfeed and express breast milk should advise their line manager in writing when returning to work so that a risk assessment can be undertaken (if appropriate) and any additional support or facilities can be arranged.

To support women who wish to continue to breastfeed their baby when they return to work an advice sheet for managers and an additional breastfeeding mothers has been produced.

There are a number of measures that will assist women who wish to continue to breastfeed when they return to work:

• Flexible working practices, including BU ways of working

• If the woman plans to express breast milk suitable facilities should be provided. These should include:

- Privacy, with a lockable door and/or ‘engaged’ signage (not a toilet);

- Space and furniture to sit or lie down comfortably;

- Facilities for washing hands and equipment nearby;

- A fridge for storage of breast milk;

- Flexible time/breaks to enable the woman to access the facilities and express breast

milk;

- The facilities should be as close as possible to the woman’s work area.

**Further sources of information and support**

• BU’s Midwifery programme holds UNICEF accreditation for its breastfeeding education. Staff working on this programme are happy to assist with queries from staff or managers [ataylor@bournemouth.ac.uk](mailto:ataylor@bournemouth.ac.uk)

• The Maternity Action is also a valuable source of information for women and employers [www.maternityaction.org.uk](http://www.maternityaction.org.uk/)

Further guidance is also available via the health, safety and wellbeing team, including through a [staff health and wellbeing referral](https://staffintranet.bournemouth.ac.uk/workingatbu/healthsafetywellbeing/occupationalhealthwellbeing/occhealth/) if needed.