

# Breastfeeding-Friendly Businesses: A profitable opportunity

## Family-Friendly Policies

Women with children are the fastest growing segment of the workforce. Nearly 55 percent of women with children under the age of 3 are employed, and a majority of these women will choose to breastfeed their babies, providing them with important nutrition and health benefits. Family-friendly policies and programs that provide lactation support to employees and their partners help protect your company's investment in staff and your bottom line.

## Employee Retention

High employee turnover negatively affects a company's costs and productivity. Companies that are successful at retaining employees after childbirth have worksite lactation support and dedicated spaces (as small as 4 feet by 5 feet) for employees to express breast milk in private.

The payoff is significant. Companies with lactation support policies are able to retain experienced employees, see a reduction in sick time taken by parents for children's illnesses, and receive fewer health care and insurance claims.

## The Return on Investment

Supporting your breastfeeding employees saves money.

### 1. Breastfeeding employees miss work less often.

Breastfed infants are healthier! Breast milk boosts an infant's immune system and helps protect them from common childhood illnesses, infections and dermatitis.

### 2. Breastfeeding lowers health care costs.

Babies who are not breastfed visit the physician more often, spend more days in the hospital and require more prescriptions than breastfed infants. Reduced health care costs for breastfed infants means lower medical insurance claims for businesses.

### 3. Supported employees are more productive.

Companies of all types have found that having a lactation support program can increase productivity and loyalty among employees. Companies that support their employees also receive more positive public recognition.

To learn more about the benefits of supporting employees in the workplace and to download the New York State "Making It Work" breastfeeding toolkit, visit [breastfeedingpartners.org](http://breastfeedingpartners.org).

#### Adapted from:

Office on Women's Health in the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. *The Business Case for Breastfeeding: For Business Managers*. 2008. Retrieved from: <https://www.womenshealth.gov/breastfeeding/breastfeeding-home-work-and-public/breastfeeding-and-going-back-work/business-case>. Accessed July 12, 2017.