

Four Steps to Minnesota Department of Health Breastfeeding Friendly Workplace Recognition

Step 1: How do I start? How do I find an employer to work with? What kind of employer should I work with first? Who will advocate for the process at the worksite?

1. Selection of an employer

- a. Based on existing personal relationship within an employer, strategic selection of a prominent employer in the community, or through your local or state Better Business Bureau
 - i. Note: It is helpful if your contact has access to employers' decision makers to ensure leadership support of program
- b. Identify key employee demographic factors (usually available from human resource department)
 - i. How many workers are on site and of those, how many are women of reproductive years (16-49)?
 1. Note: It helps to establish a minimum number of women potentially impacted by breastfeeding policy to maximize the impact of membership on Minnesota's employed mothers.
- c. Evaluate employer's readiness/motivation to seek MDH recognition
 - i. Has the employer already put in place some aspects of a breastfeeding friendly worksite?
 1. Note: This may have been done by the employer or in partnership with your local SHIP
 - ii. Does the employer express the desire to persevere the effort?
 1. Note: It will be easier to start to promote Breastfeeding Friendly Worksite recognition in your community with worksites that are motivated partners. After a "critical mass" of worksites achieve recognition, less motivated worksites may become more interested in pursuing recognition.
 - iii. Are there employees at the worksite that have an interest in breastfeeding and/or MDH recognition? Who will be the employer contact person for the MBC member? Who will ultimately complete and submit the application for the employer?
 1. Note: It helps to have an employee or employees at the worksite who have a vested interest in breastfeeding or recognition who will be the company contact. This could be someone from Human Resources, Benefits, Employee Health and Wellness, a current or former nursing mom, or someone else who is interested in the process. It could be an individual or a committee.



Step 1 Toolkit:

- Minnesota Breastfeeding Coalition Workplace
<http://mnbreastfeedingcoalition.org/workplace/>
- Free "Breastfeeding Welcome Here" window cling for businesses
Contact Melissa Carstensen: 763-689-8265
- Minnesota Better Business Bureau
<http://www.bbb.org/minnesota/>
- Minnesota Department of Health Recognition Program
<http://www.health.state.mn.us/divs/oshii/bf/BFFworkplace.html>



Employer selected? Move to Step 2.

Step 2: What has the worksite already done? Is there a policy or guidelines for supporting breastfeeding employees? Is there a secure space for mothers to express milk? Is flexible break time available for pumping? Is there support? Is this being communicated to employees?

2. Document the employers existing efforts

- a. Does a written policy or guideline(s) for supporting breastfeeding employees exist? Obtain a copy of the policy or guidelines for purposes of review.
- b. Support: does the employer provide opportunities for breastfeeding mothers to receive support and encouragement?
 - i. Optional: The employer maintains a list of local breastfeeding resources (local La Leche League chapter, lactation consultants, breastfeeding coalition, support groups) that is provided to pregnant and breastfeeding employees seeking breastfeeding information and support. Also, health insurers covered by the Affordable Care Act (ACA) are supposed to make this information available to beneficiaries.
- c. Time
 - i. Ask about the current type of work schedules and flexibility in the work place. Does the employer accommodate reasonable break times for breastfeeding employees to express breast milk or breastfeed as needed, for one year or longer after the child's birth?
 - a. *This is important as it is a provision of state and federal law.*
- d. Education
 - i. How are supervisors being educated to support breastfeeding mothers when they return to work?
 - ii. How are employees being informed and educated about the lactation support policy and company support of breastfeeding employees?



Step 2 Toolkit:

- CDC Lactation Support Program
<http://www.cdc.gov/nccdphp/dnpao/hwi/toolkits/lactation/index.htm>
- Family Friendly Business Initiative
<http://www.familyfriendlybusinessinitiative.com>
- Making It Work Toolkit
http://www.breastfeedingpartners.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=164&Itemid=411
- Supporting Nursing Moms at Work & The Business Case for Breastfeeding
<http://www.womenshealth.gov/breastfeeding/government-in-action-on-breastfeeding.php>
- Texas Mother-Friendly Worksite Program
<http://texasmotherfriendly.org>
- USBC Workplace Support
<http://www.usbreastfeeding.org/Workplace/WorkplaceAccommodations/tabid/105/Default.aspx>
- Vermont – Becoming a Breastfeeding Friendly Employer
<http://healthvermont.gov/wic/food-feeding/breastfeeding/employers.aspx>



Existing efforts identified? Move to Step 3.

Step 3: What else does the employer need to prepare prior to applying for recognition?
Does the employer have the resources needed to complete the steps? What is the employer's timeline for completing the steps?

3. **Identify and facilitate the development of any missing components of a Breastfeeding Friendly Worksite**
 - a. Which aspects of the Breastfeeding Friendly Worksite still need to be developed by this employer?
 - i. Do any of the required components present a challenge to the employer? Help troubleshoot to prevent barriers to recognition.
 - ii. Offer examples of other "model" worksites that are successfully implementing a Breastfeeding Friendly worksite.
 - b. Match the employer's needs with available resources
 - i. Templates, drafts and other outside resources can help an employer to quickly develop materials suitable to their worksite
 - c. Develop a timeline and assign task managers from within the company

✓ Application requirements complete? Move to Step 4.

Step 4: How does the employer fill out the application and submit their materials to MDH?
Is there a deadline?

4. **Complete and submit the MDH application for Breastfeeding Friendly Worksite recognition**
 - a. Identify which of the rolling deadlines the employer would like to meet
 - b. Review the application materials with the employer for accuracy and completeness



Step 3 and 4 Toolkit:

- Minnesota Department of Health Recognition Program
<http://www.health.state.mn.us/divs/oshii/bf/BFFworkplace.html>



Application submitted to MDH?
Congratulations on helping MBC meet Objective 1