

## Lactation Room Guidelines

The state's commitment to family-friendly practices includes the availability of lactation spaces for breastfeeding and pumping breastmilk. While lactation rooms and procedures may vary from building to building and agency to agency, the following document serves as guidance for employees, supervisors, and HR professionals regarding best practice for creating lactation rooms and supporting employees who pump in the workplace. If you have any questions or need further guidance on lactation rooms, contact the Office of Women's Advancement and Advocacy at (302) 577-8970.

### Best Practices for Creating a Lactation Room:

**Federal protections for employees to pump breast milk at work (including employees who telework) include the following:**

- Not a bathroom
- Private, shielded from view
- Free of intrusion by other employees or the public
- Available as frequently as needed for one year after the child's birth
- Must be functional as a space for pumping (for example consider if the space is convenient, sanitary, and safe)
- A space must contain a place for the nursing employee to sit, and a flat surface other than the floor, on which to pump.
- Employees must be able to safely store milk while at work such as in an insulate food container, personal cooler, or refrigerator.
- Ideally space includes access to an electrical outlet
- Ideally near a safe water supply such as a sink (or included in the space)
- The room can be a permanently designated ADA-compliant room or a temporary, consistently available private space such as an office, conference room, storage room, or lounge connected to a restroom as long as the space meets all other requirements.
- Employees who telework are eligible receive the same protections, including the right to take a pump break that is shielded from view. For example, an employee must be free from observation by an employer provided or required video system, including a computer camera, security camera, or web conferencing platform, when they are expressing breast milk, regardless of the location they are working from.

**To be fully functional for milk expression, a permanent space should also include:**

- Signage designating the room's intended use (i.e., "Lactation Room")
- Signage designating the room as occupied/unoccupied
- Lockable (the door should lock both from the inside and ideally have a code lock on the outside)
- Refrigerator (for storing milk) in the space
- Adjustable, wipe-able chair
- Table or desk
- Calendar or room reservation system
- Nontoxic cleaning supplies (e.g., alcohol-based wipes)

- Wastebasket
- Regular cleaning by janitorial staff

**If possible, a permanent space should also include:**

- Lockers or other storage for breast pumps and supplies
- Microwave (for steam-sanitizing pump parts) in the space (or nearby)
- Footstool
- Clock
- Bulletin Board (include printable posters on [breastmilk storage](#), [breast pump cleaning](#), and protections under the [PUMP Act](#) and the [Pregnant Workers Fairness Act](#))
- Resource station, such as a bookcase, for educational literature and local resources
- Telephone for emergencies

**Additional tips related to lactation in the workplace:**

Consider creating a shared calendar to organize reserving time in the lactation room. If you already utilize a system to schedule conference rooms, a similar system can be used.

Share printable “Do Not Disturb” signage for employees that may use a common space such as a conference room or for use on their office door while pumping. Provide window coverings when needed for privacy purposes.

Display flyers announcing a lactation room template for sharing the details of the lactation room.

Provide lactating employees with breastfeeding resources through ComPsych’s Employee Assistance Program, which is free and available to all employees.

Share local resources related to breastfeeding including the [Breastfeeding Coalition of Delaware](#).

Returning from paid parental leave can be a significant transition for employees. Make sure the employee feels welcomed back to the workplace and valued as a member of the team.

Make sure the employee has the information on the availability of a lactation room and the procedure for using the room. If a lactation room is not available, be sure to work with the employee so there is a plan in place for a secure location the employee can use as needed.

Within the first week of the employee’s return from paid parental leave, schedule a meeting to discuss how the work shifted while they were on leave and how to best transition the employee back into the workflow.

Check-in with the employee regularly to see how they are adjusting to being back at work and offer support as needed. Create an open, non-judgmental environment where employees feel comfortable discussing their concerns and challenges.

Be flexible: Be open to making accommodations for the employee as they transition back into their role, such as offering a flexible work schedule or reduced workload for the first few weeks. DHR’s Alternative Work Arrangement Policy and Procedure can be found [here](#).

Be aware of postpartum depression: Be attentive to signs of postpartum depression in returning employees. These signs may include persistent sadness, anxiety, changes in appetite, difficulty sleeping, or feelings of guilt or worthlessness. If you suspect an employee may be experiencing postpartum depression, encourage them to seek professional help. Share resources such as the [Postpartum Depression Hotline](#).

Share resources related to [FLSA protections](#) for employees related to pumping at work.

If possible, keep the dedicated lactation space as just a lactation space. Having a lactation space also serves as a wellness space can be problematic for scheduling purposes.

If you are looking to fit in a lactation space in an existing office, look at utilizing an underutilized larger closet, office or even part of a break room. These are the types of spaces that can be made into a dedicated lactation space.

If your office is moving or being renovated, think ahead about including a lactation space in the plans.

# Lactation Room Example



**Includes a code lock, additional inside lock, signage, chair, electrical outlet, refrigerator**



**Pumping in Progress  
Please Do Not Disturb**