

Florida Breastfeeding Coalition

Breastfeeding —the gold standard.

210 Lookout Place, Maitland, FL 32751

Phone 407.803.2024 - Fax 407.215.0402

www.flbreastfeeding.org

To Whom It May Concern:

I'm writing to you to share the importance of employers supporting an employee's choice to continue breastfeeding after returning from maternity leave. The American Academy of Pediatrics and the US Surgeon General recommend all infants be exclusively breastfeeding for 6 months and breastfeeding be continued for at least one year or as long as the mother and baby mutually desire. The many positive benefits of breastfeeding have been well documented in the medical literature and have been supported by the Department of Health and Human Services' *Blueprint for Action on Breastfeeding* and the United States Breastfeeding Committee's *Breastfeeding in the United States: A National Agenda*.

Today, women with children are the fastest growing segment of the workforce with nearly 55% of women having children less than 3 years of age. In the US today, more than 70% of all new mothers choose to breastfeed to give their babies the best nutrition and health benefits possible.

Why should employers support breastfeeding employees in your workplace? Because it's worth it! Employer benefits to supporting the breastfeeding employee include the following:

- Fewer sick days for moms:
 - Formula feeding moms have three times as many one-day absences from work to care for sick children in the first year of life than do breastfeeding moms. [Cohen, Mrtek, and Mrtek \(1995\)](#)
 - It is estimated that, for every 1000 formula feeding babies, their mothers would miss a total of one full year of employment in excess of breastfeeding mothers, because their children are sick so much more often, [Ball and Wright \(1999\)](#)
- Return on your investment
 - Aetna found a \$2.8 return for every \$1 invested to support lactation
 - Sanvita, a worksite lactation support company, has found that companies have obtained \$1.50 to \$4.50 for each dollar invested.
- Lower health care costs
 - Infants who receive only their mothers' milk for the first three months of life incur \$331 less in health care costs over the first year of life.
- Lower staff turnover
 - Employers find that lactation support leads to improved staff productivity and loyalty, helping you retain talented employees.
- Positive image of a family friendly employer

Employers can best offer support to the breastfeeding employee with as little effort as providing a small, private room (not a toilet stall or restroom) in the workplace where breastfeeding employees can pump their breast for a few minutes during usual breaks. The US Department of Health and Human Services has developed the following publications [The Business Case for Breastfeeding](#), which explains the benefits to the employer, as well as [Easy Steps to Supporting Breastfeeding Employees](#). You can also visit our web site for more information regarding supporting the breastfeeding employee or contact us for information or suggestions on how you can best support your breastfeeding employees.

Breastfeeding is a win-win for the baby, the family and employers! Every citizen should encourage breastfeeding. The benefits of breastfeeding affect every part of our society. Breastfeeding reduces infant mortality and morbidity more than any other intervention, which translates into healthier children who have a greater chance to grow up as healthier adults. Breastfeeding is the most cost-effective way to decrease disease and save healthcare dollars.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Patricia Lindsey, IBCLC".

Pat Lindsey, IBCLC, RLC

President of Florida Breastfeeding Coalition, Inc.

<mailto:office@flbreastfeeding.org>

www.flbreastfeeding.org

http://flbreastfeeding.org/bfing_working.htm

<http://www.womenshealth.gov/breastfeeding/programs/business-case/business-case-breastfeeding.cfm>

<http://www.womenshealth.gov/breastfeeding/programs/business-case/easysteps-breastfeeding.cfm>