What if my employer does not support my decision?

- Ask if your employer would be willing to let you try it for a week and then decide.
- Look for another job or see if you can work from home.
- Breastmilk is best, but you can combine breastfeeding with formula feeding if you need to.
- Be proud of your efforts to continue giving your baby the best after your return to work or school. Don't be afraid to try new ways to combine working and breastfeeding to find the right combination for you and your baby.

BreastMilk
100% Natural Ingredients

For more information about the Mother-Friendly Worksite program, please call (512) 458-7796 or visit the program's Web site at http://www.dshs.state.tx.us/wichd/lactate/mother.shtm.

For breastfeeding help and information call 1 (800) 514-6678.

WIC GROWING HEALTHY FAMILIES

TEXAS Department of State Health Services

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Talking to Your Employer About Breastfeeding

It's natural to be nervous when it comes to talking about breastfeeding with your employer. After all, it's not a topic that comes up normally at the office. However, most moms find that their employers are happy to help them return to work and continue breastfeeding.

Continued breastfeeding benefits you, your baby, and your employer.

- You get a healthier baby as well as a decreased risk of osteoporosis and breast and ovarian cancer.
- Your baby gets the continued benefits of breastmilk — including fewer illnesses, such as ear infections, and a decreased risk of chronic diseases such as obesity.
- Your employer gets reduced health-care costs, lower absenteeism, and increased productivity because your baby will be sick less often.

Is my employer required by law to allow me to pump at work?

Most employers are happy to allow their breastfeeding employees to pump at work, however, the law does not require that they do so. Therefore it is important that you talk to your employer about your return.

What is the best way to approach my employer?

Here are some simple steps successful moms suggest:

1. Before talking to your employer or school, tell your family that you want to continue breastfeeding after you return and ask them for their support. Knowing you have their support will give you confidence to talk to your employer.
2. Schedule an appointment with your employer to discuss your return.
3. Before your appointment, practice what you plan to say with your friends or family. This will help you ease your nerves and be prepared.
4. At your appointment:
   - Talk to your employer about pumping at work or nursing on site.
   - Explain why breastfeeding is important to you.
   - Discuss any questions or concerns your employer has.

What should I ask about at my appointment?

1. Using a private space to pump. If one is not available:
   > **Use an office.**
   If the door doesn't lock, hang a sign outside your door when you are pumping, or ask if your employer could have a lock installed for privacy.
   > **Use a cubicle.**
   Use a shower curtain rod or wooden dowel from a hardware store to hang a large curtain outside your cubicle when you need to pump.
   > **Use a bathroom.**
   For reasons of safety and hygiene, a bathroom should only be used for pumping breastmilk if there are no other options available.
2. Arranging **your schedule** to pump at work or nurse on site.
   > You will need to pump the same number of times that you are currently breastfeeding.
   > With a double-sided electric pump, each pumping session will take about 15-30 minutes.
   > Be prepared to offer to come in early or stay late to make up for the time.
3. Where you should **store** your milk.
   > It is safe to store breastmilk in a shared staff refrigerator.
   > An insulated bag with ice packs can be used for up to eight hours.