

This workplace is an accredited Breastfeeding Friendly Workplace

Your support makes a difference to your colleagues

Balancing work commitments with a baby's needs is a challenge. Support and understanding from her manager and work colleagues can make a real difference to a mother's successful return to work after maternity leave.

If one of your colleagues is combining breastfeeding and work commitments, please keep in mind:

- She may need to take breaks during the day to express milk or feed her baby.*
- She may require some flexibility around her work.*
- Combining work and breastfeeding can be stressful. Understanding from colleagues goes a long way.*

Combining breastfeeding and paid work is a short-term commitment on the part of your colleague, however it has long term benefits to both mother, baby and your organisation.



An Australian Breastfeeding Association Initiative

Many women return to work when their infant is at an age that breastfeeding is still recommended.* Support from her manager and colleagues is often an important factor in a mother's decision whether to combine breastfeeding and paid work, or prematurely wean her baby to return to work.

Research consistently shows that breastfeeding is important for the normal growth and development of babies and the health of their mothers. Not breastfeeding increases the risk of many childhood illnesses including gastroenteritis, ear infections, asthma, leukaemia, type 1 diabetes, and allergies. Not breastfeeding also increases a mother's risk of suffering cancers of the reproductive organs, type 2 diabetes, heart disease and many other illnesses.

Research shows that many women prematurely wean their babies to return to the paid workforce. However, this does not need to be the case as there are lots of practical ways the workplace, managers and colleagues can support breastfeeding employees. For more information visit the Breastfeeding Friendly Workplace website.

www.breastfeeding.asn.au/workplace

This information has been provided to you as part of this organisation's commitment to supporting our employees' health and wellbeing in both their work and personal lives.

* The National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC) recommends exclusive breastfeeding until six months of age and continued breastfeeding with complementary foods for at least 12 months and beyond if mother and infant wish.



**Australian
Breastfeeding
Association**