Breastfeeding and Lactation Support Policy

Policy Summary

The university recognizes the importance and benefits of breastfeeding for both mothers and children and is committed to supporting our nursing mothers in the workplace.

This policy is intended to support compliance with applicable laws related to nursing mothers and to provide guidance for the university community regarding the rights and resources available to nursing mothers on campus.

Related Regulations

- District of Columbia: https://dchealth.dc.gov/service/breastfeeding-workplace
- Federal: https://www.dol.gov/agencies/whd/nursing-mothers
- State: https://www.ncsl.org/research/health/breastfeeding-state-laws.aspx

Who is Governed by this Policy

Faculty, staff, students, and other university constituents and affiliates.

Policy

A nursing mother may breastfeed in any public or private location on campus where children are permitted. Children may not be permitted in settings where potential health, safety, noise issues or other hazards may be of concern, including but not limited to laboratories and clinical areas.

Lactation Breaks

A nursing mother may request reasonable lactation breaks during work hours for the purpose of breastfeeding or expressing breast milk.

The nursing mother should inform their supervisor of their need for reasonable daily lactation breaks so that appropriate accommodations can be made. Lactation breaks shall, if possible, run concurrently with the employee’s authorized work or lunch break time. If this time for an employee’s break time does not run concurrently or additional time is necessary, employees may request reasonable unpaid lactation breaks during work hours. Break-time will be provided unless it creates an undue hardship on university operations.

Lactation Rooms

The university will make reasonable efforts to provide nursing mothers sanitary, non-bathroom spaces shielded from view and free from intrusion from coworkers and the public for purposes of expressing milk. Private and secure spaces for breastfeeding or expressing breast milk can be found on campus and are referred to as Lactation Rooms. These Lactation Rooms have an accessible electrical outlet, a comfortable chair and a flat surface for the employee’s use.

Breastfeeding and Lactation Support

Nursing mothers who feel they have been denied appropriate accommodations are encouraged to contact their Human Resources Business Partner. Unlawful discrimination or harassment of a nursing mother, or
violations of this Policy, is prohibited and violators may be subject to disciplinary action. Complaints may also be filed with the District of Columbia Office of Human Rights.

**Related Information**

**New Parent Support:** Whether you are preparing for the birth of your child or have already welcomed your new baby home, GW is committed to providing programs and resources that can support you at every stage.

**Employees Guide to Breastfeeding and Working:** Developed by the Department of Health & Human Services, this booklet provides you with the basics for successfully continuing to breastfeed after returning to work.

**The Breastfeeding Center for Greater Washington:** The Center is located just off the Foggy Bottom campus at 2141 K Street NW. Staff at the Center are committed to optimizing the breastfeeding experience from the start. Supportive classes emphasize healthy and normal breastfeeding variations, with respect and understanding of the unique family.

**Contacts**

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**Responsible University Official:** Vice President and Chief People Officer

**Responsible Office:** GW Benefits

**Last Reviewed Date:** August 20, 2021