

Breastfeeding-Friendly Policy Toolkit: My Experience

For internal use by Breastfeeding Family Friendly Communities. With adaptations, this toolkit can support Businesses, Childcare Centers, and Clinics across North Carolina.

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Purpose: Developed during my Summer 2025 practicum, this toolkit reflects my contributions in creating outreach emails, policy templates, bilingual materials, and strategic guidance. Its primary purpose is to serve as an internal Breastfeeding Family Friendly Communities (BFFC) resource for future outreach and support initiatives. One of BFFC's main objectives is to document and share what one community (e.g., Durham, NC) has accomplished so that other communities nationwide can adapt and apply similar strategies. Breastfeeding Family Friendly Communities is effective in the work they do because they foster a group effort approach where communities learn from each other and share best practices. Additionally, as a nonprofit with frequent transitions between volunteers and interns, this toolkit can help newcomers understand the process and workflow. While currently in a pilot phase, this toolkit has the potential to become a step-by-step guide to help organizations implement breastfeeding-friendly policies, apply for recognition through the NC Breastfeeding Coalition, and foster a supportive workplace culture.

Section 1 – Why Lactation-Friendly Policies Matter

The Benefits

- **Health:** [Supports breastfeeding duration](#), which improves maternal and infant health outcomes.
- **Legal:** Complies with [NC workplace lactation law](#) and [federal requirements](#).
- **Workplace:** Increases [employee satisfaction, retention, and productivity](#).

NC Law Highlights

- Employers must provide **reasonable break time** and a **private space** (not a bathroom) for lactating employees to express milk.
- Policies should clearly communicate access, time allowances, and available resources.

Case example of how harmful the lack of policy and support can be:

“On top of being physically uncomfortable to even painful, it was very emotionally challenging as well...There were times where my pumping sessions were interrupted due to a student needing to get their belongings from my classroom (I had to pump in my classroom with the door locked because there was nowhere else to go). Ultimately, I ended up stopping around 6 months (as opposed to my goal of 1 year) because I just couldn't continue experiencing all that anymore.”

(Teacher testimony collected Summer 2025)

Section 2 – Getting Started

When approaching a business, childcare center, or clinic about developing a breastfeeding-friendly policy, or if the organization has expressed interest, assessing the current practices and environment may look something like:

1. Identifying workplace decision-makers and key contacts
 2. Reviewing current workplace policies
 3. Determining what physical space can become a dedicated lactation space
 4. Scheduling a meeting to discuss the policy and/or sending an example policy
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Section 3 – Outreach Materials

Email templates may vary depending on the purpose and timing of outreach. The following examples reflect communications I sent to hundreds of contacts during the summer of 2025, illustrating BFFC’s approach to partners and potential partners.

For Businesses:

Subject: Lactation Policy Support for State Recognition (NCBC Employer Award)

Dear (contact),

In 2023, Breastfeed Durham recognized your organization as a Breastfeeding Family Friendly Community Partner and Local Employer. As Breastfeed Durham's Policy Coordinator, I wanted to follow-up to ask if you would like to be considered for the North Carolina Breastfeeding Coalition's (NCBC) Employer Award, a state recognition of being a breastfeeding friendly employer. If so, the award requires organizations to have adopted and implemented an employer lactation policy.

In your survey response, you had indicated that your organization does not have an employer lactation policy. To assist with policy development, I have drafted an employer lactation policy for your organization. This is a living document that can be amended or exchanged amongst ourselves for feedback/review as desired.

If your organization implements this employer lactation policy or has implemented an employer lactation policy, please reply to this email with confirmation as we can apply for the NCBC Employer Award on your behalf if desired.

Please let me know if you have any questions or concerns.

Thank you!

For Childcare Centers:

Subject: Free Support to Earn NC's Breastfeeding-Friendly Child Care Designation

Hi (contact),

My name is Samantha and I am Breastfeeding Family Friendly Communities' new Policy Coordinator. I'm reaching out to follow up on the breastfeeding friendly policy you developed last fall with Fariha and to offer some exciting support.

Based on your efforts so far, we believe your center may now qualify for the prestigious [North Carolina Breastfeeding-Friendly Child Care Designation](#) from the North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services. We'd love to offer free assistance to help you complete the application. It usually takes about 90 minutes to file the paperwork and we can guide you through it during a Zoom call or site visit, whichever works best for you.

This is a no-pressure offer, we simply want to support the great work you're already doing. We'd love to help your center gain recognition for being a supportive space for breastfeeding families.

Please let me know if you're interested or have any questions. I'm happy to help however I can!

Thank you!

For Clinics:

Subject: Breastfeed Durham Policy Support

Good morning (contact),

My name is Samantha, and I'm reaching out as Breastfeed Durham's Policy Coordinator. I saw that you completed our Business Award form and indicated interest in developing a lactation policy for your clinic.

Attached to this email, you'll find two sample policies for your consideration:

1. **Employer Lactation Policy** – This addresses accommodations and rights for lactating employees in your clinic.
2. **Clinic Practice Lactation Policy** – This outlines best practices to support patients and families who are breastfeeding or chestfeeding.

These policies are living documents that can be amended or exchanged amongst ourselves for feedback/review as desired.

If your clinic implements the **employer lactation policy** then we can apply for the NCBC Employer Award on your behalf if desired.

The **clinic practice lactation policy** is optional but may be helpful if your team is looking to expand your current approach to lactation support with patients. We'd be happy to assist with tailoring either or both policies to reflect your clinic's needs and values.

Please let me know if you have any questions or would like to schedule time to discuss next steps. We're here to support you however we can!

Thank you!

These materials supported outreach and engagement efforts and can be adapted for future initiatives:

- National Breastfeeding Month Photo Contest flyer – English and Spanish



(Larger versions attached in the Appendix)

- Information card to go inside store aisles – English and Spanish



(Harris Teeter is just one example) (Larger versions attached in the Appendix)

Section 4 – Policy Templates

Employer Lactation Policy

[Insert Employer Name] Lactation Policy

Purpose

At **[Insert Employer Name]**, we are committed to supporting employees who choose to breastfeed, chestfeed, or express milk. We recognize lactation as a natural and essential process and aim to provide a supportive and accommodating work environment. This policy ensures that employees have access to appropriate facilities and reasonable time to express milk or nurse their babies.

Lactation Accommodation Provisions

Private Lactation Space

[Insert Employer Name] provides a private lactation space that is:

- **NOT a bathroom** and is free from intrusion and public view.
- **Equipped with:**
 - A comfortable chair and a small table or flat surface.
 - Electrical outlets for pumping equipment.
 - Adequate lighting and ventilation.
 - Privacy features, such as a locking door and window coverings.
 - Access to clean water nearby for washing hands and pump parts.
- **Located close to employees** whenever possible to minimize disruption.
- **Available as needed** and reserved exclusively for lactation accommodations.

Reasonable Time for Milk Expression

- Employees shall be provided **reasonable break time** to express milk or nurse their babies each time they need to do so during work hours.
- Break time for expressing milk shall be **paid when taken during an employee's existing paid break periods**. If additional time is needed beyond standard breaks, the employee may use unpaid time or other leave options as per policy.
- This accommodation is available **for as long as the employee chooses to express milk or nurse their baby following childbirth**.

Non-Discrimination and Privacy Protections

- **[Insert Employer Name]** strictly prohibits discrimination, harassment, or retaliation against employee who exercise their rights under this policy.
- Any act that invades a community member or employee's privacy while using the lactation space will be treated as a disciplinary offense and reported to management for prompt disciplinary action.

Employee Responsibilities

- An employee should **communicate their lactation needs** to management to arrange appropriate accommodations.
- Employees are responsible for the **proper storage of expressed milk** if refrigeration is not provided on-site.

Policy Communication and Compliance

- This policy will be **communicated to all current employees** and included in **new employee and community member materials**.
- Management is responsible for **ensuring compliance** and supporting employees in accessing lactation accommodations.
- This policy complies with all **applicable federal and state laws** regarding lactation accommodations in the workplace.

By implementing this policy, **[Insert Employer Name]** aims to create a supportive and inclusive environment that allows all employees to balance their responsibilities with their personal and family needs.

- **Break Time:** break afforded to any employee regardless of lactation status.
- **Employee:** individuals employed by **[Insert Employer Name]**
- **Lactating Employee:** an employee, regardless of gender identity, who is expressing human milk for their child. This process of expression is also called breastfeeding, chest feeding, pumping, or exclusively pumping, and may or may not occur after a pregnancy.

Clinic Lactation Policy

This is the Clinic Employer Lactation Policy which applies to clinical employees. This is different from patient care or clinic practice policies, such as our Clinic Practice Policy.

[Insert Clinic Name] Lactation Policy

Purpose

At **[Insert Clinic Name]**, we are committed to supporting clinical employees who choose to breastfeed, chestfeed, or express milk. We recognize lactation as a natural and essential process, especially important in healthcare environments that promote public health. This policy ensures that all employees in clinical settings have access to supportive accommodations and time to express milk or nurse their babies without compromising patient care or their professional responsibilities.

Lactation Accommodation Provisions

Private Lactation Space

[Insert Clinic Name] provides a private lactation space that is:

- NOT a bathroom and is free from intrusion and public view.
- Equipped with:
 - A comfortable chair and a small table or flat surface.
 - Electrical outlets for breast pumps.
 - Adequate lighting and ventilation.
 - Privacy features, such as a locking door and window coverings.
- Near running water for handwashing and cleaning pump parts.
- Located as close to employee work areas as feasible to reduce disruption to clinical duties.
- Available as needed and reserved exclusively for lactation use.

Reasonable Time for Milk Expression

- Clinical staff are provided reasonable, flexible break time to express milk or nurse during their shifts.
- If additional time is required beyond paid breaks, it may be taken as unpaid or covered by accrued leave, in accordance with clinic policy.
- This accommodation is available for as long as the employee chooses to express milk or nurse following childbirth.

Non-Discrimination and Privacy Protections

[Insert Clinic Name] strictly prohibits discrimination, harassment, or retaliation against any employee who exercises their rights under this policy.

Any breach of privacy—such as unauthorized entry or surveillance of the lactation space—will be addressed promptly and may result in disciplinary action.

Employee Responsibilities

Employees are encouraged to communicate their lactation needs to their supervisor or clinic management to coordinate access to space and time.

Employees are responsible for labeling and storing their expressed milk. Refrigeration will be made available when possible; otherwise, employees should bring appropriate storage solutions.

Policy Communication and Compliance

This policy will be shared with all current clinical employees and included in new hire orientation. Posters or notices

may be placed in staff areas to increase visibility and awareness. Clinic leadership is responsible for ensuring policy implementation and for supporting staff access to lactation accommodations. This policy complies with all applicable federal and state laws, including FLSA and the PUMP Act.

By implementing this policy, **[Insert Clinic Name]** affirms its commitment to creating a respectful and inclusive clinical environment that supports the health and wellbeing of its employees and their families.

- **Break Time:** break afforded to any clinic staff regardless of lactation status.
- **Clinic Staff:** individuals employed by **[Insert Clinic Name]**
- **Lactating Clinic Staff:** a clinic staff, regardless of gender identity, who is expressing human milk for their child. This process of expression is also called breastfeeding, chest feeding, pumping, or exclusively pumping, and may or may not occur after a pregnancy.

Tip: Highlighted sections indicate where you can customize the policy with the clinic or business name and other specific details when creating an example policy.

Section 5 – Recognition & Awards

North Carolina Breastfeeding Friendly Employer Award – Step-by-Step

1. Review eligibility checklist
 2. Collect documentation
 3. Customize policy using templates in Section 4
 4. Submit application on the NCBC portal
 5. Celebrate and promote recognition internally and externally
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Section 6 – Implementation & Follow-Up

Tips for Implementing a Policy in Your Workplace:

- Include policy in onboarding packets
- Announce in a staff meeting or newsletter
- Post flyer in staff break room or public space
- Create a feedback form for employees to assess how the policy is working and share their satisfaction.

Lessons Learned from Summer 2025 Outreach:

- Quick follow up after initial contact increases participation and engagement.
 - Providing bilingual materials enhances accessibility and expands our reach.
 - Example policies help decision makers visualize how a lactation policy could be implemented in practice.
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Section 7 – Resources

- **NCBC Guidelines:** <https://www.ncbfc.org/awards-recognitions>
 - **CDC Workplace Breastfeeding Support:** <https://www.cdc.gov/infant-toddler-nutrition/breastfeeding/returning-to-your-workplace.html>
 - **BFFC Support Contact:** contact@breastfeedingcommunities.org | <https://breastfeedingcommunities.org/about-us/learn-more/>
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Appendices

Appendix A: English and Spanish Flyers

Silliest Breastfeeding Photo Contest

 **Breastfeed Durham**



Win a \$100 gift card and more!

Celebrate National Breastfeeding Month with us!

Fill out the Google Form found at the QR code or at the link in the description to enter!
<https://breastfeeddurham.org/silliest-photo/>

Submit by August 31st

Winners announced on September 15th (extending National Breastfeeding Month joy!)





**Breastfeed
Durham**

Concurso “La Foto Más Divertida de Lactancia”



**Gana una
tarjeta de regalo
de \$100 y más**

**¡Celebra el Mes Nacional de la Lactancia Materna
con nosotros!**

¡Rellene el formulario de Google que se encuentra en el
código QR o en el enlace de la descripción para participar!
<https://breastfeeddurham.org/silliest-photo/>

Envíe antes del 31 de Agosto

Las ganadoras se anunciarán el 15 de
Septiembre. ¡Compartamos la alegría del
Mes Nacional de la Lactancia Materna!



Need lactation support?

Necesita apoyo para la lactancia?



Harris Teeter

Developed by BreastfeedingCommunities.org



Lactation support available at:

Women, Infant, and Children's Program (WIC)

- signupwic.com | 919-707-5800

La Leche League USA

- LLLusa.org/locator/ | 1-800-525-3243

US Breastfeeding Committee

- usbreastfeedingcommittee.org

North Carolina Breastfeeding Coalition

- ncbfc.org

Appalachian Breastfeeding Network Hotline

- appalachianbreastfeedingnetwork.org | 888-588-3423

