



What is “Reasonable Break Time” for Breastfeeding Employees?

In 2010, the government enacted the federal Break Time for Nursing Mothers law that requires employers covered by the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) to provide “reasonable break time” for an employee to express breast milk for her nursing child for one year after the child’s birth.

Understandably, many employers are unclear about what constitutes “reasonable break time.” How much time is needed varies greatly by company and their employees’ working environment(s), so we’ve put together some general guidelines to help HR professionals determine what “reasonable” is in their unique situation.

We’ve left room for you to estimate and record how much time each of these tasks take so that you can learn how much time your employees need. We’ve already filled in a couple of them for you, based on our experience working with thousands of breastfeeding parents!

Task	Time
Walk from workstation to collect stored pumping equipment (e.g., a locker)	
Walk from where pumping equipment is stored to designated lactation space	
Remove work-required equipment that is worn (e.g., hairnets, goggles, other PPE, etc.)	
Set-up pumping equipment and remove necessary clothing	3 minutes
Pump	15 minutes
Clean up pumping equipment and space and get redressed	5 minutes
Walk to location to store breast milk (e.g., designated fridge)	
Walk to where pumping equipment is stored and put it away	
Reapply work-required equipment (e.g., hairnets, goggles, PPE)	
Walk back to return to workstation	



Helpful tips:

Here are some ways employers can reduce the amount of time needed for pumping breaks and help further support their breastfeeding parents!



Provide a hospital-grade pump in your lactation space. A multi-user pump helps employees express milk faster and because the employee need only bring her breast milk “kit” with her it is much less to clean up and pack up.



Offer storage in your pumping space where employees can leave their supplies, such as their pumping kit, so it is already in the room when it comes time to pump – and it’s easy to put away at the end of a session.



Put an easy-to-place, free-standing Mamava® lactation space near employee workstations or lockers, to reduce travel time getting to and from the pumping area.



Provide a small, dedicated refrigerator for employees to keep their breast milk so they don’t have to waste time finding space in a common refrigerator in the breakroom or cafeteria.



Provide a source of water (either a sink, or bottled water), a microwave, and some cleaning supplies in the pumping space to make clean-up a little faster and easier.

Congratulations on taking this important step in supporting the working moms in your organization! For additional information on employee lactation support, visit [NewMomsHealthyReturns.com](https://www.newmomshealthyreturns.com).