



Talking to your Supervisor

Before going on leave, talk to your employer about your plans to breastfeed when you return to work. The included sample letter can help get the conversation started. It can be used as-is, or changed based on your needs.

What do I say?

Talk about your plan to feed your baby when you return to work, and how being able to meet your breastfeeding goals allows you to give them a healthy start in life. It helps to tell your employer why it is important to you, and why you need their support.

What do I ask for?

Talk with your employer about your needs. If you do not have a private space to pump or breastfeed, ask your employer to pick a space that will work. The space does not have to be permanent, but should be a non-bathroom, private space that is close to a clean water source. You will need access to a place to store your breast milk, such as a cooler or staff refrigerator.

Another key topic to talk about is the type of break schedule you will need. Work with your employer to develop a schedule. Discuss your needs for flexibility especially in your early weeks back at work. Consider talking about other ideas like working shorter hours, starting in the middle of the week, or working part-time, if those are possible options.

How do I negotiate?

It is important that you feel comfortable letting your employer know what you need to help meet your breastfeeding goals. Every mom's needs and every job's needs are unique, so there is not a one-size-fits-all break schedule for pumping. Talking with your employer about ideas that meet the business and your needs is the first step to finding a schedule that works.

How do I get more information about FLSA or FMLA?

The Wage and Hour Division of the U.S. Department of Labor has information and a helpline to answer questions about federal wage and hour laws, including the Fair Labor Standards Act as well as the Family and Medical Leave Act.

For more information, visit the Wage and Hour Division website at: [dol.gov/agencies/whd](https://www.dol.gov/agencies/whd) or call 1-866-4-US-WAGE (1-866-487-9243).



TEXAS
Health and Human
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Sample Letter



Date

Employer Name and Address

Dear *Supervisor Name*:

Thank you for your support during my *xx* years with *Employer Name*. I take great pride in my work for *Employer Name*. Based on advice from my doctor, I have made the decision to feed my baby breast milk. All major health organizations agree that breastfeeding is the best way for me and my baby to be healthy, now and in the long term. I am asking for your support with this feeding goal as a new parent returning to work.

Studies have shown that employers who support breastfeeding see benefits for themselves. Improved staff morale and reduced turnover, increased productivity, reduced insurance claims, and less absenteeism to care for a sick child are just some of the reported benefits.

Federal law protects the right to break time and access to an appropriate space for breast milk expression at work. The Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) requires that employers provide reasonable break time and a private space—other than a bathroom—for an employee to express breast milk for her nursing child for one year after the child’s birth, and each time an employee has the need to express their milk.

To continue breastfeeding when I return to work, I need:

- **Flexible time to pump** to help maintain my milk supply: for example, two 20-to-30-minute breaks each day as well as a regular lunch break.
- **A clean, private space to express breast milk.** This can be an existing, non-bathroom space.
- **Support of my decision to breastfeed my baby** and to take care of the physical needs that come naturally with breastfeeding.

For planning purposes, a sample work schedule is attached, and though I will try to stick to it, your flexibility as I figure out the needs to breastfeed successfully will be greatly appreciated.

Time	Activity
8:00 to 10:00 am	At workstation/able to attend meetings
10:00 to 10:20 am	Lactation break
10:20 am to 12:10 pm	At workstation/able to attend meetings
12:10 to 1:00 pm	Lunch, lactation break
1:00 to 3:30 pm	At workstation/able to attend meetings
3:30 to 3:50 pm	Lactation break
3:50 to 5:00 pm	At workstation/able to attend meetings

For more information on supporting breastfeeding in the workplace, including state and federal laws, please visit dshs.texas.gov/TexasMotherFriendly. This site offers more details on the benefits of breastfeeding, plus support and resources to help set up a breastfeeding-friendly workplace.

I hope this letter can start a conversation and welcome your input. I appreciate the efforts that you are making to support me, my family, and especially my newborn child, *Child's First Name (if you know it already)*.

Sincerely,

Your Name

Your Title



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