



Lactation and Breastfeeding Support

Cornell University provides on-site lactation accommodations, time away from work for the purpose of pumping, health insurance coverage for pumps, and more.

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Breast Pump/Supply Expenses

The Cornell Program for Healthy Living, Empire Plans, and student health insurance program all provide various forms of breast pump and supply coverage (see [coverage details](#) - pdf).

Faculty and staff members who are enrolled in a medical flexible spending account can submit lactation supply expenses for reimbursement. See more information on [flexible spending accounts](#) (including deadlines).

Existing Mothers' Rooms

See [directory of available rooms](#) along with photos, amenities, and contact information.

Informal accommodations have been made in facilities that do not have a dedicated Mothers' Room. To obtain information on informal accommodation options, or to obtain assistance in creating a designated Mothers' Room for your building or department, please [contact Work/Life](#).

Procedure to Request Lactation Time Away from Work

To make reasonable time away from work arrangements to express breast milk employees needing accommodation must contact their supervisor or college/unit level human resource representative. Unpaid break time, paid break time, or unpaid meal time can be used for this accommodation, as well as personal leave, family health leave, vacation, or flexible scheduling.

Supervisors: How to Respond to an Employee Request for Time Away from Work

Supervisors are encouraged to work within University policies regarding breaks and hours of work to accommodate employees who wish to use the facilities. Generally, a maximum of 20-30 minutes, 3 times per day, should be sufficient; however, the required time is impacted by individual needs and the proximity of a reasonable space for lactation. Decisions should therefore be made on a case by case basis. Consider schedule options that would accommodate this leave time, and still allow for business needs to be accomplished.

A reasonable space should be secure, private, ventilated, sanitary, and kept at a comfortable temperature. It should offer comfortable seating, an electrical outlet, lighting, and have a sink nearby.

Examples of Reasonable Spaces for Lactation

- An area that is separated from the restroom facility by a door
- A small, unused conference room that can be secured and is visually private
- A private office that can be secured and is visually private

Examples of Unreasonable Spaces for Lactation

- Restroom area that does not have an area separated from the stalls
- Janitorial or supply closet

Expectations of Employee

- Before going on leave, communicate with the supervisor what needs you will have regarding time away from work for lactation
- Tidy up the area or room after its use
- Provide own pump, adapter, and accessories
- Provide own small cooler or insulated bag, if a refrigerator is not available for milk storage

Potential Options for Scheduling Concerns

A variety of flexible work arrangements can be used for the purpose of accommodating lactation time, such as alternate start/stop times to the workday, rearranging break periods, work from home agreements, etc.

Additional Support Services

- **Preparing for Baby Series:** a six-part series of workshops offered twice throughout the year, with two dates devoted to breastfeeding education. Upcoming dates will be posted on the [parenting workshops](#) page when registration opens.
- **E-list:** lactation-L is an e-list that is available for faculty, staff, and students to join. The list will provide you with information on upcoming breastfeeding classes, the development of designated rooms on campus, and allow for members to interact by asking questions and provide support to fellow breastfeeding mothers.
- **Maternity and Nursing Mother Parking Permits:** Expectant mothers in their last six weeks of pregnancy can purchase a permit for the parking area closest to their place of work or classes. A doctor's note indicating the due date is required. Nursing mothers may purchase a permit, valid for 12 weeks, to park closer to their place of work or classes. This permit accommodation may be renewed one time for another 12 week period. Prices for both permits vary depending on parking location. Please contact Transportation Services at 255-PARK for more information.

Traveling with Breastmilk

- Cornell employees with a [Flexible Spending Account \(FSA\)](#) may use their account for the expense of shipping breastmilk. When submitting a receipt to Payflex after travel, provide as much information as possible (including the purpose of travel).
- [Transportation Security Administration - Traveling with Children](#) - Guidance on formula and breastmilk
- [Fly Fearlessly with Breast Milk: Your TSA Rights in Plain English](#) - by Mamava.com

Bargaining Units

Employees covered under collective bargaining agreements are also covered under the Lactation Time Away from Work policy, which is a reflection of New York State law. Refer to the appropriate union contracts for more information to determine how paid, unpaid, and flextime leave may be used for lactation purposes. Supervisors are encouraged to work within union policies and contracts, if applicable.

Prohibited Discrimination

The New York State law prohibits discrimination against an employee who chooses to express breast milk in the work place. Any complaints of discrimination will be handled under University Policy 6.4, Prohibited Discrimination, Protected Status (Including Sexual) Harassment and Bias Activity.

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