

Breastfeeding and Employment

Work Barriers	Potential Impact on Breastfeeding	Possible Solutions
Lack of space/privacy	Embarrassment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Place curtains over cubicle entrances Use a supervisor's office, conference room, or closet area When the weather permits, place a sun reflector screen over the windshield and hang a baby blanket inside the driver and passenger windows. Some personal use breast pumps have car battery attachments. Use a sling or lightweight blanket to cover while breastfeeding or expressing milk.
Irregular work schedule	Reliance on family for childcare who may not support breastfeeding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Talk with family members about bringing her baby to her worksite for scheduled breaks and meal periods. This can help sustain her milk production and help her feel close to her baby. Encourage mothers to breastfeed often when they are with their baby to protect milk production.
Inflexible schedule while at work	Leaking, engorgement, and ultimate decline in milk production	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encourage mothers to breastfeed often when they are with their baby to protect milk production
Weather conditions (a job that involves working outside, for example)	Inability to safely store milk	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hand expression can be helpful when an electric or battery-powered breast pump is not possible. When weather permits, place a sun reflector screen over the windshield and hang a baby blanket inside the driver and passenger windows. Some personal use breast pumps have car battery attachments. Encourage mothers to carry a cooler with ice packs to keep their milk cool
Lack of supervisor support	Lack of confidence in speaking up about breastfeeding needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Try to speak with supervisors before returning to work to discuss options such as: job sharing, split shifts, or telecommuting; working a four day week for a while; bringing baby to work if possible; adjusting schedule to allow for pumping/feeding breaks; provide discrete locations for pumping/feeding; possible locations for storing expressed milk. Encourage mothers to seek support from other breastfeeding mothers at the job
Job stress	Lack of self-esteem/confidence in working through breastfeeding concerns; inability to relax to bring about a milk ejection reflex	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encourage mothers to seek support from other mothers at the job who are breastfeeding. Help them locate La Leche League or another mother support group in the community.