

Breastfeeding and Returning to Work
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In 2008, approximately 80% of WIC mothers initiated breastfeeding. Even though many mothers begin breastfeeding some of them return to work or school and are not sure how to manage breastfeeding their baby under those circumstances. A few mothers take their baby to work and are able to breast feed their baby during a break or at lunchtime. Sometimes a family member is able to bring the baby to the work place for the mother to breastfeed. Many women do not have this as a choice but still want to provide breast milk to be fed to their baby while they are away from the baby due to school or work.

For women who return to work or school for 20 or more hours per week, WIC may be able to provide a single user electric pump. The baby must be fully breastfed and be at least 4 weeks old before the pump can be issued to the mother. For mothers who will be returning to work or school for less than 20 hours per week, WIC can provide a good quality manual pump.

In addition, the Affordable Care Act of 2010 requires that employers are to provide reasonable break time for an employee to express breast milk for a nursing child up to one year of age. Employers must also provide a place, other than a bathroom, that is shielded from view and free from intrusion from coworkers and the public, to be used by an employee to express breast milk. The law applies to hourly workers who are subject to overtime laws. If you have any questions about breastfeeding please contact the WIC office at 327-7488 and listen to the prompt and then press 5 to speak to the Breastfeeding Coordinator.

References:

Nutrition Surveillance Trend Report, 1998 to 2008, Idaho WIC Program

<http://www.usbreastfeeding.org/Workplace/WorkplaceSupport/WorkplaceSupportinHealthCareReform/tabid/175/Default.aspx>

<http://healthandwelfare.idaho.gov/LinkClick.aspx?fileticket=LfvkOOg1ErE%3d&tabid=92&mid=938>

<http://www.iwpr.org/publications/pubs/better-health-for-mothers-and-children-breastfeeding-accommodations-under-the-affordable-care-act>