

Breastfeeding Friendly Workplace Policy

File Number:		Directorate:	Corporate Services
Authority:	CEO	Responsible Officer:	OD Consultant
Policy Type:	OD	Version Number:	July 2019
Approval Date:	March 2011	Review Date:	July 2022

1. Purpose

The City of Greater Dandenong is committed to ensuring a consistent and sound approach to the provision of breastfeeding facilities for staff.

2. Background

The Greater Dandenong City Council Enterprise Agreement (EBA) states:

“The Greater Dandenong City Council agrees to continue to provide nursing mothers with access to clean and safe private facilities for expressing and storing milk, including adopting Breastfeeding Friendly Workplace Accreditation principles.”

It is the intention of Greater Dandenong City Council to maintain accreditation per the provisions of the EBA.

3. Scope

The policy is designed to inform staff of Council’s acceptance and support of breastfeeding mothers who wish to continue breastfeeding when they return to work after taking maternity leave.

4. References

- Greater Dandenong City Council Enterprise Agreement
- Victorian Local Authorities Award 2001
- Appropriate Workplace Behaviours Policy

5. Council Policy

The City of Greater Dandenong Council Municipal Early Years Plan and the Greater Dandenong City Council Enterprise Agreement recognises the importance of breastfeeding, which promotes a wide range of health benefits to both mother and baby as noted by the World Health Organisation (WHO) in its recommendations¹.

¹ “As a global public health recommendation, infants should be exclusively breastfed for the first six months of life to achieve optimal growth, development and health. Thereafter, to meet their evolving nutritional requirements, infants should receive nutritionally adequate and safe complementary foods while breastfeeding continues for up to two years of age or beyond”.

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Council aims to promote a family friendly workplace that enables mothers to balance breastfeeding and their work responsibilities where practicable when returning from maternity leave.

City of Greater Dandenong also recognised a need to ensure that work and breastfeeding can be combined comfortably and practically to promote ongoing benefits to the baby, mother and Council.

Commitment:

Where practicable the City of Greater Dandenong will provide the following facilities and support to lactating mothers per the City of Greater Dandenong Breastfeeding in the Workplace Guidelines:

- A clean, private room with a power point, lockable door, comfortable chair, access to refrigerator, hand washing facilities and storage area which may be used for feeding or expressing breast milk;
- Mutually agreed work arrangements as determined by Council's Enterprise Agreement and relevant policies, such as the Breastfeeding in the Workplace Guidelines, Flexible Work Options Policy and Workplace Adjustment Guidelines;
- Lactation break; the number and duration of lactation breaks taken during the working period will be determined by the individual needs and age of the baby. It is recognised that the younger the baby, the more frequently a mother is likely to feed her baby. These breaks may be negotiated between the mother and her supervisor / manager and will enable the mother to either express breast milk, leave her workplace to feed her baby or have the baby brought to her;

Awareness:

All staff employed by the City of Greater Dandenong will be informed of the policy by newsletters, noticeboards and council Intranet. Staff signalling their intention to apply for maternity leave will be reminded of this policy by their supervisor / manager and encouraged to discuss the incorporation of breastfeeding in their return to work plans. Support from colleagues is crucial to providing a supportive workplace environment for breastfeeding employees. All employees have a responsibility to treat colleagues who are breastfeeding with respect and dignity.

6. Related Documents

- Flexible Work Options Policy
- Workplace Adjustment Guidelines

Breastfeeding in the Workplace Guidelines

File Number:		Directorate:	Corporate Services
Authority:	CEO	Responsible Officer:	OD Consultant
Policy Type:	OD	Version Number:	July 2019
Approval Date:	November 2010	Review Date:	July 2022

1. Purpose

The City of Greater Dandenong is committed to maintaining Breastfeeding Friendly Workplace accreditation from the Australian Breastfeeding Association.

2. Background

The Greater Dandenong City Council Enterprise Agreement (EBA) states:

“The Greater Dandenong City Council agrees to continue to provide nursing mothers with access to clean and safe private facilities for expressing and storing milk, including adopting Breastfeeding Friendly Workplace Accreditation principles.”

It is the intention of Greater Dandenong City Council to maintain accreditation per the provisions of the EBA.

3. Scope

Introduction

Breastfeeding Friendly Workplace (BFW) is an initiative of the Australian Breastfeeding Association. An Accredited Breastfeeding Friendly Workplace is assessed annually to ensure that female employees:

- have access to a suitable facility in which they can breastfeed their infant or express their breast milk;
- are provided breaks from work in order to breastfeed or express milk; and
- can discuss their breastfeeding needs with their employer;

City of Greater Dandenong (CGD) acknowledges that combining work and breastfeeding can create considerable pressures for working women with babies and therefore is committed to provide support and promote a balance between work and early parenthood for all employees.

This document aims to provide guidance and principles to assist managers and team leaders in all departments to effectively support and manage employees who are breastfeeding.

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The intent of these principles is to:

- Encourage new mothers to breastfeed, as this is important as breast milk is the normal source of nutrition for infants;
- Improve the retention rate of female employees after maternity leave;
- Lead to earlier return to work for some mothers;
- Provide a low-cost intervention that supports a family friendly work culture;
- Improve employer-employee relations by acknowledging the needs of employees who are breastfeeding;

Employees working within City of Greater Dandenong can refer to the “New Employee Handbook” Council has *“agreed to provide nursing mothers with access to clean and safe private facilities for expressing and storing milk”*

4. References

- Greater Dandenong City Council Enterprise Agreement;
- Victorian Local Authorities Award 2001;
- Appropriate Workplace Behaviours Policy
- Staff Grievance Resolution Policy;

5. Council Policy

Breastfeeding Facilities

CGD will provide appropriate facilities for breastfeeding mothers either on-site or within reasonable access of the employees work location, for example Maternal & Child Health Centres, Child Care Centres or a suitable room. A child may be brought into the workplace for the purpose of breastfeeding, the mother may leave the workplace to breastfeed, or the mother may express milk within the workplace.

A suitable room will be identified at the relevant work sites. When selecting an appropriate place, consideration must be given to the comfort, safety and privacy of the breastfeeding employee. The room does not have to be specifically allocated as a “Breastfeeding Room” though it can be a general-purpose room or office that can be used if required by a breastfeeding employee. It will include easy access to hand washing and milk storage facilities.

For Breastfeeding Room locations and other up to date information please see our Breastfeeding Friendly Workplace page on WebStar.

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Lactation Breaks

Reasonable paid time required by staff for Lactation Breaks will be provided by the City of Greater Dandenong in order to assist them to achieve a positive work / life balance whilst achieving their daily operational requirements. Employees will also need to ensure that their colleagues are informed when taking these breaks. Direct supervisors / managers need to be flexible in allowing employees to take lactation breaks from work when needed and arrange coverage if / as necessary.

Employees will need to discuss with their direct manager suitable breaks from work for the purpose of breastfeeding or expressing milk. These breaks should occur in addition to, not instead of normal meal and tea breaks. For example, two 30-minute breaks per 8 hour working day should be provided for the purpose of breastfeeding or expressing milk, acknowledging that it is not always possible to designate set work breaks as the individual needs and lactation cycles of mothers will vary.

Other Support

To ensure that all City of Greater Dandenong staff are aware of the Breastfeeding Policy / Guidelines they will be communicated to all new staff during their Induction program.

Breastfeeding information will also be provided to staff when they request Maternity Leave.

The Australian Breastfeeding Association has trained volunteer breastfeeding counsellors available on the National Breastfeeding Helpline 24 hours per day for information and support. Call 1800 mum 2 mum – 1800 686 268 (including VoIP callers) or visit www.breastfeeding.asn.au for breastfeeding information local group contact details in your area.

The City of Greater Dandenong recognises that the individual needs of mother, carer and baby will vary, and as such are committed to provide work arrangements that will meet the needs of the employee as well as operational requirements. If after discussing your individual needs with your manager a workable solution cannot be found, please contact the Team Leader Organisational Development to assist with the facilitation of a suitable arrangement within the Guidelines.

Breastfeeding mothers can refer to advice from their Maternal & Child Health (MCH) Nurse, lactation consultants within CGD's MCH service or the Australian Breastfeeding Association. Further information can be accessed via:

<http://www.breastfeeding.asn.au>

Health & Safety considerations

A risk and occupational health & safety assessment will be undertaken to address health and safety issues related to breastfeeding in the workplace. Potential issues, hazards and control measures are:

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a) Storage of Breast Milk and Freezing / Thawing Breast Milk

Hazards:

If breast milk is stored unsecured and unlabelled, then it is at risk of contamination. This may also occur if frozen breast milk in an unlabelled container is left out of the freezer to thaw.

Potential consequences:

- Employee stress and anxiety;
- Potential exposure to infection and disease of child;
- Replacement worker cost;

Control Measures:

To reduce the likelihood of this hazard occurring, breastfeeding employees will ensure that the following procedures are implemented:

- Milk is stored in the fridge or freezer in individual clean, sterilized and leak proof containers within a larger container with lid all of which are supplied by the breastfeeding mother;
- Each and every container is clearly labelled with employee's name and date;
- Individual containers are stored within the larger container with lid at the back of the fridge at a temperature of 4 degrees Celsius or lower. Breast milk is not to be stored in the fridge door;
- Frozen milk to be thawed in the fridge and not left on a bench, nor thawed in the microwave;
- Stored breast milk is removed from the communal fridge at the end of each day;

b) Storage of Nursing Equipment

Hazards:

There is a potential risk of damage or contamination of personal nursing equipment including bottles, pumps, (manual or electric) teats, bibs and towels.

Potential consequences:

- Risk of adverse medical reaction;
- Employee stress and anxiety;
- Replacement worker cost;
- Adverse publicity;
- Damaged property and cost of replacement;

Control Measures:

To minimize the likelihood of this hazard from occurring, all equipment is to be stored with the employee and not in communal areas where there is an opportunity for others to access the equipment.

The employee is responsible to ensure that any electric breast pumps are maintained and checked to be in sound working order.

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c) Disposal of soiled nappies and nursing pads

Soiled nappies and nursing pads are not to be disposed of in sanitary bins or internal bins. They should be disposed of appropriately in external bins located outside each building.

Responsibilities

a) Employee's responsibilities

Breastfeeding employees will:

- Notify their Direct Manager of their work-related breastfeeding requirements in advance (where possible). Employees may need to breastfeed at the workplace, express milk at the workplace, or travel away from work to feed their baby;
- Discuss and negotiate breastfeeding facilities and lactation breaks with their Direct manager, ensuring that daily operational requirements continue to be met;
- Adhere to the Health & Safety requirements outlined in these Guidelines;
- Ensure that their child is delivered directly to the workplace facility designated for the purpose of lactation breaks, as applicable; and
- Ensure that the caregiver and the child in their care leave the workplace at the completion of each lactation break;

All employees will be required to:

- Treat employees who are breastfeeding with respect and dignity;
- Ensure breastfeeding employees feel comfortable to breastfeed in the workplace and do not suffer discrimination or harassment as a result of doing so; and
- Understand the Health & Safety requirements outlined in these Guidelines and refrain from contact with the storage of breast milk and other personal equipment;

b) Direct Manager's responsibilities

In addition to their responsibilities as employees, Direct Managers are specifically required to:

- Give due consideration to all requests for lactation breaks and suitable breastfeeding facilities;
- Consider and implement (where possible) flexible work practices to enable breastfeeding mothers to return or commence work, and provide suitable breastfeeding facilities, subject to genuine operational requirements and the restrictions of the work site; and
- Deal with any complaints seriously and confidentially and in accordance with Council's policies and procedures;

Grievances

Any employees aggrieved by the application of these Guidelines may follow City of Greater Dandenong Staff Grievance Resolution Policy. A copy of this policy is available on Webstar.

6. Related Documents

- Flexible Work Options Policy
- Workplace Adjustment Guidelines
- Supporting breastfeeding employees – Checklist for Managers