

# **SUL ROSS STATE UNIVERSITY**

*A Member of the Texas State University System*

## **SRSU Policy: Workplace Lactation Program**

**SRSU Policy ID: APM 5.27**

**Policy Reviewed by: Director of Human Resources**

**Approval Authority: Vice President of Finance and Operations**

**Approval Date: July 01, 2017**

**Next Review Date: July 01, 2021**

### **A. Purpose:**

Sul Ross State University recognizes that maintaining a balance between work and family is necessary for optimized employee work performance. The university is committed to supporting employees who choose to breastfeed. To assist employees with challenges associated with workplace milk expression, and to comply with the Texas State Health and Safety Code Chapter 165.003 which recognizes that a mother is entitled to breastfeed her baby in any location in which the mother is entitled to be, the university has implemented a Workplace Lactation Program.

Benefits of the program include:

1. Healthier babies – Research shows that breastfed babies get sick less often and have fewer visits to the doctor than babies that receive formula.
2. Increased attendance – Due to less time lost for care of sick children;
3. Reduced cost – Due to fewer insurance claims for sick children and mothers;
4. Reduced turnover – Due to mothers opting to return to work because private locations are provided for milk expression and breastfeeding; and
5. Increased morale – Due to the university's support for breastfeeding employees.

### **B. Policy and Procedure:**

1. Support for Workplace Lactation
  - a. Employees who wish to express milk or breastfeed during work hours are entitled to take reasonable breaks as frequently as needed for up to one year following the birth of the employee's child. Exceptions beyond one year should be discussed in advance with the supervisor.

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- b. The frequency and duration of breaks for this purpose may vary as determined by the needs of the mother. This is considered paid time; however, nursing mothers should first utilize their normal break periods. The frequency and amount of break time allowed to express breast milk may vary and will include the time required to gather, clean, store necessary equipment, and any necessary travel time to and from the location used to express milk.
- c. Employees may work predetermined and approved flexible work schedules to accommodate lactation.

## **C. Responsibilities**

### 1. Supervisors shall:

- a. Discuss with an expectant mother her potential plans to express milk upon return to work. This will allow planning time to make adjustments as needed. The supervisor may delegate this responsibility to an appropriate female staff member.
- b. Human Resources will work with the supervisor to designate an appropriate area for the employee to breast feed or express milk. The designated area may not be a multiple user bathroom, and must be an area shielded from view and free from intrusion from coworkers and the public.
- c. Supervisors are responsible for ensuring that the duties of the nursing mother are covered during her expression or breastfeeding breaks.
- d. Supervisors are responsible for alerting pregnant and breastfeeding employees about this policy for lactation support.

### 2. Employees shall:

- a. Communicate with their supervisor regarding scheduling or other needs as far in advance as possible if planning to express breast milk or breast feeding while at work and comply with agreed flexible schedules.
- b. If an employee prefers, she may also express milk in her own private office, or in another private location agreed upon in consultation with the employee's supervisor and Human Resources.