Date: April 26, 2012

Purpose:

The University of Southern Maine recognizes the importance and benefits of breastfeeding for both mothers and their infants, and in promoting a family-friendly work and study environment. Maine law and the federal Affordable Care Act provide for the needs of mothers who are nursing and their infants. The University of Southern Maine intends to fully comply with these provisions of law by implementing a breastfeeding and lactation policy for faculty and staff.

By implementing a breastfeeding and lactation policy, the University strives to create an exceptional environment conducive to working and learning and attuned to both professional and personal needs, such as the needs of a mother who is breastfeeding to nurse or express milk for her baby while she is at work.

Applicable To:

All relevant University faculty and staff.

Responsibility:

All University supervisors are responsible for being aware of the policy and working with relevant employees to arrange mutually convenient lactation break times.

Policy:

The University of Southern Maine recognizes the importance and benefits of breastfeeding for both mothers and their infants and its promotion of a family-friendly work environment. In accordance with Maine law, the University acknowledges that a woman may breastfeed her child in any place open to the public on campus. As required by federal and state law, the University also makes reasonable efforts to provide sanitary and private space, other than a bathroom, to be used as a lactation room in close proximity to the work area for employees who are breastfeeding. Supervisors in nonacademic and academic units or departments shall work with employees who are breastfeeding to schedule reasonable and flexible break times each day for this activity.
1. Lactation Breaks
   a) Whenever possible, the University shall provide flexibility for staff and faculty mothers who give their supervisor adequate notice identifying a need for lactation support and facilities.
   b) Mothers are responsible for requesting lactation support prior to or during maternity leave, preferably no later than two weeks before returning to work.
   c) The unpaid time (such as a lunch period), generally not to exceed one hour, may run concurrently with an employee’s paid break time (if applicable), but the University shall make separate time available if this is not reasonable. Supervisors and employees shall work together to establish mutually convenient times.
   d) Alternatively, personal leave, vacation time, or flexible scheduling may be used for this accommodation.
   e) No serious disruption of University operations may result from providing lactation time.
   f) Consistent with the University’s efforts to recognize the importance of supporting the needs of working caregivers, supervisors shall respond seriously and positively to notice of a need for lactation support and facilities and shall ensure that there are no negative consequences to mothers who are breastfeeding when lactation break times are needed.

2. Lactation Facilities
   a) The University shall make reasonable efforts to provide sanitary and private facilities in close proximity to the work area for mothers to breastfeed or to express breast milk.
   b) The location may be the place an employee normally works if there is adequate privacy, cleanliness, and that place is comfortable for the employee.
   c) Areas such as private offices or conference rooms with lockable doors qualify as appropriate spaces for lactation purposes.
   d) Bathrooms are not appropriate spaces for lactation purposes, unless the bathroom is equipped with a separate, designated room for lactation purposes.

Procedure:
1. Supervisors shall review available space in their unit or department and provide appropriate nearby space and break time upon a request for lactation support and facilities.
2. Mothers who are breastfeeding or expressing milk are responsible for any spot cleaning of the lactation facility upon completion of their breastfeeding or expressing milk.
3. If an employee has comments, concerns, or questions regarding the University of Southern Maine Breastfeeding and Lactation Support Policy, other work-life balance personnel policies, or believe they have been denied appropriate accommodation, they may contact the Human Resources Department.