

Breastfeeding Policy

Section 1 - Background and Purpose

(1) La Trobe recognises the importance of parents having time and space to provide food for their babies and supports staff who wish to breastfeed their baby while they participate in work or study on campus and in campus related activities. It acknowledges that women have the right to breastfeed in public places and that it is unlawful to treat a woman less favourably on the basis that she is breastfeeding a child, in accordance with legislation.

(2) La Trobe encourages staff and management to have a positive, accepting attitude toward working women who are breastfeeding. La Trobe promotes and supports breastfeeding and the expression of breastmilk by staff members who are breastfeeding when they return to work.

(3) In order to support women's return to work following a period of parental leave, La Trobe seeks to provide a supportive environment, including reasonable arrangements to enable women to continue to breastfeed.

(4) La Trobe has received accreditation as a Breastfeeding Friendly Workplace since 2010 and continues to provide a breastfeeding friendly environment that has breastfeeding or parenting rooms to support mothers.

(5) This Policy outlines the principles La Trobe is committed to in support of mothers who are breastfeeding at work.

Section 2 - Scope

(6) This Policy applies to all La Trobe staff.

(7) This Policy applies to all staff and associates of La Trobe (contractors, agency staff, conjoints, volunteers, honoraries, Council members, visiting appointments and other professional personnel).

(8) The collective group is referred to as 'staff' in this policy unless specifically identified as being separate.

(9) Students should refer to the student specific policy.

Section 3 - Policy Statement

(10) La Trobe recognises the importance of parents having time and space to provide food for their babies and supports staff who wish to breastfeed their baby while they participate in work or study on campus and in campus related activities. It acknowledges that women have the right to breastfeed in public places and that it is unlawful to treat a woman less favourably on the basis that she is breastfeeding a child, in accordance with legislation.

(11) La Trobe encourages staff and management to have a positive, accepting attitude toward working women who are breastfeeding. La Trobe promotes and supports breastfeeding and the expression of breastmilk by staff members who are breastfeeding when they return to work.

(12) La Trobe is committed to provide the following support:

Feeding/Lactation Breaks

(13) La Trobe is committed to providing staff with flexibility to take paid feeding/lactation breaks during their workday. Flexible breaks may include:

- a. time-off for a staff member to express breast milk or to breastfeed. This may be on-campus or off-site, including a short period of time to travel or return home for the purpose of feeding;
- b. flexible start and finishing times; or
- c. allowing lunch and/or other breaks to coincide with feeding times, if preferred.

Flexible Work Options

(14) La Trobe is committed to providing staff flexible work options to balance their work and breastfeeding requirements in accordance with the [Flexible Work Arrangements Policy](#). Flexible Work Options are offered as an alternative to feeding/lactation breaks as outlined above according to needs and appropriateness.

Breastfeeding/Parenting Facilities

(15) La Trobe is committed to providing appropriately equipped parenting facilities. Access to breastfeeding facilities is available at each campus with dedicated breastfeeding rooms equipped with a refrigerator, sink, table and chair or bed located at our Melbourne (Bundoora), Bendigo, Shepparton, Albury-Wodonga and Mildura campuses. Should staff not have access to these facilities, contact Diversity & Inclusion via HR Assist who will discuss alternative options. This also includes liaising with our partners to provide similar facilities for staff permanently located at non La Trobe campuses e.g. hospitals.

Individual Needs

(16) La Trobe recognises that the individual needs of mother, carer and baby will vary, and is committed to providing work arrangements that will meet the needs of the staff member as well as operational requirements.

Protection from Unlawful Discrimination or Harassment

(17) Being treated unfairly or harassed because of the need to breastfeed is contradictory to La Trobe [Workplace Behaviours Policy](#), our values and it is against the law.

(18) La Trobe will seek to ensure that its staff do not engage in behaviour that discriminates against other persons, either directly or indirectly, and will maintain established procedures for dealing with complaints.

Section 4 - Procedure

Individual Needs and La Trobe Requirements

(19) Managers will be required to take into account both the staff member's and La Trobe's operational requirements when considering requests.

(20) Minor alterations to working arrangements can be managed between the staff member and the manager and should be recorded appropriately between the staff member and the manager e.g. short term requirement for breastfeeding/lactation breaks.

(21) Other more significant flexible work arrangement requests must comply with the [Flexible Work Arrangements Policy](#) e.g. significant (or permanent) change to working hours.

Flexible Work Options

(22) Staff requesting flexible work arrangements for breastfeeding purposes should discuss their requirements with their manager.

(23) A breastfeeding staff member can negotiate flexible work options with her manager taking into account both the staff member's and La Trobe's needs.

(24) Options may include:

- a. flexible start and finish times;
- b. allowing lunch and other breaks to be taken to coincide with feeding times;
- c. working from home;
- d. feeding/lactation breaks (as below);
- e. staggered return to work and/or gradual increase to full hours;
- f. job share;
- g. converting to part-time.

(25) If after discussing individual needs a workable solution cannot be found, the staff member or the manager may contact their OH&S Representative to assist with the facilitation of a suitable arrangement.

(26) Staff should refer to the:

- a. Parental Leave – HR Standard;
- b. Flexible Work Arrangements – HR Standard;
- c. Working from Home – HR Standard.

Feeding/Lactation Breaks

(27) Staff who go to their baby or have their baby brought to campus or who express breastmilk, should discuss their break requirements with their manager.

(28) The number of times women need to feed or express milk will be determined by the individual needs and age of the baby. The younger the baby, the more frequently a mother is likely to need to do so.

(29) A 35 hour week staff member is entitled to one or more daily breaks of up to one (1) hour per day (in total) or a reduction of hours of work counted as working time and remunerated accordingly.

(30) For staff requiring more than one (1) hour for feeding/lactation breaks, a flexible work arrangement may be implemented to cover the time in excess of that hour.

(31) Part-time staff working 4 hours or less on any one day are entitled to one or more lactation breaks of up to 30 minutes (in total) or a reduction of hours of work, counted as working time and remunerated accordingly on any day worked.

(32) The period of paid lactation breaks includes travelling time for staff who take feeding/lactation breaks off campus.

(33) Staff member's requiring breaks may consider:

- a. time-off to express breast milk or to breastfeed;
- b. a short period of time to travel/return home for the purpose of feeding;
- c. flexible start and finishing times;

- d. allowing lunch and/or other breaks to coincide with feeding times, if preferred.

Breastfeeding/Parenting Facilities

(34) Staff (and students) can breastfeed anywhere on La Trobe campuses, with the exclusion of locations detailed in the [Children on Campus Policy](#), which are deemed inherently dangerous and/or hazardous to children.

(35) For those seeking privacy whilst breastfeeding and/or expressing, they are able to access the designated breastfeeding/parenting rooms provided at the different campuses.

(36) Designated breastfeeding/parenting rooms are available during normal working hours and are shared with students. Where a room is occupied by another user, the room can be shared by mutual agreement with the residing occupant.

(37) Location details for all available facilities are on La Trobe's internet and intranet sites.

(38) Staff wishing to utilise the facilities have the responsibility to:

- a. supply their own expressing equipment and appropriate storage containers for expressed breast milk
- b. clearly label these containers with their name and date before placing them in the designated refrigerator
- c. observe any guidelines for the use of the designated room, including being considerate of other users by ensuring facilities are left in neat, clean and hygienic conditions

(39) Should staff not have access to these facilities, contact Diversity and Inclusion via HR Assist who will discuss alternative options. This also includes liaising with our partners to provide similar facilities for staff permanently located at non La Trobe campuses e.g. hospitals.

Car Parking

(40) Car parking will be made available for carers bringing a baby into the workplace to be breastfed. Staff should discuss their requirements with Traffic & Parking.

Discrimination and Harassment

(41) If a staff member feels they are in a situation where they are experiencing discrimination or harassment because of the need to breastfeed/express, and they are not able to discuss it with their manager; contact Human Resources – HR Assist for further guidance and support.

Support

(42) There are people/resources available to assist or support staff and provide information, advice or appropriate referrals. Support options may include:

- a. Australian Breastfeeding Association - <https://www.breastfeeding.asn.au/>
- b. National Breastfeeding Helpline on 1800 686 268
- c. EAP - Call 1300 OUR EAP (1300 687 327) to access EAP 24 hours 7 days per week pager service.
- d. Manager
- e. Human Resources

Roles and Responsibilities

(43) It is important that both staff and managers remain flexible, accommodating, and respectful of each other's needs.

(44) Decisions made regarding the provision of breastfeeding/parenting breaks and flexible work options must be fair, transparent and capable of review. A written agreement between the staff member and La Trobe may be effective in this regard (a clear, well written email will suffice as an agreement).

(45) La Trobe is responsible for ensuring all La Trobe staff members have provisions protecting breastfeeding as outlined in this Policy and Procedure, including taking all reasonable action to enable access to suitable facilities for breastfeeding.

(46) Human Resources (Diversity and Inclusion) is responsible for the implementation and ongoing facilitation of support for breastfeeding staff members through the following channels:

- a. ensure all managers are aware of the policy and this procedure via various communication methods;
- b. provision of breastfeeding information where appropriate;
- c. providing information regarding the policy and this procedure and other relevant information to staff members when appropriate/requested.

(47) Managers are responsible for:

- a. ensuring all staff understand their rights and responsibilities under the policy and this procedure;
- b. supporting breastfeeding requests in line with operational requirements and the provisions of the policy and this procedure;
- c. if, due to operational needs, there is a need to delay the taking of a feeding/lactation break, efforts should be made to ensure that the staff member is able to take the break as soon as possible in order to minimise any risks to the staff member's health or milk supply or the child's health.

(48) Staff are responsible for:

- a. discussing requirements with their manager as soon as possible;
- b. keeping infants under the direct and regular supervision of the parent or carer at all times;
- c. taking both La Trobe and personal needs into account, with a focus on minimising disruption in the workplace, when determining the timing of feeding/lactation breaks;
- d. notifying their manager if their breastfeeding needs change, or cease.

Section 5 - Definitions

(49) For the purpose of this Policy and Procedure:

- a. Flexible work arrangements is a change to a staff member's usual work arrangements that balances the staff member's need for flexibility and La Trobe's operational requirements.
- b. Feeding/lactation break is a break taken by staff to breastfeed, express breast milk or otherwise engage in an activity necessary to the act of breastfeeding.
- c. Breastfeeding facilities includes the range of facilities needed to enable breastfeeding employees to breastfeed, express breastmilk or engage in an activity necessary to the act of breastfeeding. It also refers to a room within La Trobe grounds which has been identified as a suitable space for breastfeeding an infant or expressing milk.

Section 6 - Stakeholders

Responsibility for implementation – Staff and Managers.

Responsibility for monitoring implementation and compliance – Diversity and Inclusion.

Status and Details

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