

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 staff, students and the community have the right to breastfeed in public places and that it is unlawful to treat a person less favourably on the basis that they are breastfeeding a child, in accordance with legislation.

(2) La Trobe encourages staff and management to have a welcoming and inclusive approach to support people 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 an employee's return to work following a period of parental leave, La Trobe seeks to provide a supportive environment, including reasonable arrangements to enable staff to continue to breastfeed.

(4) In 2010 the university received accreditation as a Breastfeeding Friendly Workplace and continues to provide a breastfeeding friendly environment.

(5) This Policy outlines the university's commitment to support parents who are breastfeeding while at work.

Section 2 - Scope

(6) 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).

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

(8) Students should refer to the [Breastfeeding/Chestfeeding Facilities webpage](#).

Section 3 - Policy Statement

(9) La Trobe University is committed to providing a diverse, inclusive and respectful working environment for all staff, including parents. The University is responsible for ensuring that staff have access to suitable facilities for breastfeeding and is committed to providing the following support and provisions:

- a. Feeding/lactation breaks
- b. Flexible work options
- c. Breastfeeding/parenting facilities
- d. Protection from unlawful discrimination or harassment

Section 4 - Procedures

Part A - Feeding/Lactation Breaks

- (10) The University provides staff with the flexibility to take paid feeding/lactation breaks during their workday.
- (11) Staff who go to their baby or have their baby brought on to campus or who express breastmilk, should discuss their break requirements with their manager.
- (12) The number of times people 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 parent is likely to need to do so.
- (13) A 35 hour week staff member is entitled to one or more paid daily breaks of up to one (1) hour per day (in total).
- (14) For staff requiring more than one (1) hour for feeding/lactation breaks, a flexible work arrangement should be implemented to cover the time in excess of that hour.
- (15) Part-time staff working 4 hours or less on any one day are entitled to one or more paid lactation break of up to 30 minutes (in total). For staff requiring more than 30 minutes, a flexible work arrangement should be implemented to cover the time in excess of that 30 minutes.
- (16) The period of paid lactation breaks includes travelling time for staff who take feeding/lactation breaks off campus.
- (17) Staff member's requiring breaks should 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.
- (18) 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.

Part B - Flexible Work Options

- (19) The University provides staff with flexible work options to balance their work and breastfeeding requirements in accordance with the [Flexible Work Policy](#).
- (20) Options as per the [Flexible Work Policy](#) may include:
- 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.
- (21) Flexible work options are offered as an alternative to feeding/lactation breaks as outlined above, according to needs and appropriateness.
- (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 their manager taking into account both the staff member's and La Trobe's needs.

(24) Staff should refer to the:

- a. [Parental Leave Information](#) (staff intranet)
- b. [Flexible Work Arrangements Information](#) (staff intranet)
- c. [Working from Home - HR Standard](#)

Part C - Breastfeeding/Parenting Facilities

(25) Breastfeeding facilities are available via dedicated rooms equipped with a refrigerator, sink, table and chair or bed and are located on each of the following campuses Bundoora, City Campus, Bendigo, Shepparton, Albury-Wodonga and Mildura.

(26) Designated breastfeeding/parenting rooms are available during normal working hours for those seeking privacy whilst breastfeeding and/or expressing 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.

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

(28) Staff wishing to utilise the facilities are responsible for:

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

(29) Staff who do not have access to the provided facilities should contact Culture, 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.

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

Part D - Individual Needs and La Trobe Requirements

(31) La Trobe recognises that the individual needs of the parent, 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.

(32) Managers will be required to take into account both the staff member's and the university's operational requirements when considering requests for flexibility to accommodate breastfeeding/lactation.

(33) 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.

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

Part E - Protection from Unlawful Discrimination or Harassment

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

(36) The University does not condone staff who engage in behaviour that discriminates against other person, either directly or indirectly, and has established procedures for dealing with complaints.

(37) 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 they should contact Human Resources - HR Assist for further guidance and support.

Part F - Support

(38) There are support services 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

Part G - Roles and Responsibilities

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

(40) 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).

(41) 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; and
- d. Notifying their manager if their breastfeeding needs change, or cease.

(42) Managers are responsible for:

- a. Ensuring all staff understand their rights and responsibilities under this Policy and procedure;
- b. Supporting breastfeeding requests in line with operational requirements and the provisions of this Policy and 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.

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

- a. Ensuring all managers are aware of this Policy via various communication methods;
- b. Provision of breastfeeding information where appropriate;
- c. Providing information regarding this Policy and other relevant information to staff members when appropriate/requested.

Section 5 - Definitions

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

- a. 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.
- 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. 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.

Status and Details

Status	Current
Effective Date	15th March 2019
Review Date	14th March 2022
Approval Authority	Vice-Chancellor
Approval Date	14th March 2019
Expiry Date	Not Applicable
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