Policy for Supporting Breastfeeding Employees

In recognition of the well documented health advantages of breastfeeding for infants and mothers and the Wisconsin State Statute 253.16, right to breast−feed which states:

“A mother may breast−feed her child in any public or private location where the mother and child are otherwise authorized to be. In such a location, no person may prohibit a mother from breast−feeding her child, direct a mother to move to a different location to breast−feed her child, direct a mother to cover her child or breast while breast−feeding, or otherwise restrict a mother from breast−feeding her child as provided in this section,”

the Ho-Chunk Nation provides a supportive environment to enable breastfeeding employees to express their milk during work hours. This includes a company-wide lactation support program administered by Ho-Chunk Nation Maternal Child Health Program, within the Community Health Nursing Program. The Ho-Chunk Nation subscribes to the following worksite support policy. This policy shall be communicated to all current employees and included in new employee orientation training.

**Company Responsibilities**

Breastfeeding employees who choose to continue providing their milk for their infants after returning to work shall receive:

* **Milk Expression Breaks**

Breastfeeding employees are allowed to breastfeed or express milk during work hours using their normal breaks and meal times. For time that may be needed beyond the usual break times, employees may refer to their supervisors to make reasonable arrangements.

* **A Place to Express Milk**

A private room (not a toilet stall or restroom) shall be available for employees to breastfeed or express milk. The room will be private and sanitary, located near a sink with running water for washing hands and rinsing out breast pump parts, and have an electrical outlet. If employees prefer, they may also breastfeed or express milk in their own private offices, or in other comfortable locations agreed upon in consultation with the employee’s supervisor. Expressed milk can be stored in employee breakroom refrigerators, in designated refrigerators provided in the lactation room or other location or in employee’s personal cooler. Please see “Lactation Room Options” attachment.

* **Breastfeeding Equipment**

Personal use breastfeeding equipment can be obtained through the employee’s healthcare plan, per the Affordable Care Act, WIC or Badgercare. For special circumstances, breastpumps are available through the Ho-Chunk Nation Maternal Child Health Program.

* **Education**

Prenatal and postpartum breastfeeding classes and informational materials are available for all mothers and fathers, as well as their partners through the Ho-Chunk Nation Maternal Child Health Program.

* **Staff Support**

Supervisors are responsible for alerting pregnant and breastfeeding employees about the company’s worksite lactation support program, and for negotiating policies and practices that will help facilitate each employee’s infant feeding goals. It is expected that all employees will assist in providing a positive atmosphere of support for breastfeeding employees. Lactation services are available at all six health office locations: Ho-Chunk Nation Health Care Center, House of Wellness, Tomah, La Crosse, Nekoosa and Wittenberg.

**Employee Responsibilities**

* **Communication with Supervisors**

Employees who wish to express milk during the work period shall keep supervisors informed of their needs so that appropriate accommodations can be made to satisfy the needs of both the employee and the department.

* **Maintenance of Milk Expression Areas**

Breastfeeding employees are responsible for keeping milk expression areas clean, using anti-microbial wipes to clean the pump and area around it. Employees are also responsible for keeping the general lactation room clean for the next user. This responsibility extends to both designated milk expression areas, as well as other areas where expressing milk will occur.

* **Milk Storage**

Employees should label all milk expressed with their name and date collected so it is not inadvertently confused with another employee’s milk. Each employee is responsible for proper storage of her milk.

* **Use of Break Times to Express Milk**

When more than one breastfeeding employee needs to use the designated lactation room, employees can use the sign-in log provided in the room to negotiate milk expression times that are most convenient or best meet their needs.