
THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA



Human Resources
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<http://www.hr.ubc.ca>

Date: May 13, 2009

To: HEADS UP – Vancouver list

From: Lisa Castle, AVP, Human Resources
Tom Patch, AVP, Equity

CC: HR Network

Re: Breastfeeding-friendly Spaces on Vancouver Campus

A copy of this memo is available online at www.hr.ubc.ca/memos.

The University is supportive of and acknowledges the family responsibilities of all of our constituencies, including students, staff, faculty and visitors. The focus of this memo is on providing appropriate environments for breastfeeding mothers.

The ability to breastfeed in public without harassment or censure is a right protected under both UBC's *Policy on Discrimination and Harassment* and the *BC Human Rights Code*. UBC supports the right of women to breastfeed their children in a safe and comfortable environment that is free from discrimination or harassment, whether they choose to do so in public or in a more private location.

Although breastfeeding in public is protected by law, some women may prefer to breastfeed their children in a private location for personal or religious reasons.

To this end, the Equity Office, Human Resources and Health, Safety and Environment are looking to create a network of breastfeeding-friendly spaces across the Vancouver campus where a mother can go to breastfeed her child in a more discreet location.

Such a network is already in place at the Okanagan campus (<http://web.ubc.ca/okanagan/healthsustainability/familyfriendly.html>).

We are asking units at UBC Vancouver to consider whether your unit or building may have existing space that would suit this need, or if there is the ability to create such a space for this purpose. What is required is a clean, quiet and relatively private room with a table and a chair with supportive arms in which a breastfeeding mother can sit to feed her baby or express milk. It would be helpful if the room had an electrical outlet for expressing milk. If you have such a room, you will be provided with:

- A baby changing table;
- Signage for the room;
- Alcohol pumps for sanitization;
- Literature on breastfeeding and how to care for expressed breast milk.

It is understood that the onus is on the parent to keep the room clean in the manner in which it was found, and used diapers must be disposed of in washrooms. This will be an element of the signage.

As space is at a premium on campus, we do not expect all units to have unallocated rooms which will be free at all times. Nor do we expect the demand for spaces in which to breastfeed or the traffic in these spaces to be high. Instead, we are asking units to come forward if they have a room that is not used frequently (for example a meeting room or spare office space) that could be made available to a breastfeeding mother during normal working hours, and ideally between 11am and 2pm. Units located in high traffic locations or places in which children and/or the public frequent are especially encouraged to come forward.

Upon collecting this information, we will be communicating it broadly, including making this information generally available on our websites, and providing it to other areas that may wish to provide the information on their websites as well.

If you have a space that may be appropriate or have any questions about this initiative, please contact Terri Kennedy (terri.kennedy@ubc.ca) in the Equity Office or Suzanne Jolly (suzanne.jolly@ubc.ca) from the Health Promotion Program at UBC Vancouver. We thank you for your support.