# Breastfeeding and Employment

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| Lack of supervisor support         | Lack of confidence in speaking up about breastfeeding needs                       | • Try to speak with supervisors before returning to work to discuss options such as: job sharing, split shifts, or telecommuting; adjusting schedule to allow for pumping/feeding breaks; providing discrete locations for pumping/feeding; possible locations for storing expressed milk.  
• Seek support from other breastfeeding mothers at the job.  
• The U.S. Patient Affordable Care Act of 2010 requires that employers provide breastfeeding employees (hourly workers) with support to continue breastfeeding including, 1) a private place that is not a bathroom to express milk and 2) reasonable time to express milk during the workday. |
| Lack of space/privacy or working outside | Embarrassment                                                                   | • Place curtains over cubicle entrances.  
• Use an undisturbed, private location (“i.e.,” empty office, conference room, or break room area).  
• During breaks, place a sun reflector screen over the car windshield and hang a baby blanket inside the driver and passenger windows. Some personal-use breast pumps have car battery attachments. Additionally, hand expression can be helpful when access to an electric or battery-powered breast pump is not possible.  
• See Office of Women’s Health website: [Supporting breastfeeding mothers at work - employer solutions](#). |
| Irregular work schedule            | Reliance on family for childcare who may not support breastfeeding               | • Talk with family members about bringing baby to worksite for scheduled breaks and meal periods. This can help sustain milk production and helps mom feel close to baby.  
• Breastfeed often when mom is with baby to protect milk production. |
| Inflexible schedule while at work  | Leaking, engorgement, and decline in milk production                             | • Practice using a breast pump and start storing milk a few weeks before being away from baby, like returning to work or school.  
• Breastfeed often when mom is with her baby to protect milk production. |
| Lacking refrigeration              | Inability to safely store milk                                                   | • Carry an insulated cooler bag with frozen ice packs to keep milk cool. Refrigerate or freeze milk as soon as possible.  
• Freshly pumped/expressed milk may be stored at room temperature for up to 4 hours. |
| Job stress                         | Lack of confidence in working through breastfeeding concerns; inability to relax to bring about a milk ejection reflex | • Seek support from other breastfeeding mothers at the job.  
• Help moms connect with a WIC peer counselor, locate La Leche League or another mother support group in the community. |