Supporting Lactation at Work

New protections begin January 1, 2027

A simple guide to workplace protections under Healthy Starts Act (SB 5217)



Paid lactation time

Time spent expressing milk and traveling to an agreed-upon location is paid at the employee's regular rate.

Regular breaks still apply

Time spent expressing milk is in addition to regular meal and rest breaks.

No paid leave required

No requirement to use paid leave for lactation time.

Private lactation space

A private space—not a bathroom. If one is not available onsite, the employer and employee must identify a convenient location and schedule.

Plan ahead

Employees and employers can discuss:

WHERE
Lactation location options

WORKLOAD
Coverage and responsibilities

SCHEDULING
Flexibility for appointments and expressing milk

Learn about the law

Pregnancy and lactation protections

https://wa-law.org/bill/2025-26/sb/5217/S2.PL/

Need help preparing?

Lactation professionals can support employees. Some may also offer workplace guidance for employers.

Download your free breastfeeding resource guide →

https://tinyurl.com/md2y3tx9

Created in partnership with Chelan-Douglas Health District and the Breastfeeding Awareness Coalition of Wenatchee.