

Washington Employers Must Provide Break Time and Space for Employees to Express Breast Milk

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As of July 28, 2019, Washington employers with 15 or more employees are required to provide reasonable break time for employees to express breast milk. (See [House Bill 1930](#) and [Revised Code of Washington 43.10.005](#).) Break time must be provided each time the employee needs to express breast milk, and must be provided for up to two years after the child's birth. If the employer has space in its business or worksite, it must also provide a private location, other than a bathroom, for the employee to express milk; if no private space is available, the employer must work with the employee to find a convenient location and work schedule to accommodate her needs.

The new law's accommodation provisions go beyond [similar federal requirements](#) under the Fair Labor Standards Act by, for example, lengthening the amount of time that Washington employers must accommodate employees expressing milk from 1 year after the birth of a child to 2 years, and broadening coverage to employers with as few as 15 employees as opposed to the 50 -employee threshold under federal law.

Washington employers may want to review and revise their policies and practices to ensure that employees are provided reasonable break time to express break milk. Employers may also want to consider whether available space should be designated for the expression of breast milk.

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