

Before sending a letter to your employer, consult your human resources policies and ask other working moms in your company how they've handled the situation. You can probably address your need for a lactation plan in a conversation with your boss. However, at some point your company may require a letter, or perhaps you would like to document the chat with your supervisor in writing. In that case, start with this sample letter for pumping breastmilk at work.

Edit the letter below as appropriate to fit your situation or your employer's policies. Where you see (parentheses), insert the relevant words or phrases for your circumstances. Instructions are noted in italics and should be deleted from the final letter before you submit it.

Lactation Room Memo for (Your Name)

(Date)

To (Your Supervisor)

I am writing this letter to let you know that I plan to continuing breastfeeding my baby after I return to work on (*approximate date your maternity leave will end*). I will need to take breaks at regular intervals during the workday to pump breastmilk in order to maintain my milk supply and to provide milk for my child. I expect to need two or three 20- 30 minute breaks to go to a lactation room, set up the pump, express milk, disassemble and clean the pump parts, and resume work.

I would appreciate a written reply indicating that you understand my intentions and will implement a plan to accommodate this need. I'd be happy to discuss arrangements for a convenient pumping location, as well as any *work schedule modifications* that may be needed. *If your employer already has a designated lactation room at your work site, you can eliminate the reference above to "arrangements for a convenient pumping location".*

As you know, I take pride in the quality of my work for (*employer*) and I want to assure you that it will continue to meet the same high standards as before my maternity leave. In fact, research suggests that lactation programs lower the amount of lost work time due to sick babies by 77 percent, and employees whose babies are breastfed experience one-day absences half as often as those whose babies aren't nursed.

Breastfeeding protects both mothers and children from many health risks, short and long term. I want to thank you for your willingness to make accommodations for me and other nursing mothers.

Looking forward to seeing you soon.

Sincerely,

(Your name)

NOTE:

New Mexico law, Use of a Breastpump in the Workplace (2007), requires employers to “...*provide flexible break time, and a clean, private space, not a bathroom, in order to foster the ability of a nursing mother who is an employee to use a breast pump in the workplace.*” This bill is found at <http://www.breastfeedingnewmexico.org/supportive-communities/breastfeeding-and-law>.