

SUNY Cobleskill Procedures

University Lactation Policy

These procedures accompany SUNY Cobleskill's Lactation Policy and are intended to establish standards, resources, and contact information specific to SUNY Cobleskill.

Procedures for Students

Students planning to breastfeed or express milk at SUNY Cobleskill should do so around their scheduled class times. While professors are not required to excuse tardiness or absence due to lactation needs, students who request reasonable scheduling accommodations should be considered.

Procedures for Employees

Employees planning to breastfeed or express milk at SUNY Cobleskill are responsible for requesting and arranging appropriate and reasonable break times for lactation purposes. The request is to be submitted to the employee's supervisor in writing, and the supervisor must respond to the employee's request for lactation accommodations within five business days. Supervisors should attempt to provide as much scheduling flexibility and break time as reasonably possible to accommodate the employee's needs. Both the employee and supervisor are encouraged to contact Human Resources for assistance. Breastfeeding employees may be eligible to receive a breast pump through their health insurance plan. To determine specific coverage, employees should consult their insurer directly.

Procedures for Supervisors

Under the Affordable Care Act (ACA), employers are required to provide a reasonable amount of break time and private space to express milk as frequently as needed. The frequency of breaks needed to express milk as well as the duration of each break will likely vary. Typically, a nursing mother will need 20 – 30 minutes, 2 – 3 times per day, but it will vary over time and by the individual.

Breastfeeding employees will be allowed a reasonable amount of break time to breastfeed and/or express milk during work hours, which, if possible, shall run concurrently with normal break and meal periods. Breastfeeding employees should work with their supervisors to establish mutually convenient times. Supervisors should attempt to provide as much flexibility and break time as reasonably possible to accommodate the employee's needs, as long as the department's work needs can be efficiently and effectively met.

SUNY Cobleskill has specially designated lactation areas. In the absence of a designated lactation area in the building, supervisors should review with the breastfeeding employee the available space in their department and be prepared to assist with identifying suitable accommodations, ideally no more than five minutes away. An employee or student may express breast milk in their work or study area as long as it meets or can be temporarily adapted to meet, the requirements of a suitable lactation area.

Upon notification by an employee of a need to express milk and/or breastfeed in the workplace, supervisors are encouraged to contact Human Resources for assistance.

Lactation Rooms

A lactation room is set up in Frisbee 302 and is available for use by employees, students, volunteers, and visitors. It is a comfortable room with a refrigerator for storage and a sink around the corner for cleaning. A key to the lactation room may be obtained by contacting the Title IX Office at 518-255-5999 or titleix@cobleskill.edu. Upon request, and based on space availability, additional lactation rooms may be created. No employer shall discriminate in any way against an employee who chooses to express breast milk in the workplace. Access to a temporary location will be handled on a case-by-case basis with Human Resources.

Reasonable lactation accommodation must fall within these parameters: clean, well-lit, in close proximity to the work area, private (the ability to be shielded from view and free from intrusion) space, electrical outlet, chair, table for breast pump, and nearby access to clean running water. A toilet stall is not considered an appropriate space for lactation purposes and would not be following the Affordable Care Act or this policy. Individuals are responsible for keeping lactation areas clean after use and ready for the next user. This includes wiping down surfaces and disposing of any food or drink items brought into the room.

An employee or student may express breast milk in their private work area or study area or other location if it meets or can be temporarily adapted to meet, the above requirements.

If the sole purpose or function of such room or other location is not dedicated for use by employees to express breast milk, such room or other location shall be made available to such an employee when needed and shall not be used for any other purpose or function while in use by such employee. Employers shall provide notice to all employees as soon as practicable when such room or other location has been designated for use by employees to express breast milk.

SUNY Cobleskill is not responsible for the integrity or security of breast milk stored in any refrigerator on campus. Employees and students must provide their own containers for storage of expressed milk while on campus. Employees should check with their supervisor to determine if there is a refrigerator available near their work area where breast milk may be stored. If there is no refrigerator available, employees and students must provide their own means to store and keep the milk cool.

SUNY Cobleskill will make every effort to incorporate space that could serve as a lactation room in new buildings, modeled on the American Institute of Architects best practices regarding lactation spaces.

Resources and Support Services

Supervisors and faculty should be aware of the University's lactation policy, practices, and available resources. SUNY Cobleskill expects that all employees will assist in promoting a positive atmosphere of support for breastfeeding employees, students, and visitors.

Contacts

Employees with questions regarding the SUNY Cobleskill Breastfeeding and Lactation Support Program Policy or other work-life policies should contact the Department of Human Resources at 518-255-5423 or humanresources@cobleskill.edu

Students who would like general information about breastfeeding and other work-life topics may contact the Wellness Center at 518-255-5225.

Employees and students who have questions regarding access and use of the lactation facilities or anyone believes they have been denied appropriate accommodation according to the Lactation policy may contact the Title IX Office at 518-255-5999 or Elhakam@cobleskill.edu