



Breastfeeding Policy

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Dissemination requirements	All Trust employees by intranet
Part of Trust's publication scheme	Yes

The East of England Ambulance Service NHS Trust (EEAST) has made every effort to ensure this policy does not have the effect of unlawful discrimination on the grounds of the protected characteristics of age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion/belief, gender, sexual orientation, marriage/civil partnership, pregnancy/maternity. The Trust will not tolerate unfair discrimination on the basis of spent criminal convictions, Trade Union membership or non-membership. In addition, the Trust will have due regard to advancing equality of opportunity between people from different groups and foster good relations between people from different groups.

EEAST recognises its obligations of supporting the requirements of the Modern Slavery Act 2015 and any future legislations. A prime objective of EEAST is to eradicate modern slavery and human trafficking and recognises the significant part it must play in both combatting it and supporting victims. EEAST is committed to ensuring that its supply chains and business activities are free from any ethical and labour standards abuse.

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All Trust policies can be provided in alternative formats.

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1. Introduction

- 1.1 Here at EEAST, we are a family friendly organisation and acknowledge our responsibilities for the wellbeing of all our employees. We recognise that, if you chose to breastfeed your baby, there are many good reasons for you to continue after returning to work. We therefore encourage you to let us know your intentions as soon as possible so that we can work with you to ensure that you are provided with a safe environment with the right level of support.

2. Purpose

- 2.1 The purpose of this policy is to:
- ensure that your transition back to the workplace is as smooth as possible,
 - ensure that you feel supported whilst breastfeeding or expressing milk at work,
 - ensure managers are aware of their role in how they can support you in line with this policy.
 - ensure managers are provided with information to access to Health and Wellbeing tools to support you,
 - provide information on where to access a safe and healthy environment for you to breast feed, express and store milk.

3. Scope

- 3.1 This policy applies to all EEAST employees who are breastfeeding, including apprentices, fixed-term contract holders and employees on secondment that hold a contract of employment with another organisation.
- 3.2 This policy should be considered alongside the Maternity Leave and Pay Policy.

4. Duties

- 4.1 The Board and Executive Leadership Team have a responsibility to:

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- tackle discrimination within the workplace, whether amongst staff, patients or the public.

4.2 **Line managers** have a responsibility to:

- provide support to employees in line with this policy,
- support and meet with employees to ensure they have a smooth transition back into the workplace,
- ensure the completion of the Breastfeeding section of the Maternity Support Plan,
- ensure completion of any relevant risk assessments and relevant actions,
- promote a culture of tolerance, compassion and kindness.

4.3 **HR Representatives** have a responsibility to:

- ensure this policy is promoted, accessible and kept in line with employment legislation, best practice people management principles and NHS guidelines,
- provide advice to individuals and managers regarding the application of this policy,
- provide advice around other options to help support breast feeding/expressing milk, for example, flexible working, home working, temporary redeployment.

4.4 **Employees** have a responsibility to:

- be supportive of employees who are breastfeeding or expressing milk at work,
- familiarise themselves and act in accordance with this policy,
- speak to their line manager to make them aware of their intention to breastfeed or express milk at the earliest opportunity,
- be as open as possible about any support and/or reasonable adjustments that they need,

- complete a Maternity Support Plan and relevant risk assessments with their manager.

5. Definitions

- 5.1 For the purposes of this policy, the term '**breastfeeding**' is used to cover both feeding a baby directly and/or using a breast pump to express milk.

6. Equality Act 2010

- 6.1 You have the right to be protected from harassment under the Equality Act 2010.
- 6.2 Any inappropriate behaviours and/or language in relation to your choice to breastfeed or your requirement for supportive actions will be managed in line with the Dignity at Work policy.

7. Information about Breastfeeding

- 7.1 There are numerous reported benefits of breastfeeding for both you and your baby, for example, optimal growth, immunity, development and health. Exclusive breastfeeding (i.e. nursing parent's milk only) is recommended by the World Health Organisation (WHO) for babies up to the age of 6 months. Breastfeeding alongside food is recommended up to two years and beyond, and we are committed to support you in achieving this recommendation if you choose to do so.

If you were planning to breastfeed and have any concerns or need to know where to go for support, you can refer to Appendix A for information, including how to access our Health and Wellbeing Team.

- 7.2 The frequency of feeding will depend on the age of your infant, whether they are on solid foods and throughout different stages of their development. Because of this, your needs when you return to work as a nursing parent, may differ to your needs six months later.

- 7.3 It is most likely that when you return to work you will already have established breastfeeding with your baby; this means that your milk is being produced frequently. If the milk is not released frequently (for example, every few hours) by feeding the baby directly or expressing milk, you may be uncomfortable and at risk of obtaining an infection (mastitis).
- 7.4 The length of time between feeding or expressing varies but managers should expect a nursing parent to feed or express every 3-4 hours and the duration will vary; no longer than an hour each time in most cases. If expressing, time will also be needed to set up any equipment prior and wash/sterilise any equipment afterwards.

8. Letting your manager know

- 8.1 We recognise that the circumstances required to enable you to continue breastfeeding upon your return to work may be individual to you.
- 8.2 You and your line manager should maintain contact during your maternity leave and prior to your return to work in line with the Maternity Leave and Pay Policy and your Maternity Support Plan. If you intend to continue breastfeeding, you must make your manager aware of this, ideally no later than 28 days before any return to work, including Keeping in Touch (KIT) days.
- 8.3 Should you wish to return to work on different hours, please discuss this as part of your Maternity Support Plan and submit a request under our Flexible Working Policy.

9. What support can be considered and offered if reasonable?

- 9.1 Prior to your return to work, you and your line manager should discuss what support and/or reasonable adjustments are required by referring to the Breastfeeding section of the Maternity Support Plan, including completion of the New, Expectant Mothers and Breastfeeding Risk Assessment.

This will ensure that your manager knows what support to put in place for your return to work; for example, adjustments to your role, facilities, and working arrangements.

- 9.2 The following information should be referenced (this list is not exhaustive):

Facilities:

Although we are not legally required to provide somewhere for you to breastfeed at work, we must provide somewhere suitable for you to rest, and we also aim to provide the following arrangements wherever possible:

- The provision of a clean, warm, and private space that can be accessed easily and regularly (toilets, ambulances, etc, would not be appropriate due to hygiene risks).
- Access to a fridge to store expressed milk and/or space for a cool bag/ice pack.
- Space that has plug sockets, a table, and a comfortable chair/sofa for you to rest/lie down.
- Suitable facilities to wash and dry equipment.

If we are unable to offer the above, you and your line manager should consider:

- Whether you can return to your home/childcare facility.
- Whether your child can be brought onto Trust premises by a named person.
- Whether there is a suitable place nearby. For example, hospital building, fire service building, council building.
- Consideration could also be given to the safety and access of suitable breastfeeding friendly sites; for example, supermarkets, cafés and shops if you feel comfortable with this.

For a list of multi-use welfare rooms across EEAST, please refer to the Health and Wellbeing hub on East24. This

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provides a heat map of suitable rooms and a list of alternative locations suitable for breastfeeding.

Rest breaks:

- Flexible breaks for you to breastfeed; for example, an additional three breaks per one 12-hour shift or one additional break every 4 hours.
- If it has been arranged for you to travel to an appropriate and alternative facility.

Job Role:

- Whether your role allows you to be able to go to a private room to breastfeed when required.
- Consideration should be given to the impact of changing your role after potentially being away from the workplace for a long period of time.

Operational Impact:

- Whether there is an operational impact during the periods you may be unavailable during a shift. If so, consideration may be given to other duties with the understanding that it may be best for you and the service to return to your operational duties if you wish (including in a reduced capacity).

Flexible Working:

- Whether a temporary change to working hours, shift pattern and/or location would be helpful to accommodate breastfeeding.

Keeping In Touch (KIT) Days:

- KIT Days are available under the Maternity Leave and Pay Policy and may be beneficial to trial the facilities and requirements if you are breastfeeding.

Temporary Redeployment:

- Consideration as to whether temporary redeployment to another Trust location would support in line with the Redeployment Policy and Procedure. If so, the appropriate manager would need to be made aware of requirements to support and will consider induction into the new area.
- Where arranged, your line manager retains responsibility for supporting your return to work, will remain in contact and consider any impact on you.

10. What happens on my return to work?

- 10.1 The New, Expectant Mothers and Breastfeeding Risk Assessment and Maternity Support Plan should initially be reviewed one month after your return and then at least every 3 months following this; this will help your manager identify if there are any changes in requirements.
- 10.2 Should you feel that the agreed working arrangements are not successful and need adapting, we encourage you to inform your line manager as soon as possible so this can be reviewed.
- 10.3 Managers should be conscious that a pattern or set of arrangements that have worked for one breastfeeding employee, may not work for you, therefore, decisions should be made on a case-by-case basis. Managers are expected to respond reasonably to your needs and requirements whilst also considering the impact on the service.

11. What happens if my requests are refused?

- 11.1 If all options have been considered, and you and your manager have agreed there are no reasonable adjustments that can be made, including temporary redeployment, a decision may be made to place you on management stand-down on full pay until the risk has been removed.
- 11.2 In the event of management stand-down, your manager will ensure that regular meetings are held to review the arrangement and ensure that you are able to return to work when a reasonable adjustment can now be made or when there are any changes to your breastfeeding arrangements.

12. Regular review meetings

- 12.1 We understand that you may not know how long you will breastfeed, and that your requirements may change with time. Therefore, it is recommended that you meet with your line manager to review how the arrangements are working for you and the service on a regular basis, for example, monthly.
- 12.2 Guidance for these review meetings can be found by referring to the Breastfeeding Section of the Maternity Support Plan. The New, Expectant Mothers and Breastfeeding Risk Assessment should also be discussed at these meetings to ensure there are no further changes that have occurred.
- 12.3 At the last review meeting before your child's 2nd birthday, your manager should make you aware that discussions will be held regarding your working arrangements at your next review meeting. This meeting will take place once your child reaches 2 years of age, and managers must discuss longer-term working arrangements with you.
- 12.4 Should you wish to continue breastfeeding where it impacts on the working day, you will be able to submit a flexible working request for both permanent or temporary changes to your substantive contractual working pattern, for example, reduced hours to enable a morning and evening feed. This

request will be managed in line with the Flexible Working Policy.

- 12.5 Sensitivity and support for your requirements, together with operational requirements, should continue throughout the flexible working discussions.
- 12.6 Your line manager can seek further advice from a HR representative and/or the Equality and Diversity Team.

13. Confidentiality

- 13.1 It may be necessary for relevant information regarding the agreed breastfeeding arrangements to be shared with the appropriate people. For example, other line managers that you report to on temporary redeployment. However, we will obtain your consent, and restrict the information to those who need to know.

14. Policy review

- 14.1 This policy will be reviewed on a three-yearly basis, or amended in the light of new legislation, relevant case law, or if significant changes to its effective operation are necessary.

Appendix A – Additional Support

Additional support and information can be sought from the following:

- **EAST24 – Health and Wellbeing Hub:** [Wellbeing at EEAST \(sharepoint.com\)](#)
- **NHS – Breastfeeding and going back to work:** [Breastfeeding help and support - NHS \(www.nhs.uk\)](#)
- **The Breastfeeding Network:** [The Breastfeeding Network | Independent Breastfeeding Support](#) – information about breastfeeding in public, returning to work, and other topics.
- **La Leche League UK:** www.laleche.org.uk – offers 1-to-1 support with breastfeeding
- **Maternity Action:** www.maternityaction.org.uk
- **ACAS – Maternity Leave and Pay (Returning to Work):** [Returning to work - Maternity leave and pay - Acas](#)

Appendix B

Equality Impact Assessment

EIA Cover Sheet			
Name of process/policy	Breastfeeding Policy		
Is the process new or existing? If existing, state policy reference number	Existing (POL133)		
Person responsible for process/policy	HR		
Directorate and department/section	People Services		
Name of assessment lead or EIA assessment team members	HR Policy Subgroup		
Has consultation taken place? Was consultation internal or external? (please state below):	Internal consultation through HR Policy Subgroup members		
The assessment is being made on:	Guidelines		
	Written policy involving staff and patients	X	
	Strategy		
	Changes in practice		
	Department changes		
	Project plan	X	
	Action plan		
	Other (please state)		

Equality Analysis																					
<p>What is the aim of the policy/procedure/practice/event?</p> <p>This policy aims to ensure that individuals who are breastfeeding at work are supported and are provided with information on where to access a safe and healthy environment to breastfeed, express and store milk.</p>																					
<p>Who does the policy/procedure/practice/event impact on?</p> <table border="0"> <tr> <td>Race</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> <td>Religion/belief</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> <td>Marriage/Civil Partnership</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Gender</td> <td><input checked="" type="checkbox"/></td> <td>Disability</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> <td>Sexual orientation</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Age</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> <td>Gender re-assignment</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> <td>Pregnancy/maternity</td> <td><input checked="" type="checkbox"/></td> </tr> </table>				Race	<input type="checkbox"/>	Religion/belief	<input type="checkbox"/>	Marriage/Civil Partnership	<input type="checkbox"/>	Gender	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Disability	<input type="checkbox"/>	Sexual orientation	<input type="checkbox"/>	Age	<input type="checkbox"/>	Gender re-assignment	<input type="checkbox"/>	Pregnancy/maternity	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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Age	<input type="checkbox"/>	Gender re-assignment	<input type="checkbox"/>	Pregnancy/maternity	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>																
<p>Who is responsible for monitoring the policy/procedure/practice/event? HR</p>																					
<p>What information is currently available on the impact of this policy/procedure/practice/event?</p> <p>Having reviewed and updated the policy and completed a full consultation process, no negative impact was raised, and with the evidence available there is no negative impact.</p>																					
<p>Do you need more guidance before you can make an assessment about this policy/procedure/ practice/event? No</p>																					
<p>Do you have any examples that show that this policy/procedure/practice/event is having a positive impact on any of the following protected characteristics? Yes/No, if yes please provide evidence/examples:</p> <table border="0"> <tr> <td>Race</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> <td>Religion/belief</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> <td>Marriage/Civil Partnership</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Gender</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> <td>Disability</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> <td>Sexual orientation</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> </tr> </table>				Race	<input type="checkbox"/>	Religion/belief	<input type="checkbox"/>	Marriage/Civil Partnership	<input type="checkbox"/>	Gender	<input type="checkbox"/>	Disability	<input type="checkbox"/>	Sexual orientation	<input type="checkbox"/>						
Race	<input type="checkbox"/>	Religion/belief	<input type="checkbox"/>	Marriage/Civil Partnership	<input type="checkbox"/>																
Gender	<input type="checkbox"/>	Disability	<input type="checkbox"/>	Sexual orientation	<input type="checkbox"/>																

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Age	<input type="checkbox"/>	Gender re-assignment	<input type="checkbox"/>	Pregnancy/maternity	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<p>Please provide evidence: This policy is designed to be inclusive of all employees who wish to breastfeed at work.</p>					
<p>Are there any concerns that this policy/procedure/practice/event could have a negative impact on any of the following characteristics? Yes/No, if so, please provide evidence/examples: No</p>					
Race	<input type="checkbox"/>	Religion/belief	<input type="checkbox"/>	Marriage/Civil Partnership	<input type="checkbox"/>
Gender	<input type="checkbox"/>	Disability	<input type="checkbox"/>	Sexual orientation	<input type="checkbox"/>
Age	<input type="checkbox"/>	Gender re-assignment	<input type="checkbox"/>	Pregnancy/maternity	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p>Please provide evidence: Having reviewed and updated the policy and completed a full consultation process, no negative impact was raised, and with the evidence available there is no negative impact.</p>					
<p>Action Plan/Plans – SMART</p> <p>Specific</p> <p>Measurable</p> <p>Achievable</p> <p>Relevant</p> <p>Time Limited</p>					

Evaluation Monitoring Plan/how will this be monitored?

Who – see Monitoring Table
How
By
Reported to

Appendix C - Monitoring Table

What	Who	How	Frequency	Evidence	Reporting arrangements	Acting on recommendations	Change in practice and lessons to be shared
Audit of employee experience, and that the policy and procedure is being applied consistently, fairly and accurately for all employees who are breastfeeding	Head of HR People Partnering / ER team / wellbeing team.	Monitor ER Tracker data / risk assessments	Annually	Risk assessments / number of grievances/ complaints received in relation to breastfeeding	Reported to and discussed at People Committee where required	Head of HR People Partnering will address any actions or changes required.	Any change in practice will be identified and: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • process updated with HR People Partnering team • HRBP / line manager training implemented • policy updated where required.

