



# Oregon

Theodore R. Kulongoski, Governor

## Department of Human Services

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Dear Oregon employer:



I am writing to request your support for Oregon's wage and hour law as it applies to new mothers. As an employer, you can support this law by providing unpaid rest periods for breastfeeding mothers and a private place at the work site for new moms to express breast milk.

While these workplace requirements may seem inconvenient, research has shown that supporting breastfeeding can benefit both your bottom line and the lifelong health of mothers and children. For every \$1 invested to support breastfeeding, businesses see a \$3 return from improved employee retention, reduced absenteeism and lower health care costs. Parents of formula-fed babies miss 27 percent more work days to care for a sick child than parents of breastfed babies.

The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends that new moms breastfeed their infants for at least the first 12 months of the child's life. Breast milk provides infants with nutrients essential for brain development and a strong immune system to fight diseases. The protection that breastmilk provides lasts for many years after breastfeeding ends.

For example, breastfeeding is the first defense against obesity. Children who are not breastfed have higher rates of both obesity and diabetes. Children not breastfed have more infections, asthma, leukemia and dental caries. Women who do not breastfeed have higher rates of ovarian cancer and osteoporosis.

Breastfeeding plays an important role in improving the health of babies and their mothers. And, researchers now know that breast milk cannot be duplicated by artificial means. Employer support can make all the difference in giving children and their mothers the chance for a healthier life.

**Thank you for investing in the health of Oregon families by supporting working mothers who breastfeed.**

Bruce Goldberg, M.D.  
Director, Oregon Department of Human Services



## **Additional Information about Breastfeeding and Oregon's Wage and Hour Law: Rest Periods for Breastfeeding Mothers**

### **Breastfeeding Facts**

1. The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends breastfeeding for at least the first year of life.
2. Data show a savings of \$400 to \$1,000 per year for every breastfed baby.
3. For every 1,000 babies not breastfed there are 2,033 excess doctor visits and 212 extra days in the hospital.
4. Nationally, the higher rate of diabetes in formula-fed children costs a minimum of \$1.1 billion per year.

### **Wage and Hour Law (ORS 653.077) – Effective January 1, 2008**

1. Applies to employers with 25 or more employees.
2. Administered by Bureau of Labor and Industries.
3. Requires employers to provide:
  - At least one unpaid 30-minute rest period per four hours of work for milk expression for women with children 18 months of age or younger.
  - A private place for expressing breastmilk, not a toilet stall or restroom.

### **For More Information on the Wage and Hour Law**

- Oregon Department of Human Services:  
<http://www.oregon.gov/DHS/ph/bf/hb2372.shtml>
- Bureau of Labor and Industries (BOLI): <http://www.boli.state.or.us/>

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#### **Contact information for BOLI Wage and Hour Section**

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Eugene	1400 Executive Pkwy, Suite 200 Eugene, OR 97401	541-686-7623
Medford	119 N Oakdale Ave, Medford, OR 97501	541-776-6270
Portland	800 NE Oregon St, Suite 1045 Portland, OR 97232	971-673-0761,
	TTY – Portland	971-673-0766
Salem	3865 Wolverine St NE; E-1 Salem, OR 97305-1268 Representantes hispanohablantes están disponibles en Portland, Salem, y Medford.	503-378-3292

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