



Tips for Creating a Breastfeeding-Friendly Policy for Your Business

We know that running a business can be incredibly challenging; running a business that makes everyone involved feel included, welcomed, and supported is an even greater challenge. When it comes to protecting a mother's right to breastfeed in your place of business, the laws, both federal and at the state level, have your back completely! The laws support breastfeeding where both the mother and child are allowed to be. The [California Breastfeeding Coalition](#) has put together a comprehensive list of the laws and what they protect, in regards to breastfeeding as a whole in California.

If you're looking for resources for other states, [BreastfeedingLaw.com](#) is an excellent, up-to-date compilation of all the laws, that is moderated by Jake Marcus, a breastfeeding mother, advocate, and attorney.

Example of a Breastfeeding-Friendly Policy:

A mother's right to breastfeed in our establishment (business, restaurant, etc) is protected by state and federal law. Our state law states: (list your law here). If another customer brings to your attention that he/she feels uncomfortable seeing a mother breastfeeding her baby in public, it is your obligation to remain in compliance with the law. You may not ask this breastfeeding mother to leave our establishment, cover up, or move to another location. Instead, it is your responsibility to inform the bothered customer of the state law and recommend that he/she move to another location so that he/she will no longer be able bothered by seeing this mother breastfeed. Also, please make sure that this bothered customer doesn't take matters into his/her own hands by causing a scene and harassing the breastfeeding mother. If this happens, please ask the bothered customer to leave our establishment.

Why have a Breastfeeding-Friendly Policy?

Educating your staff about your business's breastfeeding-friendly policies will help to empower them, as well as provide them with easy tools to handle a somewhat uncomfortable situation. It will also help keep your business out of the media for being an establishment that infringed upon a mother's right to feed her baby. Being featured in the media often brings extremely negative backlash to a business by exacerbating the incident. Lastly, breastfeeding mothers like to go out and be social, so you are increasing your revenue by providing a safe place where a mother can nourish her child anytime, anywhere.



Tips for Handling a Nursing in Public Harassment Incident in your Establishment:

We encourage businesses and other interested parties to read through the articles and commentaries we've posted here on the [SDNIP webpage](#). In them, you'll find easy ways to resolve issues you have with patrons and breastfeeding mothers. We will often hear of businesses, mostly restaurants, where a mother has been breastfeeding and another patron has asked the wait staff to speak with her about covering up or nursing elsewhere. This situation usually lends itself nicely to resolution when the law is quoted as it is written. Here in CA that conversation might look like this:

Patron #1: Waiter, can you please ask that woman to cover up or go somewhere else while she nurses? I don't want to see that while I eat.

Waiter: I'm sorry, sir or ma'am, but I cannot ask her to cover up or go elsewhere as it is against our state law. CA civil code, 43.3., states that: "a mother may breastfeed her child in any location, public or private, except the private home or residence of another, where the mother and the child are otherwise authorized to be present." Due to the fact that both mother and baby are allowed to eat in this establishment, we cannot legally ask her to do anything differently than what she's currently doing. If you are uncomfortable seeing her breastfeed, I am happy to reseat you at another table.

Most of the time, informing your customer that the mother is well within her legal right to nurse in public will diffuse the situation rather peacefully.