

# Pregnant workers and new parents

## PREGNANCY AT WORK

If you are pregnant, it is your right to request and your employer must provide:

- more frequent or longer restroom, food and water breaks;
- seating; and
- limits on lifting more than 20 pounds.

You have the right to request other workplace changes when you have been given advice from a health care provider or doula. Your employer cannot require you to adjust your working conditions because you are pregnant.

## PREGNANCY AND PARENTAL LEAVE FROM WORK

Employees may request and take up to 12 weeks of unpaid leave during pregnancy or upon the birth or adoption of their child. Employees are eligible for this leave regardless of the size of their employer or the amount of time for which they have worked for their employer.

Pregnancy and parental leave may be taken for:

- prenatal care;
- incapacity due to pregnancy or related health conditions;
- childbirth or adoption; or
- bonding time by a birthing or non-birthing parent after the birth or adoption of the child.

Employers can adopt reasonable policies about when requests for leave must be made and leave must be taken within 12 months of the birth or adoption.

You may be able to use employer-provided benefits, such as sick leave or disability leave, if you are sick during pregnancy or to recover after childbirth.

Minnesota's paid family and medical leave law, which provides paid time off during or following a pregnancy, goes into effect Jan. 1, 2026.

## EXPRESSING MILK AT WORK

If you decide to express milk at work, your employer, regardless of size, must provide:

- break times to express milk without you losing compensation; and
- a clean, private and secure area to express milk that:
  - is not a bathroom;
  - is shielded from view;
  - is free of intrusion from coworkers and the public;
  - is in close proximity to the work area; and
  - has access to an electrical outlet.

There may be limited exceptions to this requirement.

You can choose when to express milk based on your needs, whether that means expressing milk during an existing paid break, during an existing unpaid break, such as a meal break, or during some other time.

It is against the law for your employer to retaliate, or take negative action, against you for requesting or taking a leave, pregnancy accommodation or break to express milk at work.

## CONTACT US

Contact Labor Standards at 651-284-5075 or [dli.laborstandards@state.mn.us](mailto:dli.laborstandards@state.mn.us).



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Notice: This is a brief summary of Minnesota law. It is intended as a guide and is not to be considered a substitute for related Minnesota Statutes.