

# Pregnancy leave, nursing mothers

## PREGNANCY LEAVE FROM WORK

Female employees may take up to 12 weeks of unpaid leave during or following pregnancy when:

1. they work for a company with 21 or more employees at one site;
2. they worked at least half time during the past 12 months; and
3. they have been with the company for at least 12 months.

Pregnancy leave may be taken if the woman cannot work because of:

- prenatal care;
- pregnancy;
- childbirth; or
- related health conditions.



An employee may also be able to use employer-provided benefits, like sick leave or disability leave, if she is sick during her pregnancy or to recover after childbirth.

## PREGNANCY ACCOMMODATIONS AT WORK REQUIRED ACCOMMODATIONS

A pregnant employee may request and her employer must provide:

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

## OTHER ACCOMMODATIONS

A pregnant employee may request other reasonable workplace accommodations when:

- she has been given advice from a health care provider or doula; and
- the accommodation would not impose an undue hardship on the employer's business.

Other accommodations may include the temporary transfer to a less strenuous or hazardous job. An employer cannot require an employee to take an accommodation. An employer cannot retaliate against an employee for requesting or taking an accommodation. Employees may have additional rights under the Minnesota Human Rights Act.

## NURSING MOTHERS

A mother who needs to express breast milk for her child at work:

- must be provided reasonable unpaid break time to express breast milk; and
- must, when possible, be provided a private area to express milk that:
  - » is not a bathroom,
  - » is shielded from view,
  - » is free of intrusion from coworkers and the public, and
  - » has access to an electrical outlet.

The employer must make a reasonable effort to provide a private area to express milk. Employers are not required to provide break time if doing so would seriously disrupt operations. Breaks already provided may fulfill this requirement.



Labor Standards • 443 Lafayette Road N. • St. Paul, MN 55155  
651-284-5075 • 800-342-5354 • 651-284-5099 (Spanish) • [www.dli.mn.gov](http://www.dli.mn.gov) • [dli.laborstandards@state.mn.us](mailto:dli.laborstandards@state.mn.us)