

Parents Guide: Alabama Breastfeeding Friendly Child Care



As a breastfeeding family, finding a child care provider that supports, promotes, encourages, and protects your needs is likely very important to you. How do you know if a child care provider is truly supportive of your breastfeeding needs?

5 Requirements to Become a Breastfeeding Friendly Child Care

1. Breastfeeding Friendly Environment

- A quiet, clean, and comfortable place, other than a restroom, for mothers to sit and breastfeed or express breast milk (pump) is available. This space should be available for both nursing mothers of children in the program and employees.
- The following are available to mothers in the space set aside for breastfeeding or expressing breast milk: privacy, an electrical outlet, comfortable seating, and access to a sink with running water.
- Culturally appropriate* educational materials, posters, brochures, children's books, and other materials that promote breastfeeding are displayed in multiple locations and could include the following areas of the building:
 - Entrance or other public spaces
 - Infant classrooms
 - Toddler or preschool classrooms
 - Space set aside for breastfeeding

*Posters and other materials should include photos that reflect the ethnicity of the families served and should be written in a reading level understandable by families.

- Enough refrigerator or freezer space is available to allow all breastfeeding mothers, including employees, to store expressed breast milk.

2. Breastfeeding Policies

- Written policies* on promoting and supporting breastfeeding including the following topics:
 - Providing space for mothers to breastfeed or express breast milk
 - Providing refrigerator and freezer space to store expressed breast milk
 - Offering professional development for all staff on breastfeeding
 - Creating individualized feeding plans and coordinating feedings to meet the needs of the child and mother
 - Providing educational materials for families on breastfeeding, including guidance on how to properly store and label expressed breast milk
- Supporting breastfeeding for employees, including time given to pump or nurse their babies

*Policies should be included in parent handbooks, staff manuals, and other documents as applicable.

3. Breastfeeding Support Practices

- Teachers and staff promote breastfeeding and support mothers who provide breast milk for their infants in the following ways:
 - Inviting mothers to come to the program to nurse their babies
 - Talking with families about the benefits of breastfeeding
 - Communicating with families about the ways the program supports breastfeeding
 - Telling families about community organizations* that provide breastfeeding support
 - Giving families educational materials, which can include brochures, tip sheets, and links to trusted websites
 - Showing positive attitudes about breastfeeding

*Community organizations that provide breastfeeding support can include local health departments, hospitals, or local La Leche League groups.

4. Breastfeeding Education and Professional Development

- Teachers and staff receive professional development* on promoting and supporting breastfeeding at least one time per year.

*Initial training to obtain certification must be the official Breastfeeding Friendly Child Care Training provided by Alabama Cooperative Extension System or Alabama Partnership for Children.

- Professional development for current staff on promoting and supporting breastfeeding includes the following topics:
 - Proper storage and handling of breast milk
 - Bottle-feeding a breastfed baby
 - Benefits of breastfeeding for mother and baby
 - Promoting breastfeeding and supporting breastfeeding mothers
 - Community organizations that support breastfeeding
 - Program's policies on promoting and supporting breastfeeding
- As part of new employee orientation, breastfeeding information is shared with all new staff within 90 days of hire.
- Expectant families and families with infants are offered educational materials on breastfeeding.

5. Breastfeeding and Infant Feeding Practices

- With permission from families, the timing of infant feedings is based on the specific needs and cues of infants showing they are hungry. Hunger cues include but are not limited to rooting, sucking on their fingers, licking their lips, fussing, or crying.
- Teachers end infant feedings based on infant cues showing they are full.
 - Infants show they are full by slowing the pace of eating, turning away, and spitting out or refusing more food.
- When feeding infants, teachers use responsive feeding techniques including making eye contact, talking, responding to the infant's reactions during feedings, or signs of hunger and fullness; not propping bottles.
- Teachers inform families about what, when, and how much their infants eat each day.
- Mothers are encouraged to introduce solid foods at a developmentally appropriate time.

Contact your county Extension office for more information on how to get started or email aceshse@auburn.edu



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