

Breastfeeding FAQ

1. What are my entitlements to breastfeeding breaks?

If you are breastfeeding, after returning from maternity leave, you are entitled to breastfeeding breaks at work for up to one hour in an 8-hour-hour working day. Where you work less than 8 hours in a day, this entitlement is pro-rated. This is in addition to your normal rest breaks. The breaks may be taken until the child's second birthday.

2. How long is the break and does it have to be taken in a block?

The break entitlement is one hour each day away from work (with pay). This break can be constructed in a manner that is agreed between the employee and manager.

Under the legislation, for a staff member working 8-hour-hour day, this may comprise of:

- 1x 60-minute period
- 2x 30-minute periods
- 3x 20-minute periods

Staff who work less than 8 hours a day are entitled to breastfeeding breaks, calculated on a pro rata basis. Examples of how the break duration is calculated are outlined in example 1.0 and 1.1 below.

It should be noted that breastfeeding breaks are to be taken in addition to meal breaks and breaks cannot be accumulated.

3. Are breastfeeding breaks in addition to my working hours?

No, the break(s) must be taken within your normal working hours. The breaks cannot be used to accrue flexitime.

4. Can I avail of breastfeeding breaks while remote working?

Yes, you can avail of breastfeeding breaks while remote working. The break(s) must be taken within your normal working hours.

5. Can I take the break at the start /end of the working day?

Subject to operational demand the break(s) can be used at the start/end of the working day in agreement with the employee's line manager. However, they must be taken within your normal working hours, and cannot be used to accrue flexitime.

6. Are breastfeeding breaks paid?

Yes, employees will be paid as normal for statutory breastfeeding breaks.

7. How do I request reduced hours for breastfeeding?

Employees should inform their manager in writing of their request for reduced hours for breastfeeding four weeks before their return from maternity leave. If breastfeeding breaks are no longer required, employees should make their manager aware of this.

8. For what duration am I entitled to take reduced hours for breast feeding?

Employees are entitled to take reduced hours for breastfeeding up until their child is 2 years of age.

9. How are breastfeeding breaks recorded?

Line Managers have a responsibility to maintain a record of requests made by employees and arrangements put in place. The Line Manager and employee should agree an arrangement for same. This applies to both office-based and remote working. Records will be held for a period of 12 months after the breastfeeding arrangement has ended and will be held by the Line Manager in line with TU Dublin's data retention policy.

10. Where can breast milk be stored?

- Breast milk can be stored in refrigerators provided by the University in the breastfeeding/expressing facilities.
- Breast milk can be stored within a cooler bag with ice packs or in a shared staff refrigerator within the employee's work area if that is more convenient.
- It is the responsibility of the employee/student to ensure that their name and details are clearly marked on all items when stored in refrigerators. Refrigerators provided by the University are shared.
- The University is not responsible for managing or removing milk stored in refrigerators in breastfeeding/expressing facilities.

11. Where are the Breast-feeding facilities located in TU Dublin?

Facilities are provided by TU Dublin for the purposes of breastfeeding/expressing milk. These facilities are aligned to good practice to ensure the comfort of those using them. These facilities are in place should someone wish to avail of them but there is no requirement by those breastfeeding to use them.

TU Dublin is entirely breastfeeding friendly and there are no restrictions on bottle or breastfeeding at the University. Individuals are entitled to breastfeed in public places and do not have to ask anyone for permission to do so.

Protection for breastfeeding in public is covered by the Equal Status Act (2000) on gender grounds.

Information about breastfeeding facilities and locations is available at: <https://www.tudublin.ie/media/website/for-staff/health-and-safety/documents/Location-of-first-aid-rooms.docx>

Who do I contact if there is an issue with the breast-feeding facilities?

Contact TU Dublin's Safety, Health & Welfare office for queries about facilities.

Examples for calculating breastfeeding breaks.

Example 1.0

The statutory entitlements for breastfeeding breaks are based on an 8-hour workday and are as follows:

- one 60-minute break
- two 30-minute breaks
- three 20-minute breaks

Employee A works 7 hours per day. Therefore, they work 87.5% of the full time equivalent for the purposes of calculating the entitlement. The break entitlement for Employee A is pro-rated by 87.5% as follows (all figures rounded up to nearest whole number).

- one 53-minute break (60 mins x 87.5%)
- two 27-minute breaks (30 mins x 87.5%)
- three 18-minute breaks (20 mins x 87.5%)

Example 2.0

Employee B works 4 hours per day. Therefore, they work 50% of the full time equivalent for the purposes of calculating the entitlement. The break entitlement for Employee B is pro-rated by 50% as follows;

- One 30-minute break
- Two 15-minute breaks
- Three 5-minute breaks.