

ABC's *Breastfeeding Welcomed Here* Initiative

ADVOCATES TOOL KIT

INSTRUCTIONS

Thank you so much for participating in ABC's "*Breastfeeding Welcomed Here*" initiative!

STEPS:

Prepare

1. Identify potential local Businesses and Organizations that may be agreeable to posting "*Breastfeeding Welcomed Here*" window clings. We suggest you start with supportive Businesses/Institutions for practice in approaching those where resistance is expected.
2. Practice your approach using the FAQ information sheet below. We suggest you keep your pitch short, to about 3 minutes in length.
3. Print 2 copies of both documents (the "Agreement Letter" and the "FAQ") below for EACH Business or Organization you plan to approach.

Approach

4. Ask the designated manager of the Business/Organization for their support. Have them fill out and sign 2 copies of the "Agreement Letter to Business/Organization". Then sign your name and contact details below the manager's on both copies. Give one signed copy to the manager.
5. Retain the second signed copy. Either mail or scan and e-mailed this second copy to ABC at the address below. When ABC receives the signed "Agreement Letter to Business/Organization", we will mail out the number of "*Breastfeeding Welcomed Here*" window clings requested.
6. With the manager's permission, take a photo of the Business/Organization and post it on ABC's Facebook page yourself, or e-mail the photo to ABC to post.

Follow-up

7. Revisit the Business/Organization to ensure they have received and hung their window cling(s). Check ABC's Facebook page to ensure your photo has been added. Also check ABC's website on the "*Breastfeeding Welcomed Here*" page to ensure the Business/Organization has been added to ABC's breastfeeding-friendly list. E-mail ABC if the clings have not been received, the Business/Organization has not been listed or their photo posted within 1 month of submitting the signed Agreement Letter and photo.

Contact info for ABC:

MAIL: ABC, PO Box 211124, Anchorage AK 99521 **E-MAIL/WEBSITE:** <http://alaskabreastfeeding.org>

**ABC – The Alaska Breastfeeding Coalition
And our Collaborating Community Partners**
[http://: alaskabreastfeeding.org](http://alaskabreastfeeding.org)
PO Box 211124 Anchorage AK 99521



Agreement Letter to Business or Organization Manager,

Thank you for your interest in supporting breastfeeding mothers and babies through *The Alaska Breastfeeding Coalition's* **"Breastfeeding Welcomed Here"** Initiative! Businesses and Organizations that agree to place "Breastfeeding Welcomed Here" window signs will be listed on *The Alaska Breastfeeding Coalition's* website and Facebook Page. When breastfeeding mothers know they are welcomed, they are more likely to visit, to return, and to tell their friends. Together, we can support breastfeeding success and improve the health of Alaska families.

By posting "Breastfeeding Welcomed Here" window clings you acknowledge that:

- **Breastfeeding is acceptable in all areas of your premises open to the general public**
- **All staff will be informed how to support the needs of breastfeeding customers**
- **Breastfeeding women will never be asked to cover-up, move, stop breastfeeding or leave**

Business/Organization Manager's Name: _____

Business/Organization Manager's Signature: _____

Business/Organization Name: _____

Business/Organization Address: _____

Business/Organization Phone Number: _____

____ Number of Window Clings requested

____ I do NOT want my Business/Organization's Name listed on the ABC website

____ I do NOT want my Business/Organization's Photo posted on the ABC Facebook Page

____ ABC Member or Name: _____

____ Community Partner Phone: _____

Email: _____

***Alaska Statute 29.25.080 Breastfeeding (1998)** A municipality may not enact an ordinance that prohibits or restricts a woman breast-feeding a child in a public or private location where the woman and child are otherwise authorized to be. In a municipal ordinance, "lewd conduct," "lewd touching," "immoral conduct," "indecent conduct," and similar terms do not include the act of a woman breast-feeding a child in a public or private location where the woman and child are otherwise authorized to be. Nothing in this section may be construed to authorize an act that is an offense under a municipal ordinance that establishes an offense with elements substantially equivalent to the elements of an offense under AS 11.61.123 . This section is applicable to home rule and general law municipalities.

Breastfeeding Welcomed Here

Frequently Asked Questions

Why should I get involved?

It is important to be in compliance with Alaska law*. Additionally, many mothers are nervous to breastfeed in public because they feel unsupported. Lack of social support keeps some from breastfeeding at all and causes others to stop breastfeeding before the minimum time period suggested by the American Academy of Pediatrics.

What are the benefits of breastfeeding?

Babies who are breastfed have a lower risk of developing obesity, diabetes, asthma, and infections that can require treatment in hospital. Women who breastfeed have a lower risk of developing heart disease, diabetes and breast or ovarian cancers.

What is wrong with asking a mother to move to the restroom or cover up?

It implies that the mother and baby are engaging in a shameful or distasteful act when they are simply feeding. It is not reasonable to expect others to eat in a bathroom.

Why can't the mother just bring a bottle or nurse before she leaves home?

The breastfeeding relationship is complex and can be disrupted by bottle-feeding. Babies eat on an irregular schedule and need to feed-on-demand to grow well.

What about the rights of others to not see women nursing in public?

If breastfeeding offends someone, they can ignore it, ask to be moved or leave. A nursing mother and baby are not responsible for another person's comfort level.

Are there really that many mothers breastfeeding in public?

Yes. People don't realize how often babies are breastfed in public because mothers and babies are so skilled that their feeding doesn't register with others.

How should you respond if people do complain?

"I'm sorry you're uncomfortable. However, that mother is within her legal rights to breastfeed in public."

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