

# Breastfeeding Welcomed Here Information Sheet

Breastfeeding moms need all the support they can get. By taking the 'Breastfeeding Welcomed Here' pledge you will be agreeing to **provide a welcoming environment where breastfeeding mothers are able to sit anywhere and enjoy a welcoming attitude from staff, management and other patrons while breastfeeding.**

## Tennessee Law (TCA 68-58-101)

Permits a mother to breastfeed in any location, public or private, that the mother is authorized to be, and prohibits local governments from criminalizing or restricting breastfeeding. Specifies that the act of breastfeeding shall not be considered public indecency as defined by § 39-13-511; or nudity, obscene, or sexual conduct as defined in § 39-17-901. (HB 3582)

## 'Breastfeeding Welcomed Here' Background

*'Breastfeeding Welcomed Here'* is a component of the NashVitality campaign, which celebrates and promotes efforts that make the healthy choice an easy choice for all of Nashville.

*'Breastfeeding Welcomed Here'* highlights a city and business community that welcomes and supports breastfeeding moms and is a part of a much larger campaign to make Nashville a healthier city and ultimately to increase breastfeeding rates in Davidson County.

Because it is the law to permit a mother to breastfeed her child in any location, public or private, many businesses are already providing this level of access and comfort to their patrons. However, there are some businesses and employees that may be unaware of the current law. This can often cause an awkward and embarrassing situation for the mother that is simply feeding her child.

The Nashville community has expressed interest in having businesses clearly designate that they are aware of the law, and committed to providing a welcome environment for mothers. This initiative aims to allow families to be more at ease by businesses displaying this commitment through a pledge, and a clearly visible window decal.



# Frequently Asked Questions

## What is the big deal?

It's the law. Additionally, many mothers are afraid to breastfeed in public because of lack of societal support. The problem is big enough that it keeps many from breastfeeding at all or causes them to end their breastfeeding relationship before the minimum guidelines suggested by the American Academy of Pediatrics.

## What are the benefits of breastfeeding?

Women who breastfeed have a lower risk of getting breast and ovarian cancers, and their babies are less likely to develop numerous conditions, from earaches to diabetes and obesity.

## What is wrong with asking a mom 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 their child.

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

Breastfeeding is a complex relationship that can be disrupted by bottle-feeding. Babies often eat on an irregular schedule and it's important to feed the baby on demand.

## What about the right of others to not see someone nurse in public, especially while eating?

If breastfeeding offends someone, they may ignore it, turn away, 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 children are breastfed in public because mothers and babies are so skilled at it that it often doesn't register with viewers.

## 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."

