



Guide to Preparing for Employee's Return After Baby

Parents who return to work after the birth of a child need unique support during this transition, especially if they choose to continue feeding breast milk to their child. Anyone with HR or supervisory responsibilities for another employee should be familiar with the company's parental benefits and breastfeeding policies, and be prepared to answer questions their employees may have.

The following guide frames topics that often arise when new parents return to work. This can help HR and managers review relevant policies and benefits they have in place that employees may ask about in their first days back. It may also be beneficial to consider the distinct implications of exempt and non-exempt roles, as the processes for supporting them may be vastly different based on their job responsibilities and schedules.



Flexible work arrangements – be familiar with the company's stance on adjusting work schedules for employees who are just returning after a baby.

- Adjustments to start and/or end time of the shift or workday
- Remote work policy and details
- Ability to transition back to work on a reduced schedule (e.g., part-time), and how long that may be available



Managing workload responsibilities – be prepared to discuss how your employee can re-engage, and balance work and parental demands as they return.

- Available support resources and benefits, such as employee resource groups for new parents
- Formal or informal mentoring by another employee who recently returned
- On-site childcare, or back-up childcare
- Sick leave policy to care for an ill baby





Pumping needs at work – if an employee plans to pump breast milk when they return, be aware of the resources they may need to rely on and the schedule adjustments they may require.

- Know the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) and any relevant state or local laws
 - The FLSA requires employers to provide adequate break time and a private lactation space to pump for non-exempt (hourly) employees
 - Information on state laws can be found at: mamava.com/lactation-laws
- Understand the company policies regarding support for breastfeeding needs
 - Lactation Accommodation Policy
 - Breast milk shipping services for employees who travel for work
 - Lactation Consulting or other support services
- Accommodate pumping schedule needs: blocking time for exempt employees, and arranging a break schedule for non-exempt employees (with appropriate workload coverage, if necessary)
- Lactation space and supplies
 - How/where to schedule or reserve time in the lactation space
 - Where to store and refrigerate breast milk
 - What supplies are offered in the lactation space
- If your company offers a hospital-grade multi-user breast pump in your lactation space, explain to the employee that they will need their own breast pump kit, and advise where they can get one

To learn more about Medela's resources for employers, visit www.kinbenefits.com.