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NORTH-WEST UNIVERSITY
NOORDWES-UNIVERSITEIT
YUNIBESITI YA BOKONE-BOPHIRIMA

WORKPLACE BREASTFEEDING POLICY

Reference number	3P_3.20C
Accountable executive manager	Executive Director: People and Culture Executive Director: Student Life
Policy owner	Director: Employee Relations Directors: Student Life
Responsible division	Employee Wellness Student Life Protection Services
Status	Approved
Approved by	Council
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Date of amendments	
Review date	2024

WORKPLACE BREASTFEEDING POLICY

1 Preamble

Against the background to be an internationally recognised university in Africa, distinguished for engaged scholarship, social responsiveness and an ethic of care, the Council of the North-West University (NWU) adopted the Workplace Breastfeeding Policy on 17 June 2021.

2 Interpretation and application

This policy must be interpreted and applied in a manner consistent with the:

- Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996;
- Occupational Health and Safety Act, 85 of 1993;
- Labour Relations Act, 66 of 1995;
- Basic Conditions of Employment Act, 75 of 1997;
- Employment Equity Act, 55 of 1998;
- Code of Good Practice on the Protection of Employees During Pregnancy and After the Birth of a Child Regulation 1441 published in *Government Gazette* No 6342 of 1998 in terms of section 87(2) of the Basic Conditions of Employment Act of 1997.

3 Definitions

In this policy and related documents –

“**breastfeeding**” means the normal way of providing young infants with the nutrients they need for healthy growth and development, namely exclusive breastfeeding, partial breastfeeding, token breastfeeding, or exclusive expression of breastmilk using a breast pump;

“**wellbeing**” means a positive state of physical, spiritual, social and emotional wellness;

“**student**” refers to a registered student of the NWU.

4 Scope of Application

The provisions contained in this policy are applicable to all North-West University employees and students.

5 Policy statement

It is the policy of the NWU to support, in the interests of the wellbeing of its employees and students, to recognise that breastfeeding contributes to the overall wellbeing of parents and children, and therefore to establish a framework to promote breastfeeding at the North-West University, for the benefit of working mothers and students of infants and toddlers.

6 Rules

- This policy must be communicated to all staff and students of the North-West University.
- On return from maternity leave, a breastfeeding employee must inform her direct line manager thereof in order for the necessary arrangements to be made.
- The line manager must ensure that reasonable provision is made within the workplace to accommodate female employees who request to breastfeed or express breastmilk in a clean, comfortable and private facility.
- All employees in full day positions (8/8) and students who breastfeed must be allowed 30 minutes twice a day to breastfeed or express breastmilk for the first six months after returning to work.

Employees who are appointed in half day (5/8) positions must be allowed to breastfeed or express once a day for 30 minutes for the first six months after returning to work. Beyond six months, breastfeeding women should engage their employers to make arrangements to support breastfeeding.

- An employee and student who is breastfeeding may not be required to perform duties that is hazardous to the health of the employee or student or the health of her child.
- The line manager, through the Occupational Health and Safety Unit, must assess and control risks to the health of breastfeeding employees and their infant or child.
- In cases where abuse of time is suspected, the line manager may investigate and take action according to North-West University's Behavioral Policy.

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