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|  | Standard Operating Procedure DCU Mothers' Rest Room | OP: DCU/HSO/SOP/008 Rev : 01 Approved by: PK Page : 1 of 4 Revision date: 19/01/2023 Review Date: 19/01/2026 |
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1.0 Introduction

DCU recognises the importance and benefits of breastfeeding, and understands that many women will return to work or study while they continue to breastfeed. The University is therefore committed to providing mothers who are staff members with flexibility to take breaks (lactation breaks) during their workday for the purpose of expressing and storing breast milk. This policy seeks to accommodate the needs of employees within the context of the needs of the University and individual work units.

2.0 Purpose

The purpose of this document is to detail how the University will provide suitable facilities for Pregnant, Post Natal and Breastfeeding women.

3.0 Scope

This policy applies to all DCU employees and students who are pregnant, post-natal or breastfeeding.

The scope of the procedure includes:


- Responsible Persons
- References
- Procedure
 - Lactation Breaks (DCU Staff)
 - Lactation Facilities (DCU Staff and Students)
 - Pregnant Employees Rest Facility
 - Coordination of the Mothers' Rest Room
- Contact
- History

4.0 Responsible Persons

Health and Safety Office

The health and safety office shall:

- Provide suitable facilities for pregnant, post-natal and breastfeeding mothers. These facilities shall be lockable and shall contain a fridge, bed or reclining chair, a socket, sink and a phone.
- On request, distribute access cards to pregnant, post-natal and breastfeeding staff or students.

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Student Support and Development

The Student Services Department shall inform pregnant, post-natal and breastfeeding students about the Mothers' room and refer them to the Health and Safety Office for access. Refer to "Supports for Pregnant Students" Dec 17, Student Support and Development Dept.

Departmental and Faculty/Schools Management

Managers shall inform pregnant, post-natal and breastfeeding employees about the Mothers' room and refer them to the Health and Safety Office for access. They shall ensure that the employee completes the Risk Assessment on the DCU Health and Safety website.

5.0 References

DCU Framework Safety Statement Oct 2022.

6.0 Procedure

6.1 Lactation Breaks (DCU Staff)

In accordance with the Maternity Protection (Amendment) Act 2004, from the time the mother returns to work following her maternity leave up until the child is 6 months old, lactation breaks will be provided without loss of pay in one of the following manners, in agreement with her manager:


- One break of one hour
- Two 30 minute breaks or
- Three 20-minute breaks, which is equal to one hour per day.

DCU also recognises that some mothers may wish to continue to breastfeed beyond the statutory 6-month period. Arrangements to continue to avail of lactation breaks beyond the child's first 6 months are subject to local management agreement.

6.2 Lactation Facilities (DCU Staff and Students)

DCU supports breastfeeding mothers by providing a private, comfortable 'Mothers' Rest Room' for them to express and store breast milk for their babies. The room includes cleansing and refrigerated storage facilities.

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| Glasnevin Campus | - | XG-38 (Ground floor X Block – Lonsdale Building) |
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The Mothers' Rest Room is locked at all times and may be accessed by a swipe card issued by the Health & Safety Office. Staff or students requiring access to the room must contact the Health & Safety Office (01 700 8896) and complete the confidential web based Pregnancy Risk Assessment Form.

Swipe cards issued to an individual for long-term use may be retained until access to the room is no longer necessary.

6.3 Pregnant Employees Rest Facility

DCU recognises that staff members who are pregnant may occasionally suffer from fatigue related to their pregnancy and may wish to rest for a short period during their day. The Mothers' Rest Rooms are available to such staff members who wish to access rest facilities on campus. These rooms may be accessed by a swipe card issued by the Health & Safety Office. Staff requiring access to the room must notify their manager and contact the Health & Safety Office (01 700 8896).

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They must complete the confidential web based Pregnancy Risk Assessment Form. Staff who access the room must notify their manager on each occasion prior to use and must similarly notify their return to their normal work.


Pregnant students should refer to "Supports for Pregnant Students" available from the Student Support and Development Department, for details of arrangements for pregnant students.

Swipe cards issued to an individual for use during pregnancy may be retained until the commencement of maternity leave.

It is noted that the Mothers' Rest Room is a stand-alone rest room and not a medical facility. It is not therefore designed to accommodate or support pregnant staff or students who may be unwell at work. Such staff are required to contact their medical advisor to seek advice and instructions regarding their particular condition

6.4 Coordination of the Mothers' Rest Room

Staff members and students using the Mothers' Rest Room are required to respect the privacy and security of the room and of those who use it. Individuals are expected to respectfully coordinate their use with other mothers using the room. Each user is expected to ensure the room is clean and locked as they depart.

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7.0 Contact

CG 10 Health and Safety Office
 Henry Grattan Building
 Glasnevin
 Email: safety@dcu.ie

8.0 History

| Revision No: | Date: | Purpose of Revision: |
|--------------|------------|------------------------------|
| 01 | Feb 2018 | New SOP |
| 02 | April 2021 | Minor Amendments and Reissue |
| 03 | Jan 2023 | Minor Amendments and Reissue |