



DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE  
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MEMORANDUM FOR DISTRIBUTION C  
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FROM: SAF/MR  
1040 Air Force Pentagon  
Washington, DC 20330-1040

SUBJECT: Air Force Guidance Memorandum (AFGM) Establishing Requirement of Lactation Rooms for Nursing Mothers

By Order of the Secretary of the Air Force, this AFGM immediately implements policy and procedures for women's health by supporting nursing mothers with a private, secure (lockable from the inside) and sanitary area, herein referred to as a lactation room, within unit facilities. The instructions contained herein detail responsibilities and procedural steps, as necessary, to enable commanders to align the needs of nursing mothers with mission requirements. Compliance with this publication is mandatory. To the extent its directions are inconsistent with other Air Force publications, the information herein prevails, in accordance with AFI 33-360, Publications and Forms Management.

The attachment to this memorandum provides guidance that is effective immediately.

This memorandum becomes void after one-year has elapsed from the date of this memorandum, or upon publication of an Air Force Instruction of the same policy and procedures, whichever is earlier.

JOHN A. FEDRIGO  
Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary  
(Manpower & Reserve Affairs)

Attachment:  
Establishing Requirement of Lactation Rooms for Nursing Mothers

## ATTACHMENT

### *Establishing Requirement of Lactation Rooms for Nursing Mothers*

**1. Overview:** The guidance contained herein details policy and procedures for commanders to support nursing mothers with a lactation room to nurse or express milk in close proximity of a nursing mother's workplace within unit facilities under the control of a unit commander or equivalent.

1.1. It provides roles, responsibilities, and requirements and applies to all Regular Air Force, Air National Guard, and Air Force Reserve units who have Service members or civilian employees that are nursing mothers.

1.2. The requirement for all elements of the Executive Branch to implement policies and procedures for lactation rooms stems from Public Law (PL) 111-148, *Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act*, §4207. Following passage of this Act, the President of the United States delegated authority to the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) to regulate implementation throughout the Executive Branch. OPM subsequently issued a *Nursing Mothers in Federal Employment* memorandum for heads of Executive departments and agencies, and *Guide for Establishing a Federal Nursing Mother's Program*. Department of Defense policy was then set out in the memorandum, *Department-Wide Policy for Nursing and Lactation Rooms*. Providing nursing mothers with a private space was further codified in Department of Defense (DoD) Unified Facilities Criteria (UFC) 1-200-01, *DoD Building Code (General Building Requirements)*, Chapter 3, paragraph 3-2.2.

**2. Policy:** It is Air Force policy to remain committed to women's health issues as a core component of a lethal, ready force and will provide a lactation room in accordance with procedures shown in paragraph 3 below for Service member and civilian employee mothers who choose to breastfeed upon return to duty or work, respectively, following pregnancies. The procedures to implement a lactation room balance the mission readiness needs of units while affording nursing mothers the opportunity to continue breastfeeding, pursuant to the United States Surgeon General's goals for increasing breastfeeding for a period of at least one year after a child's birth.

### **3. Procedures:**

3.1. Unit Commanders will:

3.1.1. Identify a private, secure (lockable from the inside) and sanitary area as a lactation room in the immediate vicinity of unit facilities that is available to meet the needs of breastfeeding Service members and civilian employees to breastfeed or express breast milk. **(T-0)**. This room can be temporary, depending on the unit's circumstances and Service member/civilian employee needs. If a lactation room is configured for multiple users, the room will be configured so each user has privacy. When establishing the location of the lactation room, consideration will be given to the limited amount of time Service members and civilian employees may have for breaks. Units in close proximity to each other (within the same building complex or in buildings that have entrances within 100 feet) may choose to share lactation rooms. The time needed for

nursing mothers will vary per the individual and also includes concepts that nursing mothers should be relaxed, well hydrated, and in a space with comfortable temperatures and adequate lighting.

3.1.1.1. Lactation rooms must be clean and sanitary. The rooms should be cleaned as often as are restrooms and be periodically inspected by Public Health officials. Restrooms, to include shower rooms and locker rooms, will not be used. **(T-0)**.

3.1.1.2. Ensure units with industrial work settings identify and maintain lactation rooms consistent with direction for break rooms per Air Force Manual 91-203, *Air Force Occupational Safety, Fire, and Health Standards*. Lactation rooms will not contain toxic materials, chemicals, or industrial shop contaminants. Personnel using a lactation room will adhere to the same industrial hygiene practices as a break room, removing personal protective equipment, changing clothes when contaminated with solvents, lubricants or fuels prior to entry and washing their hands prior to using the lactation room. **(T-0)**.

3.1.1.3. The lactation room will be near a source of hot and cold water for hand washing/breast pump cleaning and electrical outlets for use of breast pumps. **(T-0)**.

3.1.1.4. The lactation room must have a place to sit and a table or similar flat surface, other than the floor, to place the breast pump and other supplies. The room must have adequate temperature control and lighting. **(T-0)**.

3.1.2. Ensure supervisors provide Service members and civilian employees time to utilize the lactation room while balancing mission work schedules. Commanders and supervisors will provide Service members and civilian employees with reasonable lactation breaks for a period of at least one year after a child's birth. **(T-0)**. For civilian employees, a "reasonable break time" to express breast milk for one year postpartum is a legal right. **(T-0)**. Air Force Instruction 44-102, *Medical Care Management*, paragraph 4.15., recommends that supervisors work to arrange the schedules of breastfeeding Service members and civilian employees to allow 15-30 minutes every 3-4 hours to pump breast milk.

3.1.3. Establish organizational rules and procedures for scheduling and/or utilization, to include maintenance and cleaning, of the lactation room for nursing mothers. **(T-3)**.

3.1.4. If the requirements of field training and exercises permit, commanders should ensure that Service members and civilian employees have a clean, private space, specifically not a restroom or latrine, in which to pump breast milk. **(T-1)**. With the consent of all lactation room users and provided adequate space exists, more than one nursing mother may utilize the lactation room at one time.

3.1.5. Consult with:

3.1.5.1. Appropriate installation civilian personnel offices for appropriated/non-appropriated fund employees to determine break time entitlements for nursing mother practices. **(T-1)**.

3.1.5.2. The Base Civil Engineer to establish lactation rooms, based on need, pursuant to Department of Defense (DoD) Unified Facilities Criteria (UFC) 1-200-01, paragraph 3-2.2. (T-3). All work that modifies the facility should be coordinated with installation Civil Engineer Squadron or equivalent organization.

3.1.5.3. Installation medical services for information on nursing mother issues, sanitation requirements, or any other associated medical issues that may arise when establishing or maintaining a lactation room. (T-3).

3.2. Service member and civilian employee nursing mothers must provide their own breast pump equipment and hygiene cleaning materials.

### ***References***

1. PL 111-148, *Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act*, 23 March 2010
2. OPM Memorandum for Heads of Executive Departments and Agencies, *Nursing Mothers in Federal Employment*, 22 December 2010
3. OPM *Guide for Establishing a Federal Nursing Mother's Program*, January 2013
4. Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness Memorandum, *Department-Wide Policy for Nursing and Lactation Rooms*, 1 Nov 2016
5. DoD Unified Facilities Criteria (UFC) 1-200-01, *DoD Building Code (General Building Requirements)*, Change 2, 1 November 2018
6. Air Force Manual 91-203, *Air Force Occupational Safety, Fire, and Health Standards*, 11 December 2018
7. Air Force Instruction 44-102, *Medical Care Management*, 17 March 2015

### ***Abbreviations and Acronyms***

**DoD**—Department of Defense

**OPM**—Office of Personnel Management

**PL**—Public law

**UFC**—Unified Facility Criteria