

Advancing Public Health Through Partnerships of Support & Advocacy for Lactating Women of ECU

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Current Lactation Support Policy

Overview: In striving to reach global initiatives as set forth by the World Health Organization and Healthy People 2020, East Carolina University's (ECU) Lactation Support Policy outlines that our university will provide space, privacy, and time for nursing mothers to express breast milk for up to one (1) year after the birth of a child. ECU has taken great strides in supporting nursing mothers' transition from maternity leave back to work or school. ECU's comprehensive, multi-level approach allows for breastfeeding support for all women affiliated with our institution, and makes lactation rooms a norm in our community.

Departmental Responsibilities: Departments within East Carolina University will provide space, privacy, and time for nursing mothers to express breast milk for up to one year after the birth of a child.

Benefits for the University: This program will yield positive results, such as reduced healthcare cost, reduced absenteeism, improved productivity, lower turnover, and an enhanced university image.

Current Designated Lactation Rooms

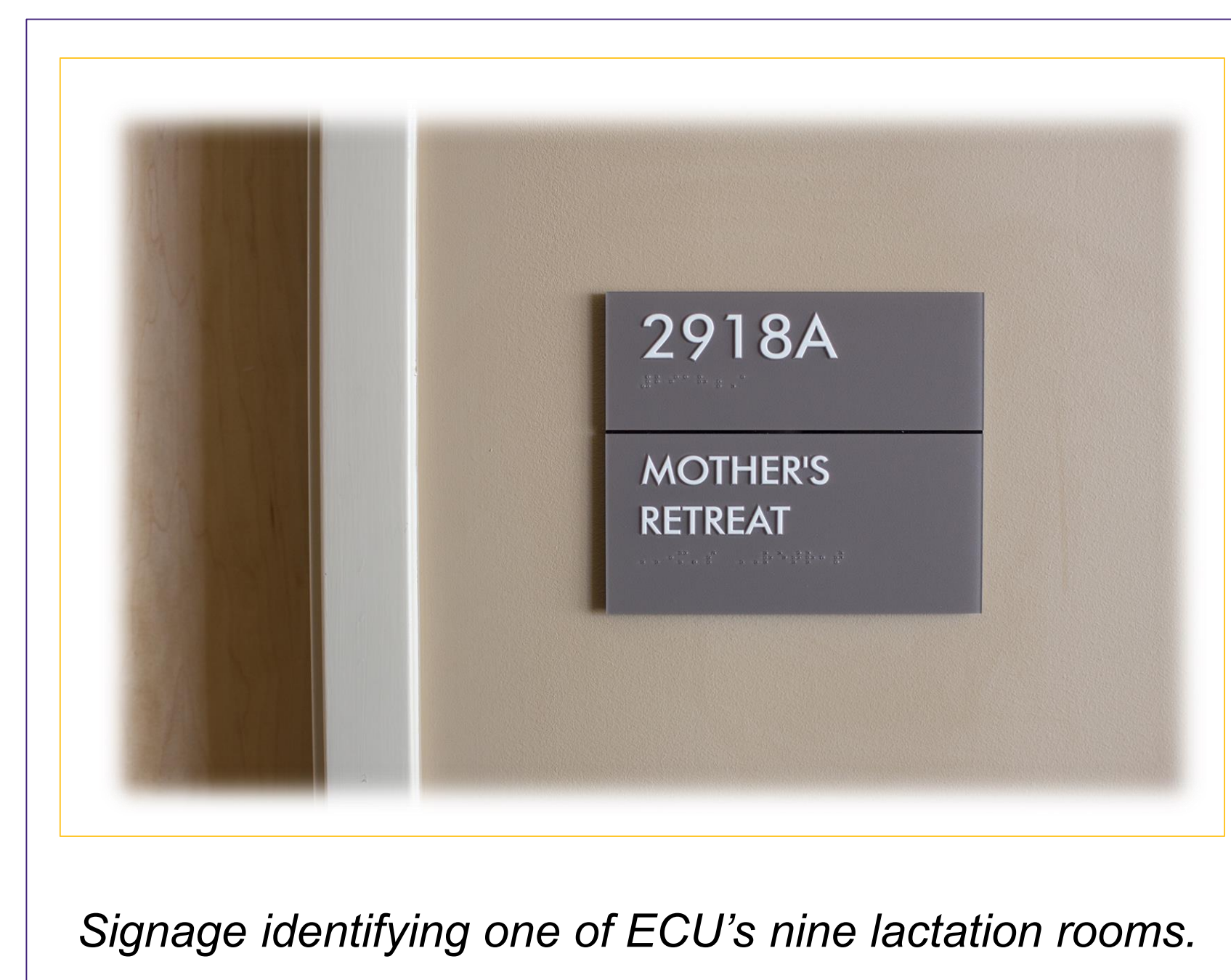
To date, ECU has nine (9) lactation rooms across two (2) campuses available to any woman in need, including faculty, staff, students, and visitors. Each room, conveniently spaced around our campuses where women work and learn, provides the essentials for a nursing and/or pumping mother: comfortable seating, privacy and convenient electrical outlets. Each room is stocked with donations from supplies partner Lansinoh which include, packets of two (2) individually wrapped, disposable nursing pads, two (2) milk storage bags, and lanolin nipple cream. By having multiple locations, ECU seeks to empower women to make informed choices while eliminating conflict between employment/learning and sustained breastfeeding.

Committees and Support

Our success is a reflection of the support from several different offices and organizations on campus including but not limited to the Women and Gender Advisory Committee (WGAC) formerly Chancellor's Status on the Committee of Women (CCSW), Staff Senate, Faculty Senate, Faculty Welfare, Office of Equity and Diversity (OED), the Committee on Supporting Pregnant and Parenting Students and Employees, Faculty and Staff Senates and the Nancy Darden Child Development Center (NDCDC). This support has allowed us to break barriers and focus on an environment that is conducive to allowing lactating mothers a private setting to express milk while on campus and allows us to protect, promote and support lactation efforts.

Donations

- Mini & large refrigerators donated by individual donors, ECU Student Health Services, and Friends of Joyner Library
- "Turning Water Into Liquid Gold..." water bottles provided by ECU OED
- Individually packaged storage bags, nursing pads and lanolin provided by Lansinoh



Signage identifying one of ECU's nine lactation rooms.



An interior view picturing a lactation room in Ross Hall on ECU's medical campus.



Through partnering with Lansinoh, donations of bags, pads and lanolin are in each room in case a woman needs an essential supply.

Lactation Support at ECU Growth Timeline

- **Pre-2014:** Two designated lactation rooms existed on ECU's two campuses
- **May 2014:** A third lactation-specific room created at Joyner Library
- **August 2014:** Initiative to identify space on medical campus for lactating women
- **Fall 2014:** A basic revision of the lactation policy was added to ECU's website
- **Late 2014/Early 2015:** Additional spaces were added on medical campus
- **2015/2016:** Additional spaces were added on main campus
- **2016:** Lactation Committee was created as a subcommittee of the Chancellor's Committee on the Status of Women (CCSW) to oversee all lactation rooms
- **2016:** Lactation rooms were added as a category on the ECU official map
- **2017:** Lactation Accommodation online request process was created to provide lactating women a room if there is not a lactation room accessible/convenient to their workstation. Additionally, the process can assist in identifying milk storage solutions.

Awards

- **2016 to present - Breastfeeding Friendly Workplace designation from the North Carolina Breastfeeding Coalition (NCBC).** Multiple locations received this award in separate years including Joyner Library & Student Health Services. To be eligible for consideration workplaces must make accommodations to support breastfeeding mothers as employees. This can be as simple as allowing employees to have flexible breaks and access to a private room for expressing milk or nursing. The room needs to have a comfortable chair and a lock on the door. Minimum criteria for receiving this award are:
 - We do not advertise infant formula or related products directly to consumers,
 - All lactating employees are allowed breaks to express milk or nurse their children, and
 - All lactating employees have access to a private space for expressing milk or nursing. The space is not a bathroom. The space is lockable and shielded from view. The space has an electrical outlet and hand hygiene station.
- **Fall 2017-World Alliance for Breastfeeding Action (WABA)**
 - Participation in awareness activities regarding rooms for World Breastfeeding Week

Future Goals

- A designated lactation room in every building,
- Coordination with HR to provide a lactation support package to all mothers requesting FMLA and lactation accommodations,
- Obtain funding to provide hospital grade pumps to every lactation room on campus,
 - Obtain stock tubing and closed membranes for pumps for purchase at SHS
- Provide manual pumps (sealed, all inclusive package with two size flanges) to give to a mother who is missing a part or perhaps has a broken part,
- Propose training targeted directly to planning and building administrators, employee and student supervisors,
- Propose including lactation room best practices in future construction standards,
- Expand lactation support services on ECU campuses and beyond,
- Increase room accessibility and security,
- Increase website visibility to include pictures and instructions for finding rooms, and
- Propose an advanced and comprehensive revision of the lactation policy.
 - Extending protections that go beyond the standard 12 months per the ACA.