

4.8.5.1 GUIDELINES FOR LACTATION AND RELIGIOUS OBSERVANCE BREAKS AT THE MARYLAND JUDICIAL CENTER

(a) PURPOSE

These guidelines provide direction on how to manage the needs of employees who are nursing mothers and the needs of employees who wish to observe their religious beliefs during work hours at the Maryland Judicial Center.

(b) PROTECTIONS

- (1) Federal law protects a mother's right to pump milk upon returning to work after childbirth. Employers must provide reasonable break times and a clean, private space, other than a restroom, for employees to express milk for their infant for up to one year after the child's birth.
- (2) The Judiciary *Policy on Religious Accommodation* requires the Judiciary to accommodate an employee's religious belief, observance, or practice in the workplace. A religious accommodation could include providing an employee with reasonable break times and a private space to practice his or her religious beliefs, such as with prayer.

(c) PRIVATE ROOM

- (1) A private "Personal Care Room" – Room #130 – has been designated on the first floor of the Maryland Judicial Center to be used for lactation and religious observance breaks. An employee may reserve the room through the Outlook Reservation System only.
- (2) The time in the Personal Care Room should be limited to authorized breaks or lunch periods. An employee must be mindful of using the room only during the specific time for which the room was reserved, so that it may be available for others to use.
- (3) Employees are required to leave the room in an orderly state for other employees. Any issues with the condition of the room should be reported to Facilities Administration at (410) 260-1577 or through ServiceNow at <https://mdcourts.service-now.com/sp>.

(d) LACTATION AND PRAYER BREAKS

- (1) The law does not require an employer to pay an employee for the time used for lactation and religious observance breaks. However, an employee at the Maryland Judicial Center may take time from work for either of these reasons once in the morning and once in the afternoon, for up to 15 minutes each, without using accrued leave. An employee also may use his or her lunch break for these purposes.
- (2) Any additional time that is needed must be made up during the workday or the employee may use accrued leave, each requiring the approval of the supervisor.
- (3) To minimize the impact to the workplace as much as possible, an employee and his or her supervisor should discuss the amount of time that will be needed and plan how that time can be scheduled into the workday or charged to leave.

QUESTIONS: Please contact Employee Relations and ADA Compliance at 410-260-1732 if there are any questions. Please contact Fair Practices at 410-260-3679 if there are any questions on religious accommodations.