

COUNTY OF



ALLEGHENY

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Health Department Seeks Nominations for Breastfeeding Friendly Place Awards
Nursing Moms are Asked to Identify Places Where They Feel Welcome

PITTSBURGH – The Allegheny County Health Department (ACHD), in cooperation with the Allegheny County Women, Infants and Children (WIC) Breastfeeding Program, announced today that it is seeking nominations for its annual Breastfeeding Friendly Places Awards.

The awards are presented to workplaces, public places and other sites away from home that make an extra effort to help breastfeeding moms by offering a positive attitude and supportive environment.

“Making places outside the home more breastfeeding friendly will encourage women to breastfeed longer and as a result babies and moms will derive greater health benefits from breastfeeding,” said Health Department Director, Dr. Karen Hacker.

Studies show health benefits increase when babies are breastfed for six months or longer. However, surveys have found that only 49% of babies nationwide and 42.9% in Pennsylvania are breastfed for six months or longer, due in part to a lack of support in the workplace and other areas outside the home.

Breastfeeding friendly workplaces are also good for business, because breastfed babies are less likely to get sick throughout childhood and as a result, their moms and dads miss less work due to a child’s illness.

Employers can help breastfeeding moms by offering flextime or extended paid maternity leave; a health plan with breast pump coverage; work site day care; and provisions for breastfeeding at work, such as an appropriate place, accommodating time for pumping milk and a refrigerator in which to store the milk.

Public places and other areas away from home—restaurants, malls, libraries, theaters, parks, places of worship as well as sports and entertainment facilities—can be supportive by providing an attractive and clean private area and comfortable seating for mothers to use when nursing, and by having signage to welcome breastfeeding mothers and let them know special accommodations are available.

To nominate an employer, public place or other site outside the home for the awards, please call the Allegheny County Health Department WIC Program at 412-350-3163 or visit the Breastfeeding Friendly Place Awards nomination page <http://www.achd.net/bfa/index.html>. Nominations will be accepted until May 21, 2016, and the awards will be announced during World Breastfeeding Week, August 1—7, 2016.

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