

Le Sueur County Public Health Breastfeeding Policy

Policy:

It is the policy of Le Sueur County Public Health that breastfeeding will be promoted to the community and clients of Le Sueur County Public Health as the standard for optimal infant nutrition and development. Le Sueur County Public Health will work to achieve the *Ten Steps to a Breastfeeding Friendly Health Department*.

Purpose:

Breastfeeding has been shown to be the superior form of infant nutrition. Breastfeeding offers significant health, social, and economic benefits to families and the community. For the healthy, full-term baby, breastmilk is the only food necessary until the baby shows signs of readiness for solids. The *Ten Steps to a Breastfeeding Friendly Health Department* process has been shown to increase the capacity of health departments in Minnesota to promote breastfeeding in the community.

Procedure:

1. Public Health Director, Women, Infant, and Children (WIC) Coordinator, Family Health Supervisor, Family Health Nurses, and WIC staff will serve on the Le Sueur County Public Health Breastfeeding Work Group to (a) assist in policy implementation, (b) lead the effort to become a Breastfeeding Friendly Health Department and (c) review and revise the department policy annually to reflect current evidence-based practice.
2. All staff providing care and/or education for the mother-baby dyad will become familiar with the breastfeeding policy and will be responsible for acquiring the skills and the knowledge necessary to support policy implementation including: maternal education, community resource awareness, and legal protection for nursing mothers, including Federal and Minnesota State Statutes.
3. Le Sueur County Public Health will support continuing education as merited to keep staff current with best practices.
4. The Breastfeeding Work Group will review and update resources for client education, including racially and ethnically diverse resources within the community.
5. Le Sueur County Public Health will provide content expertise and technical assistance to community partners to promote and support breastfeeding as the “norm” in the community.
6. Expectant mothers will receive education about the benefits of breastfeeding and how to prepare to breastfeed at WIC appointments and pre-natal visits.
7. Mothers will be offered lactation support services after their baby is born through home visits, in office or telephone consultations, WIC appointments, and referral to other agencies in the community as needed.
8. Le Sueur County Public Health will provide a space for clients, visitors, and Le Sueur County staff to breastfeed in accordance with Federal and Minnesota State Statutes.