



Gaining Accreditation as a Breastfeeding Friendly Workplace

The Australian Breastfeeding Association (ABA) awards Breastfeeding Friendly Workplace (BFW) accreditation to organisations that provide three simple criteria to support their breastfeeding employees.

1. Space

A private space for employees to feed or express milk is the first key requirement to becoming a Breastfeeding Friendly Workplace. This space may be a dedicated breastfeeding/expressing room or, depending on the size of your organisation, it could be a shared facility with a first aid room/prayer room or meeting room. The space must not be a toilet or a shower.

Smaller work sites or those with a small number of staff may not have a space available at all times but should have a plan that outlines how a space will be provided should the need arise.

All the details and information required to set up a breastfeeding and expressing room and other options can be found in the BFW toolkit ***Setting up a breastfeeding and expressing room in your organisation.***

2. Time

The needs of a breastfeeding employee are usually short term and involve either direct breastfeeding and/or expressing milk for their infant during the working day. A breastfeeding policy that clearly outlines the support for lactation breaks to allow a mother time to feed or express is the second key requirement to become a Breastfeeding Friendly Workplace.

The BFW toolkit ***Developing a breastfeeding policy and communications strategy for your organisation*** provides examples of policies and a variety of templates. These templates can be adapted to develop a breastfeeding policy and workplace practices for your workplace, that provides your employees with the time they need to feed or express during working hours.

3. Support

Communication is key to building a supportive workplace culture, so the third requirement to becoming a Breastfeeding Friendly Workplace is development and implementation of a communications strategy for your workplace.

The BFW toolkit ***Developing a breastfeeding policy and communications strategy for your organisation*** provides examples of communications channels and activities that can be adapted for your organisation. Templates and examples of completed communications strategies are also provided.

Together, these three elements demonstrate to new and existing employees that their workplace and employer is supportive of their potential needs as a breastfeeding employee.

The BFW toolkit ***Preparing for Breastfeeding Friendly Workplace Accreditation*** covers the information and resources required to gain accreditation as a Breastfeeding Friendly Workplace and will demystify the process of applying for accreditation.

It explains what documents will need to be submitted for an accreditation audit and will help you to bring together all of the criteria and other small measures an employer can put in place to demonstrate their support of breastfeeding employees.

By working through all three BFW toolkits and implementing the suggestions and criteria, your organisation will be well on the way to meeting the requirements to become an employer of choice as an accredited Breastfeeding Friendly Workplace.

For more about BFW toolkits see www.breastfeeding.asn.au/workplace/resources/bfw-toolkits

Steps towards becoming a Breastfeeding Friendly Workplace

1. Appoint a project leader in your organisation.
2. Submit an expression of interest to the Australian Breastfeeding Association at www.breastfeeding.asn.au/workplace/expression-of-interest to receive a quotation for BFW accreditation for your organisation. This quotation will be based on the size of your organisation, taking into consideration the number of staff, number and location of sites and type of industry to be covered. The quotation will include the cost of the BFW toolkits as well as the cost of the accreditation audit. This quotation will be emailed to your organisation within one week of your EOI being submitted.
3. In order to proceed, return your signed quotation to the BFW team (details will be included on the quotation). Once the ABA receives your signed quotation, your BFW toolkits will be mailed out to your organisation.
4. Work through the three toolkits to put BFW accreditation requirements in place. Typically for small to medium organisations this can take 3-6 months and for large or multi-site organisations 6-9 months.
5. Once you have all the requirements in place, submit all documentation to the BFW team (information on how to do this and what is required will be included in the toolkits).
6. A BFW Consultant will be appointed for your organisation who will assess your submitted documentation and will liaise with you to organise a site inspection/s of your facilities.
7. Within two weeks of site inspection taking place, the BFW Consultant will advise you in writing if your organisation has met the required standard for BFW accreditation.
8. If your organisation is found to be not yet compliant in one or more areas, the BFW Consultant will provide a written report which will outline the areas of non-compliance and any recommendations to meet these. A one month time frame will be set for your organisation to implement these recommendations, following which a partial reassessment will occur (at no additional cost).
9. After the partial reassessment (focussing only on the areas of non-compliance) accreditation will proceed if your organisation now meets all requirements.
10. If areas of non-compliance still exist, accreditation will not be granted and additional fees (up to 40% of original accreditation audit fee) will be required if you wish to proceed to a 3rd assessment.

Once accreditation is granted

Your organisation will receive an accreditation resource pack that contains:

- **BFW accreditation certificate** to display in your workplace
- **Resources and materials for your staff** to enable you to continue to demonstrate your support for breastfeeding employees.
- **BFW logos** for use in recruitment and promotion.
- **BFW stickers** to use in your breastfeeding/expressing rooms
- **Media release** to announce your accreditation in your local area.

In addition, you will receive:

- Listing and company profile inclusion on the ABA website (more than one million unique visitors per year).
- Communications from the BFW team in the form of a regular BFW eNewsletter to distribute to your workforce, with the latest information around legislative requirements for employers, showcasing of best practice businesses and relevant news and articles for working mothers.
- Ongoing support and consultancy to trouble shoot or extend your accreditation to other sites if required.
- An opportunity to provide an article for consideration for inclusion in the BFW eNewsletter or ABA's member magazine *Essence* showcasing your organisation's BFW status.

As companies evolve over time, grow bigger or smaller and gain or lose sites, BFW will support you in meeting your organisation's ongoing needs.

At your annual reaccreditation each year we will work with you to ensure BFW standards are maintained and that as an accredited Breastfeeding Friendly Workplace your organisation continually strives for industry best practice.

Each year the focus will be on a different aspect of accreditation:

- **Space** - your facilities
- **Time** - your breastfeeding policy
- **Support** – your communication plan and company culture