

Corning, Incorporated

Corning, N.Y.

Corning Incorporated, is a world leader in specialty glass and ceramics. The company creates and makes keystone components that enable high-technology systems for consumer electronics, mobile emissions control, telecommunications and life sciences. Corning succeeds through sustained investment in R&D, over 150 years of materials science and process engineering knowledge, and a distinctive, collaborative culture.

Corning began its breastfeeding program in March 1997. Program implementation took about six months of planning, meetings and gaining buy-in from facility management. Corning faced some challenges when setting up its program, including locating space to provide adequately furnished rooms that are both private and secure, obtaining lactation consultants in rural areas and scheduling breaks for factory workers. The initial costs were minimal and related to setting up or constructing the rooms and providing room amenities. Lactation rooms for nursing mothers are made available in all buildings nationwide, including manufacturing plants. As of February 2009, Corning had 19 U.S. locations with lactation rooms.

Program Components:

Private Area to Express Milk: Lactation rooms are made available in all buildings nationwide, including the manufacturing plants. Some rooms are large enough for multiple users but are often used by one person at a time. When needed, a privacy screen can divide the room into separate areas to enable several women to use the room at the same time. Amenities include a table, a chair, a breast pump, a telephone (for emergencies or voicemail), germicidal cleaner and a sign-in sheet. Optional items may include a sink, lockers and a refrigerator for storing milk.

Breastfeeding Equipment: Corning provides a hospital-grade pump; employees buy the attachment kit. The same brand and model of pump is provided in all lactation rooms so that employees working in multiple locations have compatible pumps. Employees can also borrow a personal pump for up to two weeks when traveling for business or vacation.

Milk Expression Scheduling: Employees express milk during designated breaks as worked out with their supervisor. Scheduling can be a bit more difficult for hourly employees working on production lines. Phasing back in to work is encouraged by the employer and negotiated between employees and supervisors.

Education: Prenatal classes are available on-site. The health benefits of breastfeeding are incorporated into the class curriculum. Prenatal vitamins are provided at no cost for employees through the medical plan pharmacy benefit.

Support: A lactation consultant service is provided for lactation support. In addition, referrals to public/private community resources are offered for situations beyond the scope of the program.

A corporate lactation consultant is available for phone consultations. Some locations also provide on-site consultants. The lactation consultant is responsible for scheduling room usage. A sign-in sheet is used to track participation. There is no limit on the number of times an employee can contact the lactation consultant.

Corning provides an internal employee website to promote the breastfeeding support program. Through this website, employees can learn about the program, find lactation room locations and obtain contact information for lactation consultants. Further, newsletters, brochures, on-site prenatal classes, free prenatal vitamins, and a 24-hour nurseline are offered to promote the program and the importance of maternal and child health. A brochure is also available to inform employees about the program.

Phasing back into work after maternity leave is encouraged by Corning. Employees discuss the details of their return to work with their supervisors. Two weeks before returning to work, Corning also offers a worksite meeting between the participant and the lactation consultant to review the transition to work and pumping procedures.

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Workplace Breastfeeding Programs: Employer Case Studies

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About the Center for Prevention and Health Services

Mission: Educate large employers about diseases and health issues in order to protect and promote health and well-being among their employees and beneficiaries as well as control costs.

The Center:

- Identifies strategies and develops tools to address health and benefits issues.
- Translates health research into practical solutions for large employers.
- Provides the national voice for large employers and links them with national expertise and resources.

For more information, e-mail healthservices@businessgrouphealth.org.

Issue Brief

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About the National Business Group on Health

The Business Group is the only non-profit organization devoted exclusively to representing large employers' perspectives on national health issues and providing solutions to its members' most important health care and health benefits challenges. The Business Group fosters the development of a safe health care delivery system and treatments based on scientific evidence. Members share strategies for controlling costs, improving patient safety and quality of care, increasing productivity and supporting healthy lifestyles.

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