**Northamptonshire Breastfeeding Alliance**

**‘Breastfeeding Welcome’ Scheme**

**The Equality Act 2010 has specifically clarified that it is unlawful for a business to discriminate against a woman because she is breastfeeding a child. Although breastfeeding in public is now protected by law, as mothers build their confidence in the early days they can struggle to feel comfortable nursing in public and when out and about. It is important that Northamptonshire mothers have places where they can go and feel comfortable, relaxed and confident when meeting their babies’ feeding needs. When you welcome breastfeeding mothers you are making a real difference to local families. The Equality Act 2010 aims to give women complete confidence to breastfeed while going about their day-to-day business. Businesses must facilitate this.**

 **Benefits**

 There are a variety of benefits to becoming a 'Breastfeeding Welcome' business or organisation under the scheme, these are:

 \* It is completely free

\* Free publicity online by being part of our breastfeeding welcome directory

\* New customers or clients who wouldn't otherwise have known about your business

\* Happy and loyal customers who will promote your services through word of mouth

\* Promotion within the Northamptonshire Breastfeeding Alliance's Facebook pages

 **FAQs**

 \*My business premises are small, do I need to worry about having enough space for buggies?

-No, we will publish whether or not your premises has space for buggies and how many.

 \*I don’t have baby-changing facilities, can I still be part of the scheme?

-Yes, again we will inform mothers of the facilities available.

 \*How long will it take to become 'Breastfeeding Welcome'?

- Not long at all we estimate 5 minutes per staff member to read through the fact sheet/suggestions we provide and deal with any questions.

 \*Will mothers expose themselves and make other customers feel uncomfortable?

-No.  It is understandable you may be worried about your other customers but breastfeeding mothers are very discreet. In fact many owners or managers of ‘Breastfeeding Welcome’ venues tell us that they don’t even notice when women are breastfeeding. Remember, polls have shown that 85% of adults have no problem with seeing mothers breastfeeding in public.

**‘BREASTFEEDING WELCOME’ SCHEME FACTSHEET**

The Equality Act 2010 has specifically clarified that it is unlawful for a business to discriminate against a woman because she is breastfeeding a child.

Babies' tummies are tiny and breast milk is quickly digested, they need to be fed where and when they ask to feed.

The World Health Organisation recommends breastfeeding until 2 years old or beyond. Many mothers follow this recommendation and need to breastfeed their older baby or toddler in public.

Breastfeeding works best when mother and baby are relaxed.

Hungry, upset babies will generally be calmed down and become quiet more quickly when breastfeeding. This is good for all customers, visitors or clients.

**SUGGESTIONS FOR BECOMING ‘BREASTFEEDING WELCOME’**

Breastfeeding mothers really appreciate being offered a glass of water alongside their purchased drink, and have told us they'd often like to order another drink, but can't get to the counter, so it is worth asking if you can get them anything else whilst they are nursing, even if you don’t normally offer table service.

Mothers always appreciate the offer of help for getting drinks/trays to the table if they are holding their baby.

In the unlikely event that another customer complains about a breastfeeding mother, they can politely be informed that the management support breastfeeding under the 'Breastfeeding Welcome' scheme. If the situation cannot be resolved readily junior staff should refer customers to senior management.

**Am I responsible for how other customers treat a woman who is breastfeeding?**

Yes, you may be responsible, and you will be responsible if other customers’ behaviour has been brought to your attention and you failed to act. You have an obligation to ensure that a woman who is breastfeeding while receiving a service you provide is not treated unfairly. The Equality Act 2010 aims to give women complete confidence to breastfeed while going about their day-to-day business. Businesses must facilitate this.

**Does this mean I have to create a separate facility to allow women customers to breastfeed?**

No, but you are under an obligation to ensure that a woman can breastfeed without being treated unfairly. It is up to you to decide how best to do this.

**APPLICATION FORM**

 **Name of business/organisation:**

**Address:**

**Manager:**

**Phone number:**

**E-mail:**

**Would you like to be on our NBA email list?** YES/NO

**I give permission for my business’s details to be added to the Northamptonshire Breastfeeding Welcome Scheme online and would like my website and/or Facebook details to be added.**

Yes/No

**Website and/or Facebook details for online directory:**

Signed: Date:

**FACILITIES CHECKLIST**

**Does the premises have space for buggies? YES/NO**

**If yes, how many? \_\_\_\_\_**

**Does the premises have baby changing facilities? YES/NO**

Please complete and return to:

Northamptonshire Breastfeeding Alliance,

c/o 23 University Close, Northampton, NN2 7EX

Any questions? Please call us on 07832490054 or email northantsbreastfeedingalliance@yahoo.co.uk

[www.northantsbreastfeedingalliance.weebly.com](http://www.northantsbreastfeedingalliance.weebly.com)