



National Healthy Childhood Programme,
HSE Area Office,
Arden Rd,
Tullamore,
Co. Offaly
R35 TY28

26th October 2022

Deputy Cairns,
Dáil Éireann,
Leinster House
Dublin 2

PQ Ref: 50343/22 To ask the Minister for Health the number of dedicated spaces for breastfeeding and expressing breast milk in workplaces within his Department and the workplaces of public bodies and agencies under his remit, including a list of said buildings which do and do not have these facilities

Dear Deputy Cairns,

The Health Service Executive has been requested to reply directly to you in the context of the above Parliamentary Questions, which you submitted to the Minister for Health for response. I have examined the matter and the following outlines the position.

Breastfeeding mothers are protected by laws to enable them to breastfeed in public and within public facilities. Breastfeeding mothers are welcome to feed their babies when in HSE facilities.

The Civil service, Department of Education and more recently in the HSE have implemented policies to enable staff to take breastfeeding breaks on their return from maternity leave up to the child's 2nd birthday, in line with infant feeding recommendations. The policies support employees who wish to breastfeed through the provision of space, time and support as required. This includes facilitating the expression of breast milk in the workplace by mothers upon their return to work following maternity leave.

Dedicated rooms or multipurpose rooms for mothers to express breast milk or feed their babies are available within HSE services. The total number of dedicated or multipurpose rooms available is not available on a national basis.

I trust this clarifies the matter.

Yours sincerely,

Anne Parry, General Manager, National Healthy Childhood Programme & Chair of HSE National Breastfeeding Implementation group