



# Cochise County Health and Social Services

Public Programs...Personal Service  
www.cochise.az.gov

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\*\*\* MEDIA RELEASE \*\*\*

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: *Third Annual Breastfeeding-Friendly Business of the Year Award Contest***

## Cochise County Employers to be Recognized for Supporting Breastfeeding Families

In celebration of World Breastfeeding Week, an annual global event held during the first week of August, Cochise Health and Social Services is sponsoring its *Third Annual Breastfeeding-Friendly Cochise County Business of the Year Award*. Awards will be presented to one or more breastfeeding-friendly businesses from each of the following communities: Sierra Vista, Bisbee, Douglas, Willcox and Benson. All public and private employers in the county are eligible for consideration.

Nominations for the awards may be made via short forms that are available at all Cochise Health and Social Services clinic sites, or by contacting Priscilla Lord (phone: 520-805-5619, fax: 520-364-5453, or [plord@cochise.az.gov](mailto:plord@cochise.az.gov)) and providing (i) the name of the business, (ii) an explanation of why the business deserves the award, and (iii) the nominator's name and contact information. Nominations must be submitted by July 21<sup>st</sup> to be eligible for consideration.

Employers selected as leaders in workplace breastfeeding will be notified the second week of August, and a media release will be sent to local media outlets. Winners will be honored during the County Board of Supervisors meeting in September.

This year's event theme is *Breastfeeding: A Key to Sustainable Development*. Sustainable development is essentially about ecology, economy and equity. Businesses that support breastfeeding positively impact the health, well-being and economy of our communities. For more information on this year's theme, please visit <http://worldbreastfeedingweek.org/>.

The Cochise County Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) provides healthy foods, nutrition education, breastfeeding support and community referrals to pregnant women, infants and children up to age five. Numerous health and medical organizations, including the American Academy of Pediatrics, encourage breastfeeding as the best infant feeding choice. Breastfeeding has many proven benefits for both mother and child which positively impact an employer's bottom line. These benefits range from health care savings to reductions in absenteeism and employee retention.

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A 2010 study published in the journal *Pediatrics* estimated that the nation would save \$13 billion per year in health care and other costs if 90 percent of U.S. babies were exclusively breastfed for six months. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, currently only 13 percent of U.S. babies are exclusively breastfed at the end of six months. By providing accommodations for nursing mothers, employers can reduce their company's health care costs and lower their absenteeism and turnover rates.

### **And It's the Law, Too**

The Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act of 2010 amended the Fair Labor Standards Act to require employers to provide reasonable break time for an employee to express breast milk for her nursing child for one year after the child's birth each time such employee has need to express the milk. Employers are also required to provide a place, other than a bathroom, that is shielded from view and free from intrusion from coworkers and the public, which may be used by an employee to express breast milk. For more information visit <https://www.dol.gov/whd/nursingmothers>, which includes a fact sheet and Frequently Asked Questions.

In addition, the Arizona Revised Statutes stipulate that a mother is entitled to breastfeed her child in public without being subject to indecent exposure laws.

### **About Cochise Health and Social Services**

On behalf of the Board of Supervisors, Cochise Health and Social Services promotes health and quality of life for all Cochise County residents through community partnerships, education, service, and leadership. For more information, including recent media releases, please visit our website at <https://www.cochise.az.gov/health-and-social-services/home>.

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