

Breastfeeding in Public: Anytime, Anywhere!

There are many ways to feed your baby and every mother's journey is different. Women who choose to nurse their baby may worry about breastfeeding in public. After all, babies get hungry, whether you are at home or out in public. Mothers may feel limited due to the fear of harassment if they should need to feed their baby while out in public. The good news is that you do not have to worry about breastfeeding in public spaces because Arizona has laws that support breastfeeding.

Like all states in the country, Arizona has laws in place to protect the mother's choice to breastfeed while in public places or places of public accommodation.

- **A.R.S. 41-1443**

A mother is entitled to breastfeed in any area of a public place or a place of public accommodation where the mother is otherwise lawfully present.

- **A.R.S. 13-1402**

Indecent exposure does not include an act of breastfeeding by a mother.



A "public place" is defined as any enclosed area to which the public is invited or in which the public is permitted, such as airports, health care facilities, restaurants, retail stores, shopping malls, theaters, or waiting rooms. A private home is not a public place unless it is used as a child care, adult day care, or health care facility. These laws protect the baby's right to be breastfed whenever the baby is hungry.

Some mothers may still feel uncomfortable or nervous about breastfeeding in public. Here are common questions about breastfeeding in public that you may have.

- **If I'm in public, where can I breastfeed?**

You can breastfeed anywhere you are allowed to be, like a retail store, laundromat, or doctor's office. If you are uncomfortable and want privacy, you can ask if they have a nursing or lactation room or quiet area, or use a dressing room. Restrooms are not a recommended space for breastfeeding your baby or using a breast pump.

- **What if someone doesn't approve?**

If you are asked to stop breastfeeding, ask for the supervisor or manager in charge. Some people are not informed about the breastfeeding laws, but hopefully the manager is knowledgeable and is able to support you.

- **What special clothes do I need for breastfeeding in public?**

There are many kinds of nursing clothes you can use, but you don't need special clothes. You can wear loose-fitting clothes that lift from the bottom. When you latch the baby, let the bottom of the shirt cover your breast. Your baby's head and body will cover the rest of your breast and belly. You can practice in front of a mirror to feel confident when you are breastfeeding in public.

- **Do I have to use a nursing cover when breastfeeding in public?**

Some mothers are more comfortable when using a nursing cover, but it is not needed. It is your choice. If you would like to breastfeed using a nursing cover but don't have one, you can use a lightweight baby blanket.

Be proud that you have chosen to breastfeed your baby and know you have the support and legal protection. If you would like more information about breastfeeding in public, contact your WIC office or the ADHS 24/7 Breastfeeding Hotline.



24-Hour Breastfeeding Hotline
1-800-833-4642

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