**Carer’s Room and Lactation Room Guidelines - Treasury Precinct**



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**Treasury Precinct**

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# Introduction

The Department of Education and Early Childhood Development (the Department) respects and values diversity. The recruitment and retention of diverse employees is a driver for high organisational performance. A key enabler of diversity is supporting employees to better manage their work and family responsibilities.

Flexible work policies operate in the Department and have been utilised by employees including those managing responsibilities as parents and carers and mothers who are breastfeeding or require lactation breaks. Carer status and breastfeeding, the latter defined “as the act of expressing milk”, are protected attributes under the Equal Opportunity Act 2010. For more information, see the Department’s [Flexible Work Policy](http://www.education.vic.gov.au/hrweb/divequity/Pages/balance.aspx).

As part of the Department’s commitment to operate as a family friendly employer, a Carer’s Room and Lactation Room is available for employees on the ground floor of 2 Treasury Place. These rooms can be booked for use by employees who may need to be present at work, but who may unexpectedly also have responsibilities to attend to children or dependents.

These guidelines set out the purposes and provisions of the rooms, how they may be accessed and the responsibilities of users.

# Carer’s Room

The Carer’s Room is available as a convenient short-term emergency space for employees who need to attend to the needs of children and dependants. It may provide the opportunity for work continuity under specific circumstances at the primary place of work, whilst reducing the stress associated with often unpredictable and/or short term family caring circumstances.

A carer is defined as “a person on whom another person is wholly or substantially dependent for ongoing care and attention”. Care may, for instance, be provided to children, teenagers and adult dependants. The Carer’s Room is not to be used on a regular basis as a permanent care arrangement (e.g. on a regular weekly, fortnightly or monthly basis).

CASES in which the room could be used include where:

* normal childcare arrangements have broken down at the last minute
* a parent is unable to make alternative care arrangements for a child recovering from an illness which is not/no longer contagious.
* an adult family member requires supervision
* an ad hoc arrangement is required during school holidays or on a school pupil free day

CASES in which the room would be NOT SUITABLE for use include:

* as a substitute for care at home for a sick child
* as a regular space to care for children during school holidays
* as a regular alternative to child care

The Carer’s Room contains a workstation, a networked computer with modem access, and a telephone to which calls can be diverted from the employee's normal office. Facilities include a television and video/DVD player, a selection of videos/DVD’s, books, games and toys and comfortable chairs.

Any employee wanting to use the Carer’s Room must abide by these guidelines. Failure to observe these guidelines may result in an employee losing access to the Carer’s Room.

# Lactation Room

The Department’s Lactation Room supports the needs of women who may wish to continue to breastfeed their baby after they return to work from maternity leave. This forms an important element in the Department’s commitment to family friendly policies.

The Lactation Room provides a clean, private space for expressing and/or breastfeeding. The room contains a comfortable chair, refrigerator, table, sink and nappy change area. Employees using the room are required to provide own clear labeling for refrigerated expressed milk. For information about breast milk storage, see the Appendix. Employees are requested to leave the room clean and tidy after use. The Lactation Room is not available for child care.

The following on the storage of breast milk is an excerpt from Australian Dietary Guidelines for Children and Adolescents. Further information about breastfeeding can be obtained from the Australian Breastfeeding Association at: <http://www.breastfeeding.asn.au/>

**STORAGE OF BREAST MILK \***

| **Breast milk** | **Room Temperature** | **Refrigerator** | **Freezer** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Freshly expressed into a closed container | 6–8 hours (26ºC or lower). If refrigeration is available store milk there | 3–5 days (4ºC or lower) Store in back of refrigerator where it is coldest | 2 weeks in freezer compartment inside refrigerator.  3 months in freezer section of refrigerator with separate door.  6–12 months in deep freeze (-18ºC or lower) |
| Previously frozen— thawed in refrigerator but not warmed | 4 hours or less (i.e. the next feeding) | Store in refrigerator - 24 hours | Do not refreeze |
| Thawed outside refrigerator in warm water | For completion of feeding | Hold for 4 hours or until next feeding | Do not refreeze |
| Infant has begun feeding | Only for completion of feeding, then discard | Discard | Discard |

\* Australian Dietary Guidelines for Children and Adolescents, Australian Breastfeeding Association

Any employee wanting to use the Lactation Room must abide by these guidelines. Failure to observe these guidelines may result in an employee losing access to the Lactation Room.

# Conditions of use

Guests in the Carer’s Room (i.e. dependents) should be signed in using normal security procedures. Security name tags should be worn by guests at all times.

The Carer’s Room may be used by a maximum of one carer and three dependents.

Noise in the Carer’s Room and Lactation Room should be kept at an acceptable level and not disturb other activities on the floor. The space beyond the Carer's Room or Lactation Room is not available for use.

The carer has full responsibility for those under their care and must supervise children and adult dependents who are using the room at all times. No child should be left unattended in the room or in any other part of the building. A child means a person under 18 years of age.

If a child is recovering from an illness the carer must abide by the [Blue book - Guidelines for the control of infectious diseases](http://ideas.health.vic.gov.au/bluebook.asp) recommended minimum periods of exclusion from school and children’s services centres for cases of and contact with infectious diseases.

# Access

The Carer’s Room and Lactation Room are located on the ground floor of 2 Treasury Place. Employees can book the Carer’s Room and Lactation Room through the room booking system available through eduMail. The rooms are listed as **2T\_GRND\_Carer's\_Room\_Cap1** and **2T\_GRND\_Lactation\_Room\_CAP1**.

The rooms are maintained by the Shared Services Provider. For assistance with the maintenance of the room, log a job on 1800 SHARED (1800 742 733) or at [ssp@dtf.vic.gov.au](mailto:ssp@dtf.vic.gov.au)

The Policy and Employee Relations Branch is responsible for the development of these guidelines. For further information regarding these guidelines, contact Manager, Diversity and Equity Unit, Policy and Employee Relations, Human Resources Division at phone: 9637 2457.

# Employee responsibilities

Employees using the room are solely responsible for the care, supervision, safety and security of dependants at all times. The Department takes no responsibility for dependent(s) using the Carer's Room or for private property brought into the room. At no time should a carer use other Department employees as substitute carers. Carers should ensure that the Carer’s Room and Lactation Room are left in a neat and tidy condition.

# In case of emergencies

In the event that a fire drill or emergency evacuation takes place, a floor warden will check the room and advise on the safest exit point. In an emergency evacuation carers should not attempt to return to the room for adult dependants left unattended but should follow the instruction of their nearest fire warden.

For medical attention, carers should contact a doctor and/or emergency services as required.

For security assistance, contact the front desk at 2 Treasury Place at phone: 9637 2020 or 9637 3926.

# Conflicting bookings

The Carer’s room is occasionally booked for other health and well being activities, such as skin checks, vaccinations and health checks. The high level of demand for meeting spaces in the Department means that available resources must be fully utilised. In cases where the Carer’s Room is booked to enable a health and well being service to be delivered to employees and an employee member wishes to utilise the room for carer purposes, that employee should contact The Building Services Branch by email at [corporate.business.services@edumail.vic.gov.au](mailto:corporate.business.services@edumail.vic.gov.au) or phone 9637 3099. While every effort will be made to accommodate the needs of the employee, it may be necessary for the employee to make alternative arrangements.

It is not expected that the lactation room will be will be booked for other purposes.