# Header image reads Move Well Eat Well Early Childhood.

# Infant Feeding Policy Template

## This template is for Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC) services.

### This template is designed to:

### help ECEC services develop and improve their infant feeding policy and procedures

### bring infant feeding policies in line with current best practice.

### Use this document as your policy by adding your service’s details.

### AND

### Deleting all template instructions, the word “Template” at the top of this page, the blue text boxes, and the blue text in box brackets [...]

Policy statement

##### Our service is dedicated to supporting the health and wellbeing of children in their first 12 months and beyond.

##### We recognise that breastfeeding gives infants the nutrients they need for healthy growth and development and provides health benefits to the breastfeeding parent and infant. The *Australian Dietary Guidelines* and *Infant Feeding Guidelines* recommend exclusive breastfeeding (i.e. no other fluids or solids foods) to around six months of age. At around six months, age-appropriate food can be introduced. Breastfeeding is recommended until 12 months, and for as long as the parent and child wish.

##### We know that most parents start out breastfeeding. Starting childcare may be the first time that a baby needs to be away from their parents for a few hours or more. Our service aims to make it easier for parents to keep breastfeeding while their baby is in our care. We believe that everyone should have access to the support that they need to breastfeed for as long as they can.

##### While exclusive breastfeeding is recommended until around six months, any amount of breastmilk is beneficial to both the infant and mother. We also understand that some families choose, or need to use, infant formula to feed their babies. For babies who are not breastfed, or who are partially breastfed, commercial infant formulas should be used until 12 months of age.

#### Goal

##### Our goal is to provide safe and nurturing infant feeding practices for all infants in our care.

##### As part of this we encourage parents who are breastfeeding to continue to do so. We do this by providing a supportive environment, a positive attitude towards breastfeeding, and ensuring all staff are confident in supporting families with breastfeeding.

#### Key points

##### Our service and staff have a welcoming attitude towards breastfeeding and display and provide information that shows this support.

##### Our service has an appropriate comfortable space for parents to express milk or breastfeed.

##### Our service has relevant safe-handling practices for breastmilk labelling, storage and use as recommended in the Infant Feeding Guidelines. Please refer to a) our services procedure document OR b) see Appendices 1, 2, 3 and 4.[Please keep Appendices if choosing b)]

##### New families to the service are provided with information about breastfeeding. See Appendix 5 for recommended resources.

Relevant policies[Please insert all relevant policies that are used by your service.]

##### ResourcesNational Quality Framework

##### Standard: 2.1.2, 2.1.3

##### Regulations: 77, 78, 79

[Infant Feeding Guidelines 2012](https://www.eatforhealth.gov.au/sites/default/files/files/the_guidelines/170131_n56_infant_feeding_guidelines.pdf)  
[Get Up & Grow: Healthy Eating and Physical Activity for Early Childhood](http://www.health.gov.au/internet/main/publishing.nsf/Content/phd-gug-directorscoord)    
[Food Safety Manual for Tasmanian Education and Care Services Combined](http://www.dhhs.tas.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0013/134032/Food_Safety_Manual_for_Tasmanian_Education_and_Care_Services_Combined.pdf)

##### [Please insert additional resources that are used by your service.]

#### Appendix 1

# Storage and labelling of expressed breastmilk: procedure

##### We give information to families about safe handling practices for breastmilk.

##### We educate families to safely transport expressed breastmilk in sterilised containers and an insulated bag with an ice brick.

##### Breastmilk is stored in the refrigerator (or freezer) as soon as it arrives at the service. It is placed on a shelf, not in the door of the refrigerator. We monitor the temperature of refrigerators to make sure they do not exceed 5 °C.

##### Thawed breastmilk is never refrozen. See Appendix 2 for more information on storing and using frozen breastmilk.

##### We make sure families label bottles with the name of their child and the date the breastmilk is to be used.

##### We provide training and information to staff about the importance of safe handling and storage of breastmilk.

##### We display the procedure for safe storage and handling of expressed breastmilk in the area where bottles are prepared.

# Storage and labelling of infant formula: procedure

##### We provide information to families about safe handling practices for infant formula.

##### We encourage families who use infant formula to provide the service with sterilised bottles and teats, as well as pre-measured powdered infant formula, each day.

##### If families prefer to use premade infant formula we ask them to transport it safely in sterilised containers and an insulated bag with an ice brick.

##### Premade infant formula is stored in the refrigerator as soon as it arrives at the service It is placed in a non-spill tray and not in the door of the refrigerator. We monitor the temperature of refrigerators to make sure they do not exceed 5 °C. See Appendix 3 for more information on storing and using infant formula.

##### We make sure families label bottles with the name of their child and the date the infant formula is to be used. If powdered infant formula is sent, the amount of water to be mixed with the infant formula also needs to be stated.

##### We provide training and information to staff about the importance of safe handling and storage of infant formula.

##### We display the procedure for safe handling and storage of infant formula in the area where bottles are prepared.

#### Appendix 2

# Temperatures and length of time expressed breastmilk can be stored

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Breastmilk status | Storage at room temperature  (26°C or lower) | Storage in refrigerator (5°C or lower) | Storage in freezer |
| Freshly expressed into sterile container | 6-8 hours  If refrigeration is available store milk there | No more than 72 hours  Store at back, where it is coldest | 2 weeks in freezer compartment inside refrigerator (-15°C)  3 months in freezer section of refrigerator with separate door  (-18°C)  6-12 months in deep freeze (-20°C)\* |
| Previously frozen (thawed in refrigerator) | 4 hours or less – that is, the next feeding | 24 hours | Do not refreeze |
| Thawed outside refrigerator in warm water | For completion of feeding | 4 hours or until next feeding | Do not refreeze |
| Infant has begun feeding | Only for completion of feeding  Discard after feed | Discard | Discard |

\*Chest or upright manual defrost deep freezer that is opened infrequently and maintains ideal temperature.

Source: NHMRC (National Health and Medical Research Council), 2013, *Infant Feeding Guidelines*, National Health and Medical Research Council, Canberra p59.

#### Appendix 3

# Temperatures and length of time prepared infant formula can be stored

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Infant formula status | Storage at room temperature  (26°C or lower) | Storage in refrigerator (5°C or lower) |
| Freshly prepared in a sterile container | Less than 1 hour  If refrigeration is available store infant formula there | No more than 24 hours |
| Infant has begun feeding | Only for completion of feeding (should take no longer than 1 hour)  Discard after feed | Do not return infant formula to the refrigerator after the child has begun feeding.  Discard after feed. |

Source: NHMRC (National Health and Medical Research Council), 2013, *Infant Feeding Guidelines*, National Health and Medical Research Council, Canberra, p76.

#### Appendix 4

# Staff procedure for feeding with expressed breastmilk or infant formula

##### [Display these procedures for safe preparation, heating and handling of breastmilk and infant formula in the area where the bottles are prepared].

#### Preparing expressed breastmilk

##### Wash your hands and have a clean bench.

##### Get another staff member to double-check that the name on the milk provided matches the infant to be fed, and the date to be used. If the wrong breastmilk is given to an infant the service should follow their incident reporting procedure. The family should also be asked to contact their GP or child health nurse for advice.

##### Sign the infant’s feeding record.

##### Offer breastmilk in the sterilised bottle or cup provided by the parent/carer.

##### Do not use a microwave to warm or defrost breastmilk.

##### If the breastmilk is frozen, thaw it in the refrigerator, or by standing the bottle in a container of warm (not boiling) water.

##### Heat refrigerated breastmilk by standing the bottle in warm water until the milk is a comfortable body temperature. This should take around 10 minutes (no more than 15 minutes).

##### Check the temperature by shaking a few drops onto the inside of your wrist. It should feel warm, not hot.

##### Throw away any leftover breastmilk that has been heated.

#### Preparing infant formula

* Wash your hands and have a clean bench
* Ideally, prepare the infant formula one bottle at a time and just before feeding.
* Get another staff member to double-check the name on the bottle and infant formula powder matches the infant to be fed.
* Sign the infant’s feeding record.
* Offer the infant formula in the sterilised bottle or cup provided by the parent/carer.
* Prepare infant formula with cooled boiled water.
* Add the cool (or lukewarm) boiled water to the sterilised bottle, then add the exact amount of infant formula powder (measured by the family or using the scoop and instructions provided on the tin).
* Gently shake the bottle until the infant formula powder has dissolved.
* Do not use a microwave to warm the infant formula.
* If the infant formula has been premade and refrigerated heat it by standing the bottle in warm water until the infant formula is a comfortable body temperature. This should take around 10 minutes (no more than 15 minutes).
* Check the temperature by shaking a few drops onto the inside of your wrist. It should feel warm, not hot.
* Throw away any leftover infant formula that has been heated

#### Cleaning bottles

* Display the management plan for cleaning bottles in all kitchens/kitchenettes of the service.
* Ask the families to clean and sterilise all bottles before they bring them to the service.
* If required, bottles can be sterilised at the service by the following methods:
* boiling with an electric sterilising unit (preferred)
* chemical sterilisation
* using a microwave steriliser.

#### Good bottle-feeding practices

* Let infants decide the amount of breastmilk or formula they wish to drink. Never force them to finish a bottle.
* Hold, cuddle and talk to the infant while feeding (if it is not too distracting).
* Do not leave an infant unattended with a bottle containing liquids (e.g. do not prop the bottle up for feeding).
* Do not put an infant to sleep with a bottle.
* If an infant falls asleep while bottle-feeding remove the bottle straight away.

#### Appendix **5**

# Recommended resources

**Department of Health**

[Breastfeeding](https://www.health.tas.gov.au/health-topics/pregnancy-birth-and-early-parenting/early-parenting-newborns/breastfeeding) resources including:

* general breastfeeding information
* breastfeeding and returning to work booklet
* information on the benefits of breastfeeding.

**Australian Breastfeeding Association**

Resources for educators:

* [Using expressed breastmilk in early childhood education and care settings](https://www.breastfeeding.asn.au/resources/using-expressed-breastmilk-child-care-settings)
* [Breastfeeding and early childhood education and care pamphlet](https://www.breastfeeding.asn.au/resources/breastfeeding-and-childcare-pamphlet)

Resources for parents:

* [Going back to work](https://www.breastfeeding.asn.au/resources/going-back-work)
* [Creating a breastfeeding and work plan that works for you!](https://www.breastfeeding.asn.au/resources/breastfeeding-and-work-plan)