

**Procedure Title: Use of Mothers Room**

**Written By: Approved By:**

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**Yvonne Roache**  
**Health and Safety Officer**

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**Gordon Ryan**  
**Head of Development &  
Business Operations**

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**Tom Reilly**  
**HR Manager**

## **1. Purpose**

The Mothers room has been put in place by IT Sligo to provide a place of rest for pregnant employees in accordance with the requirements of the Health and Safety at work Act (General Applications). The facility will also be available for employees who are breastfeeding and wish to take lactation breaks in accordance with the requirements of the Maternity Protection (Amendment) Act 2004. The Mothers Room is a stand-alone rest room and not a medical facility. It is not therefore designed to accommodate or support pregnant staff who may be unwell at work. Such staff are required to contact their medical advisor to seek advice and instructions regarding their particular condition.

IT Sligo also supports students who continue to breastfeed following the resumption of their studies and the Mothers Room is available to such students who wish to take lactation breaks.

## **2. Definitions/References**

- A pregnant employee: This means a woman who has given her employer a medical certificate (or similar) stating she is pregnant
- An employee who has recently given birth: This means an employee during the 14 weeks immediately after giving birth (even if this was a miscarriage or stillbirth)
- An employee who is breastfeeding: This means an employee who is breastfeeding during the 26 weeks immediately after giving birth.
- IT Sligo Framework Safety Statement
- Pregnant, Postnatal and Breastfeeding Employees Procedure

## **3. Roles and Responsibilities**

### **3.1 IT, Sligo legal responsibility**

3.1.1 Regulation 24 (Chapter 1 of Part 2 relating to the workplace) of the Health and Safety at Work (General Applications) requires an employer to ensure that pregnant, post natal and breastfeeding employees are able to lie down to rest in appropriate conditions.

3.1.2 In accordance with the Maternity Protection (Amendment) Act 2004, from the time the mother returns to work following her maternity leave up until the child is 6 months old, lactation breaks will be provided without loss of pay in one of the following manners, in agreement with her manager:

- One break of one hour
- Two 30 minute breaks or
- Three 20-minute breaks, which is equal to one hour per day.

IT Sligo also recognises that some mothers may wish to continue to breastfeed beyond the statutory 6 month period. Arrangements to continue to avail of lactation breaks beyond the child's first 6 months are subject to local management agreement.

### **3.4 Employee Responsibility**

To be protected by legislation i.e. The Safety, Health and Welfare at Work (General Application) Regulations, 2007 and the maternity Protection Act, 1994 and in order to protect the developing child **it is in the employee's best interest**

- To inform their manager as soon as practicable of her condition
- Complete a Pregnant Employee Risk Assessment Form in conjunction with her manager and/or the Health and Safety Officer to ensure the risks are identified and that the appropriate controls are in place.

### **3.5 Health and Safety Officer**

The Health and Safety Officer or his/her nominee will oversee the management of the Mothers Room. The Health and Safety Officer shall issue keys to the room to the employees wishing to avail of the facility. The Health and Safety Officer will keep a record of those who use the room and report any issues to the relevant managers.

## **4. Procedure**

### **4.1 Pregnant Employees' Rest Facility**

IT Sligo recognises that staff members who are pregnant may occasionally suffer from fatigue related to their pregnancy and may wish to rest for a short period during their day. The Mothers Room H1020 in the Student Centre is available to such staff members who wish to access rest facilities on campus. This room may be accessed by a Key issued by the Health & Safety Office. Staff requiring access to the room must notify their manager and contact the Health & Safety Office (336). They must have completed a Pregnancy Risk Assessment Form.

Pregnant Staff who access the room (outside their break times) must notify their manager on each occasion prior to use and must similarly notify their return to their normal work.

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Keys issued to an individual for use during pregnancy may be retained until the commencement of maternity leave then they should be returned to the Health and Safety Officer.

### 4.2 Lactation Facilities (IT Sligo Staff and Students)

IT Sligo supports breastfeeding mothers by providing room H1020 in the Student Centre as a private, comfortable 'Mothers Room' for them to **express and store** breast milk for their babies. The room include refrigerated storage facilities for storage of Breast milk and a press to store expressing equipment. Cleaning facilities are available next door.

The Mothers Room is locked at all times and may be accessed by a Key issued by the Health & Safety Office. Staff or students requiring access to the room must contact the Health & Safety Office (336). Keys issued to an individual for long-term use may be retained until access to the room is no longer necessary and then they should be returned to the Health and Safety Officer.

### 4.3 Coordination of the Mothers Room

Staff members and students using the Mothers Room are required to respect the privacy and security of the room and of those who use it. Individuals are expected to respectfully coordinate their use with other mothers using the room. Individuals are also required to log their use of the room in the record book provided. Each user is expected to ensure the room is clean and locked as they depart.

## 5. Revision History

Revision No	Description of Change	Issue Date:
000	New Procedure	16/09/10