

*POLICY MEMO: NO. 15-07 (updated 09/2018)*  
*SUBJECT: Breastfeeding Promotion*  
*– Health Department*  
*CONTACT PERSON: Amy Westbrook*  
*PHONE: x5267*

**TO:** Management Group

**FROM:** Ann M. Busche,  
PHHS Division Director

**DATE:** July 25, 2015

#### Rationale for Policy

To ensure St. Louis County Public Health & Human Services Department meets the ten steps for breastfeeding friendly health departments (Minnesota Department of Health). St. Louis County Public Health & Human Services will comply with breastfeeding laws and acts to increase the impact of broad population based approaches and to improve health in our communities. St. Louis County Public Health & Human Services will actively promote, support and protect breastfeeding at the individual, community and systems levels; provide information on the benefits and risks in decision making, to support optimal outcomes associated with breastfeeding; provide education and information to the community on the importance of breastfeeding and the health benefits it provides; and provide opportunities to increase community knowledge about infant feeding methods in order to dispel incorrect assumptions.

#### Policy

The St. Louis County Public Health & Human Services Department supports breastfeeding as the preferred feeding option for infants. The Public Health Division staff collaborates with community partners to identify and remove barriers for mothers who breastfeed, educates parents and community partners about the benefits of long term breastfeeding, incorporates breastfeeding messages into Public Health messaging about nutrition, provides training of Public Health staff about the advantages of breastfeeding and how to effectively communicate the information to clients.

#### All Public Health Staff will:

- A. Receive & review information about the State and Federal laws & statutes supporting breastfeeding.
- B. Provide information on community resources that support breastfeeding families during service encounters or at client request, and refer clients experiencing common breastfeeding challenges to SLC WIC staff or SLC Maternal Child Public Health Nurses with lactation support training or to local health care providers in their community clinics and/or hospitals, which have trained lactation support staff, for additional support.
- C. Assure material created and distributed by St. Louis County will be free of references to and images of infant formula and images of baby bottles. Purchased material will be assessed by approving supervisory staff so it provides informed decision-making when discussing infant feeding practices.

- D. Receive orientation that includes review of the breastfeeding policy and program-specific information for supporting breastfeeding (including volunteers, contract staff, and students).
- E. Communicate and reinforce the written policy on breastfeeding promotion on an annual basis.

As a Breastfeeding Friendly PHHS Department, the St. Louis County Public Health Division will:

- A. Establish a designated individual/group to manage the following tasks including policy review, development, staff orientation and education.
- B. Have a written breastfeeding policy that is routinely reviewed with Department staff and meets the following criteria including addressing all Breast Feeding Friendly Health Department 10 steps.
- C. Coordinate breastfeeding support and promotion with other programs in the Public Health & Human Service Department, private and public health care systems, and community organizations to establish breastfeeding as the “norm” in the community.
- D. Collaborate with community partners to assure access to breastfeeding classes for prenatal women.
- E. Educate the community on breastfeeding support.
- F. Encourage racially and ethnically diverse breastfeeding resources within the community.
- G. Support mothers in initiating and maintaining breastfeeding up to 12 months and beyond.
- H. Through community partners, encourage local public places to provide a breastfeeding friendly environment for families.
- I. Select businesses each year and provide worksite lactation support training.
- J. Facilitate access to information and training for local childcare centers/providers/schools on how to support a breastfeeding mother.