

SB 35: Assuring that Breastfeeding Mothers are Left in Peace

KRS 211.755 affirms that a mother can breastfeed her infant anywhere, public or private, where she is otherwise allowed to be.

Although Kentucky's law has been in effect since 2006, stories of interference with mothers caring for their breastfeeding babies **continue to be reported**. In the Summer of 2014, three incidents were reported in supposedly 'family friendly' environments:

- Breastfeeding mother asked to leave public area as she watched an older child on a ride at Kentucky Kingdom.
- Breastfeeding mother asked to leave poolside area as she watched an older child participate in swim lesson, Beaumont YMCA, Lexington.
- Breastfeeding mother asked to leave public area at Louisville Zoo.

Kentucky Trails the Nation in Breastfeeding Success

- The U.S. Centers for Disease Control, the American Academy of Pediatrics, and numerous other health care organizations recognize that babies grow to their fullest potential when they are **exclusively breastfed for the first 6 months of life** and continue to be breastfed through their first year.
- In Kentucky, only about **61%** of babies start out breastfeeding (compared to 79% nationally), and only 31.5% are still breastfeeding at 6 months (compared to 49.4% nationally). This places us **48th out of 50 states**, above only West Virginia and Louisiana.

Families need SB 35, additional protections for mothers to breastfeed in public

- Mothers who fear being harassed while out of the home with their breastfeeding child will be less likely to choose breastfeeding at all, or may not choose to breastfeed exclusively or as long as previously planned because of the fear of being stigmatized.
- Mothers with these situations know that their right to breastfeed is being interfered with, but they do not know how to report the situation, nor a process by which to receive redress.
- Breastfeeding mothers are only seeking to care for their children, and to do so free from harassment. They only want to be left alone, to receive an apology, and to be assured that such harassment won't happen again to another mother.

SB 35 empowers local health officials to investigate the claim of interference with breastfeeding and levy a fine on any person who has interfered.

- Having a designated target for reporting will **help mothers regain their dignity** in providing care to their babies.
- Having a designated investigator and potential of a fine better defines the process for assuring that interference is minimized and that individuals and groups **develop practices to deter interference and support breastfeeding**.

Please support SB 35!

Kentucky Mothers and Babies are Counting on You!



Making Breastfeeding Easier for All Kentuckians
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