

Date – April 18, 2020
Committee -- Diocesan Council
Source – Human Resources VSST

DIOCESAN BREASTFEEDING POLICY

Diocese of Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island

Pertains to:

Clergy**Parishes****Diocesan Staff****Purpose:**

The Diocese of Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island recognizes the importance that breastfeeding plays in the nurturing and development of children. The Public Health Agency, Health Canada and the World Health Organization recommend breast milk only for newborn babies until the age of six months and then continued breastfeeding up to two years of age and beyond, after the introduction of solid foods. Breast milk has the perfect amount and type of protein, carbohydrate, fat, vitamins and minerals for a growing baby. Breast milk has antibodies that protect young children from infections and disease, and the resulting immunity provides protection that can last a lifetime. Breastfeeding is important to a parent's health and provides an emotional bond between the nursing parent and the child.

In Nova Scotia the province has adopted a Provincial Breastfeeding Policy and in both Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island each province has adopted the Baby Friendly Initiative. In both provinces it is recognized that a person has a right to breastfeed in public and that the person should not be discriminated against or harassed for doing so. In Nova Scotia the policy requires employers to provide reasonable accommodation to parents who wish to breastfeed.

Policy:

The Diocese of Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island has developed a Diocesan Breastfeeding Policy which supports Diocesan parents, whether clergy, staff or congregants, who wish to breastfeed their children in our churches, halls, offices and meetings. It is appreciated that this policy will require accommodation and will generate dialogue in Parishes and Regions. To assist in this dialogue a Diocesan Breastfeeding Toolkit has been developed and Parishes and Regions are encouraged to use this toolkit to facilitate that discussion.

Parishes who wish to adopt a Breastfeeding Policy will complete the policy contained in the toolkit, or one adapted for local needs, retaining a signed copy for parish records and returning a signed copy to the Diocesan Office. On receipt of the signed Parish Breastfeeding Policy, the Parish will be provided with the International Breastfeeding Symbol and an icon of Mary breastfeeding Jesus to display.