A. Purpose:

Sul Ross State University recognizes that maintaining a balance between work and family is necessary for optimized employee work performance. The university is committed to supporting employees who choose to breastfeed. To assist employees with challenges associated with workplace milk expression, and to comply with the Texas State Health and Safety Code Chapter 165.003 which recognizes that a mother is entitled to breastfeed her baby in any location in which the mother is entitles to be, the university has implemented a Workplace Lactation Program.

Benefits of the program include:

1. Healthier babies – Research shows that breastfed babies get sick less often and have fewer visits to the doctor than babies that receive formula.

2. Increased attendance – Due to less time lost for care of sick children;

3. Reduced cost – Due to fewer insurance claims for sick children and mothers;

4. Reduced turnover – Due to mothers opting to return to work because private locations are provided for milk expression and breastfeeding; and

5. Increased morale – Due to the university’s support for breastfeeding employees.

B. Policy and Procedure:

1. Support for Workplace Lactation

a. Employees who wish to express milk or breastfeed during work hours are entitled to take reasonable breaks as frequently as needed for up to one year following the birth of the employee’s child. Exceptions beyond one year should be discussed in advance with the supervisor.
b. The frequency and duration of breaks for this purpose may vary as determined by the
needs of the mother. This is considered paid time; however, nursing mothers should first
utilize their normal break periods. The frequency and amount of break time allowed to
express breast milk may vary and will include the time required to gather, clean, store
necessary equipment, and any necessary travel time to and from the location used to
express milk.

c. Employees may work predetermined and approved flexible work schedules to
accommodate lactation.

C. Responsibilities

1. Supervisors shall:

   a. Discuss with an expectant mother her potential plans to express milk upon return to work.
This will allow planning time to make adjustments as needed. The supervisor may delegate
this responsibility to an appropriate female staff member.

   b. Human Resources will work with the supervisor to designate an appropriate area for the
employee to breast feed or express milk. The designated area may not be a multiple user
bathroom, and must be an area shielded from view and free from intrusion from coworkers
and the public.

   c. Supervisors are responsible for ensuring that the duties of the nursing mother are covered
during her expression or breastfeeding breaks.

   d. Supervisors are responsible for alerting pregnant and breastfeeding employees about this
policy for lactation support.

2. Employees shall:

   a. Communicate with their supervisor regarding scheduling or other needs as far in advance as
possible if planning to express breast milk or breast feeding while at work and comply with
agreed flexible schedules.

   b. If an employee prefers, she may also express milk in her own private office, or in another
private location agreed upon in consultation with the employee’s supervisor and Human
Resources.