

# Superior Court of California

COUNTY OF SANTA CRUZ  
Justice With Dignity and Respect



## Lactation Policy for Court Users

### **Purpose**

The purpose of this Lactation Policy is to ensure that all individuals who need to breastfeed or express breast milk while attending court proceedings are provided with reasonable accommodations in accordance with California law, including California Senate Bill 949 and Rule of Court 2.40. This policy supports equal and full access to the judicial system for persons who are lactating.

### **Definitions**

- **Persons who are lactating:** Individuals who may need to express breast milk, including but not limited to those specified in Government Code section 69894 et seq.
- **Applicant:** Any court user who is participating in an ongoing court proceeding in the superior court.
- **Accommodations:** Providing break time from court proceedings to pump or express breast milk. Accommodations may include reasonable modifications in policies, practices, and procedures and providing access to the lactation room in each courthouse facility.

### **Policy Statement**

It is the policy of the Superior Court to ensure that persons who are lactating have equal and full access to the judicial system. All lactation requests and accommodations will be handled with the utmost confidentiality, dignity, and respect.

### **Notification and Request Process**

- Requesting Lactation Space in Courthouses
  - **Santa Cruz Courthouse (701 Ocean Street, Santa Cruz):** Visit the Judges' Chambers Reception Area. The clerk will provide access to the public lactation space. If Reception is closed (12 PM–1 PM), requests may be made to Sheriffs at Security Screening.
  - **Watsonville Courthouse (1 Second Street, Watsonville):** Visit the clerk's window. The clerk will provide an instructional card with an access code. If the clerk's window is closed (after 3 PM), requests may be made at the Self Help Center.
- Requesting Accommodations During Proceedings
  - Requests may be presented ex parte on a Judicial Council-approved form, in another written format, or orally.
  - Requests must include a description of the accommodation being requested. The court may require additional information.
  - Requests should be made in advance, if possible.

### **Confidentiality**

- All information concerning the request for accommodation is confidential unless waived in writing by the applicant or disclosure is required by law.
- Confidential information includes medical information and all oral or written communication from the applicant concerning the request.
- The applicant's identity and confidential information may not be disclosed to the public or to persons other than those involved in the accommodation process.

### **Permitted Communication**

Communications under this policy must address only the accommodation requested and must not address the subject matter or merits of the court proceedings.

### **Court Response to Requests**

- The court will promptly inform the applicant whether the request is granted, denied, or modified.
- If denied in whole or in part, the court's response will be in writing and include:
  - The reason for denial.
  - The nature and duration of any accommodation provided.
  - The date the response was sent.
- If a determination is made that the applicant would like to be reviewed, the court will follow the processes outlined in Rule of Court 240(f).

### **Duration of Accommodations**

Accommodations will remain in effect for the duration specified in the court's response. The court may provide accommodations for an indefinite period, a limited period, or for a particular matter or appearance.

### **Guidelines for Use of Lactation Space**

- Cleanliness: Users must dispose of waste and wipe down surfaces after use.
- Time Limits: Sessions are limited to 45 minutes to ensure equitable access. Court personnel may discreetly knock after 45 minutes to confirm occupancy.
- Personal Items: Users must remove personal items after use.
- Food and Drink: Only baby food or water for the lactating individual is permitted.
- Respect: Users must vacate promptly at the end of their allotted time.
- Access: Limited to those who need the space for lactation purposes.

### **Conclusion**

This policy ensures that breastfeeding individuals are supported while maintaining fair access to the court system. All persons attending court are entitled to accommodations in accordance with the law, and the court is committed to providing an inclusive, respectful environment for all.

For more information on lactation accommodations or to make a request, please contact [hinfo@santacruzcourt.org](mailto:hinfo@santacruzcourt.org).

*Revised December 2025*