

Shared Spaces

Lactation Room



FUNCTION

Lactation rooms play a vital role in supporting staff, faculty, and students by providing a comfortable space for expressing milk after returning to work or school. The room may be used by staff and/or visitors, and should have proper signage to identify its use. Establish a clear distinction between visitor/public-facing rooms and internal rooms.

The UCSF Lactation Accommodation Program manages lactation rooms and provides additional materials and equipment, such as pumps and fliers. There is one lactation room for every 50-100 female employees.



SPATIAL COMPONENTS

- Lactation rooms should be conveniently located, without requiring long walks or complex navigation.
- Locate an accessible sink with adjustable flow and temperature to clean pump parts and hands.
- Specify ergonomically supportive seating with adequate support and seat heights, and include multiple flat surfaces, such as sturdy, movable tables to place equipment.
- Provide an area to temporarily store personal items, such as pump accessories and containers.
- Balance rooms equipped with lounge seating versus those with an adjustable height desk and ergonomic chair.



EXPERIENTIAL QUALITY

Foster a sense of belonging

- Providing a dedicated space for lactation validates and accommodates the needs of families.
- These rooms help accommodate busy work schedules while enabling feeding and/or milk expression.

Promote wellness

- If program allows, natural light from exterior windows can enrich mood and focus. Consider outdoor views when laying out furniture to increase the user's connection to nature while maintaining privacy.



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MATERIALITY

- Use materials that are easy to clean and disinfect. Water-resistant finishes are ideal.
- Utilize wipeable, non-porous finishes on furniture to promote a hygienic environment.
- Specify red-list free, sustainable materials.

Floor

- Resilient flooring is preferred in wet areas to maintain a clean and safe space. Consider those with an acoustical backing for added soundproofing.
- Avoid using carpet in areas near the sink.

Wall

- Use soft, tranquil colors to create a calming and soothing environment.
- Consider a subtle accent wall, nature graphics, or art for visual interest.

Ceiling

- Specify adjustable light fixtures that provide adequate illumination while also allowing for softer ambient lighting to create a welcoming atmosphere.
- Acoustic ceiling tiles can reduce noise reverberation, helping to maintain a quiet environment.

LESSONS LEARNED

- Badge readers are required for safety and privacy. Single occupancy rooms shall be programmed for single entry. Multiple occupancy rooms shall be programmed to allow multiple entries, and the view of the occupants must be shielded from the doorway by a wall, privacy curtains, or other means.
- Public-facing lactation rooms should have a punch code or other secure lock and be located in an area that can be monitored.
- Consider adding a visual indicator to the door's locking mechanism to avoid disturbing the occupant.
- Duplex outlets should be installed, with at least two required per room. One outlet should be near the furniture, and an additional one near the countertop.
- Automatic faucets are challenging for washing pump parts and should be avoided.
- Consider a mirror above the sink or full length either wall mounted or behind the door. Provide coat hooks, a clock, a magnetic whiteboard, and paper towel and soap dispensers.
- Refrigerators are recommended as best practice, but cleaning, monitoring, and costs are managed by the building departments. Avoid in Health locations.