



**Breastfeeding  
Friendly  
Scotland**



**Healthier  
Scotland**  
Scottish  
Government

The **Breastfeeding Friendly Scotland** scheme is a Scottish Government supported national scheme, but implemented locally by NHS Boards which aims to:

- Provide mothers with positive experiences of breastfeeding when out and about, enabling mothers to feel confident and supported.
- Raise awareness of the Breastfeeding etc. (Scotland) Act 2005 and the Equality Act 2010.
- Ensure that organisations are aware of their responsibilities under this legislation.

Breastfeeding is really important to the health of both mother and baby, yet Scotland has one of the lowest breastfeeding rates in Europe. While many new mothers start breastfeeding, some may stop within a short period of time. This is often because they feel there is a lack of support, particularly when they want to feed their baby outside their home. If your business signs up to the award, you will be making a positive contribution to the health and wellbeing of Scotland's families and children.

This is not only good for mother and baby, but it's great for business too.

Every business and organisation knows the value of repeat customers and the value of word of mouth publicity. Breastfeeding mothers who feel that they and their babies have been made welcome will come back to your business and will also tell their family and friends.

The [Breastfeeding etc. \(Scotland\) Act 2005](https://www.legislation.gov.uk/asp/2005/1/contents)<sup>1</sup> makes it illegal to stop a mother feeding her child under the age of 2 years, either by breastfeeding or bottle feeding, in premises where the public have general access (including licensed premises if the child is lawfully permitted to be there).

[The Equality Act 2010](https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2010/15/contents)<sup>2</sup> confers the same protection for breastfeeding children over the age of 2 years, supporting families for the duration of feeding.

1 <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/asp/2005/1/contents>

2 <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2010/15/contents>

Any person who deliberately stops, or attempts to stop a person from feeding a child in these circumstances will be guilty of an offence, which could lead to a conviction.

Businesses and organisations can actively support mothers to feed outside their home by enforcing the above laws through displaying their membership of the **Breastfeeding Friendly Scotland** Award and by having their staff appropriately trained to support feeding mothers. Mothers therefore will be reassured and feel relaxed and confident about breastfeeding away from home and will be more likely to breastfeed for longer.

Further advice for employers on the Breastfeeding etc. (Scotland) Act 2005 can be found [here](#)<sup>3</sup>.

## Membership criteria

The scheme is free and is open to any organisation or business in Scotland.

Any business which offers service to the general public is eligible to join the scheme, for example, coffee shops, restaurants, shops, supermarkets, hairdressers and beauty salons, libraries, GP Practices, leisure centres and many more. In order to sign up to the scheme, businesses must agree that:

- All staff within the premises or organisation are aware of the Breastfeeding etc. (Scotland) Act 2005 and the Equality Act 2010, the aims of the Breastfeeding Friendly Scotland scheme and what that means for them. All members of staff will be advised about their responsibilities under the law and new staff will be made aware as part of their induction.
- You will support mothers to feel confident about breastfeeding on your premises; if there is a complaint from a customer about a mother breastfeeding, you will tell them that you are signed up to the **Breastfeeding Friendly Scotland** Award and tell them about the legislation; you will never ask the mother to move her seat, cover up or to stop breastfeeding.
- You will display the Breastfeeding Friendly Scotland scheme award in a prominent place, at the front of the premises, where it is easily seen. (Please do not display the award in a toilet)

You do not need to provide a breastfeeding room; the scheme supports mothers to breastfeed wherever they are. However, if a mother asks for a private space you should try to support this request if possible. This must not be a toilet. If you have a separate breastfeeding room you can make mothers aware, however, she may prefer to stay in the public space and her choice should be supported.

## **Joining the scheme**

If you agree to the aims of the **Breastfeeding Friendly Scotland** scheme and comply with the membership criteria please complete the sign up form or visit <https://www.mygov.scot/breastfeeding-and-your-business/> where you can email your NHS Board who will provide you with your **Breastfeeding Friendly Scotland** scheme award resources.

You will then become part of the **Breastfeeding Friendly Scotland** scheme and your business's name will be added to a local database of premises participating in the national award which will be kept on a secure database by your NHS Board. All businesses will be given recognition through ongoing promotion and awareness raising by Health Boards and the Scottish Government.

*Thank you for taking the time to read this information and we hope you feel able to join the scheme and support breastfeeding mothers, babies and families.*

***Together we can build a Breastfeeding Friendly Scotland***