

**WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE MINISTER FOR SOCIAL SECURITY  
BY DEPUTY G.P. SOUTHERN OF ST. HELIER  
ANSWER TO BE TABLED ON TUESDAY 24th SEPTEMBER 2013**

**Question**

Given that the latest advice concerning the benefits of breast feeding infants recommends maintaining breast feeding for a period of 26 weeks if possible, will the Minister consider extending maternity leave provision to cover this period, rather than the maximum of 18 weeks currently proposed?

**Answer**

A woman does not have to be on maternity leave in order to continue providing her baby with breast milk.

In its recommendation on Maternity, Paternity and Family Friendly working<sup>1</sup>, the Employment Forum noted that a maternity period of 10 to 18 weeks will usually provide sufficient time for a breastfeeding routine to have been established.

The Forum recommended that, if any breastfeeding provision is to be made, a code of practice or guidelines should outline what should reasonably be provided by an employer, taking into account the recommendations of the World Health Organisation (WHO) which include safe, clean and private facilities and daily breaks to express milk.

A code of practice might specify that employers should accommodate breastfeeding employees by providing the following;

- a private room, preferably lockable, to breastfeed or express milk
- a clean fridge for storing expressed milk
- a place to wash, sterilise and store containers
- time off to express or breastfeed.

The family friendly rights that I propose to bring to the States next year will include the right to request flexible working for all employees with caring responsibilities. This might include a request to work part-time or from home, or a change to work start and finish times in order to allow time to express milk or breastfeed.

When protection against discrimination on the grounds of sex is introduced, a refusal to make appropriate adjustments to enable a woman to continue to express milk or breastfeed may amount to unlawful sex discrimination.

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<sup>1</sup>[www.gov.je/SiteCollectionDocuments/Working%20in%20Jersey/R%20EmploymentForumsRecommendationMaternityPaternityFamilyFriendly%2020091211%20EV.pdf](http://www.gov.je/SiteCollectionDocuments/Working%20in%20Jersey/R%20EmploymentForumsRecommendationMaternityPaternityFamilyFriendly%2020091211%20EV.pdf)