



IBLCE Procedures for Breastfeeding Breaks during Exam Administration

The International Board of Lactation Consultant Examiners' (IBLCE) mission and purpose focus on the protection, promotion and support of breastfeeding. Therefore, it is appropriate for IBLCE to make allowances for exam candidates who are also the mothers of breastfed babies. It is necessary that these allowances meet all the requirements for ensuring IBLCE exam security while at the same time offering reasonable solutions that will allow mothers of breastfed babies to feed their babies and preserve the breastfeeding relationship.

The morning and afternoon sessions of the exam are a maximum of two and one-half (2 ½) hours long. A lunch break is provided between exam sessions. Most exam candidates take about two hours to complete each exam session. All candidates who are breastfeeding mothers may choose to feed their babies or express milk before the morning exam session begins and during the lunch break between exam sessions.

Breastfeeding or expressing milk before the morning session and between exam sessions does not require any special allowances and is an option that all candidates who are breastfeeding mothers may use. For the majority of exam candidates who are breastfeeding mothers, this option is entirely satisfactory. However, mothers of breastfed babies may need to take a break more often than every three hours (instruction time plus 2 ½ hours per session).

The value of breastfeeding for the first six months of life is a global public health recommendation that is outlined in the World Health Organisation publication "Global Strategy for Infant and Young Child Feeding" and IBLCE wholeheartedly endorses this recommendation. Accordingly, IBLCE provides allowances that permit the mothers of young breastfed babies to take breaks for the purpose of breastfeeding their babies during the hours of exam administration.

Taking a break to breastfeed during the exam administration hours requires special allowances. An additional exam proctor must be present in the exam room and available to accompany the candidate while she breastfeeds. This allowance for breastfeeding is not considered to be an accommodation for a disability. However, for this allowance to be managed in an orderly manner, the following criteria and rules must be followed.

1. Exam candidates who are the mothers of breastfed babies, who will be 12 months and younger at the time of exam administration, may request arrangements that will allow them to leave the exam room in order to breastfeed their babies during the hours of the exam administration.
2. The request for allowances to breastfeed during the exam administration must be made in advance. The request must be noted on the exam application form and substantiated by documentation of the baby's birth date, such as a copy of the baby's birth certificate or a signed letter from your healthcare provider of the baby's birth date.

3. Without the required documentation, the IBLCE staff cannot proceed with the necessary arrangements. Documentation must accompany the exam application form and must be postmarked by no later than April 30.
4. In order to provide for the need to breastfeed, an additional proctor must be available to accompany and stay with the candidate while she breastfeeds. *For mothers of babies who will be 12 months and younger at the time of exam administration, IBLCE will cover the cost of hiring this additional proctor.* Allowances for older babies are subject to additional fees.
5. While breastfeeding, the candidate will be required to leave the exam room and feed her baby in a location far enough away from the exam room that other exam candidates are not disturbed.
6. Prior to the day of the exam, the candidate must decide where she plans to breastfeed her baby. The IBLCE cannot provide a separate room for exam candidates who request breastfeeding breaks nor will babies be allowed to be with the mother in the exam room. *The IBLCE staff and proctor will negotiate with the exam candidate a method for the baby's caregiver to contact the proctor and the location for the mother to attend to her baby's needs.*
7. It is the responsibility of the baby's care-provider to bring the baby to the pre-determined break location. The exam candidate will not be permitted to use a mobile phone to call the care-provider. *Only the baby and one caregiver are allowed in the exam venue.*
8. If requested, additional time, up to a maximum of 30 minutes into the lunch break and up to a maximum of 30 minutes after the official end of the afternoon session, will be given to those exam candidates who take breastfeeding breaks. The lunch break will be adequate and a bit shorter for candidates requesting additional time.
9. The designated proctor will accompany and stay with the exam candidate while she breastfeeds her baby. In addition, the proctor will record the time when the candidate begins and ends breastfeeding.
10. The proctor will not be available to provide childcare.
11. Questions about these allowances should be sent to the Regional Director.