

JURY DUTY



Michigan Breastfeeding Network

MIBFN POSITION PAPER: IN SUPPORT OF BREASTFEEDING MOTHER-JURORS

Overview

It is time for the ongoing push for breastfeeding normalization to reach the courthouse. Courts need to be more accessible for breastfeeding women and provide accommodations for those who seek to fulfill their civic duty through the juror process. Currently, because courthouses lack proper accommodations for breastfeeding mothers, seeking exemption is the only feasible option for most breastfeeding mothers. It is important not to exclude these women from the judicial process in order for their voices and opinions to be counted in both civil and criminal matters.

Policy Recommendations

In support of breastfeeding mother-jurors, the Michigan Breastfeeding Network (MIBFN) advocates for support of the following:

- **Jury duty summons should include specific information for breastfeeding jurors: the availability of milk expression time and location that does not include a bathroom; access to baby or child for breastfeeding during the trial; whether the court provides assistance in finding child care; and other logistical support for breastfeeding accommodations.**
- **Exemptions for breastfeeding mothers who are unable to serve should be upheld.**
- **Mandatory breastfeeding accommodation education for all court employees from clerks to judges.**
- **District, circuit, and federal courts should adopt official policies providing accommodations for breastfeeding and milk expression during jury duty for breastfeeding mothers.**

Vision for the Future

MIBFN envisions a future in which women truly deserve and receive a jury of their peers, and this representation includes breastfeeding women. When mothers are encouraged to serve on juries and present their points of view, it ensures that fairness and equity are intrinsic to the judicial system. Change must come on the federal level and from within the courthouse, enabling women to perform their civic duty while preserving the real-life breastfeeding relationship that has already been established.