

CFPC Policy on Providing Testing Accommodations for Lactating Individuals

The College of Family Physicians of Canada (CFPC) is committed to supporting its members who breastfeed, including those who are candidates for the national certification examinations.

While babies and/or children cannot be brought to examination sites, the College may, with appropriate notice, provide secluded space equipped with an electrical outlet at the examination centre where lactating individuals can express breast milk before, during, and/or immediately after the exam session.

All types of breast pumping devices, including the wearable silicone ones, must be pre-approved by the CFPC to be allowed into any of the computerized test delivery examination sites and are only admitted into the private test accommodation rooms.

Private or secluded spaces for breast milk expression are subject to availability and are not guaranteed at every test location. This means a candidate who wishes access to a private or secluded space must inform the CFPC in advance and be ready to accept assignment by the CFPC to an examination location that is able to accommodate this request.

Depending on the candidate's personal lactation schedule and the length of the exam session, additional break time may be warranted. If a candidate's exam session is four hours or more in duration, up to 30 minutes of optional break time may be provided in addition to the standard break allowance. The length of time for the exam session does not change.

No access to a refrigerator to store expressed milk is provided at any of the examination sites. Candidates who will express breast milk are responsible for bringing their own appropriate storage container, such as a cooler. As with any items brought to an examination site, this container will be inspected.

Submitting a request

All requests for test accommodation must be stated at the time of application for the examination. This allows CFPC staff to identify and allocate the required—but potentially limited—resources as fairly and equitably as possible, and to assign candidates to appropriate examination locations equipped to meet stated needs.

All requests for test accommodations stated at the time of application must be corroborated by appropriate supporting documentation, as outlined below, to be received by the College no later than 12 weeks prior to the examination. Failure to submit supporting documentation will result in no test accommodation being provided for that candidate on the day of examination.

Supporting documentation

To evaluate a test accommodation request for lactating individuals to express breast milk during the exam session, the College must receive a written request for accommodation and supporting documentation at least 12 weeks prior to the examination date.

1. The Request for Test Accommodation form must be signed by the candidate and include a detailed description of the desired test accommodation, (e.g., secluded space, electrical outlet, additional break time)
2. Supporting documentation confirming the candidate will be nursing at the time of the examination, is to be submitted to the CFPC in the form of
 - a separate signed personal attestationor
 - a signed letter on office letterhead from a personal health care professional, such as
 - family physician
 - lactation consultant
 - doula

Supporting documentation that is **not** a personal attestation cannot be from a relative or spouse of the candidate.

Requests and supporting documentation may be emailed to ccfpexam@cfpc.ca.

Approval and acceptance process

After a request is reviewed, if it is approved the candidate will receive an email confirmation of the approved modification to the standard testing procedure (i.e., the test accommodation) that will be made. Candidates must sign and return a copy of this confirmation, within the timeline specified, agreeing to the specified arrangements. If the approved arrangements do not match the candidate's expectation, the candidate must follow up with CFPC staff immediately so that any misunderstanding is clarified prior to the examination date.

Candidates must present a copy of their test accommodation confirmation upon arrival at the examination site. Should the agreed arrangement not materialize at the examination site, the candidate should notify CFPC staff as soon as possible.

Test accommodation arrangements approved by the College are not transferable from one exam session to another. A new request must be submitted each time the candidate applies to sit a CFPC examination and will be evaluated independently.

Version history

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