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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## **Franklin County awarded for efforts to make working and breastfeeding easier for employees**

Ottawa, KS, March 7, 2018 – Franklin County has received the Gold Level “Breastfeeding Employees Support Award” from the Kansas Breastfeeding Coalition and its *Business Case for Breastfeeding* program.

The award is based on proven and established standards to benefit employers and employees. It recognizes businesses that provide support services to their breastfeeding employees, to include education as well as the time and space for employees to nurse and/or pump breastmilk at their workplace. The award, the top ranking of three sponsored by the Coalition, was presented by Brenda Bandy, Executive Director of the Kansas Breastfeeding Coalition.

According to Bandy, Franklin County received the award for achieving a high level of support to their employees as outlined in the Coalition’s criteria. She said they provide a “gold level” pumping room, allow flexible time to pump, and have a written policy of breastfeeding support.

Pointing out that many breastfeeding mothers abandon breastfeeding when they return to work because they lack the support and appropriate facilities at their place of employment, Bandy said, “We want to help change that unfortunate situation”. She cited research showing that adequate support for breastfeeding employees benefits businesses

through savings in health care expenses, reduced turnover rates, lower absenteeism, and increased employee loyalty. Employers that have established support services for breastfeeding employees have reported a \$3 for \$1 return on investment plus realizing a more productive working environment.

"Many Kansas employers recognize the benefits of supporting their breastfeeding employees. We want to shine the spotlight on as many employers as we can for doing their part to make returning to work while breastfeeding easier in hopes that will encourage more businesses to follow suit," says Martha Hagen, a Kansas WIC state breastfeeding coordinator.

Businesses that provide support services for their breastfeeding employees can be considered for a "Breastfeeding Employees Support Award" at the bronze, silver and gold levels. Applications are available at

[http://www.kansasbusinesscase.com/for\\_employers/employer\\_awards](http://www.kansasbusinesscase.com/for_employers/employer_awards) .

The *Business Case for Breastfeeding* is a program to assist employers in developing or enhancing support services for their breastfeeding employees. The Kansas Breastfeeding Coalition is a non-profit 501(c) 3 with the mission of working collaboratively to promote and protect breastfeeding in order to improve the health of Kansas families.

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If you would like more information about this topic or would like to schedule an interview, please contact Brenda Bandy at (785) 477-4666 or [bbandy@ksbreastfeeding.org](mailto:bbandy@ksbreastfeeding.org).