



COALITION OF OKLAHOMA BREASTFEEDING ADVOCATES

Infant and Young Child Feeding During Emergencies Position Statement

COBA believes that all children should be provided the best and safest nutrition sources, especially during natural disasters or public health emergencies at which times they are the most vulnerable to disease and death. Therefore, infant and young child feeding must be a part of policies and practices within all local, state and national emergency preparedness plans.

OUR POSITION:

- Empower breast/chestfeeding individuals to make breastfeeding part of their disaster readiness plans.
- First responders will have established evidence-based breastfeeding policies and practices that promote and support breastfeeding as the safest and most protective method for feeding infants.
- During emergencies, organizations and shelters will screen families with infants and young children for their preferred feeding methods before providing formula and will provide lactation support if necessary.
- During emergencies, alternative methods of milk removal shall be available, such as electric pumps, manual pumps, or methods of hand expression to empower mothers to express their milk to feed their babies.
- Families will be kept together for security and support.

(3/2021)