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USLCA Statement in Support of Pumping Families & TSA Procedures

The United States Lactation Consultant Association (USLCA) stands firmly in support of pumping parents who are traveling with expressed human milk. Recent reports of difficulty traveling have surfaced, with pumping parents experiencing a variety of obstacles; these parents have been forced to check gel cooling packs for their milk or asked to discard their milk entirely.

USLCA calls upon the Transportation Safety Administration (TSA) to adhere to their stated guidelines, which state that, “medically necessary gel ice packs in reasonable quantities are allowed regardless of their physical state of matter (e.g., melted or slushy). Please notify the TSA officer at the checkpoint for inspection” and that “Formula, breast milk and juice are allowed in reasonable quantities in carry-on bags....You do not need to travel with your child to bring breast milk. Please see traveling with children for more information.” In addition, USLCA calls upon the TSA to engage with subject matter experts in the field – such as USLCA or the US Breastfeeding Committee – to review and update guidelines regarding the transport of human milk and to eliminate the issues with allowing individual TSA agents to make the final judgment call in the absence of robust guidelines.

While the Friendly Airports for Mothers Act requires “all large and medium hub airports to provide a private, non-bathroom lactation space in each terminal building,” these spaces are often past the TSA checkpoints and other security measures, so additional consideration for the needs of the milk that will be expressed (e.g., cooling packs) must be taken into consideration. Parents who are expressing milk must do so on a regular basis in order to protect and promote their milk-production abilities, and traveling parents will often not have their infant with them – therefore transport of human milk is inevitable and should be handled as carefully as other medical needs (e.g. physical accommodations, prescription medication, or durable medical equipment.)