



A breastfeeding initiative by the
OHIO HOSPITAL ASSOCIATION and
the OHIO DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH



Application Instructions

The purpose of the Ohio First Steps for Healthy Babies program (Ohio First Steps) is to recognize Ohio maternity hospitals that have taken steps to promote, protect and support breastfeeding in their organization. A five-step program has been developed, with one step awarded for every two steps achieved in the Ten Steps to Successful Breastfeeding as defined by [Baby-Friendly USA \(www.babyfriendlyusa.org\)](http://www.babyfriendlyusa.org).

Hospital project teams are strongly encouraged to work together to complete this application.

Application Submission

Use the electronic **Ohio First Steps Application Form** online to apply for your five-step designation. You can access the Application Form on the Ohio First Steps website at www.ohiohospitals.org/ohiofirststeps. A printable copy is available online for your convenience when working through the application, but only applications received using the official online survey will be considered.

NOTE: Hospitals that have earned Baby-Friendly Designation from Baby-Friendly USA may submit a copy of their award and automatically earn full Ohio First Steps Recognition. Please refer to the **application form** for specific instructions.

Applications may be submitted on a quarterly basis. Applications must be completed and submitted electronically via the link found at www.ohiohospitals.org/ohiofirststeps no later than midnight on the application deadline using the schedule outlined below:

Application Deadline (must be received by midnight)	Award Notification (to hospitals)
Quarter 1: January 1	February 15
Quarter 2: April 1	May 15
Quarter 3: July 1	August 15
Quarter 4: October 1	November 15

Required Documentation

- Some sections of the application require documentation be submitted by the application deadline.
- Required documentation should be submitted via email to ohiofirststeps@odh.ohio.gov by the application deadline.
- At the discretion of the review committee, additional documentation may be requested.



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Application Review

- Applications will be reviewed by an independent, statewide, public-private review committee on a quarterly basis. The deadlines for submission and notification for each quarter are listed above and online at www.ohiohospitals.org/ohiofirststeps.
- All required application questions must be completed to be considered for review.
- Resubmission for additional star recognition will be accepted following the timeline outlined above, and is strongly encouraged.

Designation and Recognition

- Facilities will be notified by email of the results of the review.
- Facilities awarded recognition will receive a certificate suitable for framing.
- In addition, facilities earning Ohio First Steps recognition of one or more steps will be recognized on the Ohio First Steps website (www.ohiohospitals.org/firststepshospitals) as well as the Ohio Hospital Association website.

Re-Designation & Renewal

- Facility recognition is valid for three years from the time of recognition. After that time, hospitals will be required to resubmit the full application to remain recognized.
- Hospitals are encouraged to submit applications regularly until all steps are recognized.
- Hospitals only need to complete the sections for which they are applying.

Baby-Friendly USA

- The Ohio First Steps program is not meant to be a replacement of the Baby-Friendly Hospital Initiative, nor will this program prepare hospitals fully for achieving for [Baby-Friendly USA](http://www.babyfriendlyusa.org) designation (www.babyfriendlyusa.org).
- The Ohio First Steps program is meant to encourage adoption of environments and policies conducive to breastfeeding in maternity centers, and provide recognition for taking steps toward breastfeeding excellence.

Questions

Questions about this program can be directed to:

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*Do not email questions or general inquiries about this program to ohiofirststeps@odh.ohio.gov. This mailbox is not monitored and should only be used to submit required documentation supporting applications for recognition.