

MAIF Complaints Committee's interpretation of the MAIF Agreement related to Clause 5(a): The general public and parents and/or carers (including information provided to retailers)

Overall Principles

1. The purpose of these guidelines is to support the interpretation of the MAIF Agreement.
2. These guidelines are to be read with the aim of the MAIF Agreement in mind and as an overarching principle: that is, to contribute to the safe and adequate nutrition for infants, by the protection and promotion of breastfeeding and by ensuring the proper use of breastmilk substitutes, when they are necessary, on the basis of adequate information and through appropriate distribution.

Provision of information to the general public

3. Existing or new infant formula products should not be 'announced' to the public. Communicating information to the public that is factual and not promotional about product changes is permitted.
4. When an infant formula manufacturer provides information to the public about a product with the same name as an infant formula, the product name should be followed either by the range name (e.g. toiletries) or the specific product (e.g. baby powder). Generalised terms such as 'Brand X Baby Care Products' or 'Brand X, Best for Baby', should not be used where Brand X is the name of an infant formula.
5. Slogans which could imply that feeding a baby the product would be better than breastfeeding should not be used – for example 'Every baby deserves the best' or 'A little extra something' However, slogans which clearly and distinctly compare infant formula products may be acceptable.
6. Free samples should not be provided by manufacturers except at the request of a qualified health professional for the purposes of professional evaluation or research.

Changes and updates to infant formula

7. The following information about changes and updates to infant formula and its availability should be accessible to parents and carers, subject to the following:
 - Information to be presented in a way that is easy to understand and objective.
 - Announcements regarding changes to the formulation, packaging and brand updates and availability of infant formulas in the communication channels set out in this section, are acceptable, but only for a reasonable period i.e 3 months – at least 6 weeks prior to the change and 6 weeks post change for off label announcements. Announcements made in a digital forum may remain online as a historical record
 - Information about important changes may be included on the product label. In retail stores, information about changes to a product may be included on a 'shelf talker' (of standard size and displayed adjacent to the relevant product on the shelf) and in the product details for online retail stores.

- Information may also be included on a company's website (subject to guidelines on Electronic Media¹) and owned digital and social media channels. Paid search may be used to direct parents and carers who are seeking information about a company's product change to the company's website.
- Important information may be sent directly to parents who have already provided their consent to be contacted.
- Such provisions of information should have no promotional content. Pack shots are permitted, but there should be no slogans. Information should not promote or encourage use of formula.
- A company's contact details and link to the company's website is permitted if a parent or carer wishes to learn more.

Retail stores

8. Information by manufacturers to retailers regarding visual merchandising is to be factually based.
9. Price tickets on the 'shelf-talkers' that simply advertise the price of the product, or the fact that it has a 'special' price are acceptable. The ticket may also state the saving to be made – e.g. 'Special. Save \$1'. Shelf tickets should have no content other than the price and the name of the product.
10. Posters, in-store radio announcements, e-catalogues and printed catalogues, online stores and magazine provision of information should only provide the price, the name of the product and a pack shot which in size, colour etc, must be relative to the other product depictions.
11. Whenever possible, products should be located in the appropriate aisle and not on display i.e. large stacks of cans (gondola ends or shelf stacks) in promotional areas.
12. Window displays, window stacks and pavement displays are not acceptable.
13. Care should be taken not to display infant formula products or the name of the product under generic slogans for a range of products, such as 'Everything that is best for baby'.
14. There should be no price or product promotion by manufacturers or marketers of infant formula on radio, television, online streaming, or any other electronic media, including social media. Online retail store price promotion is permitted, but information should only provide the price, the name of the product and a pack shot which in size, colour etc, must be relative to the other product depictions. Label information and a reference to a "special" and price saving is also permitted in online retail stores.

¹ For further information on the requirements for web-based information, refer to the guidelines on Electronic media
[https://www1.health.gov.au/internet/main/publishing.nsf/Content/B8D64A18E546D9FBCA257BF0001ACE26/\\$File/MAIF%20Guidance%20Document%20-%20Electronic%20media.pdf](https://www1.health.gov.au/internet/main/publishing.nsf/Content/B8D64A18E546D9FBCA257BF0001ACE26/$File/MAIF%20Guidance%20Document%20-%20Electronic%20media.pdf)