

Subject: Breastfeeding Peer Counselor Job Responsibilities

Effective Date: October 1, 2014

Revised from: October 1, 2013

Policy: Agencies that have applied for and received approval for the Breastfeeding Peer Counselor Program (BFPC Program) must hire at least one person to act as the Breastfeeding Peer Counselor (BFPC). The BFPC is a paraprofessional with personal breastfeeding experience who provides basic breastfeeding information and support to WIC mothers. The BFPC is supervised by the local WIC BFPC Supervisor.

Reference: *Loving Support through Peer Counseling Materials*

Procedure:

The following table defines the typical roles and credentials of the Breastfeeding Peer Counselor:

WIC SERVICE	Breastfeeding Peer Counselor
Specific Duties	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Counsels WIC pregnant and breastfeeding mothers by telephone, WIC clinic visits, home visits, and /or hospital visits at scheduled intervals determined by the local WIC program. • Receives a caseload of WIC clients and makes required routine periodic contacts with all clients who are referred and/or assigned. • Gives basic breastfeeding information and support to new mothers, including informing them of the benefits of breastfeeding, overcoming common barriers and getting off to a good start with breastfeeding. She also helps mothers prevent and manage common breastfeeding concerns. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Provides emotional support to mother and her significant other through personal interaction. 2) Provides the mother with advice and expectations for the learning period and the continuing rewards of breastfeeding. 3) Provides anticipatory guidance to reduce the occurrence of problems. 4) Provides information on the effects on lactation from: foods, medications, and home remedies, within guidelines addressed in WIC's BFPC training. • Respects each client by keeping her information strictly confidential. • Keeps accurate records, in KWIC, of all contacts made with WIC clients. • Refers mothers, according to clinic-established protocols, to the designated breastfeeding expert – one or more of the following: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) WIC breastfeeding coordinator or nutritionist or 2) Mother's physician or nurse or 3) Lactation Consultant or 4) Public health programs in the community

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attends and assists with prenatal classes and breastfeeding support groups as assigned. • May assist with the local WIC clinic's breastpump program. • Attends monthly staff meetings and breastfeeding conferences/workshops as appropriate, to receive continuing education. • May assist WIC staff in promoting breastfeeding peer counseling through special projects and duties, as assigned.
Knowledge/Skills Requirements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Has successfully breastfed at least one infant for at least 6 months (does not have to be currently breastfeeding). • Is enthusiastic about breastfeeding and wants to help other mothers enjoy a positive experience. • Is a member of the population that will be served (preferably is a current or former WIC client.) • Agrees to work the part-time hours required for the position. • Completes the training sessions required to become and continue as a WIC Breastfeeding Peer Counselor. • After completion of BFPC training, observes other peer counselors or lactation consultants (for at least one-half day) as they help mothers with breastfeeding. Reads assigned books, views DVD's and materials about breastfeeding.
Additional Work Requirements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can work the schedule of hours required per week, as needed, by the clinic. Is available to new mothers who are having breastfeeding problems outside the usual 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. clinic hours • Signs clinic confidentiality statement. • Passes the individual clinic's employee requirements.