

Breastfeeding Volume
Peer Counseling Section

Local Agency Personnel: Breastfeeding Peer Counselor Job Description (6.00200)

ER# 6.00200

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POLICY: The local agency (LA) may use a Breastfeeding Peer Counselor (BFPC) as a paraprofessional to give basic breastfeeding information, support and encouragement to pregnant women and breastfeeding mothers, and serves as a role model for breastfeeding women.

PROCEDURES:

- A. Specific duties may vary based on the LA's plan.
1. Completes required breastfeeding trainings to become a peer counselor.
 2. Counsels pregnant women and breastfeeding mothers by telephone, home visits, hospital visits, and in the WIC clinic at scheduled intervals determined by the LA. This contact does not count as one of the two required nutrition education contacts. Refer to **Effective Nutrition Education: Standards, Participant-Centered Goals, Delivery Methods and Documentation** Policy, [ER# 2.06400](#).
 3. May teach prenatal and breastfeeding classes with approved lesson plan by BFPC Coordinator and/or organize mother support groups. Refer to **Effective Nutrition Education: Standards, Participant-Centered Goals, Delivery Methods and Documentation** Policy, [ER# 2.06400](#).
 4. Receives a caseload of WIC participants and makes contacts with participants based on local agency's contact schedule. Refer to How Often To Contact Mothers in the BFPC Training Manual.
 5. Provides information and support for women in managing common maternal and infant breastfeeding problems that occur.
 6. Contacts Breastfeeding Peer Counselor Coordinator or LA lactation expert when a situation occurs that is out of her scope of practice or anytime guidance is needed. Refer to Referral of Breastfeeding Participants Policy, [ER# 6.01500](#).
 7. May be available to new mothers who are having breastfeeding problems and need assistance outside the usual 8:00 am to 5:00 pm working hours.
 8. Respects each participant by keeping her information strictly confidential. Refer to Participant Confidentiality Policy, [ER# 1.01700](#). **Peer Counselors must sign the LA confidentiality statement at the time of hire and annually thereafter.**
 9. Keeps accurate records of all contacts made with WIC participants using MOWINS. When making contacts outside of the clinic, peer counselors will document on contact logs provided by the state and transfer to MOWINS system as soon as possible (no later than the end of the month). **Peer counselors must**

protect the logs and keep them confidential when working outside the clinic.

10. May attend and assist with prenatal classes and breastfeeding support groups.
11. May attend monthly staff meetings and breastfeeding conferences and/or workshops as appropriate.
12. Reads assigned books and materials on breastfeeding that are provided by the supervisor.
13. May assist WIC staff in promoting breastfeeding through special projects and duties as assigned.

B. Qualifications

1. Has breastfed at least one baby (does not have to be currently breastfeeding).
2. Has basic communications skills.
3. Is enthusiastic about breastfeeding, and wants to help other mothers enjoy a positive experience.
4. Comes from a similar background, age group and language of WIC participants served in the clinic.
5. Current or previous WIC participation preferred, but not mandatory.
6. Can work the number of hours required to meet the LA plan for peer counseling.
7. Has a telephone and willing to make phone calls from home, if required by the LA.
8. Has a high school diploma or GED.
9. May currently work in the LA in another paraprofessional role.*

*Peer Counselors cannot be a WIC Certifier or a member of the WIC professional staff, such as a nutritionist, WIC Coordinator or BFPC Coordinator.

C. Training Requirements

1. Participates in state approved training programs for peer counselors.
2. May attend additional educational opportunities, such as informal training sessions, observing other peer counselors or lactation consultants helping mothers.
3. May attend conferences or workshops on breastfeeding as determined by the LA.