

II. Nutrition Services

2. Breastfeeding Peer Counseling

2.2.010 Local Agency Personnel: Breastfeeding Peer Counselor Job Description

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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 serve 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, teleconference, home visits, hospital visits, and in the WIC clinic at scheduled intervals determined by the LA. This contact does not count as one (1) of the two (2) required nutritional education contacts. Refer to policy [2.4.110](#).
 3. May assist with or teach prenatal breastfeeding classes with an approved lesson plan by the BFPC Coordinator and/or organize breastfeeding mother support groups. Refer to policy [2.4.110](#).
 4. Receives a caseload of WIC participants and makes contact with the participants based on the LA's contact schedule. Refer to [Contacting WIC 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 the breastfeeding peer counselor coordinator or the LA lactation expert when a situation occurs that is out of their scope of practice or anytime guidance is needed. Refer to policy [2.2.060](#).
 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 their information strictly confidential. Refer to policy [8.1.010](#). Peer counselors must sign the LA confidentiality statement at the time of hire.
 9. Keeps accurate records of all contacts made with participants using the Missouri WIC Information Network System (MOWINS.) When MOWINS is unavailable, peer counselors will make documentation on the contact logs provided by the state and transfer the information to MOWINS 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 monthly staff meetings and peer counseling meetings as appropriate.
11. Reads assigned books and materials on breastfeeding that are provided by the supervisor.
12. May assist WIC staff in promoting breastfeeding through special projects and duties as assigned.

B. Qualifications

1. Has breastfed at least one (1) baby (does not have to be currently breastfeeding).
2. Has basic communication 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's plan for peer counseling.
7. Has a telephone and is willing to make telephone calls from home, if required by the LA, or uses a telephone provided by the agency to answer after hours calls.
8. Has a high school diploma or general educational development (GED).
9. May currently work in the LA in another paraprofessional role, provided that hours are scheduled separately for separate duties.*

*Peer Counselors cannot be a WIC Certifier or a member of the WIC professional staff, such as a nutritionist, competent professional authority (CPA), 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 shadowing lactation consultants helping mothers.
3. May attend conferences or workshops on breastfeeding as determined by the LA.