

## Section II: Local Agency Procedure Manual

### II. Local Nutrition Services

#### G. Breastfeeding Peer Counselor Program

**Purpose:**

Provide peer-to-peer breastfeeding counseling to promote and support initiation and duration of breastfeeding among WIC participants.

**Policy:**

The Montana WIC Program will select site(s) for local Breastfeeding Peer Counselor Programs which will receive identified Breastfeeding Peer Counselor funding. Other local WIC programs may fund Breastfeeding Peer Counselor Programs from their regular WIC administrative funds or other grant funds. All local Breastfeeding Peer Counselor Programs, regardless of the funding source, will comply with the Montana Breastfeeding Peer Counselor policies and the Food and Nutrition Services (FNS) model.

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#### 1. Local Breastfeeding Peer Counselor Programs (BPCP)

- Initial applicants for the Breastfeeding Peer Counselor Program will complete an application packet\* found as an attachment in the state plan. The application will address the following:
  - Identify Breastfeeding Peer Counselor Program Supervisor
  - Recruitment and training plan for the Breastfeeding Peer Counselor
  - Method of referral to the Peer Counselor from clinic staff
  - Contact methods
  - Plan for referral to breastfeeding expert when needed, and
  - Plan for outreach with community resources
- \*Programs will submit updates if changes to the proposal are made during the year.
- Will submit the following required reports:
  - Monthly expenditure reports for reimbursement which requires the detailed attachment on BPCP funds
  - Complete the annual report form for the period of May 1 to April 30 (or part of year during initial year) due by May 15<sup>th</sup>
- Will be responsible for recruiting, hiring, and training Breastfeeding Peer Counselors
- Will retain records per contract criteria
- Will have technical assistance provided by the State Breastfeeding Coordinator, and
- Will submit local agency developed policies to the State Breastfeeding Coordinator prior to implementation.

## 2. Breastfeeding Peer Counselor Program Staffing

- State Breastfeeding Coordinator responsibilities:
  - Oversight for the operation of all Breastfeeding Peer Counselor Programs
  - Coordinate state level activities including program selection, contracts, training, funding, monitoring, and evaluation.
- Local Breastfeeding Peer Counseling Supervisors/WIC Designated Breastfeeding Expert (DBE)\*required:
  - May be a WIC staff member, contractor, or other appropriate staff member in the agency
  - Have at least 1 year of experience in counseling women about breastfeeding
  - Preferably holds additional certification in lactation management, such as the IBCLC, CLC, or other certification in lactation management
  - Participate in state-provided training, and
  - Provide training and oversight for local peer counselors and overall local BFPC Program using the WIC Breastfeeding Support model.
- Breastfeeding Peer Counselor will be:
  - Recruited from the target population
  - Available to consult with participants outside clinic hours and outside the clinic environment
  - Has previous breastfeeding experience of at least 6 months
  - Able to meet the following criteria:
    - Enthusiastic for breastfeeding
    - Has effective communication skills
    - Ideally, is a current or previous WIC participant or would have qualified for WIC, and is similar in race or ethnicity, age and language spoken of target population.
  - Is not a CPA, management, or other professional staff in WIC agency.
  - A BPC may not have a health professional credential (RD, RN, LPN, etc.) or IBCLC certification:
    - Those presently holding BPC positions prior to October 1, 2017, are grandfathered in their positions, and are not required to meet these criteria.
    - If a health professional degree or credential, or IBCLC certification is earned during the tenure of the BPC, the BPC must still stay within their scope of practice.
      - ❖ Ideally, staff who advance their education, credentials and skillset would move on to a position where they could utilize them. If this opportunity is available it is encouraged, and the agency can re-hire another staff who meets the above criteria.

- Will have regular and systematic contacts with the Local Breastfeeding Peer Counselor Supervisor to conduct a review of contact logs and activities.
- Will receive referrals from other staff.
- Will make appropriate referrals for issues outside of their scope of practice as defined by the USDA.
- Will sign scope of practice agreement upon hire.
- May make contacts remotely from home and/or the clinic using a secure method.
- May conduct home and hospital visits (will be specified in the job description).
- May conduct breastfeeding classes within their scope of practice.
- Will make the following required contacts:
  - Once per trimester during pregnancy (once certified and referred).
  - Within one week of expected due date.
  - Every 2-3 days in the first critical 7-10 days postpartum; daily if the woman reports problems with breastfeeding.
  - Weekly throughout the rest of the first month of the infant's life; and
  - Monthly after first month of infant's life.
    - ❖ If participant requests a different contact frequency or declines, document this in the participant folder.
- All activities with the participant will be documented in the participant's folder within 5 business days by the Peer Counselor. Documentation will include:
  - Typed managed note under "breastfeeding", and
  - Breastfeeding "contact" in MIS within the mother's chart only,
  - Incomplete contacts will include a brief note of the attempt and a breastfeeding "contact" in SPIRIT with "attempted contact" selected in the discussion topic section.

### **3. Training for Breastfeeding Peer Counselor Program**

- The State Breastfeeding Coordinator will work with the Local Breastfeeding Peer Counselor Supervisor during the initial contract to address training needs and resources.
- Local Breastfeeding Peer Counselor Supervisors will be trained in the WIC Breastfeeding Support training curriculum.
- Local Breastfeeding Peer Counselor Supervisor will train peer counselors utilizing the most up-to-date WIC Breastfeeding Support training.
- Local Breastfeeding Peer Counselor Supervisor and Peer Counselors will be required to maintain continuing education credits according to WIC policy.

### **4. Establishment of Community Partnerships**

Local programs will promote breastfeeding peer counselor services throughout other organizations and communities and create referral networks. These may include

breastfeeding coalitions, local businesses, Community organizations, cooperative extension programs, local lactation consultants/counselors, La Leche League and other local support groups, Home Visiting programs, healthcare providers, and delivery hospitals.