

# **WIC Breastfeeding Peer Counselor Practice Guidelines And Performance Expectations**

**Title: WIC Breastfeeding Peer Counselor**

## **General Description:**

A WIC Breastfeeding Peer Counselor is a paraprofessional support person who gives basic breastfeeding information and encouragement to WIC pregnant and breastfeeding mothers.

## **Qualifications:**

- Has breastfed at least one baby (does not have to be currently breastfeeding).
- Is enthusiastic about breastfeeding, and wants to help other mothers enjoy a positive experience.
- Can work about 10 hours a week.
- Has a telephone, and is willing to make phone calls from home.
- Has reliable transportation.

## **Training**

- Attends a series of breastfeeding classes (nursing babies are welcomed).
- Observes other peer counselors or lactation consultants helping mothers breastfeed.
- Reads assigned books or materials about breastfeeding.

## **Supervision:**

The peer counselor is supervised by the WIC Breastfeeding Peer Counselor Trainer and the WIC Peer Counselor Coordinator/Manager

## **Specific Duties:**

The WIC Peer Counselor:

1. Attends breastfeeding training classes to become a peer counselor.
2. Counsels WIC pregnant and breastfeeding mothers by telephone, home visits, and/or hospital visits at scheduled intervals determined by the local WIC program.
3. May counsel women in the WIC clinic.
4. Receives a caseload of WIC clients and makes routine periodic contacts with all clients assigned.
5. Gives basic breastfeeding information and support to new mothers, including telling them about the benefits of breastfeeding, overcoming common barriers, and getting a good start with breastfeeding. She also helps mothers prevent and handle common breastfeeding concerns.
6. Is available outside usual 8 to 5 working hours to new mothers who are having breastfeeding problems.
7. Respects each client by keeping her information strictly confidential.
8. Keeps accurate records of all contacts made with WIC clients.
9. Refers mothers, according to clinic-established protocols, to the:
  - WIC nutritionist or breastfeeding coordinator.
  - Lactation consultant.
  - The mother's physician or nurse.
  - Public health programs in the community.
  - Social service agencies.
10. Attends and assists with prenatal classes and breastfeeding support groups.
11. Attends monthly staff meetings and breastfeeding conferences/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 peer counseling through special projects and duties as assigned.
14. Follows the job description duties of the hiring agency. For Providence Alaska Medical Center this is Peer Counselor, Breastfeeding (attached).

I understand the above job responsibilities, and agree to perform these duties as assigned.

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WIC Breastfeeding Peer Counselor

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Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
WIC Peer Counselor Trainer

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
WIC Peer Counselor Coordinator/Manager

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Date