

Peer Breastfeeding Support Program Sample Job Descriptions

1/2025

Peer Counselor Coordinator/Supervisor Job Description

General Description

The Local WIC Agency breastfeeding peer counselor coordinator manages the breastfeeding peer counseling program at the local WIC agency level and may provide direct supervision of peer counselors.

Qualifications

- Has experience in program management.
- Has, at minimum, one year of experience in counseling breastfeeding women.
- Has demonstrated expertise in breastfeeding management and promotion.
- Meets the education requirements:
 - Is an International Board-Certified Lactation Consultant (IBCLC), or
 - Professional with a nutrition degree (Master's or Bachelor's degree in Nutritional Sciences, Community Nutrition, Clinical Nutrition, Dietetics, Public Health Nutrition or Home Economics with emphasis in Nutrition), or
 - Licensed or Registered Dietitian, or
 - Registered Nurse, or
 - Physician's Assistant certified by the National Committee on Certification of Physician's Assistants, or
 - Has completed a minimum of 8 college courses from an Accredited Institution in the Health Sciences (suggested coursework includes, but is not limited to the following areas: Human Anatomy, Human Physiology, Biology, Infant Growth and Development, Nutrition, Counseling Skills, Sociology, Introduction to Clinical Research, etc.).

Training

- Receives State-approved training in breastfeeding management.
- Participates in continuing education about breastfeeding annually.

- Receives WIC Breastfeeding Curriculum training (levels 1-4) OR completion of a State-approved competency-based breastfeeding training that is consistent with the FNS Breastfeeding Curriculum levels 1-4.
- Receives training with the WIC Breastfeeding Curriculum: Peer Counselor Management section.

Supervision

The Local WIC Agency Breastfeeding Peer Counselor Coordinator/Supervisor is supervised by the (title of supervisor).

Duties

The Local WIC Agency Breastfeeding Peer Counselor Coordinator/Supervisor manages the WIC peer counseling program at the local WIC agency level, including:

1. Assists in establishing program goals and objectives for the local agency.
2. Identifies gaps in breastfeeding resources and services, both within the WIC local agency and within the community, which can be addressed through the WIC peer counseling program.
3. Assures that the program follows the FNS WIC Breastfeeding Model Components for Peer Counseling.
4. Identifies sites for peer counseling services to be provided.
5. Promotes the peer counseling program with local clinic staff and community organizations and providers.
6. Collaborates with community organizations such as hospitals and private physician clinics to integrate peer counseling services.
7. Determines peer counselor staffing needs.
8. Conducts activities to recruit potential peer counselors.
9. Interviews potential peer counselors in alignment with program policies and standards.
10. Provides, or arranges for, training for new peer counselors.
11. Arranges for continuing education of peer counselors.
12. Mentors new peer counselors during the first six months, providing routine follow-up and guidance in the early days of the job.
13. Arranges for availability of an IBCLC for managing complex breastfeeding problems beyond the scope of the peer counselor.
14. Recruits and arranges for training of peer counselor supervisors.
15. Assures that peer counselors receive ongoing supervision.
16. Conducts spot checks of peer counselor contacts per agency protocols.
17. Holds monthly meetings with peer counselors.

18. Provides or assists in training of local WIC clinic staff.
19. Monitors program budget.
20. Collects documentation records and data as appropriate.
21. Arranges for appropriate evaluation and monitoring of program activities.
22. Works with local agencies to determine program improvements and long-term program needs.
23. Routinely reports on the program to supervisor and/or State Peer Breastfeeding Coordinator.
24. Follows other guidelines established by the State and local agency.

Peer Counselor Job Description

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

- Completes Levels 1 and 2 of the FNS WIC Breastfeeding Curriculum.
- Observes other peer counselors and breastfeeding experts helping mothers breastfeed.
- Reads assigned books or materials about breastfeeding.

Supervision

The peer counselor is supervised by the (title of supervisor).

Duties

1. Completes FNS WIC breastfeeding training classes to become a peer counselor.
2. Receives a caseload of WIC mothers and makes routine periodic contacts with all mothers assigned.

3. 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. Helps mothers prevent and handle common breastfeeding concerns.
4. Counsels WIC pregnant and breastfeeding mothers by telephone, home visits, and/or hospital visits at scheduled intervals determined by the local WIC Program.
5. May counsel women in the WIC clinic.
6. Is available outside the WIC clinic and the usual 8 to 5 working schedule to new mothers who are having breastfeeding problems.
7. Respects each mother by keeping her information strictly confidential.
8. Keeps accurate records of all contacts made with WIC mothers.
9. Refers mothers, according to clinic-established protocols, to:
 - WIC CPA
 - Local agency breastfeeding coordinator
 - International Board-Certified Lactation Consultant (IBCLC)
 - WIC Designated Breastfeeding Expert (DBE)
 - Other community resources following agency-approved protocols
10. Attends and assists with prenatal classes and breastfeeding support groups.
11. Attends monthly staff meetings and breastfeeding conferences/workshops as appropriate.
12. Continues education following agency-approved guidelines.
13. Reads assigned books and materials on breastfeeding that are provided by the supervisor.
14. May assist WIC staff in promoting breastfeeding peer counseling through special projects and duties as assigned.

Senior Peer Counselor Job Description

General Description

A WIC Senior Breastfeeding Peer Counselor is a paraprofessional support person who provides basic breastfeeding information and encouragement to WIC pregnant and breastfeeding mothers to support normal breastfeeding. The senior peer counselor provides support in additional settings and situations such as mentoring newly hired peer counselors, assisting with group classes or drop-in centers, or providing assistance to WIC mothers in the hospital or home settings.

Qualifications

- Has breastfed at least one baby (does not have to be currently breastfeeding).
- Current or previous WIC participant.

- Is enthusiastic about breastfeeding and wants to help other mothers enjoy a positive experience.
- Has expertise in breastfeeding counseling and management through previous experience as a breastfeeding peer counselor and through additional lactation training.
- Can work about 10-20 hours a week.
- Has a telephone and is willing to make phone calls from home beyond the WIC clinic hours.
- Has reliable transportation and holds a valid driver's license.
- Has good customer service skills, relating to persons of diverse ethnic and cultural backgrounds, and communicating in a professional, courteous, and tactful manner.
- Able to remain calm and exercise judgment in unusual or stressful situations.
- Optional: bilingual in English and Spanish.

Training

- Participates in all WIC training programs of peer counselors, including formal training sessions with Levels 1 and 2 of the WIC Breastfeeding Curriculum
- Observing other peer counselors or DBE/IBCLC helping mothers
- Attends additional training conferences or workshops on breastfeeding.
- Reads additional books and materials about breastfeeding as appropriate.

Supervision

The senior peer counselor is supervised by the (title of supervisor).

Duties

1. Attends Levels 1 and 2 training of the WIC Breastfeeding Curriculum.
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. Respects each client by keeping her information strictly confidential.
6. Keeps accurate records of all contacts made with WIC clients.
7. Provides information and support for women in managing common maternal and infant breastfeeding problems that may occur.
8. Is available outside usual 8 to 5 working hours to new mothers who are having breastfeeding problems.

EXHIBIT 4-C: PEER BREASTFEEDING SUPPORT PROGRAM SAMPLE JOB DESCRIPTIONS

9. May issues breast pumps following agency protocols for mothers who are separated from their babies.
10. Makes appropriate referrals to the WIC Designated Breastfeeding Expert when more complex breastfeeding problems occur.
11. Refers mothers according to clinic-established protocols to the WIC Designated Breastfeeding Expert, the WIC CPA, and other WIC staff.
12. Assists with breastfeeding classes for pregnant and postpartum mothers, including breastfeeding support groups.
13. May assist in interviewing prospective peer counselors.
14. Mentors new peer counselors through modeling good counseling principles and job skills.
15. Attends monthly staff meetings, WIC clinic staff meetings, and breastfeeding conferences/workshops, as appropriate.
16. Reads assigned books and materials on breastfeeding provided by the supervisor.
17. Collects data required by the State or local agency (including breast pump tracking).
18. May assist WIC staff in promoting breastfeeding peer counseling through special projects and duties as assigned.

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