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## 310.12

### Licensed Dietitian Guidelines

#### Qualifications and Requirements

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**License required** A WIC dietitian must be licensed in the state of Iowa. The individual must be hired as a nutrition educator until they have successfully passed the Commission on Dietetic Registration written examination, received their registration number and received a license to practice dietetics in Iowa.

Reference: IAC 645-80.4

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**Desirable skills** The following skills are desirable:

- Computer skills including word processing and/or data entry;
- Ability to work well with a diverse population of low-income persons with possible language/cultural barriers; and
- Ability to work with community leaders and health professionals.

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**Physical requirements** This position may involve lifting up to 50 pounds.

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**Travel requirements** Travel to outlying clinic sites may be required. Driving responsibilities and transportation scheduling are determined at each agency.

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**Supervision of dietitians** WIC dietitians are responsible to the agency's WIC program coordinator and receive technical assistance from staff of the state WIC office.

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## Responsibilities

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**Introduction** A WIC dietitian may have all or any combination of the responsibilities in the following areas.

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**Clinic** A dietitian's clinic responsibilities may include:

- Functioning as the competent professional authority for determination of program eligibility and certification;
- Assessing individual anthropometric, biochemical and dietary data;
- Certifying or denying participation in the program on the basis of nutritional risk;
- Conducting the following assessments for determining nutritional risk:
  - Completing diet history
  - Measuring length/height and weight
  - Completing health questionnaire
- Tailoring the WIC food package to best meet the participant's dietary needs; and
- Functioning as a member of the agency quality assurance team.

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**Data system** A dietitian's data system responsibilities may include:

- Setting up computers and printers correctly, and preparing for transport;
- Maintaining data system equipment;
- Entering information into the data system;
- Synchronize data with state WIC office; and
- Report data system issues to the WIC HelpDesk

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**Nutrition education** A dietitian's nutrition education responsibilities may include:

- Serving as the staff person qualified to provide program nutrition information to interested professionals, outside agencies, organizations and individuals;
- Coordinating and ensuring nutrition education for all participants, on both an individual and group basis;
- Providing support to breastfeeding women and promoting breastfeeding efforts;
- Supervising other staff providing nutrition education;
- Monitoring all materials used in the education program;
- Ensuring that all WIC participants are offered at least two nutrition education contacts per certification period;
- Documentation of participant nutrition education provided; and
- Providing in-depth individual nutrition counseling and care plans as needed or requested by a participant.

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## Responsibilities, Continued

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**Adjunct to health care**

A dietitian's responsibilities as an adjunct to health care may include:

- Providing nutrition services to the Maternal and Child Health programs as assigned,
  - Assisting in the referral of WIC participants to other sources of health care as needed, and
  - Providing accurate documentation and follow-up of referrals made.
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**Training**

A dietitian's training responsibilities may include:

- Attending meetings and conferences that enhance training and skills, and
  - Providing nutrition education orientation to agency staff as needed.
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**Grant management**

A dietitian's grant management responsibilities may include:

- Assisting the program coordinator in developing needed program and personnel evaluation tools and plans, and
  - Writing at least the nutrition education needs assessment section of the agency's annual grant application.
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**Interaction with various programs**

The dietitian's position may require communication or interaction with:

- Iowa Department of Public Health
  - Department of Human Services
  - Public Health Nursing
  - Area physicians, HMOs and hospital staff
  - Area Education Agency
  - Family Planning agencies
  - Lead Poisoning Prevention programs
  - Child Health Specialty clinics
  - Maternal Health programs
  - Child Health programs
  - Head Start
  - Other community groups,
  - Staff of other WIC contract agencies, and
  - I-Smile
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