
380.75

Hiring Breastfeeding Peer Counselors

Estimating Staffing Needs

Introduction The breastfeeding peer counselor coordinator is responsible for hiring breastfeeding peer counselors.

Determining staffing needs The breastfeeding peer counselor coordinator will determine the peer counselor staffing needs by assessing:

- Number of pregnant and breastfeeding women within that agency,
- Number of clinic sites,
- Caseload at each clinic site,
- Demographics of the area,
- Responsibilities required of the peer counselors, and
- Hours per week each peer counselor can work.

Policy All breastfeeding peer counselors employed by local WIC agencies in Iowa will be paid for their work and reimbursed for work-related expenses including the following:

- Time spent in phone or face-to-face contacts with WIC participants,
- Time spent completing required recordkeeping,
- Regular meetings of the local agency peer counselors with the local WIC agency breastfeeding peer counselor program coordinator,
- Travel time to required meetings,
- Local WIC office staff meetings,
- Mileage reimbursement at current state reimbursement rate,
- Reimbursement for communication costs required for making contacts not already provided by the local agency.

Employment options Several employment options exist which include:

- Local agency employee,
- Contract, and
- Temporary employment agency.

Recruiting Peer Counselors

Strategies

Several recruiting options are available. Potential avenues include:

- Database of WIC breastfeeding mothers,
 - Recommendations from WIC staff,
 - Promotional signs in the WIC clinic and other places frequented by WIC families,
 - Recommendations from physician clinic staff,
 - Recommendations from members of local breastfeeding coalitions,
 - Promotional signs in general community locations (department stores, grocery stores, etc.), and
 - Ads in local newspapers.
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Sample application

See page 4 of this policy for a sample application form.

Sample interview guide

See page 6 of this policy for a sample interview guide.

Hiring Requirements

Confidentiality agreement Confidentiality orientation, including a signed confidentiality statement, will be required before beginning peer counselor duties.

Staff Conflict of Interest Form Breastfeeding Peer Counselors must complete the Staff Conflict of Interest Form (Policy 310.35a) as outlined in Policy 310.35.

Tuberculin Testing Breastfeeding Peer Counselors must have a tuberculin test as outlined in policy 360.60.

Civil Rights Training Breastfeeding Peer Counselors must complete Civil Rights Training as outlined in policies 300.10 and 320.50.

Sample Application

STAFFING AND SUPERVISION 2:

SAMPLE APPLICATION FOR WIC BREASTFEEDING PEER COUNSELOR

Breastfeeding Peer Counselors provide basic information about breastfeeding to WIC mothers during their pregnancy, and after the baby is born. They encourage mothers to breastfeed, and help mothers find help if problems occur.

Qualifications:

- Have breastfed at least one baby (do not have to be currently breastfeeding).
- Are enthusiastic about breastfeeding and want to help other mothers enjoy a positive experience.
- Can work about 10 hours a week.
- Have a telephone, and are willing to make phone calls from home.
- Have reliable transportation.
- Past or current WIC participant.

Please provide the following information:

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Home Phone: _____ Cell Phone: _____

E-mail address (if applicable): _____

What languages do you speak? _____

Have you, or are you currently receiving WIC services? Yes No

If yes, where did you receive services? _____

Circle the highest grade you have completed:

Grade School: 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8

High School: 9 10 11 12
 College: 1 2 3 4 Other

Ages of your children	How long you breastfed this child

Why do you want to be a Peer Counselor for the WIC Program?

Tell why you think you will be a good peer counselor. Include any job experience or volunteer work you have done that will help you as a peer counselor.

Check off all of the following that you are able to do:

- Attend the training program (total of 18-20 hours; you may bring your nursing baby)
- Talk to, e-mail, or text pregnant and breastfeeding moms from your telephone or computer at home
- Talk to WIC mothers in the clinic
- Visit new mothers in the hospital
- Help with a breastfeeding class or a support group

Do you have reliable transportation? Yes No

What computer experience do you have?

Reference: Include the name of a healthcare provider such as a WIC nutritionist, nurse, physician, or breastfeeding counselor who knows about your breastfeeding experience.

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone Number: _____

E-mail address: _____

Sample Interview Guide

STAFFING AND SUPERVISION 4: SAMPLE INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR WIC BREASTFEEDING PEER COUNSELOR

Allow applicants a few minutes to read over the WIC Breastfeeding Peer Counselor Job Description, and give a brief overview of the job responsibilities she can expect.

1. Tell me more about your comments on your application regarding (*refer to application comments you want to know more about.*)
2. Describe any experiences you have had talking to other mothers about breastfeeding.
3. What would you say to a pregnant woman who was undecided about whether she wants to breastfeed?

Personal Breastfeeding Experience(s)

4. Tell me about your own breastfeeding experience(s).
Probe: What did you enjoy most?
5. What part of breastfeeding was most challenging for you?
Probe: How did you deal with those challenges?

Employment as a Peer Counselor

6. What are you looking forward to most about being a peer counselor?
7. As a breastfeeding peer counselor, you will be talking with WIC mothers about breastfeeding. How will you feel about...
Probe: Talking with someone you do not know?
Probe: Talking with women who might have different cultural, ethnic or educational backgrounds from yours?
Probe: Keeping information confidential?
8. How does/did your family feel about your breastfeeding?
Probe: What things did your partner say about it?
Probe: What did other family members say?
9. What days/times can you come to classes to learn how to be a peer counselor?
10. Please clarify any challenges reported on your application that might make it hard for you to attend training classes or do the job.
11. Are there other challenges that might make it difficult for you to be a peer counselor?
Probe: Have you thought about how you might be able to work at home?
12. What questions do you have about the job?