

Building a Supportive Structure for Breastfeeding – Agency Checklist

(To assess strengths and where additional efforts are recommended)

P=policy BP=best practice	LOCAL BREASTFEEDING POLICY	Yes	No	Comments
BP	<p>The WIC agency has a written policy promoting breastfeeding that influences all aspects of clinic operations, including hiring, training, clinic environment, and community relations. The agency communicates the policy with new staff and annually with all staff. The director refers to this policy when evaluating clinic procedures. A comprehensive, clear and realizable breastfeeding policy involves staff in its development.</p> <p>A breastfeeding policy at a minimum:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Acknowledges breastfeeding as the norm and preferred method of infant feeding. • Defines staffs’ roles in breastfeeding promotion, education, support, and protection. • Promotes exclusive breastfeeding as the preferred nutrition for infants to achieve optimal growth and development, unless medically contraindicated. • Recommends breastfeeding continue for at least the first year of life, and thereafter, for as long as mutually desired. • Requires staff use participant-centered breastfeeding education to ensure participants make an informed infant feeding choice. • Requires staff provide referrals to mothers needing support beyond WIC program services. • Describes accommodation for nursing mothers in the clinic, including employees. This should include policy describing providing private space (other than a toilet stall) and break time (paid or unpaid) for employees to express breast milk or nurse during the work day. 			
	STAFF ROLES AND COMPETENCIES	Yes	No	Comments
P	<p>All staff members, regardless of level of breastfeeding knowledge or experience, exhibit a positive attitude toward breastfeeding and long term exclusive breastfeeding.</p> <p>Qualities of a positive attitude toward breastfeeding in practice:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promoting breastfeeding as preferred, normal nutrition • Discussing each mother’s anticipated barriers to breastfeeding • Praising mother’s efforts with breastfeeding • Inviting mothers to feed babies in their office space • Encouraging development of good milk supply by offering breastfeeding support and not formula • Providing a referral to community resources for breastfeeding expertise if out of scope for WIC program services 			
P	<p>All staff members are competent to discuss basic breastfeeding information covered in the Level II Breastfeeding Module and Resource Manual.</p> <p>Competent staff are able to address the following basic breastfeeding information:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Routine breastfeeding questions and problems (e.g., myths, barriers and common problems) • What to expect in the hospital • The health benefits of exclusive breastfeeding – both to mom and baby • WIC services available to breastfeeding mothers and babies (levels of food packages, breastfeeding support, equipment, peer counselor program) 			

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preparing for breastfeeding in the first two weeks after delivery • Responding appropriately to a mother’s requests for formula • Signs that breastfeeding is going well • How to communicate with an employer (support working mothers) • Referrals for breastfeeding problems out of scope of practice 			
BP	All WIC professional staff (high risk counselors) successfully complete the Colorado WIC Lactation Management Specialist (LMS) training and are competent to assess position and latch, respond to high risk and other breastfeeding problems, provide follow up to and/or referral for problems, and determine situations to provide a pump and select appropriate pump type. Professional staff members attend at least one form of basic lactation management seminars/training annually (e.g., participate in Lactation Journal Club webcasts or in person, ILCA webinars, WIC biennial state meeting breastfeeding sessions).			
P	<p>Breastfeeding Coordinator(s): Each WIC agency has at least one Breastfeeding Coordinator whose responsibility is to oversee breastfeeding activities, be a subject matter expert and resource for all staff, and ensure that breastfeeding guidelines are met.</p> <p>A fully competent Breastfeeding Coordinator works with clinic staff to perform the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensures a breastfeeding-supportive clinic environment (both for participants and staff) • Ensures breastfeeding mothers and infants receive a food package that both supports breastfeeding and is consistent with their nutritional needs • Ensures breastfeeding education and support are available throughout the breastfeeding period, especially during those critical times when mother is most likely to need assistance (prenatally, just after birth, first two weeks, etc.) • Participates on conference calls with the Colorado WIC State Breastfeeding Coordinator and other local agency Breastfeeding Coordinators • Ensures breast pumps are issued according to WIC Program policies, returned and maintained • Facilitates staff members’ ongoing lactation education • Collaborates with community health care providers and hospitals to develop and maintain a lactation supportive community 			
P	All staff trained in lactation management who provide breast pumps and aids to participants follow WIC Program pump issuance policies.			
P	Peer counselors, when available, offer breastfeeding support (providing encouragement, basic education) through phone calls, support groups, and clinic and hospital visits.			
	CLINIC ENVIRONMENT	Yes	No	Comments
P	<p>The clinic environment promotes breastfeeding as the normal and preferred method of infant feeding.</p> <p>Examples of ways to accomplish this are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Posting signs that announce “Breastfeeding Welcome Here” • Encouraging women to breastfeed in any waiting rooms • Providing private locations for women (including staff) who need to express milk or would like to nurse in privacy • Displaying photos and first names of breastfeeding peer counselors and /or staff trained as lactation management specialists • Posting in staff work spaces and waiting room culturally appropriate education and promotional materials that portray breastfeeding as the preferred infant feeding method • Ensuring printed (pamphlets, posters) and audiovisual materials and office supplies (e.g., calendars, pens, and note pads) are free of formula product names 			

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Formula, if in clinic, is stored out of participants' views 			
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PRENATAL BREASTFEEDING EDUCATION		Yes	No	Comments
P	Breastfeeding education is offered to <u>all pregnant</u> WIC participants and their family/friends as outlined in the document: Colorado WIC Program Manual, Section IX: Breastfeeding Promotion, Education and Support.			
P	Incorporate positive peer influences into the prenatal period. Examples include: a bulletin board showing pictures of breastfeeding mothers and babies, or support groups in which breastfeeding women and/or peer counselors (or WIC staff who may serve as peers) talk to pregnant women.			
P	Prepare mothers to communicate effectively with hospital staff regarding the decision to breastfeed and educate on what to request, including the <i>Colorado Can Do5!</i> and Baby-Friendly Hospital Initiative practices (10 Steps to Successful Breastfeeding).			
P	Prepare mothers to communicate effectively with employers about maternity leave and provide supportive documents as needed.			
POSTPARTUM EDUCATION AND SUPPORT		Yes	No	Comments
P	Breastfeeding education and support are provided throughout the postpartum period.			
BP	Implement strategies to contact mothers within 1 – 2 weeks after delivery to provide support, and to assess any concerns or problems. Methods might include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Call new breastfeeding mothers to provide support and encourage follow up with health care provider 2-4 days post discharge. • Schedule appointments soon after expected delivery date (leave some open slots available to add new babies and to re-certify mothers). • Provide a phone number for mothers to call for questions and/or community breastfeeding resources. • Offer “open” clinic use of a scale to allow mothers to weigh their babies. 			
BP	Educate for special situations. Identify and provide education and support services for breastfeeding women in special situations, such as working mothers or those returning to school. This can be inside or outside of the agency, and might include providing mothers with phone numbers for La Leche League or other support services (offer a resource list). <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discuss availability of breast pumps when/if appropriate. 			
BREASTFEEDING INFANT FOOD PACKAGES		Yes	No	Comments
P	All exclusively breastfed infants are enrolled on the WIC program. All mothers of exclusively breastfed infants receive the food package for exclusively breastfeeding women.			
P	Supplemental formula is provided after the first month of an infant's life only IF: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • requested by the mother, and • the infant has received formula from another source, and • a dialogue on the mother's plan/goal for breastfeeding occurred, and • breastfeeding counseling, problem solving, referral has occurred, and • a discussion of why the mother is requesting formula has occurred, and • information on the impact formula has on lactation has been provided. 			
P	The amount of supplemental powdered formula issued to the breastfeeding infant over 1 month of age is based on the mother's plan for breastfeeding and the amount of formula the infant is consuming at the time of check issuance.			

	NETWORKING WITH COMMUNITY PARTNERS	Yes	No	Comments
BP	<p>Agency participates in a local breastfeeding coalition or task force, and/or collaborates with other programs/groups that provide breastfeeding education and support in its community.</p> <p>Good resources for coalition building are:</p> <p>Prevention Institute: Developing Effective Coalitions: An 8-Step Guide http://www.preventioninstitute.org/eightstep.html</p> <p>The Community Tool Box from the University of Kansas http://ctb.ku.edu/tools//sub_section_main_1057.htm</p>			
BP	<p>Local agency staff members introduce themselves, and meet in person or by phone with the nurse manager at the local hospital(s) mom/baby units. Staff members discuss with them the new food packages, and how WIC promotes, protects, and supports breastfeeding.</p>			
BP	<p>Local agency WIC staff members introduce themselves, and meet in person or by phone with local pediatricians and other health professionals in local health clinics. WIC staff members describe the WIC food packages, and ways WIC promotes, protects, and supports breastfeeding.</p>			