

MI-WIC POLICY

Breastfeeding Peer Counseling

12.0 Breastfeeding Peer Counseling
12.02 After-Hours Availability

Effective Date: 07/22/2019
Implementation Date: 10/01/2019

PURPOSE: To comply with the USDA Loving Support[®] Breastfeeding Peer Counseling Program requirement to have breastfeeding peer counseling services available to WIC mothers outside of normal clinic hours.

A. POLICY

1. Local agencies shall provide breastfeeding peer counseling services outside of normal business hours. Time frames for availability shall be determined by the local agency, publicly posted, and shared with clients. This requirement is not for 24-hour coverage, but rather for providing a routine schedule of after-hours BFPC service provision.
2. Breastfeeding Peer Counselors (BFPC) shall be allowed to work flexible hours, including from home during non-clinic hours. BFPC must be compensated for actual time spent providing after-hours services to clients. Hours may be flexed during the work week to accommodate time spent on after-hours calls.
3. Local agencies shall provide a local agency cell phone to BFPC as a confidential method for contacting clients.
 - a. Service contracts for cell phones shall be held by the local agency.
 - b. Cell phone usage shall be monitored to ensure phones are being used for work purposes only.
4. To ensure safety and client confidentiality, peer counselors shall not use their personal cell phones to provide services to WIC clients. All personal cell phones used for WIC business may be subject to state or federal public disclosure laws, which means that they may be seized, and any information contained on that phone made public.
5. Methods for providing after-hours services other than a cell phone must be submitted in writing and approved by the State Breastfeeding Peer Counselor Coordinator.
6. The Local Agency must develop an after-hours phone protocol and train peer counselors on the protocol.

The protocol must include guidance on:

 - a. Voicemail greeting and content.
 - b. Expectations on time frame to answer calls, including returning calls or text messages.
 - c. Following state laws regarding the use of cell phones in cars.
 - d. Appropriate use of text messages for communication.
 - e. Conducting cell phone conversations in a location that allows confidentiality and respect for client information.
 - f. How and where to document phone contacts with clients.

MI-WIC POLICY

Breastfeeding Peer Counseling

- g. How and where to refer clients after-hours for breastfeeding issues that are out of BFPC scope of practice.
- h. Keeping cell phones secure.
- i. Immediately reporting a lost or stolen cell phone to the peer counselor lead or manager.
- j. How after-hours availability will be covered when the peer counselor is not available for an extended time.
- k. How to return the cell phone during staff leaves (either temporary or permanent).

Reference:

USDA Loving Support® Breastfeeding Peer Counseling Program Model
Nutrition Services Standards: Standard 9C Breastfeeding Peer Counseling