

Job Description 3: WIC Breastfeeding Peer Counselor

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:

- Attends a series of breastfeeding classes. Nursing babies are welcomed.
- Observes other peer counselors or breastfeeding experts helping mothers breastfeed.
- Reads assigned books or materials about breastfeeding.

Supervision: The peer counselor is supervised by the

Specific Duties of the WIC Peer Counselor:

- Attends breastfeeding training classes to become a peer counselor.
- Receives a caseload of WIC mothers and makes routine periodic contacts with all mothers assigned.
- 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. She also helps mothers prevent and handle common breastfeeding concerns.
- Counsels WIC pregnant and breastfeeding mothers by telephone, home visits, and/or hospital visits at scheduled intervals determined by the local WIC Program.
- May counsel women in the WIC clinic.
- Is available outside the WIC clinic and the usual 8 to 5 working schedule to new mothers who are having breastfeeding problems.
- Respects each mother by keeping her information strictly confidential.
- Keeps accurate records of all contacts made with WIC mothers.
- Refers mothers, according to clinic-established protocols, to:
 - WIC nutritionist or breastfeeding coordinator.
 - Lactation consultant.
 - Mother's physician or nurse.
 - Public health programs in the community.
 - Social service agencies.
- Attends and assists with prenatal classes and breastfeeding support groups.
- Attends monthly staff meetings and breastfeeding conferences/workshops as appropriate.
- Reads assigned books and materials on breastfeeding that are provided by the supervisor.
- May assist WIC staff in promoting breastfeeding peer counseling through special projects and duties as assigned.