

## Local Agency Personnel Training

### Policy

**USDA Federal Regulations:** 246.11(c) State agency responsibilities. The State agency shall perform the following activities in carrying out nutrition education responsibilities, including breastfeeding promotion and support:

(2) Provide in-service training and technical assistance for professional and para-professional personnel involved in providing nutrition education to participants at local agencies. The State agency shall also provide training on the promotion and management of breastfeeding to staff at local agencies who will provide information and assistance on this subject to participants.

246.11(c)(7) Establish standards for breastfeeding promotion and support which include, at a minimum, the following:

(iii) A requirement that each local agency incorporate task-appropriate breastfeeding promotion and support training into orientation programs for new staff involved in direct contact with WIC clients.

### Authority

7CFR Part 246.11(c)(2)

7 CFR Part 246.11(c)(7)(iii)

### Procedures

WIC agencies must have a written Local Agency Orientation policy describing their own orientation program for new employees. At a minimum, **local agency orientation** must include:

- An explanation of the objectives of WIC and its successes in improving the health and nutritional status of participants, including the employee's role in breastfeeding promotion and support.
- Introductions to key administrators, program directors, and co-workers.
- Discussion of job responsibilities listed in the employee's job description.
- An explanation of the agency's mission and organization.
- Agency policies, including work hours, benefits, holidays, sick leave, vacation leave, smoking policies, confidentiality, expense reimbursement policies, and office supplies.
- Civil rights training.
- ADA training within the first month of hire for the Section 504/Americans with Disabilities Coordinator as well as all staff **involved with** hiring (e.g. WIC Coordinators, Human Resource personnel, lead staff).
- Orientation to child and dependent adult abuse laws **for staff who are required to take mandatory reporter training**.
- An introduction to the WIC data system and equipment used on the job.
- A **WIC specific** training plan **that** includes the New Employee Training (NET) modules,

- on-the-job training, all other required trainings, and continuing education opportunities.
- WIC New Employee Training Checklist.
- See policy regarding Hepatitis B vaccination and Tuberculin testing requirements.
- See policy for requirements regarding the Staff Conflict of Interest Form and Signed Statement of Confidentiality.

Every agency WIC employee is expected to be familiar with the applicable provisions of the Iowa WIC Program Policy and Procedure Manuals.

Local WIC agencies are responsible for:

- Local agency orientation to the WIC data system,
- On-the-job training with someone of equal security rights,
- Job shadowing of all WIC staff roles,
- Role playing opportunities that can help build new employee confidence prior to working with participants,
- Time for new staff to complete training requirements,
- Documenting completion of trainings within the staff training record in the data system and
- Ability for WIC leadership to attend New Coordinator Training.

The State WIC Office is responsible for:

- Providing data system training,
- Sending state sponsored security awareness training
- Maintaining new employee training materials, and
- Monitoring compliance of agencies regarding staff training requirements.

Local WIC agencies must maintain individual training and education records for each employee in the “Staff Training” panel in the data system. The State WIC agency will monitor compliance by reviewing:

- Documentation of completed data system training during WIC office visits.
- Documentation of completed orientation programs and ongoing training during WIC office visits.
- Application of training information during WIC clinic visits.
- Local WIC agency policies during on-site administrative reviews.

The following steps must be completed upon hiring new WIC staff:

- Print the New Employee Training Checklist for each new employee according to staff position. (Found under Nutrition Services Forms on the Iowa WIC Web portal.)
- Assign experienced personnel to provide on-the-job training and support to new employees, beginning the first day of employment and continuing until the new employee is comfortable and relatively independent with job tasks.
- Complete the local agency orientation.
- Submit paperwork for access to the data system.
- Complete the data system training.
- Complete the New Employee Training (NET) (Level 1, 2, 3) for applicable staff. The

training and education record (found under Nutrition Services Forms on the Iowa WIC Web portal) shall be used as a guide for who must complete which training.

- Complete additional required training as applicable.
- Record training and continuing education on the “Staff Training” panel in the data system.

Local agency staff must be provided complete training in the data system before they are granted security rights to the system. Only WIC personnel (as funded by WIC grant funds) are allowed access to the electronic WIC data system, including the rights to “read” and “edit” records.

- Contact the WIC Help Desk about data system training.
- Data system administration training for coordinators will be included in the New Coordinator Training. An overview of the data system, how to monitor staff utilizing the data system, and data system reports are covered.

All staff using the WIC data system shall complete the state sponsored security awareness training when assigned.

The New Employee Training (NET) consists of different levels (Levels 1, 2, and 3) of self-paced modules and lessons that are required for different staff members. In the table below you will find which NET modules need to be completed by who based on job type.

Contact the State WIC Office for questions regarding the completion of NET by staff who have been previous WIC employees or if you have concerns about a new staff person completing NET within the required timeframes due to extenuating circumstances. WIC Breastfeeding Peer Counselors are not required to complete any of the NET modules.

Before completing the Level 1 modules, each employee must:

- Complete the agency’s orientation program.
- Accompany and observe at least one family unit during an entire WIC certification appointment, including all encounters with clinic staff.
- Observe and work alongside a co-worker with the same or similar job responsibilities for at least one clinic day.
- There are additional trainings that are required along with completing specific NET Modules and for local agency WIC Coordinators. Please see the Training and Education Record found in Nutrition Services Forms on the Iowa WIC web portal for more information on these trainings.

Level 1 NETC - will help build a common knowledge base about program operations while emphasizing a team approach.

Course	Staff Required to Complete	Timeframe for Completion
Level 1 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Orientation Module</li> <li>• Screening Module</li> <li>• Nutrition Risk Module</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CPAs</li> <li>• WIC Coordinators</li> </ul>	Within 1 month of hire

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Food Package Module</li> </ul> Note: Please complete in the order listed above.		
Level 1 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Orientation Module</li> <li>Food Package Module</li> </ul>	Support Staff	Within 1 month of hire
Level 1 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Orientation Module</li> </ul>	Scheduler Only	Within 1 month of hire

Level 2 NETC - These modules address nutrition topics, discuss the normal nutrition needs for participants, and identify resources for use in providing nutrition services.

Course	Staff Required to Complete	Timeframe for Completion
Level 2 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Nutrition Risks Training</li> <li>Basic Nutrition Module</li> <li>Infant Nutrition Module</li> <li>Preschool Module</li> <li>Prenatal and Postpartum Module</li> </ul> Note: These modules can be completed in any order.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>CPAs</li> <li>WIC Coordinators</li> </ul>	Within 6 months of hire

Level 3 NETC - This level provides information on communicating nutrition needs to participants.

Course	Staff Required to Complete	Timeframe for Completion
VENA Guidance Communication and Rapport	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>CPAs</li> <li>WIC Coordinators</li> </ul>	Within 9 months of hire

USDA WIC Breastfeeding Curriculum – This training developed by USDA is required for all WIC staff to enhance breastfeeding promotion and support in the WIC Program.

Course	Staff Required to Complete	Timeframe for Completion
Level 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All staff</li> </ul>	Within 1 month of hire
Level 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Peer Counselors</li> <li>CPAs</li> </ul>	Within 6 months of hire

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• WIC Coordinators</li> <li>• Breastfeeding Coordinators</li> <li>• Breastfeeding Peer Counseling Coordinators</li> <li>• Designated Breastfeeding Experts</li> </ul>	
Level 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CPAs</li> <li>• WIC Coordinators</li> <li>• Breastfeeding Coordinators</li> <li>• Breastfeeding Peer Counseling Coordinators</li> <li>• Designated Breastfeeding Experts</li> </ul>	Within 6 months of hire
Level 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Breastfeeding Coordinators</li> <li>• Breastfeeding Peer Counseling Coordinators</li> <li>• Designated Breastfeeding Experts</li> </ul>	Within 6 months of hire

Federal regulations or state law require some training topics. The table below lists the required training topics, who needs to receive training, and when the training should be provided. The state auditors define annually as once a fiscal year, i.e. once in FFY25, once in FFY26, etc.

Topic	Who	When	Notes
Bloodborne pathogens	All employees the local agency determines to be at risk of occupational exposure to bloodborne pathogens	Within the first month of employment, and annually thereafter	
Child abuse and dependent adult abuse trainings	Mandatory child and dependent adult abuse reporters including social workers, RNs, LPNs, dietitians, and all WIC CPA staff.	Complete both the core child and dependent adult mandatory reporter trainings within 6 months of employment and every 3 years thereafter.	The Mandatory Child Abuse and Mandatory Dependent Adult Abuse Trainings and more information about mandatory reporters can be found on the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) website <a href="https://hhs.iowa.gov/r">https://hhs.iowa.gov/r</a>

			<a href="#">Report-abuse-fraud/mandatory-reporters</a>
Civil Rights	All employees that are involved with the administration of the WIC Program or who interact with WIC participants in administering the program	Within the first month of employment (before talking with participants), and annually thereafter	See the Civil Rights Training policy for more information
Americans with Disability Act (ADA)	All staff in charge of hiring (e.g., WIC Coordinators and Human Resource personnel) and the Section 504 Americans with Disabilities Coordinator	Within the first month of employment	See the Civil Rights Training policy for more information

Below is information on additional training requirements and will need to be recorded on the employee's Training and Education Record and in the Staff Training panel in the WIC data system.

Topic	Who	When	Notes
Extended Breastfeeding Training	<p>Required of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Breastfeeding Coordinator</li> <li>Breastfeeding Peer Counseling Coordinator</li> </ul> <p>Designated Breastfeeding Expert (Designated Breastfeeding Experts must have extended training prior to being named)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Must be completed within the first year of hire for Breastfeeding Coordinators and Breastfeeding Peer Counseling Coordinators</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A minimum of a 45-hour course in lactation management and care (IBCLC, CLC, CLS, CBS etc.).</li> </ul>

	to this role.) <b>Strongly encouraged</b> for <b>all</b> CPAs		
Wichealth.org Academy Online Training	Required of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CPAs</li> <li>• WIC Coordinators</li> <li>• Support Staff</li> </ul>	Within 3 months of hire	<p>WIC staff will complete the appropriate wichealth.org Academy Online Training lessons according to the instructions on the document titled “<b>WICHealth Academy – Iowa Requirements</b>” found on the WIC Web Portal under the “Training-Personnel” section.</p> <p>Staff supervisors must verify that staff have completed the training by signing the document titled “Wichealth.org Academy Online Training”.</p> <p>In addition, one wichealth.org lesson shall be completed on an annual basis thereafter.</p>

**Additional guidance**

## Educational Buys:

- New WIC staff must complete an educational buy to experience the WIC shopping experience. See the Vendor Monitoring policy for more information on completing educational buys.

## Continuing Education:

It is the individual licensed health professional's responsibility to maintain professional licensure status by meeting minimum continuing education requirements however,

- WIC Coordinators should plan for each CPA to attend at least 9 hours of nutrition and health related continuing education events per fiscal year.

The local WIC agency must be represented at the biannual WIC conference by at least one WIC staff person. Agencies are strongly encouraged to register as many employees as their budget and clinic schedule allow for any WIC-specific training or conferences.

## New WIC Coordinators:

- An orientation at the State WIC Office to meet key state staff and additional training should be scheduled by the agency's nutrition consultant and the new coordinator within three months of the WIC Coordinator's employment.

Orientation topics and key staff who should provide them are listed below.

Topic	Suggested Staff
General orientation and current issues	State WIC Director
Budget/Caseload/Contract/ IowaGrants.gov	Program Planner
Data system reports/Referral organizations	Nutrition Consultants
WIC Help Desk functions	Application Support Specialist
WIC Clinic Services	WIC Clinic Services Team Lead
Nutrition services	Nutrition Services Coordinator
Breastfeeding promotion and support	Breastfeeding Coordinator
Breastfeeding Peer Counseling Program	Breastfeeding Peer Counselor Coordinator
Policy and Procedure Manuals/WIC Web Portal	Nutrition Consultants
Significant dates in the grant and funding cycle	Nutrition Consultants/Program Planner
Agency monitoring process	Nutrition Consultants/Program Planner
Vendor Management/EBT*	Vendor Coordinator
Fraud and integrity process	Integrity Coordinator



\*All new WIC coordinators should accompany Iowa WIC staff in an on-site vendor monitoring visit within six months of employment.

### Best Practices

The length of time needed for on-the-job training will depend on the experience and education of the employee and the requirements of the position. An inexperienced employee may need several weeks of in-depth training and support. This will help the new employee develop confidence and skill under the guidance of a capable co-worker or supervisor. Although some job tasks will be learned and discussed during the NET, personnel need more practice to become comfortable and competent with job tasks. They need feedback from their co-workers and supervisor about their performance.

The four-step approach to on-the-job training is recommended. This approach facilitates learning through repetition and guided practice. The four steps are listed below:

- Tell the employee how to do the task.
- Show the employee how to do the task.
- Have the employee do the task.
- Review.

A tiered approach to data system training will provide a comprehensive experience for all WIC personnel. The purpose of completing data system training is to provide all WIC staff an opportunity to develop their familiarity and confidence prior to working in the data system independently. This will help avoid unreliable or lost data in the data system and disruptions to the system for other users.

Guidance, resources and suggested activities for training new WIC Coordinators should be based on background and experience. The extent of local agency orientation needed will depend on whether the coordinator has been employed by the agency in another position prior to becoming WIC Coordinator. Assure the following trainings described in the procedures section above have been completed and reviewed as needed:

- Local agency orientation
- Supervisory training including ADA/EEO policies
- Civil Rights Training
- Data system training
- all three levels of NET
- all other trainings

The table below lists information about optional events.

Event	Notes
Annual Iowa Breastfeeding Conference co-sponsored with UnityPoint and Iowa Breastfeeding Coalition	Agencies are strongly encouraged to send at least one staff member

Midwest Region Operation Adjustment Grant Breastfeeding Trainings	Agencies are strongly encouraged to allow each staff member to attend the number of breastfeeding trainings suggested by the state office each year
Other in-state events  Examples: Iowa Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics Annual Conference, Current Issues in Nutrition, Iowa Public Health Association (IPHA) Conference, District Dietetic Association events, breastfeeding events, etc.	<p>A variety of events are available across the state. Optimally, staff will attend one event per year sponsored by an organization other than the Iowa WIC Program.</p> <p>Agencies are also encouraged to register support staff and nurses for meetings and seminars pertinent to their job scope and responsibilities.</p>
Out-of-state events  Examples: American Public Health Association Conference, National WIC Association Conferences, Intensive Course in Maternal Nutrition, Intensive Course in Child and Adolescent Nutrition, Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics Food and Nutrition Conference and Expo, Society for Nutrition Education Conference, La Leche League Conference, etc.	<p>Out-of-state conferences are an allowable training expense. However, the agency must first budget for the required in-state training events.</p> <p>Since out-of-state conferences are typically several days to a week-long, it is advisable to limit the number of registrants from a given agency in order to maintain the clinic schedule.</p>