

## Staff Referrals to Peer Counseling

### Policy

#### USDA Breastfeeding Policy and Guidance: Breastfeeding Peer Counseling in the WIC Program

##### 4.7 Referral Protocols:

Referral protocols and systems, both within the WIC clinic setting and those in the community, are necessary for successful BFPC programs. Peer Counselors depend on referrals from local clinic staff to provide timely and appropriate breastfeeding contacts.

**WIC Nutrition Services Standards:** Standard 9. C. - The State agency establishes and the local agency implements standardized breastfeeding peer counseling program policies and procedures. These policies and procedures ensure that the local agency:

5. Has a systematic procedure in place for referring participants to peer counselors as a part of the certification, assessment and nutrition education process.

### Authority

#### USDA Breastfeeding Policy and Guidance: Chapter 4. Breastfeeding Peer Counseling in the WIC Program, *excerpt*

WIC Nutrition and Services Standards: Standard 9. Breastfeeding Peer Counseling, *excerpt*

### Procedures

All local WIC agency staff will inform pregnant and breastfeeding women of the Peer Counseling services available and encourage them to participate. Interested participants will be referred to the program using the WIC electronic data system. Competent Professional Authorities (CPAs) should refer to program in the Nutrition Interview by marking “Yes” to “Interest in BF PC”. Referrals to the program should be documented in the Referrals panel in the WIC electronic data system.

### Best Practices

Clients should be asked for their preferred method of contact (call, text, email, etc.) and WIC staff should communicate the preference to Peer Counseling staff.

Local WIC agencies that prefer to use a hardcopy referral form or another electronic referral system may do so in addition to the referral in the WIC electronic data system.