

WIC-Designated Breastfeeding Expert (DBE)

Policy

USDA Breastfeeding Policy and Guidance:

H. An individual who is an expert with special experience or training in helping breastfeeding mothers and who provides breastfeeding expertise and care for more complex breastfeeding problems when WIC staff face situations outside their scope of practice. Individuals with this designation can be WIC staff including Breastfeeding Coordinators, Peer Counselor Coordinators, International Board Certified Lactation Consultants (IBCLCs), Certified Lactation Counselors or Certified Lactation Educators, nutritionists, and nurses or community health care providers such as physicians or nurses. The IBCLC is the preferred WIC DBE (2013 WIC NSS).

Authority

Breastfeeding Policy and Guidance (July 2016), Appendix A (Definitions), H

Procedures

Qualifications

- An individual who is an expert with special experience or training in helping breastfeeding mothers and who provides breastfeeding expertise and care for more complex breastfeeding problems when WIC staff face situations outside of their scope of practice. Individuals with this designation can be WIC staff including Breastfeeding Coordinators, Breastfeeding Peer Counseling Coordinators, International Board Certified Lactation Consultants (IBCLCs), Certified Lactation Counselors (CLCs), Certified Lactation Specialists (CLCs), or Certified Lactation Educators (CLEs), nutritionists, and nurses or community health care providers such as physicians or nurse.
- Meets the qualifications for a Competent Professional Authority (CPA)
- Has a minimum of 1-year experience in counseling breastfeeding people
- Successfully completed specialized training in lactation management and care (IBCLC, CLC, CLS, etc.)

Responsibilities

A Designated Breastfeeding Expert's responsibilities include, but is not limited to the following:

- Provides follow-up breastfeeding support to participants.
- Acts on referrals from other WIC staff regarding complex breastfeeding situations beyond their scope of practice.
- Assess and counsel mothers and infants with complex breastfeeding situations.

Best Practices

Per the Nutrition Services Standards (NSS), the IBCLC is the preferred DBE.

The following skills are desirable for a DBE:

- Being able to communicate and work well with others
- Having program development skills
- Having community linkage experience
- Having participant advocacy experience
- Having professional work experience or volunteer experience with breastfeeding promotion and support activities, including mother-to-mother support programs