

New Hampshire WIC Policy & Procedure Manual

Chapter 4. ORGANIZATION AND MANAGEMENT

Local Agency Staffing Requirements

- Purpose** To provide standards for statewide local agency staffing in order to provide quality nutrition services.
- Policy** Local agencies shall have an adequate number of qualified staff in order to meet the federal processing standards, to serve their assigned caseload, and provide quality nutrition services in a timely manner.
- Authority** **Federal Regulation 246.4(a)(4)**
- Procedure** This policy addresses staffing requirements for Nutrition Coordinator, Breastfeeding Coordinator, Competent Professional Authorities (CPA), Paraprofessionals and Program Assistants, Breastfeeding Peer Counselors, and WIC Program Directors. Refer to attached sample job descriptions for additional qualifications and job responsibilities.

The State WIC Director or Nutrition Services Manager shall individually approve exceptions to these policies. Resumes of key staff (Breastfeeding Coordinators, Nutrition Coordinators, CPAs, and Program Directors) shall be provided to the State Agency before an individual is authorized to function in the specific capacity.

New Hampshire has established minimum education and experience qualifications for key local agency positions. Staff employed prior to these standards are exempt.

Nutrition Coordinators

Local agency WIC Nutrition Coordinators shall have a minimum of a Bachelor's Degree in nutrition from an accredited college or university, OR credentials of a registered dietitian or eligibility with the American Dietetic Association, OR Master's Degree in nutrition from an accredited college or university. Additionally, the coordinator shall have a minimum of 2 years experience in community nutrition programs.

Breastfeeding Coordinators

The Local Agency WIC Breastfeeding Coordinator is responsible for leading all WIC staff in breastfeeding promotion activities, ensuring the local agency is following the NH Breastfeeding Peer Counseling Program policy, and providing supervision and mentoring to the local agency nutritionists and breastfeeding peer counselors. The Breastfeeding Coordinator shall have a minimum of a Bachelors Degree in Nutrition or Nursing, meets federal qualifications for a Competent

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Professional Authority, and have a certificate in lactation management, such as a Certified Lactation Counselor, or attend an advanced lactation management course within 12 months of hire. Preference is for an International Board Certified Lactation Consultant (IBCLC).

See Chapter 2 for additional information on the breastfeeding peer counseling program and staff requirements.

Competent Professional Authority

The Competent Professional Authority (CPA) on the staff of the local agency is responsible for determining if a person is at nutritional risk through a nutritional assessment and for prescribing supplemental foods. The only persons authorized by the NH WIC Program to serve as a CPA are: Registered Dietitian or Nutritionist with a Bachelor's Degree or Master's Degree in Nutritional Sciences, Community Nutrition, Clinical Nutrition, Dietetics, Food and Nutrition, Public Health Nutrition, or Home Economics with specialization in Nutrition from an accredited college or university; Dietetic Technician with a minimum of an associate's degree from an American Dietetic Association approved dietetic technician program and eligible for registration (DTR); Physician or Nurse Practitioner (MD, NP, DO); Registered Nurse or Licensed Practical Nurse (RN, LPN); Physician Assistant (PA, certified by the National Committee on Certification of Physician Assistants or certified by a State medical certifying authority); and other health professionals whose education and experience have been individually approved by the State Agency.

In order to maintain high standards of nutrition care as well as use staff effectively, local agencies shall assign nutrition and health assessment, eligibility certification, nutrition counseling, and follow up care to nutrition staff with the professional qualifications to carry out the level of responsibility needed depending upon the nutritional risk of the participant.

Registered Dietitians, BS or MS Nutritionists, Registered Nurses, Physician Assistants, Medical Doctors, Nurse Practitioners may perform the following tasks:

- All Nutrition Assistant duties described below.
- All Diet Technician/LPN duties described below.
- Certify, provide assessment and nutrition education and follow up care to high-risk participants.

Dietetic Technicians and Licensed Practical Nurses may perform the following tasks:

- All paraprofessional staff duties described below.
- Certify and provide dietary assessment and nutrition education to low risk participants. Nutrition education could include recommending foods for a healthy diet, conducting group

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education programs, and individual counseling sessions and education and counseling on immunizations, prenatal care and breastfeeding. Participants identified as high risk, according to the high-risk indicators, shall be referred to a qualified nutritionist for further counseling.

Paraprofessionals and Program Assistants

There are no minimum qualifications for paraprofessional staff; however, traits such as flexibility, ability to work as a team member, and positive customer relations are highly recommended. Paraprofessional staff may perform the following tasks after appropriate training:

- Perform hematological tests and anthropometric measurements on participants.
- Enter measurements into the StarLINC system.
- Interview and record dietary intake data.
- Provide nutrition education at second contact to low-risk WIC participants and all CSFP participants.
- Distribute food vouchers or supplemental foods, including instruction on use of WIC/CSFP foods.

Breastfeeding Peer Counselors

WIC Breastfeeding Peer Counselors are paraprofessional staff who provide basic breastfeeding information, encouragement, and support to WIC pregnant and breastfeeding women, under the direction and supervision of the Local Agency Breastfeeding Coordinator. Peer counselors shall have breastfed at least one baby, be a current or former WIC participant, and have good communication skills. See Chapter 2 for additional information on the peer counseling program and staff requirements.

Program Director

Local agency WIC Directors shall have at a minimum a Bachelor's Degree in nutrition, social work, public administration, business administration, community organization or similar area which provides professional training in management and program planning. Additionally, the director shall have at least three years of supervisory experience that includes program planning, budgeting, program monitoring, program coordination and staff supervision.

Exceptions Any exception requires a written letter from the local agency to the State Agency describing special circumstances that may allow for an exception and including a plan for progress toward the staffing requirements.