

Division of Community Nutrition

<i>Subject:</i> Designated Breastfeeding Expert (DBE) Scope of Practice		<i>Policy:</i> Appendix 20
<i>Reference:</i> WIC Breastfeeding Curriculum	<i>Effective:</i> January 6, 2025	<i>Supersedes:</i> N/A

Scope of Practice for the WIC Designated Breastfeeding Expert (DBE)

A WIC Designated Breastfeeding Expert (DBE) has advanced lactation knowledge and experience in human lactation and assists WIC participants with complex breastfeeding problems within the DBE scope of practice.

1. Maintain lactation professional standards in all aspects of the DBE role.
 - A. Rely on evidence-based approaches for advanced level breastfeeding support.
 - B. Respect the privacy, dignity, and confidentiality of all WIC participants.
 - C. Work collaboratively with WIC staff to implement a care plan for mothers experiencing complex breastfeeding challenges.
 - D. Work within the policies and procedures of the WIC program and within the context of WIC's role for breastfeeding support.
 - E. Maintain accurate records according to State and local agency policy and procedures.
 - F. Refer mom for situations outside the DBE scope of practice or WIC's role for breastfeeding support.
 - G. Acquire ongoing continuing education to stay current with lactation knowledge and skills, including opportunities to shadow an IBCLC.
 - H. Maintain lactation credentials and certifications.
2. Assist WIC mothers and infants with complex breastfeeding problems.
 - A. Respond to yielding and other referrals for complex breastfeeding problems of WIC mothers from pregnancy through weaning.
 - B. Develop and follow up on an individualized care plan for WIC mothers experiencing complex breastfeeding problems in concert with other WIC staff. The DBE:
 1. Conducts a breastfeeding assessment (including, understanding breastfeeding goals collecting a detailed breastfeeding history, breast assessment, infant assessment and feeding assessment) to identify potential breastfeeding challenge(s).
 2. Uses active listening counseling skills to conduct the assessment and build rapport.
 3. Develops care plan to include tips/solutions to resolve complex breastfeeding problems within the DBE scope.
 4. Collects and documents all relevant information.
 5. Communicates the plan with WIC team for implementation.
 6. Makes appropriate referrals for further assessment and follow-up, as needed.
 - C. Help mothers meet their breastfeeding goals when facing complex maternal and infant breastfeeding challenges.

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D. Work with WIC Competent Professional Authorities (CPAs) to recommend or tailor appropriate WIC food packages to minimize the use of infant formula.

E. Assess and issue breastfeeding aids as appropriate to address the complex problem and provide instruction on use, according to State policies and procedures.

F. Refer mom to her health care provider when mom or baby need further assessment and medical care.

G. Maintains a list (minimum of 3) of knowledgeable health care professionals in the area.

3. May serve as a WIC and community breastfeeding resource.

A. May serve as a breastfeeding resource for the WIC agency including mentoring peer counselors or providing training to other staff and community partners.

B. Promote consistent messaging about breastfeeding using evidence-based resources.

4. It is beyond the DBE scope of practice to:

A. Diagnose maternal or infant medical breastfeeding conditions (e.g., maternal infection, thrush, hormonal conditions, infant oral restriction, or medical problems).

B. Recommend medications, herbal treatments, or medical treatment plans to the mother.

C. Act beyond the Level 4 WIC Breastfeeding Curriculum for the DBE, unless doing so is within their professional credentialing scope of practice and is permitted by State agency policy.