

Division of Community Nutrition

Subject: Designated Breastfeeding Expert (DBE) Qualifications and Responsibilities		Policy: BF 01.2
Reference: §C.F.R. 246.3	Effective: January 6, 2025	Supersedes: March 14, 2022

I. Policy:

All Designated Breastfeeding Experts are qualified to provide advanced lactation support and have expertise in human lactation.

II. Procedure(s):

- A. Each local agency will have a minimum of one (1) Designated Breastfeeding Expert (DBE). The WIC DBE has advanced lactation knowledge and expertise in human lactation and assists WIC families with complex lactation problems that are outside the scope of practice of WIC Breastfeeding Peer Counselors and other WIC staff.
 - 1) Each WIC agency is required to have access to a breastfeeding expert in a timely manner.
 - 2) The DBE operates within the policies and procedures of the WIC program and within the context of WICs role for breastfeeding support.
- B. Specific qualifications required:
 - 1) Successful completion of the Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) competency-based training for WIC breastfeeding curriculum levels 1-4 and successful completion of a state approved competency based breastfeeding training *See BF 01.1 II B.2.*; International Board Certified Lactation Consultant (IBCLC) preferred.
 - 2) Minimum of one year of experience in counseling breastfeeding dyads.
- C. Each DBE possesses the following experiences and skills:
 - 1) Experience working in poorly resourced communities.
 - 2) Experience working with complex lactation challenges.
 - 3) Critical thinking and problem solving.
 - 4) Experience providing training/adult education.
 - 5) Active listening, rapport building and communication.
 - 6) Literacy, language, and computer communication appropriate to meet the needs of a diverse population.
- D. Duties of the WIC DBE include, but are not limited to:
 - 1) Acts on all referrals from other WIC staff regarding complex breastfeeding situations beyond their scope of practice.
 - 2) Assess and counsel parents with complex feeding situations.
 - 3) Provides follow-up breastfeeding support to participants.
 - 4) Communicates care plan to the WIC team as appropriate.
 - 5) Refers parent to health care providers for further assessment and care.
 - 6) May provide lactation training for WIC staff.
 - 7) May promote human milk feeding in the community.

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- 8) Maintains lactation credentials and certifications and acquires ongoing continuing education to stay current with lactation management research and practice.
- 9) Operates within the *Scope of Practice for the WIC Designated Breastfeeding Expert* as defined within the FNS competency based training platform.