

Section 4.5: Staff Training

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References: 7CFR 246.11; USDA WIC [Nutrition Services Standards](#), Standard 5 (A)(1)(a-e)

Policy: Local Agencies will make available ongoing training for WIC staff within the designated timeframes.

Purpose: To ensure ongoing staff development that broadens knowledge and competencies on various topics related to nutrition, breastfeeding, WIC and public health, and enhances staff skills in providing quality participant centered services to best meet the needs of WIC participants.

Procedures:

The WIC Coordinator, or designee, will:

1. **Develop a training plan that will provide opportunities for all staff to obtain annually, a specified number of training hours related to their job duties.** The training plan will:
 - Include a proposed schedule for training new staff and for **required** annual trainings (e.g., Civil Rights, WIC Information System security training for system users).
 - Be based on a formal, or informal, needs assessment to ensure that all staff have the abilities and skills required to competently perform their assigned duties.
2. **Ensure staff training is appropriate and completed within designated timeframes.**

New WIC Staff Training

A new staff person must complete all activities outlined in the [New Staff Training Plan](#) complete an equivalent training plan outlined by the local agency.

- A local agency-developed training plan must include all topics and competencies included in the State-developed plan. Maintain outline for review at Management Evaluations.
- Document the date each activity on the New Staff Training checklist (or equivalent) is completed.
- Maintain the checklist for review at the next Management Evaluation.

Annual Required Trainings

Two trainings are required annually: **Civil Rights** training (for all staff) and **WIC Information System Security** training (for Information System users).

- These trainings must be completed *annually* by all WIC staff, including contracted providers, interpreters, volunteers, students, and interns *who have contact* with WIC participants.
- New employees must complete each of these trainings within 6 months of hire.
- Staff must use the training materials provided by the state WIC program. Training materials provided by your local leadership would be in addition to materials provided by the state.
- **Documentation of required trainings must include the staff's name and signature and date the training was completed.** Maintain documentation until reviewed at a Management Evaluation.

Continuing Education Minimum Requirements

All WIC CPA staff will complete **a minimum of 10 hours** of staff development training relevant to the WIC program services each year. Staff development training should occur throughout the year.

- At least one training each year will focus on breastfeeding education.
- Training on emerging health issues may be required as directed by the State WIC Program or in response to a Management Evaluation corrective action plan.
- Civil Rights Training and Information System Security training *do not count* towards the minimum training hours.
- Training modes include, *but are not limited to*, in-services, staff-led trainings, online training, webinars, self-study modules, journal article review, college courses, seminars, and conferences.
- Completing the “new staff training plan” meets the 10-hour requirement for a new employee’s first year. Additional training to develop knowledge and skills is encouraged.

Role-specific training

- **Para-professional CPAs** must meet the on-going training and certification observation requirements outlined in [MOM Section 4.3](#).
- **Support staff** (such as clerks) will participate in a customer service training and breastfeeding promotion training annually, but they are exempt from other training hour requirements.

3. Document completed staff training and education.

- Documentation will include:
 - Date(s) & length;

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- Name of training, and/or brief description;
- Topic(s) or Learning Objectives;
- Type of training (e.g., webinar, in-service, conference, seminar, self-study, etc.);
- Person(s) attending.

Guidance

Assessing Training Needs: The purpose of a needs assessment is to determine areas in which training is needed or desired for staff to develop competencies, and to identify ways in which these needs can be met. ***A formal assessment is not required.***

- In assessing training needs, consider the following factors:
 - Training needs identified during Management Evaluations, site visits, individual certification observations, and/or chart audits;
 - Local agency nutrition education and breastfeeding goals outlined in the agency's nutrition education plan;
 - Current staff skills and experiences;
 - The need for general versus specialized training, based on current staff needs, and relevance of training to WIC services;
 - Participant needs, changes in population served, and health trends in your WIC population;
 - Sponsorship of trainings (e.g., State Agency provided training, training by established professional organization, on-line trainings, webinars etc.); and
 - Reasonableness of training cost.
- Use observations and evaluations already in place, including:
 - CPA observations
 - Chart audits
 - PCS mentoring observations
 - Informal discussion activities
 - Individual assessment of needs
- Sample tools for assessing and documenting training needs are available.
 - Training Needs Assessment – Activities and surveys to determine training needs. [Continuing Education Overview](#)
 - Training Plan and Log. [Continuing Education Overview](#)

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Resources for Training: [Continuing Education Resources](#)

Training Topics: See [WIC Nutrition Services Standard 5 \(C\) \(Page 24\)](#) for an extensive list of potential training topics for WIC staff. Also refer to the topics on the optional needs assessment.

Training Plan: After determining training needs, develop a written plan, outlining potential training resources to meet identified needs and general timeline of when the training will be offered. The plan should be updated as needed, or at least annually. The training plan is intended to be a working tool for your agency. You are encouraged to update it throughout the year as training needs are identified and/or training opportunities become available. A template of a training plan and log is available.

Trainings to Maintain Professional Credentials: Trainings attended by an employee to maintain their credentials would count towards WIC training requirements *if the training is within the scope of WIC services*. Trainings outside the scope of WIC may not be included in the hours.

Mandatory Civil Rights Training: Local staff must use Civil Rights training materials provided by the State WIC Program. The State WIC Civil Rights Officer is also available to assist you.

Mandatory trainings require staff signature. [Civil Rights Training](#) available at the MN WIC website.

Documentation of Training: Training can be documented in any organized manner that you prefer and that allows for review at Management Evaluations. **Mandatory trainings require staff signature.** Options include:

- Agency-wide documentation, of all staff:
 - Electronic tracking form
 - Simple spread sheet
- Documentation by Individuals:
 - Training log for maintaining credentials (RDN, RN, etc.);
 - Training record from an existing staff development plan; or
 - Other individual tracking procedure.

Training Costs: The cost for WIC-related trainings is an allowable WIC expense and should be budgeted as part of the WIC grant.

Out-of-State Trainings: Out-of-state travel using WIC funds must be preapproved. Discuss with your State WIC Consultant.

Definitions:

Paraprofessional CPA: An individual who has not attained a college degree to otherwise qualify for hiring as a CPA, but who is of a culture and/or speaks a language needed to serve participants from that community. To work as a Para-professional CPA, such an individual must

receive extensive training and mentoring, to assure they acquire and maintain the minimum competencies needed in WIC. This individual can serve low risk participants under continuous supervision, and with ongoing training and mentoring from a local agency's nutrition professionals. See [MOM Section 4.3](#), Paraprofessional CPAs.

Reference – Complete Listing of Hyperlinks

Nutrition Services Standards

(https://wicworks.fns.usda.gov/sites/default/files/media/document/wic-nutrition-services-standards_0.pdf)

New Staff Training Plan

(<https://www.health.state.mn.us/people/wic/localagency/training/nst.html>)

MOM Section 4.3

(https://www.health.state.mn.us/docs/people/wic/localagency/program/mom/chsctns/ch4/sctn4_3.pdf)

Continuing Education Overview

(<https://www.health.state.mn.us/people/wic/localagency/training/contedassess.html>)

Continuing Education Resources

(<https://www.health.state.mn.us/people/wic/localagency/training/conted.html>)

Civil Rights Training (<https://www.health.state.mn.us/people/wic/localagency/civilrights.html>)

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