



Memorandum

#11-138

TO: WIC Regional Directors
WIC Local Agency Directors

FROM: Linda Brumble, Unit Manager
Nutrition Education/Clinic Services Unit
Nutrition Services Section

DATE: October 21, 2011

SUBJECT: Recent Changes to WIC Policy *BF:03.0 Breastfeeding Peer Counselor*

Recent changes were enacted to WIC policy *BF:03.0 Breastfeeding Peer Counselor*. This memo clarifies the reasons for the changes and further explains what must be done to comply.

The Texas Peer Counselor Program was recently audited by the U. S. Department of Agriculture (USDA). The auditors found that Texas was not in compliance with all of the USDA Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) Loving Support Guidelines because Peer Counselors were not *required* to be available outside of clinic hours and outside of the clinic environment. In order for Texas to continue to receive Peer Counselor funding, all of the FNS Loving Support Guidelines must be met.

Therefore, policy *BF:03.0* now states "Breastfeeding Peer Counselors shall be available to WIC clients outside usual clinic hours and outside the WIC environment."

In the future, auditors will be looking at job descriptions to determine compliance with the FNS Loving Support Guidelines. Peer Counselor job descriptions must require that all qualified applicants:

- Are receiving WIC or have received WIC.
- Have successfully breastfed or expressed breast milk for at least one baby.
- Have the ability to work outside of regular clinic hours and outside of the WIC clinic.

Failure to comply may result in funding sanctions.

If you have any questions or require additional information regarding these changes, please contact Kristina Arrieta, Peer Counselor Coordinator, at (512) 341-4593 or Kristina.arrieta@dshs.state.tx.us.