

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Nutrition Services</b> <b>Department of State Health Services</b></p>
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Effective: March 1, 2014

Policy No. NE:01.0

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## **Standards for Nutrition Education Contacts**

### **Purpose**

To ensure nutrition education (NE) is made available to all participants and addresses the nutritional needs of the participants.

### **Authority**

*7 CFR Part 246.11,*

### **Policy**

WIC participants shall be offered NE according to standards and staff qualifications.

### **Definitions**

Nutrition education means individual or group sessions and the provision of materials designed to improve health status and achieve positive change in dietary and physical activity habits, and that emphasize the relationship between nutrition, physical activity, and health, all in keeping with the personal and cultural preferences of the individual.

### **Procedures**

- I. All adult participants and parent/guardians/caregivers of infants shall be offered two NE contacts per each six-month certification period or offered every three months to women or parent/guardian/caregivers of infants and/or children certified for a period exceeding six months.
  
- II. All NE contacts shall:
  - A. Be provided by qualified staff (*Policy NE:02.0, TR:03.0*).
  - B. Address participants' questions and concerns.
  - C. Be delivered using current client-centered learning principles.
  - D. Meet participant's language and cultural preferences.
  - E. Include professional assessment by WIC staff to determine issues to be addressed and stress the positive, long-term benefits of nutrition education.

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- F. Be offered at no cost to participants.
  - G. Consist of accurate messages and current information.
  - H. Be documented with the correct NE code in the WIN system.
  - I. Offer a variety of NE delivery methods and accept certificates or codes for completion of web based lessons at [www.texaswic.org](http://www.texaswic.org).
  - J. Include evaluation to ensure appropriateness and effectiveness.  
(*Policy QA:01.0, NE:02.0*).
- III. Substance abuse information shall be provided to all pregnant, breastfeeding, postpartum women and to parents or caregivers of infants and children.
- IV. Breastfeeding information and support shall be provided to all pregnant and postpartum participants.
- V. Types of Nutrition education contacts include:
- A. Individual counseling shall be provided at initial certification, subsequent certification, mid-certification assessment at the request of the participant, and:
    - 1. Shall include the completion of the *VENA Family Documentation Tool* (Stock No. 13-06-12805)
    - 2. May be conducted in place of group class at benefit issuance. In this instance, it is optional to complete a VENA Documentation Tool.
    - 3. Staff shall:
      - a. complete assessment forms, review previous VENA tool (if applicable) and sign or initial;
      - b. attempt to establish rapport;
      - c. attempt to identify and explore parents' concerns using active listening skills and open ended questions;
      - d. summarize conversation and if appropriate assist participant in setting goal;
      - e. provide appropriate referrals; and
      - f. attempt to conclude on a positive note.
  - B. Group classes shall:
    - 1. Be offered at benefit issuance between certifications to all participants in the form of discussion based groups, poster or

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- bulletin board group sessions, breastfeeding support group meetings, lessons with activities and or videos, health fairs or other client-centered methods such as garden-based classes, grocery tours etc. Certificates or codes for completion for web-based lessons provided at [texaswic.org](http://texaswic.org) shall be accepted.
2. Be presented by qualified staff, who have been trained on the subject matter prior to teaching the class (*Policies: NE:02.0; TR:03.0* and LA NE Coordinator/WIC Director's discretion).
  3. Be scheduled as indicated in the current NE plan.
  4. Be a SA or LA developed lesson plan (Policy *NE:04.0*).
  5. Always have a staff member present in the classroom.
  6. Be offered according to participant's category, risk conditions, interests, time considerations, preferred language and cultural needs; participants may choose a preferred class.
  7. Allocate time for participants to ask questions related to the class topic. If the educator is unable to answer the question, then the information shall be obtained and made available to the participant.
- C. Self-paced lessons may serve as a NE contact if:
1. It is SA or LA developed (Policy *NE:04.0*);
  2. The participant completes the questions and a designated staff member reviews the answers with the participant prior to benefit issuance; and
  3. It is not substituted for individual counseling at certification and mid-certification assessment.
- D. *Texaswic.org* lessons shall be accepted as an NE contact by Local Agencies.
- E. Take home lessons shall:
1. Consist of an activity and evaluation; and
  2. Can be provided by the SA or be a video, a book or a lesson developed by the LA and approved by SA or LA registered dietitian.
- F. Breastfeeding support group meetings shall be led by an IBCLC, a trained Peer Counselor or any Certifying Authority who has completed their required BF training (*Policy BF:04.0; TR:03.0*).
1. Local agencies shall submit a breastfeeding support group schedule to their SA liaison and include at least:

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- a. one main topic that will be addressed at each meeting;
  - b. one objective for the named topic(s); and
  - c. one evaluation question for each named topic.
- G. Alternate forms of nutrition education
- 1. Participants may receive WIC NE contacts from outside agencies or certain professional persons at the discretion of the LA NE coordinator and based on standards specified in Procedure II, with the approval of the SA NE Section. Examples include but are not limited to: La Leche League, diabetes support groups, and nutrition counseling by a registered dietitian. Nutrition education codes shall be assigned by the SA, at the request of the Local Agency
  - 2. For families of children with special health care needs, see *Policy CR:07.0*.
- VI. Nutrition education may be declined by participants.
- A. Food benefits shall be issued to all participants, even those who decline nutrition education.
  - B. Participants unable to stay for a NE contact or who decline a NE contact shall be issued food benefits as soon as possible. When a participant declines or refuses NE or is unable to receive NE due to an emergency, the NE code field in Texas WIN should be left blank. The blank field indicates that no NE was provided.
- VII. Each LA is responsible for ensuring that the equipment and materials necessary to conduct NE classes or counseling is available at all clinic sites in accordance with the approved *NE/BF Plan (Policies AC:33.0, AC:34.0, NE:02.0)*.
- VIII. Local Agency NE expenditures shall be in accordance with *Policies AC:33.0 and AC:34.0*.