**Background**

Completion of this Assessment is required to fulfill the Breastfeeding Goal in the 2024 Nutrition Services Plan. The purpose of this goal is to assess the education and support currently provided to parents during the early days and weeks following birth. The 2024 Nutrition Services Plan builds on the 2023 Nutrition Services Plan which focused on education and support provided to participants during the early postpartum period. This Assessment is to be completed by local agency breastfeeding coordinators, with input from CPA staff.

Why is this important? Breastfeeding in the 4th trimester can be challenging. Participants need encouragement and accurate information to work through these early challenges. WIC staff can help parents meet their breastfeeding goals.

This Assessment is designed to capture breastfeeding education and support *currently* provided at your agency. Key resources available through WIC Shopify are listed. You are encouraged to explore WIC Shopify for additional resources.

The U.S. Department of Agriculture website, [WIC Breastfeeding Support, Learn Together, Grow Together](https://wicbreastfeeding.fns.usda.gov/) provides prenatal and postpartum resources for WIC staff and WIC participants. You are encouraged to explore this website as a staff to glean additional resources to educate and support participants during the 4th trimester with their breastfeeding journeys.

**Instructions for Breastfeeding Coordinators**

1. Meet with CPAs to discuss current efforts to provide breastfeeding education and support for parents, and ways to strengthen these services. Use this input to complete the Assessment.
2. Complete the Assessment as honestly as possible. Respond to questions using the 1 to 5-point rating scale below:

**1**= not doing and not ready to start

**2**= want to start

**3**= Just started doing

**4**= already doing and can make improvements

**5**= We have this mastered

1. Review the Assessment results as a staff. Collect ideas for ways to make improvements to current practices, prioritize these ideas, and then select one strategy that your agency will focus on for 2024. This can be a continuation of your 2023 plan with or without adjustments or you can choose to create a new plan.
2. Write the strategy as an Activity that includes the *what* (action you will complete), the *who* (staff involved), the *when* (expected timeline), and *how* you will evaluate whether the activity was completed.
3. Ask the WIC Coordinator to record this Activity in the box under the Breastfeeding Goal on the 2024 Nutrition Services Plan.
4. Save the completed Breastfeeding Assessment and the 2024 Nutrition Services Plan form to your agency’s shared drive.
5. Email both the **2024 Breastfeeding Assessment** and the **completed 2024 Nutrition Services Plan** to your Nutrition Consultant as attachments, on or before **December 16, 2023.**

|  **1**= Not doing/not ready to start **2**= Want to start **3**= Just started doing **4**= Already doing and can make improvements **5**= We have this mastered |
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| **Assessment Area** | **Using the key above, check the response that describes your agency’s readiness level** | **Status** | **Ideas for Improvements and/or Future Efforts** |
|  | **1** | **2** | **3** | **4** | **5** |  |  |
| **A. Staff roles, skills, and training**  |
| 1. All WIC staff use participant centered counseling skills when talking with participants about breastfeeding.
 |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 1. Our WIC agency has sufficient staff to assist participants with normal breastfeeding and common minor breastfeeding challenges. (Note: Minor challenges generally resolve when quickly addressed such as sore nipples and engorgement, as examples.)
 |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 1. WIC staff yield/refer participants with special concerns about breastfeeding to their local agency breastfeeding expert, WIC designated breastfeeding expert or community lactation consultant.
 |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| **B. 4th Trimester Breastfeeding Education and Support** |
| 1. Staff members contact each breastfeeding participant within 1-2 weeks of expected delivery date to assess any concerns or problems and provide education and support.

Resources: Shopify- [Why Babies Breastfeed Often](https://oregon-wic.myshopify.com/products/why-babies-breastfeed-often-pad-of-50) WIC Breastfeeding Support- [Bringing Baby Home](https://wicbreastfeeding.fns.usda.gov/bringing-baby-home) |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 1. WIC staff with advanced breastfeeding training are available to assess, assist and/or refer all participants requesting breastfeeding help within 1 business day of the participant contacting WIC.
 |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 1. Breastfeeding participants wanting to combine breastfeeding and formula feeding are informed of the impact on breastfeeding and potential health changes that could occur when formula is introduced.

Resources:[WIC Breastfeeding Support- Combination Feeding and Maintaining Milk Supply](https://wicbreastfeeding.fns.usda.gov/combination-feeding-and-maintaining-milk-supply)  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 1. WIC staff teach participants infant behavioral cues including feeding cues and sleep patterns and how these relate to breastfeeding success.

Resources:Shopify -[Healthy sleep for you and your baby; Understanding your baby’s cues](https://oregon-wic.myshopify.com/collections/all/infant-cues)WIC Breastfeeding Support- [Baby’s Hunger Cues](https://wicbreastfeeding.fns.usda.gov/babys-hunger-cues) |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 1. WIC staff tailor breastfeeding education to meet participants’ needs. Typical topics include holding newborns skin to skin, frequent and effective feeding, colostrum, transitional milk, preventing/managing engorgement, stooling patterns, manually expressing breastmilk, and weight gain.

Resources: Shopify- [Why babies breastfeeding often](https://oregon-wic.myshopify.com/collections/all/why-babies-breastfeed-often); [Making more milk for your baby](https://oregon-wic.myshopify.com/products/making-more-milk-for-your-baby-handout); [Hand Expression](https://oregon-wic.myshopify.com/products/hand-expression)WIC Breastfeeding Support- [Get Support as You Start Breastfeeding](https://wicbreastfeeding.fns.usda.gov/start)  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 1. WIC staff offer weight checks for breastfeeding infants during most clinic hours.
 |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 1. If a participant requests formula, a WIC Certifier skilled in breastfeeding assessment and counseling completes the assessment and provides breastfeeding assistance and follow up. If formula is required, the formula benefit is tailored to meet the minimum amount needed by the infant.

Resources:WIC Breastfeeding Support-[Am I Making Enough Milk? QUIZ](https://wicbreastfeeding.fns.usda.gov/am-i-making-enough-milk-quiz) |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 1. WIC staff document breastfeeding contact in the data system including key parent strengths, concerns, information provided, plan for follow up including any referrals provided.
 |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 1. Optional: Add other assessment areas you want to evaluate for your agency.
 |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |

**Comments from Breastfeeding Coordinator**

1. Summarize your local agency’s specific strengths in providing breastfeeding education and support to participants during the 4th trimester (birth to 42 days postpartum)
2. Summarize the areas that staff have identified as areas for improvement. Prioritize the ideas generated, focusing on what is realistic to accomplish.

**REQUIRED ACTION for the 2024 Nutrition Services Plan:**

What is one activity your agency will implement to strengthen breastfeeding education and support provided to participants during the 4th trimester? (Additional activities may be listed if desired, but that is *optional*.)

**Record the planned activity in the box under the Breastfeeding Goal on the 2024 Nutrition Services Plan**. Include the *what* (action you will complete), the *who* (staff involved), the *when* (expected timeline), and *how* you will evaluate whether the activity was completed.

For more information about how to write a clear and realistic activity that is attainable within 2024, and specific enough that you can tell whether it was accomplished or not, see *Guidance for Writing Activities* on our website:

<https://www.oregon.gov/oha/PH/HEALTHYPEOPLEFAMILIES/WIC/Documents/wic-coord/nsp-writing-guidance-2020.pdf>