

Job Aid

Local Agency Time Study Q&As

A quick reference guide for local agency staff on how to complete quarterly WIC time studies and handle common questions about funding, coding, and special situations.

1. What hours should be included if the staff members' salary is only partly paid for by WIC NSA funds?

Example: A WIC staff member's salary is charged 0.6 FTE to PE 40/WIC, and the remainder 0.4 FTE is covered by the County General Ledger.

Staff must record all time spent on WIC activities, even if WIC only pays for part of their time. Staff who are paid with any amount of WIC NSA funds must complete an individual quarterly time study.

This includes:

- Staff whose WIC-funded time is 0 hours during the study month
- Contract nutritionists

2. Do staff who are not paid with WIC NSA funds need to complete a time study?

No. Only staff who are paid with WIC NSA funds are required to complete quarterly time studies.

Staff not required to complete time studies

Staff who are not paid with WIC NSA funds do not complete time studies, even if they certify pregnant participants or provide breastfeeding services.

This may include:

- Home visiting or public health nurses
- Perinatal care coordinators

These staff must still be listed on the personnel summary collected during the local agency review.

How this affects Nutrition Education (NE) and Breastfeeding (BF) targets

Time contributed by staff not funded with WIC NSA funds does not count toward meeting WIC NSA NE or BF spending targets. Local agencies must monitor their NE and BF targets closely if these services are delivered by staff outside WIC NSA funding.

If your agency is struggling to meet targets

If NE or BF targets are difficult to meet because services are provided by non-WIC-funded staff, your nutrition consultant can work with you to develop a plan for documenting in-kind hours or services.

3. How do staff paid with NSA funds complete time studies if they don't work in WIC year-round?

Any staff paid by the WIC NSA grant funds during any point in the federal fiscal year (October-September), must complete a time study each quarter.

How staff complete a time study with 0 hours worked

If a staff member does not work any WIC-funded hours during a time study month, they still complete a time study.

- Their individual study should show 0 hours for that month.
- On the time study summary sheet, add a note such as “No WIC-funded hours worked this month” on the same line as their name.

4. If a staff member paid with WIC NSA funds is on leave for a full month during a time study month, how is their time study completed?

A staff member still must complete an individual time study even when they are on paid or unpaid leave.

This includes:

- Vacation leave
- Sick leave
- Holidays
- Family and medical leave
- Leave without pay

How staff complete a time study with 0 hours worked

If a staff member does not work any WIC-funded hours during a time study month, they still complete a time study.

- Their individual study should show 0 hours for that month.
- On the time study summary sheet, add a note such as “No WIC-funded hours worked this month” on the same line as their name.

5. Is flex time off included as hours on the time study?

No. Treat flex time taken off is treated the same as any other time off and is not recorded as hours worked in a time study.

Time is recorded and coded when the hours are worked, not when the flex time is taken.

Example: A WIC employee normally works 8-hour days.

- They worked 10 hours on Monday
- They take 2 flex hours off on Tuesday.

The time study should show:

- Monday: 10 hours worked
- Tuesday: 6 hours worked

6. Does the time study need to match local agency staff time sheets?

Yes. Individual staff time studies must match the staff members' timesheet for the same month.

During each local agency fiscal review, reviewers compare the timesheet and the time study to ensure they align. Local agencies must keep individual time study forms on file for 3 years so they are available during fiscal reviews or USDA audits.

7. Do non-WIC employees included in a direct cost allocation plan paid by WIC NSA funds need to complete a time study?

Yes. Any non-WIC staff whose wages are paid through a direct cost allocation plan using WIC NSA funds must complete a time study.

8. Do non-WIC employees who are included in allocated indirect costs need to complete a time study?

No. Staff whose wages are paid through allocated indirect costs do not complete time studies.

Example: If your local administrator's salary is charged indirectly against the money received from the WIC NSA grant funds, they do not participate in time studies.

Where to get clarification

Check with your internal fiscal team if you are unsure how your agency handles allocated direct or allocated indirect costs.

Important note about indirect rates

As of October 2024, indirect rate requirements changed. Local agencies must develop and retain documentation to support indirect expenses, directly allocated expenses, and the methodology used.

Your fiscal team can reach out to the state fiscal team at OHA-PHD.ExpendRevReport@odhsoha.oregon.gov with questions.

9. Do breastfeeding peer counselors need to complete a time study?

No. Time spent on the breastfeeding peer counseling program (BFPC) is not included in the WIC time studies.

BFPC time is paid for with peer counseling funds, not WIC NSA funds. BFPC hours are reported in the Quarterly BFPC Report based on each staff member's full-time equivalent (FTE).

Exception: When BFPC staff complete WIC time studies

At some agencies, BFPC staff also perform other WIC duties. If they work any non-BFPC WIC-funded hours, those hours must be recorded on an individual WIC time study.

10. For agencies who track time in a “pay-by-the-minute” method, how do they complete WIC time studies in 15-minute increments?

Agencies that track time by the minute must convert those minutes into 15-minute increments for the WIC time study.

How to round minutes for the WIC time study

[Policy 316: Quarterly Breakout of Staff Time](#) (see section 2.2) requires time to be recorded in half-hour or 15-minute increments.

- If time is less than 8 minutes, round down (0 minutes)
- If time is 8 minutes or more, round up to the next 15-minute increment
- Breaks under 30 minutes do not deduct from reported time worked

Because this is a USDA requirement, all WIC-funded time must be accounted for in one of the four time study categories (NE, BF, CS and GA) in 15-minute increments, even if your payroll system tracks time differently.

11. How should training hours be coded on the time study?

Code training hours based on the activity or topic of the training. Use the examples below as a guide.

TWIST Training

Day 1: Code one hour as NE and the rest as CS

Day 2: Code two hours as NE, one hour as BF, and the rest as CS

Civil Rights Training

Code all time as GA

All other training

Refer to the Time Study Activity Descriptions document for guidance on when to use NE, BF, CS or GA. This document is included with each quarterly time study request from the state fiscal team.

Check with your assigned nutrition consultant if you're unsure how to code a training.

12. How should travel and driving time be coded on the time study?

Code travel or driving time in the same activity category (NE, BF, CS or GA) as the topic of the activity or training.

Refer to the Time Study Activity Descriptions document for guidance on when to use each code. This document is included with each quarterly time study request from the state fiscal team.

Common examples of WIC-related travel are:

- NE: Travel for NE-related activities or NE-focused training
- BF: Travel for BF-related training or BF-focused WIC services (such as home visits)
- CS: Travel for general outreach or outreach events
- GA: Travel to meet with vendor contacts, site visits, or GA-focused training

13. Should Farm Direct time be included in WIC time studies?

No. Time studies capture only WIC NSA-funded activities. Farm Direct is funded separately, so any staff hours paid by Farm Direct must not be included in the WIC time study.

Exception: Staff hours spent on Farm Direct-related work can be included in WIC time studies in the following situations:

- The staff member will not have their time paid for by Farm Direct funds
- Farm Direct funds are fully expended

14. Do WIC staff record WIC time worked outside the Monday-Friday workweek?

Yes. Any staff paid with WIC NSA funds must record all WIC time worked during each time study month regardless of the day of the week.

If work completed on the weekend relates to Farm Direct, see [Question 13](#) above.