



Policy 713

Breastfeeding: Use of Supplemental Formula

September 17, 2020

POLICY

Local WIC programs shall adopt policies for tailoring infant food packages to encourage continued breastfeeding when mothers are not fully breastfeeding.

PURPOSE

To support breastfeeding parents and infants by providing appropriate counseling and food packages consistent with their nutritional needs.

RELEVANT REGULATIONS

7 CFR 246.10 Supplemental Foods

7 CFR 246.11 (c) (7) (iv) Breastfeeding promotion mandate

OREGON WIC PPM REFERENCES

- ◆ [730—Bid Formula: Use and Description](#)
- ◆ [769—Assigning WIC Food Packages](#)

APPENDICES

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DEFINITIONS

Breastfeeding parent: The generic term for parents who provide human milk to their infant(s). See definitions under *fully breastfeeding*, *mostly breastfeeding*, *some breastfeeding* and *non-breastfeeding* for important distinctions.

Breastfeeding Self Efficacy (BSE): An individual's degree of confidence in their ability to successfully breastfeed their child. Parents with a high degree of BSE will expend more energy to overcome challenges because they see themselves as capable of breastfeeding and are quite certain they can succeed.

Bid formula: Infant formulas purchased at competitive bid by the Oregon WIC Program.

Human milk substitute: Infant formula.

Supplement: Expressed human milk or human milk substitute provided to an infant who is primarily breastfed.

Fully breastfeeding infant: A breastfeeding infant who is up to one year of age and does not receive infant formula from WIC.

Fully breastfeeding parent: A breastfeeding parent who is up to one year postpartum, whose infant does not receive formula from WIC.

Mostly breastfeeding infant: A mostly breastfed infant who is one month to one year of age and receives infant formula from WIC up to the maximum provided for a mostly breastfed infant.

Mostly breastfeeding parent: A breastfeeding parent who is one month to one year postpartum, whose infant receives infant formula from WIC up to the maximum provided for a mostly breastfeeding infant.

Some breastfeeding infant: A breastfeeding infant who is one month to one year of age and receives more than the maximum amount of infant formula from WIC provided for a mostly breastfeeding infant, but less than the amount provided for a non-breastfeeding infant.

Some breastfeeding parent: A breastfeeding parent who is one month to one year postpartum, whose infant receives more than the maximum amount of infant formula from WIC provided for a mostly breastfeeding infant, but less than the amount provided for a non-breastfeeding infant.

Non-breastfeeding infant: An infant who is not breastfeeding and is up to one year of age and receives infant formula from WIC.

Non-breastfeeding parent: A parent who is not breastfeeding and is less than six months postpartum.

Yield: The process WIC staff use to invite another staff with additional breastfeeding expertise to assist when they are working with a parent experiencing a challenge that is complicated, unusual or simply beyond their skill level. Sometimes it may be necessary to yield to a community IBCLC if no one is available within the local agency. When a staff yields, they continue to assist the family, while the staff who they yielded to work to resolve breastfeeding challenges..

BACKGROUND

Normative infant and young child feeding include immediate skin-to-skin contact, early initiation of baby-led breastfeeding (within 1 hour of birth), exclusive breastfeeding for 6 months, and continued breastfeeding for at least 1 and up to 2 years or longer, with age-appropriate complementary feeding. When a breastfeeding parent requests formula from WIC, they may not be fully aware of the impact of formula supplementation on breastfeeding, or of the increased health risks of feeding formula in place of breastfeeding. In particular, giving infant formula to a breastfeeding infant in the first month interferes with establishing breastfeeding and often leads to a decrease in a parent's milk production. For this reason, WIC does not allow issuance of formula for breastfeeding babies less than one month of age. Breastfeeding counseling is required to support continued breastfeeding and builds a parent's breastfeeding self-efficacy. It ensures parents make informed infant feeding decisions.

PROCEDURE

- 1.0 A Competent Professional Authority (CPA) shall provide counseling to a breastfeeding parent who requests supplemental formula for their infant. The CPA providing counseling must first complete *Level 1 and 2 Oregon WIC Breastfeeding Training*.

Counseling by CPA

- 1.1. Whenever possible, the counseling is provided by an RDN, RN, Health Professional, IBCLC or designated staff who has completed a minimum of 45 hours advanced lactation training.
- 1.2. Provide assessment and counseling before issuing food benefits for formula.
- 1.3. Counseling by the CPA includes the following steps:
 - 1.3.1. Ask open ended questions to explore how breastfeeding is going and to learn what the parent's desires and intentions are for continued breastfeeding. Asking parents what is most important to them about breastfeeding can be helpful. Parents often request formula when they feel overwhelmed with parenting a new baby and they see formula as an easier option. They may be facing mild, moderate or severe breastfeeding challenges. Depending on your assessment you may need to yield to a staff with additional breastfeeding expertise while you continue to assist the family with breastfeeding challenges.
 - 1.3.2. Assess the parent's understanding of the potential impact of supplemental formula on milk production, the parent's own health and the health of their infant.
 - 1.3.3. Inform the parent their food package will change and will be based upon how much they are breastfeeding. See policy [◆769—Assigning WIC Food Packages](#), for details.
 - 1.3.4. If formula is required, provide the minimum amount of formula to meet and not exceed the infant's nutritional needs. Schedule a follow up appointment soon after to reassess breastfeeding and to determine if continued formula supplementation is required. The parent may be able to return to full breastfeeding.
- 1.4. Issuance of formula is not allowed for breastfeeding infants less than one month of age.

Infant's food package

- 2.0 When the decision is made to provide supplemental formula, issue the infant a food package consistent with their nutritional needs.
 - 2.1. If supplementation is indicated, use the bid milk-based formula as the first option for supplementation per [◆730—Bid Formula: Use and Descriptions](#).
 - 2.2. Provide powdered formula as a supplement because it can be prepared in as small a quantity as needed.

Amount of supplemental formula

- 2.3. Determine the amount of supplement necessary and assign the appropriate food package.
 - 2.3.1. If the infant is receiving no formula and the mother is unsure of how many formula feedings she will be using, assess and counsel the mother on the impact of formula as in 1.3.2 above. If formula

issuance is deemed appropriate, issue the lowest amount of formula indicated, usually starting with one can of powder.

- 2.3.2. If the mother is already giving the infant some formula, issue the lowest amount the infant is currently using. See Appendix A for additional guidance on calculating the amount of supplemental formula.
- 2.3.3. Supplemental formula can be increased up to the maximum allowed based on infant's age and category. See [◆769—Assigning WIC Food Packages](#) for quantities allowed.
- 2.3.4. Provide additional follow-up visits with the parent and baby to continue to support breastfeeding success.

Food package adjustment

- 2.4. A breastfeeding infant who receives any formula from WIC is no longer in the fully breastfeeding category. The infant's status and parent's status will need to be changed to the appropriate breastfeeding category of mostly breastfeeding or some breastfeeding. Once the categories are changed, the appropriate food packages can be selected.
 - 2.4.1. A parent who is over six months postpartum and is in the "some breastfeeding" category will not receive a food package; however, they will continue to receive all other WIC services.

Documentation

- 3.0 Document the counseling and follow-up provided in the participant's data system record.

REFERENCES

1. Oregon WIC Training: Breastfeeding Level 1 Module, Oregon WIC Program, 2013.
2. Oregon WIC Training: Breastfeeding Level 2 Module, Oregon WIC Program, 2004.
3. Wambach, K. Breastfeeding and Human Lactation, 5th edition, 2016.
4. Lauwers, J., Swisher, A. Counseling the Nursing Mother, A Lactation Consultant's Guide, 6th edition, 2016.
5. Mohrbacher, N., Breastfeeding Answers, A Guide for Helping Families, 2nd edition, 2020
6. Spatz, D. and Lessen, R. Risks of Not Breastfeeding, ILCA, 2011

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POLICY HISTORY

Date	* Major Revision, Minor revision
9/17/2020	Major revision

The date located at the top of the policy is the implementation date unless an “effective date” is noted on the policy. Policies will become compliance findings 6 months from the implementation date.

Release notes can be found in the corresponding document on the [Policy and Procedure Manual page](#).

***Major Revisions:** Significant content changes made to policy.

Minor Revisions: Minor edits, grammatical updates, clarifications, and/or formatting changes have occurred.

Date of Origin: Date policy was initially released

APPENDIX A

Determining Supplemental Formula Amounts for the Partially Breastfed Infant

Have you started offering a supplement?



YES



How much supplement is the infant getting each day?

For Bid Formula		
0 - 3 oz. per day	→	1 can powder per month
4 - 6 oz. per day	→	2 cans powder per month
7 - 9 oz. per day	→	3 cans powder per month
10 - 12 oz. per day	→	4 cans powder per month
13 - 15 oz. per day	→	*5 cans powder per month
16 - 18 oz. per day	→	*6 cans powder per month
19 - 21 oz. per day	→	*7 cans powder per month
22 - 24 oz. per day	→	*8 cans powder per month
25 - 27 oz. per day	→	*9 cans powder per month

One can of Similac Advance powder yields 90 ounces of reconstituted infant formula and Gerber Good Start Soy powder yields 91 ounces.

* This quantity may exceed the maximum allowed as determined by infant age and category. See [◆769—Assigning WIC Food Packages](#) for quantities allowed.