

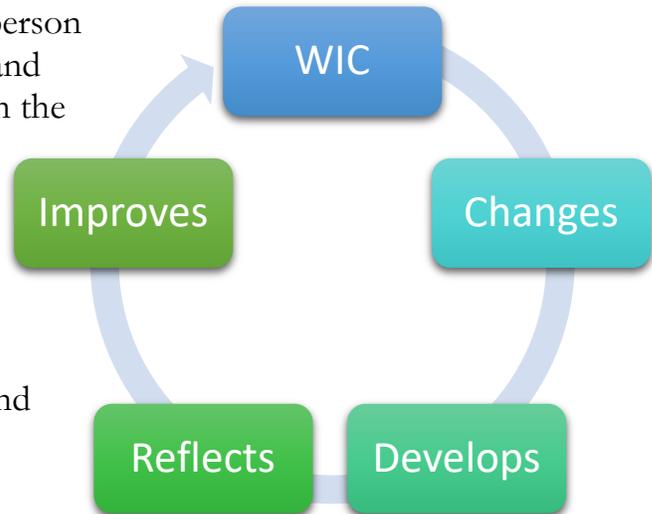
# Part 6 Staff development

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## Continuous learning

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Staff training doesn't end when a new staff person completes all the required training modules and online courses. Things are always changing in the WIC program. We are always learning ways to provide better service. Nutrition recommendations change as science makes new discoveries. Policies change with new rules from the federal government. And staff continue to improve their counseling skills through observation and reflection.



Training supervisors oversee that continuous learning process and facilitate staff development in their agency.

## Keeping up to date with changes

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Some people say that WIC stands for “**WIC Is Changing**” because change happens so often. There are several ways training supervisors can stay up to date on what is new in the WIC program. It will be up to you to learn about those changes, review the information, and then decide the best way to distribute it to other WIC staff.



Here are some of the ways you'll learn about changes:

- 1. Emails from the state training coordinator or state module coordinator**  
Emails are sent to all training supervisors when something requires attention or action. This could include changes to training materials, new resources, or required training.
  - Monitor emails from the state office and look for the required action.
- 2. Training Supervisor Forum calls**  
These quarterly Skype for Business calls are specifically for WIC training supervisors and provide the latest information on training.

- Plan to either participate on these calls or review the minutes.

### 3. WIC policy release notes

The state policy coordinator sends out a list of WIC policy changes every quarter. The policy release notes will summarize what has changed. Policy changes are also reviewed at the quarterly WIC coordinator meetings.

- Work with your coordinator to review the policies that have changed and decide who is impacted and the best way to make sure staff know what to do differently.
- [Policy release notes](#) are posted to the policy webpage.

### 4. Data system release notes or updates

Whenever something changes in the WIC data system, a summary of changes is sent out. The data system is updated quarterly but may also happen at other times if there are problems with the system.

- Review system release notes and distribute them to staff as needed.
- Monitor emails from App Support to alert you of any immediate problems.
- [Data system release notes](#) are posted to the webpage.

### 5. Meetings and conference calls

The state hosts several meetings and conference calls with WIC staff filling a variety of roles. Information is shared during these quarterly meetings that may impact staff training:

- Oregon WIC Coordinator Association (OWCA)
  - Local Agency WIC Nutritionists (LAWN)
  - Breastfeeding Coordinators or Peer Counselor Coordinators (BFC or BFPC)
  - Nutrition Education WIC Support (NEWS)
- If someone else on staff attends these meetings or calls, meet with them to discuss any information that might need to be shared with others or ask to read the minutes.
  - The [WIC Calendar of Events](#) lists the dates for meetings and conference calls and is posted to the webpage.

## Learning activity

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Find the most recent version of the *WIC Calendar of Events*.



Identify the staff from your agency that participate in the various meetings or conference calls.

- If you are the one filling those roles, contact the state office to make sure you are on the correct email list serves and receive the appropriate appointment invitations.

Find and review the most recent policy and data system release notes.

- Talk with your coordinator about how this information has been shared in the past.

## Provide opportunities to develop new skills and learn new things

Staff need the chance to review information, talk about what is new, and practice what they have discovered. Depending on your agency, there are several ways you can facilitate that happening.



### **Considerations:**

- Does your agency schedule regular WIC staff meetings where you could facilitate training or discuss upcoming changes?
- Do staff “huddle” to talk about issues that come up?
- Can you forward materials by email to staff?
- Does your agency have a staff room or bulletin board where information can be posted?
- Can you invite partners to join you to share information at a staff meeting?
- When staff attend conferences or trainings, how is information shared with others?

The state WIC office can help you provide opportunities for staff to learn and grow if you use the resources we send. Work with your coordinator and staff to find the best way to distribute information to staff and make sure they understand and can use it.

Here are some examples of resources that are routinely provided to local agencies.

### **WIC Link newsletters**

This newsletter is distributed by email every month. The newsletter is sent mid-month, is 3 pages long, and includes articles of interest and links to resources. Some standard features of the newsletter are *Shopping Tips* from the state vendor



team and *I'm Glad You Asked* which answers questions that staff may be hearing from participants.

- At a minimum, distribute the newsletter to all WIC staff each month.
- [WIC Link newsletters](#) are posted to the website so you can find past editions.

### **RENEW Review Activities**

Review activities are sent out quarterly with the WIC Link newsletter. These activities are 2 pages, often include links to resources or videos, and are a way to practice one specific counseling skill. They are optional, but highly recommended.

# RENEW

- At a minimum, distribute the review activities to certifiers.
- [RENEW Review Activities](#) are posted to the website so you can find past editions.

### **Breastfeeding and nutrition resources**

Each agency is provided with reference materials. For example, every agency has breastfeeding reference books that have been sent out over time. Occasionally the state will send updated versions of these materials.

- Locate the breastfeeding and nutrition resources in your agency.
- Make sure that any reference materials you use are current and provided by a reputable source.
- Some [Breastfeeding resources](#) and [Nutrition Education Resources](#) are posted to our website.

### **Statewide Meetings**

The state hosts a meeting for all local agency staff every few years. These meetings give staff a chance to hear speakers, network with staff from other WIC programs, and learn new skills they can use in their everyday work.

- Attendance at these meetings may be required for certain staff.
- The state supports attendance by funding mileage, meals, and hotel stays for staff working more than 70 miles from the conference site.
- CEUs may be available for RDNs.

### **Learning activity**

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Find and read the most recent WIC Link newsletter and RENEW Review Activity.



Talk with other WIC staff about how these have been distributed in the past. What worked about that? What would they like to be different?

## Required in-services

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Every staff person must complete certain in-services each year to make sure they stay up-to-date on program requirements and nutrition information. In-services are trainings that are facilitated by local agency staff and may be developed by the state or by local subject matter experts.



### All WIC staff must complete annual civil rights training

- Information on annual civil rights training will be provided each year.
- If your organization does its own civil rights training, that will meet the WIC annual civil rights training requirements.

### Certifying staff must, at a minimum, receive continuing education by participating in quarterly in-services

These in-services are a required part of each agency's annual Nutrition Services Plan. In-service topics must relate to certifier competencies. (See the Certifier Competency Model included as an appendix to [Policy 660—Competent Professional Authority: Requirements.](#))

- Examples include:
  - Facilitated discussions relating to participant centered services
  - New WIC mandates
  - Data system functionality
  - Attending the WIC statewide meetings
  - Guest speakers on customer service, cultural competence, or nutrition topics
  - Presentations by partner or referral agencies
  - Facilitated discussions about nutrition risks or topics by the WIC nutritionist.



- At least one of the quarterly in-service topics must be related to breastfeeding. The state will provide materials for this in-service which must be facilitated by your agency breastfeeding coordinator
- The state may require completion of specific in-services within a particular time frame.
  - The state provided in-services will include materials (e.g., PowerPoint slides, discussion guides) that guide you through the material.
  - You will use the materials provided to facilitate the in-service.
  - You may delegate facilitation of a specific in-service to another staff person if they have the expertise needed to a particular topic. For example, a breastfeeding in-service may be facilitated by your agency breastfeeding coordinator, a nutrition topic may be presented by your WIC nutritionist, or a policy in-service may be facilitated by your agency coordinator.
  - State required in-services are listed in the [annual training plan](#).
- If your agency selects an in-service topic, it must be based on staff training needs identified during local program self-evaluations, or local WIC program needs; or be chosen to further enhance staff skills and job satisfaction.
  - You are responsible for making sure training provided locally is accurate, evidence-based, current, and appropriate.
  - Locally mandated trainings that are not related to certifier competencies, such as HIPAA or blood borne pathogens, cannot be counted as meeting the quarterly WIC in-service requirement.

### **Tracking and documenting in-service completion**

As training supervisor, you are responsible for tracking and documenting staff attendance or completion of all required in-services.



- Document the date, presenter and names of staff completing the training.
  - If staff miss the date of the original presentation of the training, include the date they completed the training.
  - Consider using the [Job Aid – Tracking annual in-service completion](#).
- Use this information to complete the training portion of the annual Nutrition Services Plan.
- Retain the documentation so it can be viewed during local agency reviews.
- If the training is developed by staff from your agency:
  - Include the training objectives; and,
  - Retain copies of training objectives and training materials in your training files.

## Learning activity

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Review the annual WIC Training Plan and identify any in-services that need to be completed.



Locate your agency documentation of completed in-services.

## Reflective practice

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Just reading or watching training materials is not enough to change behavior. People learn best when they have a chance to engage with new concepts. This could include reflecting on new information, talking with others about what they learned, or talking about what went well and what didn't when they tried to do something different. Talking about situations and experiences is like mental practice, making it easier for them to make changes. Some staff do this naturally, but others will need opportunities for reflection identified for them. There are lots of different ways that you can support reflective practice.



### Examples of intentional reflective practice:

- Huddles are short informal discussions, usually small groups huddle for less than 15 minutes while standing up. Huddles can be informal and impromptu or can be deliberately scheduled. Huddles provide the opportunity for staff to talk about whatever they are experiencing at that point.
- Time for staff to talk about issues or concerns, and practice new skills and strategies can be built into regular staff meetings.
- Staff often reflect with co-workers, so arranging for a coach, mentor, or “work buddy” who performs similar tasks can help make sure know who they should talk to and they get accurate information.
- Observing staff and then having discussions about what went well and what could be changed next time.
- Scheduling staff to observe others and then talk about what they learned.
- Doing chart reviews and discussing what is found.

## Learning activity

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Find out what reflective practice opportunities are current practice in your agency (e.g. staff meeting schedules, scheduled observations, chart review processes).



## What you need to do

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- Monitor emails from the state for updates that require staff training.
- Distribute information and materials from the state to staff.
- Make sure staff complete required in-services.
- Document completion of required training.
- Provide opportunities for staff to reflect on what they are learning.



## References

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- [Policy 440 – Staff Training Requirements](#)
- [Policy 452 – Civil Rights](#)

