**Background**

Completion of this Assessment is required to fulfill the Breastfeeding Goal in the 2023 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 2023 Nutrition Services Plan builds on the 2022 Nutrition Services Plan which focused on education and support provided to parents in late pregnancy to prepare them for breastfeeding. This Assessment is to be completed by local agency breastfeeding coordinators, with input from CPA staff.

Why is this important? Breastfeeding in the early days and weeks after birth can be challenging. Parents 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.

**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**= started and may want to do more

**4**= already doing quite a bit, with room for improvement

**5**= we’re superstars!

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 2023.
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 2023 Nutrition Services Plan.
4. Save the completed Breastfeeding Assessment and the 2023 Nutrition Services Plan form to your agency’s shared drive.
5. Email both the **2023 Breastfeeding Assessment** and the **completed 2023 Nutrition Services Plan** to your Nutrition Consultant as attachments, on or before **December 16, 2022.**

|  **1**= Not doing/not ready to start **2**= Want to start **3**= Started and may do more **4**= Already doing/room for improvement **5**= We’re superstars! |
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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 parents about breastfeeding.
 |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 1. Our WIC agency has sufficient staff to assist parents 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 parents with special concerns about breastfeeding to their local agency breastfeeding expert or community lactation consultant.
 |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| **B. Early Postpartum Breastfeeding Education and Support** |
| 1. Staff members contact each breastfeeding parent within 1-2 weeks of expected delivery date to assess any concerns or problems and provide education and support.

Resource: [Why Babies Breastfeed Often](https://oregon-wic.myshopify.com/products/why-babies-breastfeed-often-pad-of-50)  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 1. WIC staff with advanced breastfeeding training are available to assess, assist and/or refer all parents requesting breastfeeding help within 1 business day of the parent contacting WIC.
 |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 1. Breastfeeding parents wanting to combine breastfeeding and formula feeding are informed of the impact on breastfeeding and potential health risks
 |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 1. WIC staff teach parents infant behavioral cues including feeding cues and sleep patterns and how these relate to breastfeeding success.

Resources: [Healthy sleep for you and your baby; Understanding your baby’s cues](https://oregon-wic.myshopify.com/collections/all/infant-cues) |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 1. WIC staff tailor breastfeeding education to meet parents’ 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: [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) |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 1. WIC staff offer weight checks for breastfeeding infants during most clinic hours.
 |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 1. If a parent 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.
 |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 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 parents during the early postpartum period.
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 2023 Nutrition Services Plan:**

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

**Record the planned activity in the box under the Breastfeeding Goal on the 2023 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 2023, 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>