

# Competency Model for Oregon WIC Clerical Staff

In this document, competencies are identified for WIC personnel identified as a Clerk by their agency.

## The 11 core areas for WIC clerks include:

1. Program Integrity;
2. WIC Program Overview;
3. Nutrition Education and Breastfeeding Promotion and Support;
4. Communication;
5. Multicultural Awareness;
6. Critical Thinking;
7. Technology Literacy;
8. Community Resources and Referrals; and,
9. Anthropometric and Hematologic Data Collection Techniques

Each competency area is presented in a separate table. The components of the tables and their definitions are listed below:

<b>Core area</b>	A particular area of skill or body of knowledge.
<b>Knowledge required</b>	A specific topic or content area needed to achieve the competency and is the basis for training content.
<b>Competency</b>	Skills, actions, or behaviors related to a specific knowledge requirement.
<b>Training Methods</b>	How staff will become competent – identifies state provided materials, training or support. This does not address training and support provided by the local agency and/or the local agency training supervisor.

Note: Individual local agencies determine prerequisite competencies they expect at hire. This competency model does not include those basic competencies, but rather includes only competencies that are related to the tasks specific to being a WIC clerk.

Note: Minimum competencies are met by successful completion of the WIC training modules identified in Policy 440.

Note: Competencies may pertain to more than one core area, but are listed only once in the competency model.

# 1. Program Integrity

**Competency Area:** *Shows personal accountability.*

Knowledge Required	Competency	Training Methods
Personal accountability	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Balances multiple responsibilities between data entry, benefit issuance, shopper education, and appointment scheduling.</li> <li>2. Practices positive work ethics to ensure program integrity (honesty, integrity, reliability, consistency, fairness)</li> <li>3. Participates actively in staff development/training.</li> <li>4. Uses technology and program equipment/materials in an appropriate and safe manner for work purposes only.</li> <li>5. Performs duties within the context of written policies of the agency where employed, Oregon State WIC policy and USDA regulations.</li> </ol>	<p>Local Agency orientation by Training Supervisor</p> <p>Intro to WIC Module</p>
USDA and State agency policies about participant confidentiality	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>6. Obtains release of information (Participant Signature Form) according to State agency policy before sharing any participant data.</li> <li>7. Protects participants' confidentiality in all conversations.</li> <li>8. Maintains confidentiality of all electronic participant records and information.</li> </ol>	<p>Intro to WIC Module</p> <p>TWIST Training Manual</p> <p>TWIST Clerical Training</p>
Civil rights	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>9. Complies with the provisions of Civil Rights laws, regulations and policies.</li> </ol>	<p>Civil Rights In-service</p>

## 2. WIC Program Overview

**Competency Area:** *Understands and is able to explain the WIC Program.*

Knowledge Required	Competency	Training Methods
WIC Program orientation	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Correctly describes the WIC program to potential participants.</li> <li>2. Directs participants through the clinic flow.</li> <li>3. Correctly explains a WIC participant's rights and responsibilities</li> <li>4. Correctly identifies the 4 primary WIC services (Nutritious food, nutrition education, breastfeeding promotion and support, referrals into health and social services)</li> </ol>	Intro to WIC Module
WIC eligibility criteria	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>5. Correctly screens participants for eligibility.</li> </ol>	Intro to WIC Module
Benefit issuance and use	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>6. Correctly issues benefits to participants.</li> <li>7. Educates WIC shoppers on the correct use of WIC benefits.</li> </ol>	Intro to WIC Module Food Package Module

## 3. Nutrition Education and Breastfeeding Promotion and Support

**Competency Area:** *Understands the influence of staff attitudes and behaviors on participant perceptions of nutrition education and breastfeeding.*

Knowledge Required	Competency	Training Methods
Relevant evidence-based recommendations from the American Academy of Pediatrics, the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics, the American College of Obstetrics and Gynecology, and the International Lactation Consultant Association	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Promotes breastfeeding as the biological norm for feeding infants.</li> <li>2. Recognizes potential concerns related to breastfeeding and refers participants appropriately.</li> <li>3. Recognizes health and lifestyle contraindications to breastfeeding.</li> </ol>	Intro to WIC Module Breastfeeding Level 1 Online Course
Principles of marketing	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>4. Positively promotes nutrition education to WIC participants.</li> <li>5. Maintains an environment that promotes good nutrition and health.</li> </ol>	Intro to WIC Module

#### 4. Communication

**Competency Area:** *Knows how to develop rapport and foster open communication with participants and caretakers.*

Knowledge Required	Competency	Training Methods
Principles of effective communication	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Uses appropriate techniques to establish a relationship and begin a conversation.</li> <li>2. Practices active listening and observation skills.</li> <li>3. Collects information without interrupting or correcting the applicant.</li> <li>4. Checks for understanding by paraphrasing or reflecting what was heard.</li> <li>5. Compares participants' verbal responses to non-verbal behaviors to assess participants' attitude, feelings, and readiness for change.</li> <li>6. Uses an effective balance of open-ended and closed-ended questions.</li> <li>7. Affirms participants' feelings, beliefs and efforts.</li> <li>8. Expresses empathy for the participants' situation.</li> </ol>	PCS Setting the Stage Online Course
Principles of customer service	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>9. Provides excellent customer service in person and on the phone to WIC participants, vendors, medical providers, community partners, and referral organizations.</li> </ol>	PCS Setting the Stage Online Course
Importance of documenting	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>10. Maintains appropriate documentation of contacts with participants according to State agency policies.</li> </ol>	TWIST Clerical Training TWIST Training Manual

## 5. Multicultural Awareness

**Competency Area:** *Understands how sociocultural issues (race, ethnicity, religion, group affiliation, socioeconomic status, and world view) affect participant interactions.*

Knowledge Required	Competency	Training Methods
Cultural groups in the target population including their families and communities, values and beliefs, characteristics, and resources	1. Respects different belief systems about issues such as blood work, immunizations, dietary supplements, alternative medicine, and traditional healers.	Intro to WIC  Food Package Module
Differences in communication styles between groups and how these differences may impact the participant interaction	2. Uses culturally appropriate communication styles to collect information.  3. Uses interpretation and/or translation services appropriately to communicate with participants with limited English proficiency.	Intro to WIC

## 6. Critical Thinking

**Competency Area:** *Knows how to synthesize and analyze data to draw appropriate conclusions.*

Knowledge Required	Competency	Training Methods
Principles of critical thinking	1. Collects all information before drawing conclusions and deciding upon the best next steps (course of action).  2. Asks additional questions to clarify information or gather more details.  3. Recognizes superfluous or tangential information and disregards it.  4. Considers the applicant's point of view regarding their needs, concerns, and priorities.	Food Package Module  Included as part of all training provided.
Scope of practice	5. Works within the scope of practice for their position and accesses appropriate resources.	Intro to WIC module

## 7. Technology Literacy

**Competency Area:** *Uses technology to record participant data, schedule appointments and produce vouchers.*

Knowledge Required	Competency	Training Methods
Computer use	1. Demonstrates basic computer skills.	Local Agency Training Supervisor
TWIST data system	2. Records correct participant information in the data system. 3. Uses the data system to document participant data. 4. Uses the data system to record participant contacts. 5. Identifies appropriate food benefits to be issued. 6. Coordinates food benefit issuance with nutrition education appointments. 7. Schedules appropriate appointments for participants. 8. Enters data accurately. 9. Locates and utilizes needed reports.	TWIST Training Manual  TWIST Clerical Training  TWIST Practice Database

## 8. Community Resources and Referrals

**Competency Area:** *Identifies community resources and refers WIC participants for appropriate services.*

Knowledge Required	Competency	Training Methods
Community resources and referral process	1. Identifies key referral resources available to WIC staff. 2. Gives participants appropriate referrals into health care. 3. Gives participants appropriate referrals to community resources, including mandatory referrals to OHP, drug and alcohol services. 4. Documents referrals appropriately	Intro to WIC Module  TWIST Training Module
Immunization schedule	5. Screens participants' immunization records and refers appropriately.	Screening Immunization Records In WIC packet
Community partnerships	6. Knows community demographics, resources, needs and issues.	Intro to WIC Module

**9. Anthropometric and Hematologic Data Collection Techniques (if assigned duty)**

**Competency Area:** *Understands the importance of using appropriate measurement techniques to collect anthropometric and hematologic data.*

Knowledge Required	Competency	Training Methods
Anthropometric data collection techniques	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Demonstrates appropriate anthropometric measurement techniques specific to infants, children ages 2-5, and adults.</li> <li>2. Accurately reads and records, and measurements.</li> <li>3. Identifies factors that influence the accuracy of anthropometric or hematologic measurements (e.g. uncooperative child or faulty equipment) and documents them. Takes appropriate actions (e.g., rechecks measurements, documents factors that interfere with measurements).</li> </ol>	Anthropometric Online Course
Hematologic data collection techniques	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>4. Demonstrates appropriate techniques for performing a hemoglobin or hematocrit assessment.</li> </ol>	Hematology Online Course

**References**

Nutrition Services Standards, USDA – FNS, August 2013

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