

## Frequently Asked Questions – Oregon WIC’s Breast Pump Program

### **Q: Who qualifies to receive breast pumps from the Oregon WIC Program?**

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**A:** Breastfeeding women who are not able to obtain a breast pump through their health care provider/insurer may qualify for a pump if they are enrolled in the Oregon WIC Program and they meet the specific criteria required for the type of pump offered.

### **Q: What kinds of breast pumps are available through Oregon WIC?**

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**A:** There are 3 types of breast pumps that are offered by the Oregon WIC Program:

- *Multi-user double electric breast pumps* are loaned to breastfeeding mothers with medical needs.
- *Personal double electric breast pumps* are given to breastfeeding mothers who are returning to work or school.
- *Manual breast pumps* are provided for occasional or short-term pumping needs. The type of pump is determined by a trained WIC staff member.

### **Q: What kinds of medical needs qualify a breastfeeding mother for a multi-user breast pump?**

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**A:** Multi-user breast pumps are loaned for medical circumstances such as:

- A premature infant
- An infant with severe feeding problems
- A mother or infant who is ill or hospitalized
- Multiple birth, such as twins or triplets
- A mother who has had breast surgery

This is not a comprehensive list. The need for a breast pump is determined by a hospital lactation consultant or a WIC staff member with expertise in breastfeeding.

### **Q: What criteria must be met for a mother to receive a personal double electric breast pump?**

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**A:** A breastfeeding mother must meet **all** of the following requirements:

- Mother is working or going to school more than 20 hours per week, is away from her baby for 9 or more feedings per week, and is unable to feed her baby while at work or at break time
- Infant is exclusively breastfeeding
- Infant is at least 4 weeks old
- Mother and baby are having no problems with breastfeeding
- Mother plans to breastfeed exclusively for at least 4-6 months and will not expect any formula from WIC

### **Q: In what circumstances are manual pumps issued to breastfeeding mothers?**

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**A:** Manual pumps may be given to mothers who are experiencing:

- Temporary problems such as engorgement or flat/inverted nipples
- Brief separations from the infant for social events or meetings
- Time away from the infant to seek employment
- Working or going to school on a part-time basis (less than 20 hours per week)
- Other short-term separations, where pumping would not occur more than 8 times per week
- No access to electricity when it is time to pump

### **Q: How does a mother obtain a breast pump from the Oregon WIC Program?**

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**A:** Breast pumps are available from all local WIC agencies in Oregon and may be issued to breastfeeding women who meet the qualifications. An appointment may be required due to the time it takes for assessment, issuance, pump education, and documentation.

### **Q: Is there a fee for a WIC participant to receive a breast pump?**

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**A:** No. Multi-user breast pumps are *loaned* to WIC participants who meet the criteria, so there is no fee involved. Personal double electric breast pumps and manual breast pumps are available at no cost to breastfeeding mothers who qualify.

### **Q: Are there circumstances when breast pumps may NOT be issued?**

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**A:** Yes. Breast pumps may not be issued to:

- Pregnant women
- Breastfeeding women who do not meet the necessary qualifications
- Breastfeeding women who are using substances in quantities that would be dangerous for the infant
- Participants who have not returned a multi-user breast pump in the past

### **Q: Does Oregon WIC rent or loan breast pumps to non-WIC mothers?**

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**A:** No. Oregon WIC does not rent breast pumps, and non-WIC participants do not qualify for any type of breast pump (or loan) from the Oregon WIC Program.