

Guidance Document for Utilization of Training Expectations And Meeting Competency Areas

7 CFR 246.11(c)(2); NSS Standard #5 All new staff is oriented to the program.

The State and local agency ensure that staff receive sufficient orientation, competency-based training and, as appropriate, continuing education activities as well as periodic performance evaluations.

Training of new staff is essential to ensure that optimal service is provided to WIC participants. As crucial as training is, the organization of and actual training of new staff can be difficult and time consuming. It is important to provide thorough training to ensure that staff is knowledgeable of both their role and other staff roles within the WIC clinic. Additionally, performance evaluation tools (chart audits, observations, peer reviews, etc.) for new and veteran staff are critical in identifying staff member's needs for additional training and/or support.

Many local agencies experience challenges associated with new hires including reduced staffing and the demands of getting staff trained quickly. Often pieces of training are missed because of clinic demands and the pressure of having new staff servicing participants shortly after hire. While this may fill a void in service, it could potentially cause long term issues when staff is not trained adequately. Several issues may occur including poor customer service, provision of incorrect information to participants, potentially unhappy staff and higher than normal staff turnover. This tool was developed to ensure all local agency staff statewide is trained in a similar fashion and meet specific competencies based on each WIC position.

It is expected that this tool will be used for training of all staff at every level and should be initiated upon hire. You will see there are targeted timelines to ensure specific areas are reviewed in order of importance. Since Civil Rights and Customer Service are high priority topics, they should be reviewed shortly after hire and prior to providing direct participant service.

Working for WIC you'll find that the clinic environment and expectations change on a regular basis. It will take most people a full year or more to develop skills and meet competencies necessary for their position at WIC. While some skills may be mastered early on, staff's receptiveness to feedback is essential for continued growth. Skill assessment including results from chart audits, observations, peer reviews and performance evaluations (necessary for quality assurance) must be completed in a supportive environment. In order for WIC to provide quality nutrition services it is important for our skills to remain fresh and cutting edge.

Some topics may require attention on an annual basis or as needed based on performance. This tool allows for documentation of date of completion and supervisory initials identifying that staff have completed the topic/module and that the knowledge learned has been reviewed and discussed with a supervisor. Questions are included to support and engage staff during the learning process and to promote a coaching environment. The expectation is that the trainee will complete a competency area

and meet with their supervisor to encourage further dialogue on the specific module before moving on to the next area.

There are many benefits to both the local and State agency in utilizing this tool. They are:

- ✓ Improved and streamlined documentation of training. This will assist the local agency in meeting the staff training component of your local agency plan.
- ✓ Ensure staff is meeting all competency areas.
- ✓ Assist with yearly performance evaluations.

A	Program Nutritionist	B	Meets Competencies When...	C	Initial Review Date	Sign-off Supervisor Initials	Annual Review Date	Sign-off Supervisor Initials	As needed Date	Sign-off Supervisor Initials
<p>Complete within 30 days (prior to providing direct participant services)</p>										
<p>Customer Service</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • View the CT Exceptional Client Services module • Review reflection questions • Discuss with Supervisor/Mentor • Print certificate of completion for employee file 		<p>Understands and demonstrates for staff excellent customer service skills.</p> <p>WIC staff:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Use good interpersonal skills (VENA: Rapport Building). Is polite and has a customer-friendly manner (deals effectively with upset /emotional participants). ✓ Is sympathetic to participant's challenges/interests and language. ✓ Listens actively, doesn't interrupt, and limits use of jargon... (Cert, Recert, VOC, etc). ✓ Effectively communicates necessary information regarding Certification appointments. ✓ Efficient management of clinic flow. <p>Establishes consistent use of local agency appointment policy, procedures for missed appointments, ensures agency provides appropriate extended hours to increase access to appointments and ensures staff considers participant input for appointment times.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • List 2 reasons why good customer service is important. • Rewrite the following statement "The other staff person was wrong! That's not our policy!" • Think about a time when you experienced great customer service and bad customer service. Why were they so memorable and what could have made them better? 								
<p>WIC Program Eligibility Requirements State Plan Policy 200 Certification</p>		<p>States four components of WIC Program Eligibility and can list the noted exceptions to reduce participant barriers to Program access.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How would you explain the WIC eligibility components to a 								

This tool can be accessed on the CT WIC webpage under Resources for Local Agency Staff section or click the link [LA Training Tool](#). This tool is intended to remain a fluid document for all staff and should be updated any time training occurs within the identified competency areas.

A. Competency Areas includes:

- Recommended timelines
- Defined competency areas
- Resources necessary to meet competencies

B. Competency Assessment includes:

- Expected knowledge or skills learned following training
- Questions to assess if competency met

C. Documentation of training includes:

- Initial review date and supervisor initials of completion
- Annual review date and supervisor initials of completion
- As needed date and supervisor initials of completion

Coordinators

Since local agency Coordinator's include those with or without Nutrition backgrounds, the Coordinator's tool includes identifiers for those competencies appropriate for all. Those key areas will be identified with an asterisk, for example ***Customer Service**. All other areas would be appropriate for those Coordinator's with a Nutrition degree. Many of these competencies may require coordination with the Program Nutritionist. While a Coordinator may not perform some responsibilities included in the competency area, knowledge is essential in order to support staff and provide ongoing training as needed.

Please be advised that these tools will be reviewed and updated every 2 years or earlier as needed. Please inform the State agency if any of the hyperlinks are no longer functioning, so that updates are completed in a timely manner.