

Subject: Nutrition Education Requirements

Item: Exit Counseling

PURPOSE:

To outline the educational requirements for pregnant and postpartum exit counseling. The purpose of exit counseling is to reinforce the nutrition education the participant received during the time they were an active WIC participant.

POLICY:

- I. The local agency (LA) Competent Professional Authority (CPA) must offer exit counseling and the “Healthy You!” pamphlet to all pregnant and postpartum participants before the end of their certification period.
- II. LA staff must offer to verbally review at least one of the following topics relevant to the participant’s category, risk condition, and/or interests:
 - A. Making healthy food choices.
 - B. Consuming adequate folic acid.
 - C. Considering breastfeeding as the preferred method of infant feeding.
 - D. Following the recommended immunization schedule for the family.
 - E. Knowing the health risks associated with alcohol, tobacco, and drug use.
 - F. Getting regular physical activity.
 - G. Realizing the benefits of family planning.
- III. The LA is allowed to count the exit counseling session as a secondary nutrition education contact (NEC).
- IV. LA staff must document the exit counseling contact in the WIC Web Information System Exchange (WIC WISE).
- V. Exit counseling must not replace nutrition education when more risk-specific counseling is needed but should be offered.
- VI. If exit counseling was provided and documented within the past twelve months, LA staff may offer abbreviated exit counseling to the participant.

PROCEDURES:

- I. The LA CPA must:
 - A. Offer exit counseling to participants:
 1. Pregnant, Breastfeeding, and Non-breastfeeding: Before the end of each certification period (e.g., second-to-last or final NEC) or at the time of termination.

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2. Breastfeeding to non-breastfeeding: At time of termination when a participant reports breastfeeding has stopped and the infant is 7-11 months of age. The exit counseling contact must be documented prior to terminating the participant in WIC WISE.
- B. Offer the pamphlet “Healthy You!” during the exit counseling session.
- C. Address at least one of the required exit counseling topics during the counseling session, tailoring the discussion to the participant’s needs.
- D. Provide additional risk-specific nutrition education when needed.
- E. Document the exit counseling contact as a secondary NEC.
 1. LA staff must document the exit counseling contact in the Topic column on the NE Documentation screen in WIC WISE.
 2. Staff must also document any other contact (e.g., trimester check) or nutrition education (e.g., breastfeeding class) provided on the same day. All nutrition education provided on the same day count as one NEC. Refer to WPPM 400-08.
 3. If the participant/caretaker declines the exit counseling, LA staff must document the refusal in the Notes column on the NE Documentation screen.
 4. A Care Plan follow-up note is not required when documenting the exit counseling contact.
 5. The exit counseling contact must be documented prior to the end of the participant’s certification period or prior to terminating the participant in WIC WISE.

AUTHORITY:

USDA, Food and Nutrition Service, WIC Policy Memorandum #1994-9, *WIC Exit Counseling Pamphlet*

USDA, Food and Nutrition Service, WIC Nutrition Services Standards, *Standard 7: Nutrition Education and Counseling*, August 2013

[7 CFR §246.11 Nutrition Education](#)

22 CCR §40725 Local Agency Responsibilities

CROSS-REFERENCE:

WPPM 400-08 Frequency of Nutrition Education Contacts