

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Texas WIC</b> <b>Health and Human Services Commission</b></p>
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Effective April 1, 2020

Policy No. NE:01.0

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## **Standards for Nutrition Education Contacts**

### **Purpose**

To ensure nutrition education (NE) is made available to all participants and addresses the nutritional needs of the participants.

### **Authority**

7 CFR Part 246.11

### **Policy**

WIC participants shall be offered NE according to standards and staff qualifications.

### **Definitions**

Nutrition education means individual or group sessions and the provision of materials designed to improve health status and achieve positive change in dietary and physical activity habits, and that emphasize the relationship between nutrition, physical activity, and health, all in keeping with the personal and cultural preferences of the individual.

### **Procedures**

- I. All women participants and parent/guardians/caregivers of infants and children shall be offered an NE contact every three months.
- II. All NE contacts shall:
  - A. Be provided by qualified staff (**Policy NE:02.0, TR:03.0**).
  - B. Address participants' questions and concerns.
  - C. Be delivered using current client-centered learning principles.

<b>Texas WIC Health and Human Services Commission</b>
---

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Policy No. NE:01.0

---

- D. Meet participant's language preference and be culturally sensitive.
  - E. Include professional assessment by WIC staff to determine issues to be addressed and stress the positive, long-term benefits of nutrition education.
  - F. Be offered at no cost to participants.
  - G. Contain evidence-based messaging consistent with professional organizations such as the American Academy of Pediatrics, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the American Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics, the World Health Organization and/or information from reputable continuing education providers.
  - H. Be documented correctly in the MIS.
  - I. Include the offer of a variety of delivery options, including group classes and web lessons at [www.TexasWIC.org](http://www.TexasWIC.org). Individual counseling must be provided at each certification and as needed.
  - J. Include evaluation to ensure appropriateness and effectiveness. (Policy QA:01.0, NE:02.0).
- III. Substance abuse information must be provided to all pregnant, breastfeeding, postpartum women and to parents or caregivers of infants and children at initial certification and on an as-needed basis at subsequent visits.
- IV. Breastfeeding information and support must be provided to all pregnant, and breastfeeding participants. (Policies BF:01.0, 02.0, 03.0, and 04.0)
- V. Types of nutrition education contacts include:
- A. Individual counseling must be provided at initial certification, subsequent certification, mid-certification assessment at the request of the participant, and:

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---

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---

1. Must include the completion of Value Enhanced Nutrition Assessment (VENA) within the MIS.
  2. May be conducted in place of group class at benefit issuance. In this instance, it is optional to complete documentation in the MIS.
  3. Staff shall:
    - a. complete nutrition assessment, review previous VENA documentation;
    - b. attempt to establish rapport;
    - c. attempt to identify and explore parents' concerns using active listening skills and open ended questions;
    - d. summarize the conversation, if appropriate;
    - e. attempt to assist participant in setting a goal, if appropriate;
    - f. provide relevant referrals as needed.
- B. Group classes shall:
1. Be offered at benefit issuance throughout certification periods to all participants.
  2. Be in the form of discussion-based groups, breastfeeding support group meetings, lessons with activities and/or videos, or other client-centered methods such as garden-based classes, grocery tours, etc.
  3. Be presented by qualified staff, who have been trained on the subject matter prior to teaching the class (Policies: **NE:02.0**; **TR:03.0** and LA NE Coordinator/WIC Director's discretion).
  4. Be scheduled as indicated in the current NE plan.
  5. Be a SA or LA developed lesson plan (**Policy NE:04.0**).
  6. Always have a staff member present in the classroom.

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Texas WIC</b> <b>Health and Human Services Commission</b></p>
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7. Be offered according to participant's category, risk conditions, interests, time considerations, preferred language and cultural needs; participants may choose a preferred class.
  8. Allocate time for participants to ask questions related to the class topic. If the educator is unable to answer the question, then the information shall be obtained and made available to the participant.
- C. Self-paced lessons may serve as a NE contact if:
1. It is SA or LA developed (**Policy NE:04.0**);
  2. The participant completes the questions and a designated staff member reviews the answers with the participant prior to benefit issuance; and
  3. It is not substituted for individual counseling at certification and mid-certification assessment.
  4. Posters or bulletin boards are considered self-paced lessons.
- D. Health fairs may serve as NE contacts if they:
1. Include an activity and evaluation, and
  2. Contain content approved by an LA or SA RD
- E. TexasWIC.org lessons shall be accepted as an NE contact by Local Agencies.
- F. Take home lessons:
1. Shall consist of an activity and evaluation; and

<b>Texas WIC Health and Human Services Commission</b>
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Policy No. NE:01.0

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2. Can be provided by the SA or be a video, a book or a lesson developed by the LA and approved by SA or LA registered dietitian.
- G. Breastfeeding support group meetings shall be led by an IBCLC, a trained Peer Counselor or any Certifying Authority who has completed their required BF training (**Policy BF:04.0; TR:03.0**).
1. Breastfeeding support group meetings shall be led by an IBCLC, a trained Peer Counselor or any Certifying Authority who has completed their required BF training (**Policy BF:04.0; TR:03.0**).
- a. one main topic that will be addressed at each meeting;
- b. one objective for the named topic(s); and
- c. one evaluation question for each named topic.
- H. Alternate forms of nutrition education
1. Participants may receive WIC NE contacts from outside agencies or certain professional persons at the discretion of the LA NE coordinator and based on standards specified in Procedure II, with the approval of the SA NE Branch. Examples include but are not limited to: La Leche League, diabetes support groups, and nutrition counseling by a registered dietitian.
2. For families of children with special health care needs, see **Policy CR:07.0**.
- VI. Nutrition education may be declined by participants.
- A. Food benefits shall be issued to all participants, even those who decline nutrition education.
- B. Participants unable to stay for a NE contact or who decline a NE contact shall be issued food benefits as soon as possible. When a

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participant declines, refuses NE or is unable to receive NE due to an emergency, this shall be documented in the MIS.

1. If the participant has an appointment, "Refused NE" shall be selected.
2. If the participant does not have an appointment, "No" shall be selected in the "Receive NE" field.

VII. Each LA is responsible for ensuring that the equipment and materials necessary to conduct NE classes or counseling is available at all clinic sites in accordance with the approved NE/BF Plan (**Policies AC: 33.0, AC: 34.0, NE: 02.0**).

VIII. Local Agency NE expenditures shall be in accordance with Policies **AC: 33.0** and **AC: 34.0**.