

## **PC Program Policy # 14:**

### **Maternity Leave**

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**Purpose:** *The purpose of this policy is to support Peer Counselors (PCs) in utilizing maternity leave for the health and well-being of both mother and baby. The NM WIC PC Program will work collaboratively with PCs and Local Peer Counselor Coordinators (LPCC) to maintain client service coverage and ensure a smooth transition before, during and after maternity leave.*

### **1. Procedures:**

- **Leave Allowance**

- PCs may take up to **90 days (12 weeks)** of maternity leave following delivery in accordance with state and federal laws.

- **Documentation Requirements**

- The PC must email **Proof of pregnancy** with the **expected due date** to the LPCC.
- The LPCC will forward the documentation to the NM WIC PC Manager and/or the WIC Breastfeeding Manager.

- **Extended Leave Requests**

- If circumstances require leave beyond 90 days, the LPCC must contact the NM WIC PC Manager and/or the NM WIC Breastfeeding Manager to discuss the situation and obtain approval for next steps.

### **2. Maternity Leave Planning**

- The LPCC and PC will collaborate to develop a maternity leave plan.
- The LPCC will schedule a meeting with the PC to discuss caseload, ongoing client services, and duties.
  - The LPCC may include the NM WIC PC Manager and/or the NM WIC Breastfeeding Manager as needed.

### **3. Required Components of the Maternity Leave Plan**

- **Client Service Coverage**

- Identification of how client services will continue during the PC's leave.
- The LPCC will coordinate with other PCs in the region (or outside the region if needed) to arrange coverage.

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- **Client Caseload and Documentation**

- A complete list of client names, folder locations, timelines, deadlines, duties, and any assignments requiring action during the leave.
- A plan for transferring clients to other PCs when appropriate

- **Client Communication Plan**

- Clear steps for informing clients of their PC's maternity leave.
- Identification of which PC(s) will contact clients during the leave period.

- **Support Needs**

- Any ongoing support required by:
  - The PC on leave, and
  - The PC(s) covering the caseload.
  - The PC will work with the LPCC to determine what support is required while the PC is on Maternity Leave.

- **Return-to-Work Plan**

- Projected return date.
- Expected caseload upon return.
- Gradual return-to-work considerations (if applicable).

#### **4. Approval Process**

- The LPCC will submit the completed maternity plan to the NM WIC PC Manager and/or the NM WIC Breastfeeding Manager for final approval.

#### **5. Required Notifications**

- Once the maternity leave is approved, the LPCC must ensure that *all relevant information* from the plan is shared with the individuals who need to support client services and program operations. Only the necessary parts of the plan for continuity of services will be shared with the Team Leader (TL), and/or WIC Breastfeeding Ambassadors.
- The LPCC must also notify the following when maternity leave changes occur:
  - NM WIC PC Manager and/or NM WIC Breastfeeding Manager.
  - Relevant PCs
  - Relevant TL, WIC Breastfeeding Ambassadors, and/or other WIC staff.