

## **PC Program Policy # 14: Maternity Leave**

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The New Mexico WIC Peer Counseling program supports Peer Counselors (PCs) to utilize maternity leave for the health and wellness of both mother and baby. Maternity leave will provide mother and baby to bond and establish routine care for well-being. This policy ensures that PCs have the support and a developed plan to avoid interruption of client services due to a PC's temporary departure for maternity leave. Procedures to avoid interruptions or delays in client services:

**PCs are allowed to take up to 90 days (12 weeks) from delivery for time-off per state and federal laws.**

- The PC should email proof of pregnancy with expected due date to the LPCC, who will send it on to the NM WIC Peer Counseling Manager and NM WIC Breastfeeding Manager.
- The PC program will provide flexibility to PCs in accordance with the amount of time-off and work availability. Should unusual circumstances occur where a PC requires time-off exceeding 90-days, the LPCC should communicate with the NM WIC Peer Counseling Manager and the NM WIC Breastfeeding Manager to discuss and obtain approval for next steps.

**The LPCC and PC will work together to create a plan for requesting maternity leave.**

- The LPCC will schedule a meeting with the PC to discuss caseload, continuing client services, and duties. NOTE: The LPCC has the option to include the NM WIC Peer Counseling Manager and the NM WIC Breastfeeding Manager in this meeting.

**The PC's maternity plan should include:**

- How client services will be continued; the LPCC will communicate with other PCs in the region (or outside of the region if necessary) to find a PC who can cover the client services and any other assignments for the PC on leave.
- A list of client names and folder locations, with timelines, deadlines, duties, etc. in detail for other PCs who will be providing coverage. For example, transferring clients to other PCs.
- A plan for how clients will be contacted to inform them of their PC's leave and who will be contacting them during that leave period.
- Any continued support needed for the PC on maternity leave, as well as for the PC(s) providing coverage.
- The plan for the PC on maternity leave to return back to full-time work; projected date, caseload expectations, etc.

**The LPCC will send the PC's maternity leave plan to the NM WIC Peer Counseling Manager and NM WIC Breastfeeding Manager for final approval:**

- The LPCC is also responsible for notifying and sending approved maternity leave plans to the WIC PC staff in the region she serves.
- The LPCC will also notify the NM WIC Peer Counselor Manager, NM WIC Breastfeeding



Manage and regional WIC PC staff when the maternity leave begins and/or when changes in pregnancy occur.