

Special Projects Funding and Allowable Costs Fiscal Year 2021

Note: Not all agencies are approved for all special projects.

Peer Counselor – A Peer Counselor’s qualifications must include; (1) previously received WIC services, (2) have breastfeed at least one of her children, and (3) take appropriate training prior to serving as PC to participants. This funding includes but not limited to

- Salaries of Peer Counselors who assist pregnant and breastfeeding WIC participants.
- Training for Peer Counselors.
- Communication equipment.
- Travel expenses Peer Counselors may incur in the course of performing their job duties or attending training and/or conferences.
- Equipment and supplies used to train Peer Counselors or used by Peer Counselors to educate clients.
- Please see WIC Policy AC:17.0 for an extensive list.

Allocations are made based upon the following criteria: number of pregnant and breastfeeding women served, retaining counselors established with previous discretionary funding, prevalence of serving rural and remote locations, and breastfeeding rates.

Please note that all agencies are required to have a Peer Counselor on staff. (*WIC Policy GA 14.0*).

Lactation Services – Funds are being provided to help your agency provide breastfeeding assistance to WIC participants and WIC staff. This funding can be used for contract or regular WIC employees. You will be reimbursed for the following expenses:

- Lactation consultations by:
 - a. Qualified professional; International Board-Certified Lactation Consultant (IBCLC),
 - b. Qualified professionals that can be put on contract according to WIC Policy AC16.0,
 - c. Qualified employee; Peer Counselor, or Designated Breastfeeding Expert, after normal working hours depending on local agency (LA) personnel policies and procedures.
 - Local agency staff fees paid to prepare for (i.e., prerequisite courses, prep courses, study materials) or take the International Board of Lactation Consultant Examiners (IBLCE) exam. See www.iblce.org for more information.
 - Supplies that would complement lactation consults such as nipple shields and shells, nursing bras, and supplemental nursing systems.
 - Reference books and teaching aids such as breastfeeding dolls, stuffed breasts, belly balls, flip charts and other teaching tools or supplies to create teaching tools.
 - Furniture and supplies to establish and a nursing room to be used for lactation consultations and a private place for WIC moms to nurse and pump. Examples include chairs, pillows, stools, side table, lamps, peer counselor desk and chair, and dividers for privacy.
 - To pay for equipment (i.e., webcams) to facilitate tele-conferencing with the Houston or Dallas Lactation Support Centers as per WIC Policy CS: 33.0, available at <https://hhs.texas.gov/sites/default/files/documents/doing-business-with-hhs/provider-portal/wic/policy/cs-33-0t.pdf> To pay for other innovative expenditures, which are approved on a case-by-case basis by the State Agency.
- Other breastfeeding expense as listed on WIC Policy AC34:0.

Registered Dietitian (RD) – Use this special funding for reimbursement of staff and contract RD duties and associated costs. Reimbursement vouchers must identify the category of expense (Admin, NE, or BF) to appropriately allocate funds. The following are examples of approved expenses:

NE Cost Category:

- Providing high-risk individual counseling
- Developing and conducting facilitated discussion nutrition education classes
- Consultation regarding the appropriate issuance of special formulas
- Nutrition publications and visual aids for on the job use
- Developing and implementing the NE plan for special projects such as projects related to Innovation Centers.
- Assisting with the implementation of Value Enhanced Nutrition Assessment (VENA)
- Providing staff training on nutrition-related topics and nutrition assessment procedures.
- Serving as preceptor for the WIC Certification Specialist Program
- Assisting with completion of the annual *Nutrition Education and Breastfeeding Plans*

ADMIN Cost Category:

- Developing, implementing, or assisting with the Quality Assurance Program (i.e. ongoing evaluation of individual counseling, nutrition education classes, clinical procedures, etc.)
- Developing and implementing the ADMIN plan for the Obesity Prevention projects.
- Registration fees to the Commission on Dietetic Registration for staff RD. (Not an allowable expense for Contract RD unless RD is also the NE Coordinator)
- Attending continuing education opportunities for staff RD only (i.e., professional conference fees) (Not an allowable expense for Contract RD)
- Other non-NE direct service activity, i.e. staff meetings, timesheet preparation, High Risk client scheduling

BF Cost Category:

- Providing assistance to the participants with breastfeeding issues and concerns
- Providing assistance to the participant with breast pump issues and concerns

Please note the following:

- All local agencies are required to have an RD on staff or on contract (*WIC Policy GA: 14.0*).
- You must follow *Policy AC: 16.0 – Allowable Costs – Professional Contract Services*, when securing the services of an RD consultant via contract.
- Use a separate *State of Texas Purchase Voucher (form 4116)* to bill the state for RD services funded by this special allocation. Specify on the face of the voucher that this is reimbursement for an RD consultant or to defray the cost of a staff RD.
- Prior to contracting with the RD, the RD must submit a current copy of his/her registration card from the Commission on Dietetic Registration.

The State Agency plans to reallocate any unused RD funds later this fiscal year. At that time, funds will be shifted from local agencies that have not used their funds to local agencies that need additional funding.

Snap-Ed Projects– Snap-Ed projects will focus on obesity prevention, nutrition education or breastfeeding friendly community initiatives, or peer counselor services for SNAP and WIC eligible populations within the community. Snap-Ed funding may be used to pay for staff time for staff who plan, develop or implement the nutrition education or breastfeeding activities. Snap-Ed funds may also be used for nutrition education reinforcements (\$5 or less per item) and expenses related to the project as detailed in your accepted project budget. A detailed list of Snap-Ed allowable costs can be found in Section 3: Financial and Cost Policy of the FY21 Snap-Ed Plan Guidance document. This document can be found here: <https://snaped.fns.usda.gov/program-administration/guidance-and-templates>.

If selected by System Agency, the amount awarded in your funding letter is a not to exceed amount. In order for the State Agency to track these expenditures, please bill on the Snap-Ed project voucher. Select the Snap-Ed project (i.e. Snap-Ed- OP, Snap-Ed- Breastfeeding) you are billing for and record the expenses for any of the categories provided. A copy of the voucher is available for download here: <https://txwic.egnyte.com/fl/wdkOll6TAG>.

Innovation Centers - Innovation center (IC) funds are used to implement Local Agency and State Agency driven projects that have been discussed and approved by the State Agency. Partial funds are **required** to fund a full time designated Innovation Lead for the IC. Clinic enhancements/ repairs or renovations in Year 1 may be completed using allocated funds up to \$50,000 (note: all renovations must be approved and must follow the Texas WIC Design Guidelines). Selected innovation centers should follow their approved project expenditures to carry out IC specific projects. Any changes to project expenditures should be discussed with the State Agency. Reimbursement vouchers must identify the category of expense (Admin, NE, or BF) to appropriately allocate funds.

EXTRA Funding

WIC SFSP - Summer Food Service Program - In order for the State Agency to track these expenditures, please bill for the Summer Food Service Program (SFSP) expenses on your LA Extra Funding vouchers and label the expense as SFSP on the face of the voucher. These expenses are to be allocated only to Administrative (Admin) costs.

Improving Participant Experience (IPE) – IPE funding is intended to be used to enhance and redesign clinic spaces with the goal of creating a positive client experience and a unified visual brand for Texas WIC. The Texas WIC Design Guidelines and Catalog **must** be used to implement design themes in clinics.

Allowable costs include:

- Clinic enhancements/ repairs or renovations (note: all renovations must be approved)
- Paint and flooring
- Furniture
- Artwork
- Lighting, ceiling tiles, internal finishes
- Signage
- Toys
- Exterior repairs

IPE Funding Requirements-LAs will be requested to provide:

- Photos of the clinic spaces designated for enhancements
- Clinic floor plan
- Details of work plan for each space
- Budget with estimated itemized cost
- Quarterly updates and photos demonstrating progress of clinic improvements
- Reports to the State Agency including budget status and results

Other requirements:

- Participate in activities requested by State Agency-sharing sessions, Texas WIC Express news articles, workgroups and NBF Conference activities.
- All funds must be expended September 30 of the Contract year.

TXIN Internet – All costs associated with keeping the TXIN system online with an internet service provider. These expenses are to be allocated only to Administrative (Admin) costs.

Funds are awarded with the understanding that any procurements using these funds will be in compliance with the state Uniform Grants Management Standards (UGMS), WIC policies, and the federal Uniform Grant Guidance 2 Part 200. This letter is approval for funding only. It does not relieve the agency from seeking additional approvals as required by WIC Policy.

If your local agency is unable to utilize allocated funds in the above special projects within the budgeted year, please contact the program lead.

Please be advised that acceptance of your project does not relieve you of the responsibility to seek State Agency approval for a specific dollar threshold related to particular items. Refer to the WIC Policies located on <https://hhs.texas.gov/doing-business-hhs/provider-portals/wic-providers/wic-policy-procedures-manual>.