



JOB DESCRIPTION
WIC Breastfeeding Peer Counselor
October 2024

The mission of Healthy Start is to improve maternal and child health and to reduce poor birth outcomes and infant mortality in Allegheny County.

Overview:

Healthy Start, in partnership with the Allegheny County Health Department's division of Women, Infants, and Children (WIC), is adding a full-time Breastfeeding Peer Counselor (BFPC) to the team! A BFPC is a paraprofessional support person who gives basic breastfeeding information and encouragement to pregnant and breastfeeding participants. BFPCs are women who have successfully breastfed, are trained to help other women in their communities and may have direct experience with the WIC program. As a part of the Healthy Start multidisciplinary team, our BFPCs have a passion for maternal and child health, and advance family systems and life course approaches to support improved birth outcomes and family and community health and well-being. Our BFPCs will focus on health equity, using evidence-based practice, supporting Healthy Start's unique contributions to the field of maternal and child health, eradicating disparities faced by members of the Black community, and will work to serve the Healthy Start and WIC participant population and the community at large.

Duties of the Position:

- Complete breastfeeding training classes to become a peer counselor.
- Deliver competent breastfeeding support to WIC participants within Allegheny County.
 - Give basic breastfeeding information and support to new mothers and help mothers prevent and handle common breastfeeding concerns.
 - Counsel mothers at the WIC clinic, by phone, or during hospital visits at scheduled intervals.
 - Refer mothers, according to clinic established protocols, to:
 - WIC nutritionist or breastfeeding coordinator
 - Lactation consultant
 - Physician, nurse, or other medical/public health professional
- Be available for shifts outside normal WIC clinic operation hours for new mothers who are having breastfeeding problems (on-call schedule will be established upon hire and occurs on rotating basis approximately once per week).
- Provide a positive customer service experience and timeliness of communication for all participants who interact with the program.
- Provide ongoing education and support to Healthy Start, WIC participants and community members.
- Perform other job-related duties as assigned by immediate supervisor.
- Represent Healthy Start and WIC in local, regional, and national meetings and on committees/working groups as needed and assigned.
- Comfortable with leading small groups such as a support group setting.
- Respects each mother by keeping her information strictly confidential.
- Keeps accurate records of all contacts made with WIC mothers.
- Attends and assists with prenatal classes and breastfeeding support groups as needed.
- Attends regular staff meetings and breastfeeding conferences/workshops as appropriate.
- Reads assigned books and materials on breastfeeding provided by the supervisor.
- May assist WIC staff in promoting breastfeeding peer counseling through special projects and duties as assigned.

- Professional demeanor is required as you will interact with people at all levels within the organization, outside of the organization and community.
- Operate a variety of office equipment, i.e., copier machine, facsimile, etc.
- Other duties as assigned.

Qualifications of Position:

Must have breastfed (does not have to be currently breastfeeding), be able to demonstrate advanced communication and problem-solving skills and an ability to utilize counseling techniques. Is enthusiastic about breastfeeding and wants to help other mothers enjoy a positive experience. Must be willing to be available to work occasional evening or weekend shifts to support breastfeeding mothers by making/receiving phone calls/text messages from home based on the established weekly schedule. Must be willing to initiate communication and provide follow up, be reliable to work shifts and have reliable transportation. Must demonstrate a passion for maternal and child health, with an understanding or willingness to understand public health concepts and health disparities. Must understand or be willing to understand the current and historical context of breastfeeding within the Black community, with a level of cultural humility in working with the target population. Must be proficient in or committed to learning Microsoft Word, Excel and Outlook. Preference will be given to applicants who demonstrate deep knowledge of and experience supporting breastfeeding women.

Other:

- COVID vaccination required
- Act 33/34 clearances are required
- A valid unrestricted Pennsylvania Driver’s License
- Current and valid unrestricted automobile insurance and be listed as an insured driver

Supervisory Relationship:

This position works under the direction of the Healthy Start Senior Program Manager, who serves as the WIC Agency Peer Counselor Supervisor.

Physical Demands:

- The work is performed in a hybrid, office home, and community environment. Candidates must be on call based on a rotating schedule and work at locales outside the office.
- Intense mental, visual and aural attention is required as the work involves responding to requests, planning or performing work that is at times, can be fast paced.
- There will be office work requiring sitting, typing and answering phones, with occasional light lifting, carrying, stooping, standing, bending, walking, and filing.
- Out of town and overnight travel may be required on occasion.

Compensation:

The starting salary for this position is \$17 per hour, with a competitive benefits package that includes professional development and room for self-care. **This is a 12-month grant-funded position with the possibility of an extension upon grant renewal.** This is an exempt position.

To apply, email resume and cover letter to hr@hsipgh.org.

Reasonable accommodations may be made to enable individuals with disabilities to perform the essential functions. Nothing in this job description restricts management's right to assign or reassign duties and responsibilities to this job at any time.