


MEMORANDUM

ACTION MEMO #17-02

TO: District Nutrition Services Directors

FROM: Angela Hammond-Damon, IBCLC 
Deputy Director, Operations and Nutrition Services
Georgia WIC Program

DATE: October 25, 2016

RE: 2016 Loving Support Award of Excellence Application Period

We are excited that the 2016 application period for the Loving Support Award of Excellence is now open, October 14, 2016 to December 14, 2016. The application period opens annually and offers three (3) award levels: Gold, Gold Premiere (Mid-level), and Gold Elite (Highest Level).

The *Loving Support Award of Excellence* is an initiative by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) that recognizes local agencies for critical breastfeeding support that they provide. The award recognizes local agencies that provide exemplary breastfeeding promotion and support activities to WIC participants. The Loving Support Award seeks to highlight unique breastfeeding programs in WIC local agencies and provide models that strengthen breastfeeding promotion and support.

In an effort to continue to build the infrastructure for breastfeeding promotion and support, districts must complete at a minimum the Gold Award Application questions attached and submit to the State WIC Office by November 21, 2016. The information from the application provides the State WIC Office with valuable insight about individual districts across Georgia. From this information, many districts will be encouraged to complete and submit their final applications for further review by USDA on the official *Food and Nutrition Services* website before the closing date of December 14, 2016, should you feel confident that you want to apply for recognition.

Districts who have won an award within the past four (4) years, will complete the application questions for the level above the designated award (i.e. if you won the *Gold Award*, submit the *Gold Premiere/Elite Application* questions).



Action Steps:

1. Review attached *Loving Support Award of Excellence Application Assistance* PDF.
2. Complete the appropriate attached application questions (i.e. *Gold Application* or *Gold Premier/Elite Application*).
3. Return completed application questions with attached documentation, when applicable to the State WIC Office (SWO) at GAWIC.breastfeeding@dph.ga.gov by November 21, 2016.
4. If eligible, and so desired, complete award application at <http://www.fns.usda.gov/wic/loving-support-award-excellence-program> by December 14, 2016. (*optional*)

We look forward to the receipt of your completed application questions with attached documentation, and hope to see all districts across Georgia recognized for their critical breastfeeding support to WIC participants in 2017.

In regards to any questions or concerns, please contact Shlonda Smith at (404) 463-0901 or via email shlonda.smith@dph.ga.gov .

Attachments (5)

c: Debra L. Keyes, MA, RD - Director, Georgia WIC Program
District Health Directors
District Program Managers
WIC Deputy Directors
WIC Managers



Loving Support Award of Excellence Gold Premiere and Gold Elite Award Application Instructions

There are 3 Award Levels: Gold, Gold Premiere, and Gold Elite.

Gold Award Questions: In order to be eligible for any level of award applicants must fulfill the criteria for all the Gold Award questions.

The Gold Award application has a total of 30 questions. The Gold Award questions, worth 1 point each, are criteria identified as best practices, which demonstrate excellence in breastfeeding practices and support, and relate to practices beyond the core components of Loving Support® Model.

Gold Premiere and Gold Elite Award Questions: The Gold Premiere and Gold Elite application has 16 questions. The Gold Premiere and Gold Elite questions are each worth 2 or 3 points. The questions for these higher level awards are criteria identified as exemplary practices that are deserving of the highest recognition of excellence. An applicant may fill out only the Gold award application and choose not to complete the combined application for the Gold Premiere and Gold Elite awards.

Performance data: **Applicant does not submit performance data.** The performance data considered is the rate of exclusively breastfed infants reported by local WIC agencies and published annually on the FNS website. Performance data is considered for the Gold Premiere and Gold Elite Awards. Evaluators will use the most recent data posted on the [FNS website](#).

GOLD AWARD

- All Gold Award application questions (30 points) must be answered “yes” to be eligible.
- Seven of the 30 questions require you to add additional documentation to support your response.
- Performance data is not considered.

GOLD PREMIERE AWARD

- Applicants must meet the criteria for the Gold Award (30 points) **and**
- **Additional 18 points** from the Gold Premiere and Gold Elite application questions such that additional points are awarded in **each** of the 3 sections:
 - a minimum of 9 points from the Peer Counseling section,
 - a minimum of 4 points from the Partnership section,
 - a minimum of 5 points from the Other Criteria section.

Public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 2 hours per response, including the time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information. An agency may not conduct or sponsor, and a person is not required to respond to, a collection of information unless it displays a currently valid OMB control number. Send comments regarding this burden estimate or any other aspect of this collection of information, including suggestions for reducing this burden, to: U.S. Department of Agriculture, Food and Nutrition Services, Office of Research and Analysis, Room 1014, Alexandria, VA 22302 ATTN: PRA (0584-0591). Do not return the completed form to this address.

- **and** Performance data of **either**:
 - the rate of exclusively breastfed infants is at least **15 %** or higher in the previous year of published data, and the most recently published year of data shows an increase over the previous year **OR**
 - the rate of exclusively breastfed infants is at least **25 %** or higher in the most recently published year of data

GOLD ELITE AWARD (highest level)

- Applicants must meet the criteria for the Gold Award (30 points) **and**
- **ALL** of the Gold Premiere and Gold Elite application questions are answered “yes” (37 points) and
- Performance data that demonstrates **40%** or higher of the infants are exclusively breastfed

Documentation

Some questions in this application require additional documents. There are two types of document requests, a unique narrative and/or supportive documentation.

Narrative refers to a document with explanatory statements that have been written exclusively for the purpose of this application. The narrative should describe how your agency meets the criteria of a specific question as noted in the instructions. **Narratives are not to exceed 500 words.**

Supportive documentation refers to documents that already exist. An example may be, but is not limited to, a policy/ procedure from the state manual that your local agency follows or a locally developed MOU. You may submit these documents to demonstrate your agency meets the criteria of a specific question as noted in the instructions for that question. When attaching documentation, indicate the page number(s) where the specific information can be found in response to the question.

Each document you attach to the application must have a unique name/title entered into the application. The title should reflect the content of the document. If you submit the same document for more than one question, enter the same document title again, and indicate the page number(s) that corresponds to the specific question.

Do not submit entire policy and procedure manuals

Download and save the application to your computer before entering ANY information.

Work completed on the application prior to being downloaded and saved will be lost.

In order to be eligible to apply for a Gold Premiere or Gold Elite award, you must have applied and met the criteria for a Gold Award for this application period.

PEER COUNSELING

Question 1. (2 points)

Do you have established guidelines for how many hours of observation/shadowing are required as part of peer counseling training/continuing education?

Check the appropriate box (Yes/No) in response to the question.

Question 2. (2 points)

Do you have an IBCLC on staff or do you contract with an IBCLC to serve as a referral source for peer counselors?

Check the appropriate box (Yes/No) in response to the question.

Question 3. (2 points)

Do you have a referral process in place between hospitals and the WIC Program to facilitate peer counselor follow-up for WIC mothers shortly after discharge?

Check the appropriate box (Yes/No) in response to the question.

Question 4. (2 points)

Do you have a system that electronically documents and tracks peer counseling referrals and contacts?

Check the appropriate box (Yes/No) in response to the question.

Question 5. (3 points)

Do you have policies and procedures for home visits as part of your peer counseling program?

The supportive documentation must include a process for making home visits and procedures which address travel, safety and confidentiality.

Examples of acceptable supportive documentation: Policy and procedures, Staff training materials

Check the appropriate box (Yes/No) in response to the question.

Attach the supportive documentation; fill in the document title and indicate the page numbers where the information that answers this question can be found.

Question 6. (3 points)

Do you have policies and procedures for hospital visits as part of your peer counseling program?

The supportive documentation must include:

- a process for making hospital visits,
- describe the relationship with hospital,
- address confidentiality, supervision, liability, and
- clarify the scope of practice and the role of the peer counselor.

Examples of acceptable supportive documentation: Policy and procedures, Staff training materials, Written agreements/contracts with hospitals

Check the appropriate box (Yes/No) in response to the question.

Attach supportive documentation. Fill in the document title and indicate the page number(s) where the information that answers this question can be found.

Question 7. (2 points)

Do you have a recognition program in place to acknowledge peer counselor accomplishments?

Check the appropriate box (Yes/No) in response to the question.

Question 8. (2 points)

Do you include career path structures for upward mobility of peer counselors?

Check the appropriate box (Yes/No) in response to the question.

Question 9. (3 points)

Do you have policies and procedures for peer counselors to communicate via social media technologies, e.g., Facebook, text messaging, Twitter, Skype or PalTalk?

Social media is the use of web-based and mobile technologies to turn communication into interactive dialogue and build a sense of community among users. Social media represents a fundamental shift in the way people communicate in recent years. Research shows that WIC's target population of low-income mothers use social media extensively as a means to communicate.

The narrative and/or the supportive documentation should indicate how the local agency is using social media technologies with peer counselors. It should indicate how they allow peer counselors to use social media and/or electronic communication for at least one of the following reasons: training, communicating with mothers, communicating with supervisors, communicating with other peer counselors, communicating with referral sources.

Documentation must include information on at least one of the following that allows peer counselors opportunities to communicate via social media technologies or other electronic media: Facebook, text messaging, Twitter, Skype, PalTalk, other electronic media.

Policies and procedures must address confidentiality and privacy, proper etiquette, and follows local agency, health department or State policies for use of social media. It also must indicate supervisory monitoring of communication.

Examples of acceptable supportive documentation: Policies and procedures, Screen shots, Peer counselor documentation log

Check the appropriate box (Yes/No) in response to the question.

Please describe in a narrative how your peer counseling program is implementing social media technologies **and** attach supportive documentation. Narrative not to exceed 500 words.

Attach narrative **and** supportive documentation that indicate existing policies and procedures for peer counselors to communicate via social media technologies.

Fill in all document titles for both the narrative and supportive documentation and indicate the page number(s) that corresponds to each document.

PARTNERSHIP

Although the WIC Program can provide many of the services breastfeeding women in the community need to educate and support breastfeeding families, WIC cannot do it alone. Various community entities such as public health programs, coalitions, schools and businesses influence a mother's ability to initiate and continue breastfeeding. Establishing meaningful partnerships among these relevant community organization/resources is critical to a mother's breastfeeding success.

Partnership is defined as a sustainable ongoing voluntary collaborative agreement between two or more parties based on mutually agreed upon objectives and a shared vision, generally within a formal structure. The partners agree to work together to achieve a common goal, undertake specific tasks, and share risks, responsibilities, resources, competencies and benefits in order to provide breastfeeding support throughout the continuum of care.

Question 10. (2 points)

Does the partnership have a written agreement or a Memorandum of Understanding?

Examples of acceptable supportive documentation: Memorandum of Understanding, Written agreement

Documentation attached includes all of the following:

- Description of the role of each partner
- Description of the goals and outcomes.
- Description of the types of activities planned.

Check the appropriate box (Yes/No) in response to the question.

Attach supportive documentation. Fill in the document title and indicate the page number(s) where the information that answers this question can be found.

Question 11. (2 points)

Have new policies or procedures been developed because of the partnership?

Describe the new procedures developed as a result of the partnership in a brief narrative or attach supportive documentation that indicates policies or procedures have been developed as a result of the partnership. Narrative not to exceed 500 words.

Acceptable documentation: Narrative or Supportive Documentation. Examples of acceptable supportive documentation: Policy and procedures

Check the appropriate box (Yes/No) in response to the question.

Attach narrative or supportive documentation. Fill in the document title and indicate the page number(s) where the information that answers this question can be found if using supportive documentation.

Question 12. (2 points)

Does the partnership have a plan for sustainability?

Check the appropriate box (Yes/No) in response to the question.

OTHER CRITERIA

Question 13. (2 points)

Do you partner with stakeholders such as the American Hospital Association to support the Baby-Friendly Hospital Initiative in your community?

Check the appropriate box (Yes/No) in response to the question.

Question 14. (2 points)

Do you have a supportive clinic environment that implements breastfeeding-friendly workplace policies for WIC staff?

The supportive documentation should indicate workplace policies that are breastfeeding-friendly for WIC staff and should include adequate time and an appropriate place to express milk and a program such as a “Bring your baby to work” program for staff who are breastfeeding.

Examples of acceptable supportive documentation: Policies and procedures

Check the appropriate box (Yes/No) in response to the question.

Attach the supportive documentation; fill in the document title and indicate the page number(s) where the information that answers this question can be found.

SUPPORT OF EXCLUSIVE BREASTFEEDING

Exclusive breastfeeding, feeding only breastmilk and nothing else except drops or syrups consisting of vitamins, minerals or medications, is recognized as the optimal feeding practice for infants. It confers the most health benefits for babies and mothers and contributes to a longer duration of breastfeeding. Although women are aware that breastfeeding is the best source of nutrition for their infants, many are uncertain about what to expect and how to actually carry it out (Surgeon General’s Call to Action). WIC staff have an important role in educating mothers about exclusive breastfeeding, encouraging new mothers to breastfeed exclusively for 6 months and providing the support necessary for them to feel confident in their ability to do so. The local agency must have policies and procedures in place that ensure benefits and services (support and assistance) are provided which support exclusive breastfeeding.

Staff provide realistic strategies to mothers on how to feed their baby only breast milk and provide appropriate support and/or referrals as needed.

STAFF TRAINING

Breastfeeding promotion and support has always been a key part of the WIC Program’s mission to improve the health of its target population. However, as the focus on breastfeeding has increased, it has become essential for all staff to have knowledge and skills needed to encourage and support breastfeeding mothers. All local agency staff who interact with WIC participants should be trained to have a level of competence in breastfeeding promotion and support relevant to their tasks and responsibilities.

OTHER CRITERIA

Question 15. (3 points)

Do you provide funding or work hours for education and training for staff to pursue certifications and advanced credentials in breastfeeding? (e.g. CLC, CLE, IBCLC)

The supportive documentation should indicate funding or staff working hours are provided for education and training for staff in pursuit of certifications and advanced credentials in breastfeeding.

Examples of acceptable supportive documentation: Policy and procedures, Nutrition education plan.

Check the appropriate box (Yes/No) in response to the question.

Attach the supportive documentation; fill in the document title and indicate the page number(s) where the information that answers this question can be found.

PRENATAL/EARLY POSTPARTUM SUPPORT

The third trimester of pregnancy and the early postpartum period are critical times in encouraging and supporting mothers who express intention to breastfeed and those who have initiated breastfeeding. These time periods are important to helping mothers establish successful breastfeeding relationships with their babies. During the prenatal period, a mother should be educated about breastfeeding and her ability to produce milk. She should be assured that her baby will get enough milk from her to thrive. During the first few weeks after delivery, mothers need assurance they are successful and support should be provided if problems arise.

Question 16. (3 points)

Do you provide around the clock assistance to assist mothers working through their breastfeeding problems?

Please describe in a narrative how you provide assistance to breastfeeding mothers around the clock. Narrative not to exceed 500 words.

Check the appropriate box (Yes/No) in response to the question.

Attach the narrative. Fill in the narrative title.

Please complete the Application Checklist on Page 5 and the Application Verification Form on page 6 of the Application.

Thank you for applying for the WIC Loving Support Award of Excellence

**For more information, visit the FNS WIC Website:
<http://www.fns.usda.gov/wic/breastfeeding-promotion-and-support-wic>**

Loving Support Award of Excellence Application Assistance for Local WIC Agencies



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The purpose of this PowerPoint presentation is to inform applicants how to complete the Loving Support Award of Excellence applications.

Updates

- FAQ's
- Dedicated webpage for past Awardees
- Gold Application
 - Added one question, 30 total points for Gold
 - New instructions for past Gold Award Awardees
- Gold Premiere Application
 - Reduced points from 3 points to 2 points on one question, 37 total points for Gold Elite



2

FNS has updated the FAQ's and Applications, along with creating a new page dedicated to past Gold and Gold Premiere Awardees.

These updates have been incorporated into the slideshow.

Documents Needed

Download the following documents from the FNS website: <http://www.fns.usda.gov/wic/loving-support-award-of-excellence-program>

- Gold Application
- Gold Application Instructions
- Gold Premiere and Gold Elite Application
- Gold Premiere and Gold Elite Application Instructions



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Before you continue, please be sure you have downloaded the documents you see listed here as you will need them for reference for this presentation.

If you have not, I recommend you go to the FNS website (<http://www.fns.usda.gov/wic/loving-support-award-of-excellence-program>) and download the documents listed.

Who can apply?

Local WIC Agencies

- Designated in WIC Local Agency Directory Report Form FNS-648
- Operated a peer counseling program for at least 1 year
- Peer counseling program must meet all of the required core components of the FNS Loving Support Model® for a successful peer counseling program.



What are the awards?

- Gold Award
- Gold Premiere Award (midlevel award)
- Gold Elite Award (highest level award)



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There are 3 awards but only 2 applications: one application for the Gold award and one combined application for Gold Premiere Award or the Gold Elite Award.

The criteria for each award will be discussed later in the presentation.

Gold Award Application and Instructions

Gold Award Application and Instructions

There are 3 Award Levels: Gold, Gold Premiere, and Gold Elite. The Gold Award application has a total of 16 questions. The Gold Premiere and Gold Elite Award applications have 16 questions. The Gold Premiere and Gold Elite Award applications have 16 questions for these higher level awards and are deserving of the highest recognition of excellence.

Gold Award Questions: In order to be eligible for all the Gold Award questions, the applicant must be a U.S. citizen or permanent resident, at least 18 years old, and have a minimum of 1 year of experience in the field of child nutrition. The Gold Award application has a total of 16 questions, are criteria identified as best practice, and relate to practice, and relate to practice.

Gold Premiere and Gold Elite Award Questions: The Gold Premiere and Gold Elite Award applications have 16 questions for these higher level awards and are deserving of the highest recognition of excellence.

Loving Support Award of Excellence Gold Award Application

OMB Control Number: 0584-0098
Expiration date: 03/31/2017

Cover Sheet

Local Agency Name

Street Address

City, State, Zip code

Applicant's Name and Title

Telephone Number

Email address

Date

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At this point you should have both the Gold application and Gold application instructions in front of you.

The images here are the first page of the Gold Award application and the Gold Award application instructions.

The awards build on one another so you must start with the Gold application whether you are applying for the Gold award or a higher award.

Your first step in applying will be to fill out the cover sheet of the application, seen here on the right.

It is important that you take the time to enter your full Local agency name and all of the information on the cover sheet correctly so FNS will have your contact information when the time comes to notify awardees.

On the left of the screen you see the instructions for filing out the Gold application. You will need the instructions to help you work through the application as the instructions will give you the information the evaluators will be looking for.

Gold Award Prescreening Questions

In order to apply for an award of excellence, your local agency must first be able to answer "Yes" to the following two questions.

- 1. Has your local agency peer counseling program been in place for at least one year? Check Yes on the application if appropriate.**
- 2. Does your local agency peer counseling program meet ALL of the components of the FNS Loving Support® Model for a Successful Peer Counseling Program as listed below? Check Yes on the application if appropriate.**

LOVING SUPPORT® MODEL REQUIRED PROGRAM COMPONENTS

Program Management

- The local agency has a designated peer counseling program manager or coordinator.
- The local agency has standardized breastfeeding peer counseling program policies in place as part of its nutrition education plan.
- Local agency staff is trained on supporting the peer counseling program.
- The local agency has a WIC designated breastfeeding expert for referrals outside of the peer counselor's scope of practice.
- The local agency has established community partnerships to enhance the effectiveness of its peer counseling program, e.g., hospitals, health care providers, home visiting programs, etc.

Peer Counselor Staffing

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Here you see page 2 of the Gold award application.

As you can see there are 2 prescreening questions that you are required to answer before proceeding to the application.

These questions are based on the criteria mentioned previously with regard to who can apply for this award. In order to apply for any award, you must have operated a peer counseling program for at least 1 year and the peer counseling program meets all core components of the FNS Loving Support Model for a successful peer counseling program.

For question 2, please refer to the Loving Support® Model Required Program Components. If you answer 'yes' to both prescreening questions, you are eligible to apply for the Gold Award.

If you do not meet the prescreening requirements, do not continue with the application. Instead, strengthen those identified areas to improve upon for the next application period.

The application will open again next fiscal year to provide you with an opportunity to apply at that time.

Documentation and Narrative Explanation

Documentation

Some questions in this application require additional documents. There are two types of document requests, a unique narrative and/or supportive documentation.

Narrative refers to a document with explanatory statements that have been written exclusively for the purpose of this application. The narrative should describe how your agency meets the criteria of a specific question as noted in the instructions. **Narratives are not to exceed 500 words.**

Supportive documentation refers to documents that already exist. An example may be, but is not limited to, a policy/ procedure from the state manual that your local agency follows or a locally developed MOU. You may submit these documents to demonstrate your agency meets the criteria of a specific question as noted in the instructions for that question. When attaching documentation, indicate the page number(s) where the specific information can be found in response to the question.

Each document you attach to the application must have a unique name/title entered into the application. The title should reflect the content of the document. If you submit the same document for more than one question, enter the same document title again, and indicate the page number(s) that corresponds to the specific question.

Do not submit entire policy and procedure manuals.

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On page 3 of the Gold Application Instructions, as well as page 2 of the Gold Premiere and Gold Elite Application Instructions you will see the documentation and narrative explanation shown here.

Some questions require additional documentation. Narratives are written exclusively for this application and should not exceed 500 words.

Supportive Documentation is preexisting policies, procedures, agreements, etc.

Pay special attention to the examples of acceptable supportive documentation and narratives within the Instruction document. This is the criteria which the response will be evaluated and points given or not given.

Acceptable forms of documentation include PDF (.pdf) and Word (.doc or .docx) documents

Documentation example

Application

2. Do you have a protocol that describes how peer counselors address a mother's concerns and needs outside of usual clinic hours, including how peer counselors make after-hour referrals? Attach supportive documentation. Fill in the document title and indicate the page number(s) where the information that answers this question can be found.	Yes <input type="radio"/>	No <input type="radio"/>
	Document Title	
	Page Number(s)	

Application instructions

Question 2. (1 point)
Do you have a protocol that describes how peer counselors address a mother's concerns and needs outside of usual clinic hours, including how peer counselors make after-hour referrals?

The key to success in peer counseling is being available to mothers when they need it most. Breastfeeding problems often occur outside usual business hours, and peer counselors provide important support beyond usual WIC services. The Loving Support® Model for a Successful Peer Counseling Program requires that peer counselors be available to mothers outside of usual clinic hours, i.e., evenings and weekends. Exemplary peer counseling programs develop strategies to ensure that peer counselors are available to address a mother's concerns and needs in a timely manner (via telephone, hotline, or face-to-face) and that referral and follow-up are provided.

The supportive documentation should indicate that the local agency has a specific plan in place that addresses how peer counselors address a mother's concerns and needs outside of usual clinic hours.

Examples of Acceptable Supportive Documentation: Policies and procedures or protocols, Training materials, Position descriptions / Roles and Responsibilities

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Here you can see an example of how the application and instructions work together.

The top box in this slide is a screenshot of Question 2 from page 2 of the Gold award application, and the bottom box is a screenshot of the criteria for Question 2 found on page 4 of the Gold award application instructions.

Based on the criteria in the instructions, you will be able to determine what supportive documentation can be used to fully answer each question. On the instructions you will find what should be included in the documentation or narrative.

For example, Question 2 shown here requires that you attach supportive documentation describing how peer counselors address a mother's concerns and needs outside of usual clinic hours. Examples of acceptable supportive documentation include: policies and procedures or protocols, training materials, and position descriptions with roles and responsibilities. As mentioned in the third paragraph down in the instructions box, you see the list of the specific criteria that the document must include.

In this example "The supportive documentation should indicate that the local agency has a specific plan in place that addresses how peer counselors address a mother's concerns and needs outside of usual clinic hours."

Therefore for each question that requires documentation the instructions will have this important information on what type of documentation is acceptable and what content should be included. *That is the criteria the evaluators will be looking at to determine if points can be awarded.*

Once you have your determined your supportive documentation, you will then go to the application, as seen in the top box, and enter the name of the document (i.e Peer Counseling Availability Policy) and enter the page(s) where the information supporting your response can be found.

Please do not submit entire policy and procedure manuals!

Gold Award Evaluation and Scoring

- 30 points
- All questions are required
- Performance data is not considered



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Your State Agency and FNS will evaluate your application and supportive documentation based on the criteria as described in the Application Instructions.

To be eligible for the Gold award you must have 30 points.

There are 30 questions each worth 1 point, therefore you must answer all the questions “yes” to be eligible for a Gold award.

Performance data is not considered for the Gold award.

Submitting the Gold Award Application

- A complete Gold award application includes:
 - Cover sheet with the Agency information
 - Responds to all 30 questions
 - Attached documentation
- Upload complete Gold application to <https://www.hightail.com/u/WWRS>.



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Please ensure all documents referred to in the Gold Application are uploaded with the application as additional submission of documents will not be accepted.

A complete application includes:

- Cover sheet with Agency information
- Responded to all 30 questions
- Attached documentation

Use the checklist provided on page 6 of the Gold Application to ensure a complete application package.

Complete the Applicant Verification Form on Page 7.

Upload the complete Gold application to <https://www.hightail.com/u/WWRS>. Instruction on how to use Hightail Secure Upload will be discussed later in the presentation.

Once you have completed the Gold award application you have the option to start Gold Premiere and Gold Elite Application

Previous Gold Awardees

- Awards are valid for 4 years.
- When applying to a higher level award with a valid Gold Award:
 - New process for this year
- Past Gold Awardees will submit a Gold Application with:
 - Cover Page
 - Prescreening Questions
 - Checklist
 - Verification of the Gold Application



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These instructions are only for Past Gold Awardees interested in applying for a higher award. For those without a past Gold Award, please resume on slide 15 for instructions on Gold Premiere/Elite Applications.

All Awards are valid for 4 years.

When applying to a higher level award with a valid Gold certificate, the Gold application does not have to be completely redone to apply to the combined Premiere and Elite application.

However, the Applicant must complete the Cover Page, Prescreening Questions, Checklist and Verification of the Gold Application before moving onto the Gold Premiere/Elite Application.

The next slides will explain the steps to complete within the Gold Application and Gold Application Instructions before moving onto the higher level applications.

Previous Gold Awardees

- <http://www.fns.usda.gov/wic/breastfeeding-promotion-and-support-wic>

> Fact Sheet
> How WIC Helps
> Reports
> Resources
> Program Data
> Breastfeeding Promotion and Support
> WIC Food Packages
> Links
> WIC Works Resource System

FY 2010 WIC Breastfeeding Data Local Agency Report
Released October 2012
FY 2010 WIC Breastfeeding Data Local Agency Report
Released December 2011

loving support.
MAKES BREASTFEEDING WORK

U.S. Department of Agriculture, Food and Nutrition Service (FNS), Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children (WIC) announce the Loving Support Award of Excellence program. The award program was established to recognize local WIC agencies that have provided exemplary breastfeeding promotion and support activities.

The intent is to provide models and motivate other local agencies and clinics to strengthen their breastfeeding promotion and support activities and ultimately increase breastfeeding initiation and duration rates among WIC participants.

Three levels of excellence will be recognized and awarded: **Gold, Gold Premiere, and Gold Elite.**

Who can apply:
Local WIC agencies that have operated a peer counseling program for at least one year, which meets all of the required core components of the FNS **Loving Support® Model** for a successful peer counseling program. The application period will open once annually.

Application Details and To Apply
[The Loving Support Awards of Excellence Awardees](#)

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After completing the Cover Page and Prescreening Questions of the Gold Application, you are instructed proceed to page 12 of the Gold Application Instructions.

Previous Gold Awardees applying for a higher level award can verify the year they received an Award by going to <http://www.fns.usda.gov/wic/breastfeeding-promotion-and-support-wic> . This will link you to the list of all Awardees (highlighted in blue).

The year your Local agency was awarded will be entered on the Gold Application Checklist on page 6 of the Gold Application.

Loving Support of Excellence Gold Award Application Checklist

Please review the checklist prior to submitting application and supportive documentation.

Previous Gold Awardees		
If your local agency has a valid Gold award, please fill out the year your local agency received the award.	Year Received <input type="text"/>	
Please enter the full name of your Local Agency without abbreviations or acronyms and complete the Application Verification Form on page 7 of the Application.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
Continue on to the application for the Gold Premiere and Gold Elite Awards to apply for a higher level award.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
New Applicants		
All 30 questions need to be answered "Yes" to be eligible for the Gold Award. Verify that all questions have been answered.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
Narratives and/or supportive documentation must be attached to the application to be eligible for an Award.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>


This slide is a screenshot of the Gold Award Application Checklist in the Gold Application on page 6.

After verifying the year you received an Award, put the year your local agency received the award in the textbox. Complete the next two items on the checklist.

Make sure you have entered information in for the following before moving onto the Gold Premiere/Elite Application: Cover Page, Prescreening Questions, Checklist and Verification of the Gold Application.

If you have not received a Gold award in the past 4 years, you MUST complete the Gold application with supportive documentation to be considered for any award.

Gold Premiere and Gold Elite Award



U.S. Department of Agriculture, Food and Nutrition Service (FNS),
Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children (WIC)

OMB Control Number: 0584-0098
 Expiration date: 03/31/2017

There are 3 Award Levels: Gold, Gold Premiere, and Gold Elite. The Gold Award questions are the same for all the Gold Award questions.

Gold Award Questions: In order to receive the Gold Award, applicants must meet the criteria for all the Gold Award questions. The Gold Award application has a total of 16 questions. Each question is identified as best practices and support, and relate to the Gold Award Model.

Gold Premiere and Gold Elite Award Questions: The Gold Premiere and Gold Elite Award application has 16 questions. The Gold Premiere and Gold Elite Award questions for these higher level awards are more challenging and deserving of the highest recognition.

**Loving Support Award of Excellence
Gold Premiere and Gold Elite Award
Application Instructions**



U.S. Department of Agriculture, Food and Nutrition Service (FNS),
Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children (WIC)



**Loving Support Award of Excellence
Gold Premiere and Gold Elite Award Application**

Cover Sheet

Local Agency Name	
Street Address	
City, State, Zip code	
Applicant's Name and Title	
Telephone Number	
Email address	

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Now that we covered the Gold award, I will be covering the Gold Premiere and Gold Elite awards.

For this section you should have the Gold Premiere and Gold Elite award application along with the Gold Premiere and Gold Elite application instructions in front of you.

The images here are the first page of both of those documents.

As with the Gold award application, your first step will be to fill out the cover page of the Gold Premiere and Gold Elite Application.

And similar to the Gold award instructions you will find the criteria and points for each question in the application instructions.

Also you will see on page 2 of the Gold Premiere and Gold Elite award application instructions, the explanation of supportive documentation and narrative section for this application is the same as the Gold Application.

Prescreening for Gold Premiere and Gold Elite Awards

DOWNLOAD INSTRUCTIONS FROM WIC WORKS BEFORE BEGINNING APPLICATION IN ORDER TO BE ELIGIBLE TO APPLY FOR A GOLD PREMIERE OR GOLD ELITE AWARD, YOU MUST HAVE APPLIED AND MET THE CRITERIA FOR A GOLD AWARD FOR THIS APPLICATION PERIOD.

1. Have you completed the Gold Award application for this application?

Yes

Application



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If you open the combined Gold Premiere and Gold Elite Award application to page 2, you will see the prescreening question here on the slide, at the top of the page.

The prescreening question must be answered before proceeding to the application questions.

The Gold Premiere and Gold Elite Application can only be completed after the Gold Application is complete.

The awards build on each other; you must be eligible for a Gold Award in order to be able to apply for a Gold Premiere award or a Gold Elite award.

Evaluation and Scoring for the Combined Gold Premiere and Gold Elite Application

16 questions

- each worth 2 or 3 points (see points in the instructions)

3 areas

- Peer Counseling
- Partnerships
- Other Criteria

Performance data considered

- You *do not* upload your performance data



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As you look at the Gold Premiere and Gold Elite application and instructions, you will see that there are a total of 16 questions in 3 areas: Peer Counseling, Partnership, and Other Criteria.

The questions are worth 2 or 3 points. You can find how many points may be awarded for each question in the application instructions next to the question number.

Again, the application and application instructions are meant to be used together. You will need to refer to the instructions throughout the time that you are filling out the application.

The points will be used to calculate your score for eligibility for an award.

Performance data is considered for these 2 higher level awards.

You will not have to upload your performance data; however you will want to know what it is to determine if you are eligible for the 2 higher awards.

Performance Data

- Participant data for fully breastfed infant food package participation, expressed as a percentage of total infant participants in each local agency
- WIC Breastfeeding Data Local Agency Report
<http://www.fns.usda.gov/wic/breastfeeding-promotion-and-support-wic>



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The performance data considered for the awards is the program participant data for fully breastfed infant food package participation, expressed as a percentage of total infant participants in each local agency.

See the WIC Breastfeeding Data Local Agency Reports or FAQ for more information.

The performance data used will be from the most recently posted WIC Breastfeeding Data Local Agency Reports posted on the FNS public website at the URL listed here on the slide

<http://www.fns.usda.gov/wic/breastfeeding-promotion-and-support-wic>

Gold Premiere Award Evaluation and Scoring

Premiere Award- 18 points in addition to Gold Award points

- a minimum of 9 points from the Peer Counseling section
- a minimum of 4 points from the Partnership section
- a minimum of 5 points from the Other Criteria section

Premiere Award Performance Data

- 15 % or higher of the infants are exclusively breastfed in the previous year of published data, and the most recently published year of data shows an increase over the previous year **OR**
- the rate of exclusively breastfed infants is at least 25 % or higher in the most recently published year of data



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To be eligible for a Gold Premiere Award you will need 18 points in addition to the Gold Award points.

There are a minimum number of points need from each of the sections. You will need

- a minimum of 9 points from the Peer Counseling section,
- a minimum of 4 points from the Partnership section,
- a minimum of 5 points from the Other Criteria section

And although you do not need to answer all 16 questions to meet the minimum point requirements for the Gold Premiere award, it is recommended that you respond to as many questions as possible.

AND

The performance data indicating that 15 % or higher of the infants are exclusively breastfed in the previous year of published data, and the most recently published year of data shows an increase over the previous year OR the rate of exclusively breastfed infants is at least 25 % or higher in the most recently published year of data

Gold Elite Award Evaluation and Scoring

- Gold Award criteria met
- ALL questions on the Gold Premiere and Gold Elite application answered “yes”
- Performance Data
 - **40%** or higher



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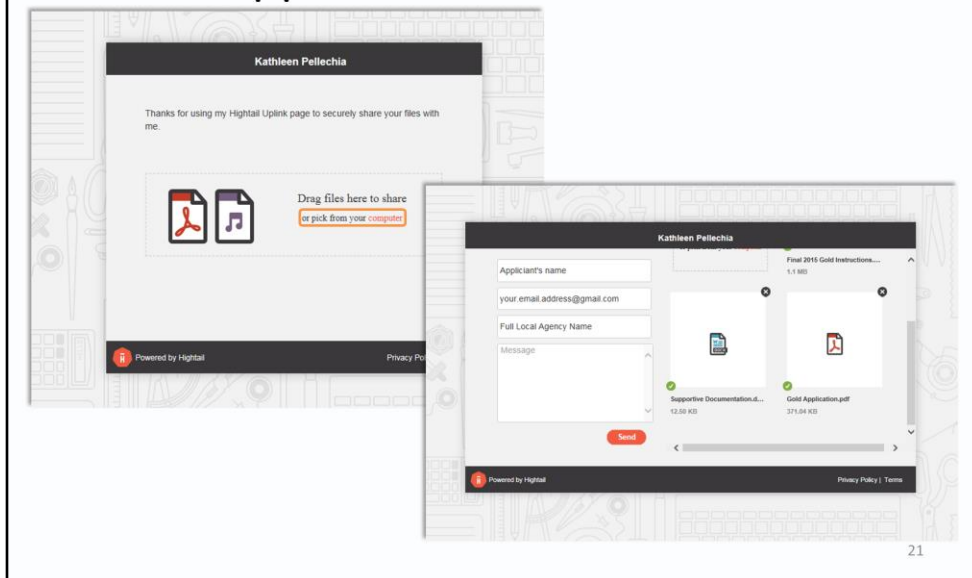
Now we will move on to the scoring of the highest level award, the Gold Elite award.

As stated previously the awards build on each other. The highest award, the Gold Elite award, builds on both the Gold and the Gold Premiere awards.

The Gold Elite award requires that you have met the criteria for the Gold award, And that you have answered ALL the questions, and met the criteria for all the questions, on the Gold Premiere and Gold Elite application, and the performance data criteria is met.

The performance data required for the Gold Elite award is the percent of exclusively breastfed infants at 40% or higher.

Submitting the Application(s) and Supportive Documentation



Upload the completed application and supportive documentation to <https://www.hightail.com/u/WWRS>

To upload your application(s) and supportive documentation, click on “pick files from your computer”. A window will appear where you can locate and open your files for uploading.

In the “Your Name” box, please enter your name. This should be the same person who’s name is on the Application Verification Form on page 6 of the Gold Application or page 5 for the Gold Premiere/Elite Application.

Enter your email in the “Email” text box. After submission, you will receive an confirmation receipt.

In the Subject text box, please enter your Full Local Agency name exactly as it is written on the Application Coversheet. It is not necessary to enter any information in the “Message” text box.

You can only have one submission via Hightail per Local Agency and you cannot attach additional documents after you click “Send”.

Double check to make sure all you have attached your completed application and **ALL** supportive documentation. Click the “Send” button to submit your application packet.

You are now finished with the Loving Support Award of Excellence application process!
Congrats!

Technical Assistance

- Frequently Asked Questions on the FNS Website
<http://www.fns.usda.gov/wic/loving-support-award-of-excellence-program>

Email WICHQ-SFPD@fns.usda.gov for assistance with:

- Downloading and/or uploading application and documents email
- Application Questions and/or Instructions email



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If you have questions regarding the application process, the Frequently Asked Questions are available on FNS website at the URL listed here.

Frequently Asked Questions on the FNS website <http://www.fns.usda.gov/wic/loving-support-award-of-excellence-program>.

If you have questions or need assistance with downloading and/or uploading the applications and documents or for questions about the Application Questions and/or the Instructions you can use the email listed here: WICHQ-SFPD@fns.usda.gov

Thank you



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Thank you for taking the time to view this PowerPoint presentation.



Loving Support Award of Excellence Gold Award Application Instructions

There are 3 Award Levels: Gold, Gold Premiere, and Gold Elite.

Gold Award Questions: In order to be eligible for any level of award applicants must fulfill the criteria for all the Gold Award questions.

The Gold Award application has a total of 30 questions. The Gold Award questions, worth 1 point each, are criteria identified as best practices, which demonstrate excellence in breastfeeding practices and support, and relate to practices beyond the core components of Loving Support[®] Model.

Gold Premiere and Gold Elite Award Questions: The Gold Premiere and Gold Elite application has 16 questions. The Gold Premiere and Gold Elite questions are each worth 2 or 3 points. The questions for these higher level awards are criteria identified as exemplary practices that are deserving of the highest recognition of excellence. An applicant may fill out only the Gold award application and choose not to complete the combined application for the Gold Premiere and Gold Elite awards.

Performance data: **Applicant does not submit performance data.** The performance data considered is the rate of exclusively breastfed infants reported by local WIC agencies and published annually on the FNS website. Performance data is considered for the Gold Premiere and Gold Elite Awards. Evaluators will use the most recent data posted on the [FNS website](#).

GOLD AWARD

- All Gold Award application questions (29 points) must be answered “yes” to be eligible.
- Six of the 29 questions require you to add additional documentation to support your response.
- Performance data is not considered.

GOLD PREMIERE AWARD

- Applicants must meet the criteria for the Gold Award (30 points) **and**
- **Additional 18 points** from the Gold Premiere and Gold Elite application questions such that additional points are awarded in **each** of the 3 sections:
 - a minimum of 9 points from the Peer Counseling section,
 - a minimum of 4 points from the Partnership section,
 - a minimum of 5 points from the Other Criteria section.

Public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 2 hours per response, including the time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information. An agency may not conduct or sponsor, and a person is not required to respond to, a collection of information unless it displays a currently valid OMB control number. Send comments regarding this burden estimate or any other aspect of this collection of information, including suggestions for reducing this burden, to: U.S. Department of Agriculture, Food and Nutrition Services, Office of Research and Analysis, Room 1014, Alexandria, VA 22302 ATTN: PRA (0584-0591). Do not return the completed form to this address.

- **and** Performance data of **either**:
 - the rate of exclusively breastfed infants is at least **15 %** or higher in the previous year of published data, and the most recently published year of data shows an increase over the previous year **OR**
 - the rate of exclusively breastfed infants is at least **25 %** or higher in the most recently published year of data

GOLD ELITE AWARD (highest level)

- Applicants must meet the criteria for the Gold Award (29 points) and
- ALL of the Gold Premiere and Gold Elite application questions are answered “yes” (37 points) and
- Performance data that demonstrates **40%** or higher of the infants are exclusively breastfed.

In order to apply for an award of excellence, your local agency must first be able to answer “Yes” to the following two questions.

- 1. Has your local agency peer counseling program been in place for at least one year? Check Yes on the application if appropriate.**
- 2. Does your local agency peer counseling program meet ALL of the components of the FNS Loving Support® Model for a Successful Peer Counseling Program as listed below? Check Yes on the application if appropriate.**

**LOVING SUPPORT® MODEL
REQUIRED PROGRAM COMPONENTS**

Program Management

- The local agency has a designated peer counseling program manager or coordinator.
- The local agency has standardized breastfeeding peer counseling program policies in place as part of its nutrition education plan.
- Local agency staff is trained on supporting the peer counseling program.
- The local agency has a WIC designated breastfeeding expert for referrals outside of the peer counselor’s scope of practice.
- The local agency has established community partnerships to enhance the effectiveness of its peer counseling program, e.g., hospitals, health care providers, home visiting programs, etc.

Peer Counselor Staffing

- The local agency has defined job parameters and position descriptions for peer counselors.
- Peer counselors are recruited and hired from the target population served by WIC.
- Peer counselors are paraprofessionals, i.e., are not licensed or credentialed as healthcare, nutrition, or lactation consultant professionals.
- Peer counselors are available to WIC clients outside usual clinic hours and outside the WIC clinic environment.
- Peer counselors receive adequate compensation and reimbursement for expenses.

Peer Counselor Training and Support

- Peer counselors are trained with a standardized curriculum based on the FNS “Loving Support® Through Peer Counseling” trainings.
- Ongoing continuing education is provided to peer counselors through regularly scheduled staff meetings and other educational opportunities.
- Peer counselors have timely access to breastfeeding coordinators and other lactation experts for assistance with problems outside their scope of practice.
- Peer counselors are offered opportunities to meet regularly with other peer counselors.

Documentation

Some questions in this application require additional documents.

There are two types of document requests, a unique narrative and/or supportive documentation.

Narrative refers to a document with explanatory statements that have been written exclusively for the purpose of this application. The narrative should describe how your agency meets the criteria of a specific question as noted in the instructions. **Narratives are not to exceed 500 words.**

Supportive documentation refers to documents that already exist. You may submit these documents to demonstrate your agency meets the criteria of a specific question as noted in the instructions for that question. When attaching documentation, indicate the page number(s) where the specific information can be found in response to the question.

Each document you attach to the application must have a unique name/title entered into the application. The title should reflect the content of the document. If you submit the same document for more than one question, enter the same document title again, and indicate the page number(s) that corresponds to the specific question.

Do not submit entire policy and procedure manuals.

If your local agency received a Gold award in the past 4 years proceed to page 12 of the Gold Application Instructions.

PEER COUNSELING

Question 1. (1 point)

Do you conduct an annual assessment to determine each of the following:

- (a) the needs of your target audience;
- (b) where gaps exist in breastfeeding services and resources within your local agency and the community that can be addressed through peer counseling; and
- (c) where improvements in your program are needed?

Briefly describe in a narrative the top 2 priorities determined by your assessment and how your local agency is addressing those needs. Narrative not to exceed 500 words.

Successful peer counseling programs occur through careful planning to address identified needs. Information gathered during needs assessment helps local agencies identify strengths as well as areas of breastfeeding services that can be modified or improved through peer counseling. A needs assessment helps local agencies set priorities to maximize the effectiveness of peer counselors.

Without a needs assessment, planning is just a best guess.

Check the appropriate box (Yes/No) in response to the question.

Attach narrative. Fill in narrative title.

Question 2. (1 point)

Do you have a protocol that describes how peer counselors address a mother's concerns and needs outside of usual clinic hours, including how peer counselors make after-hour referrals?

The key to success in peer counseling is being available to mothers when they need it most. Breastfeeding problems often occur outside usual business hours, and peer counselors provide important support beyond usual WIC services. The Loving Support© Model for a Successful Peer Counseling Program requires that peer counselors be available to mothers outside of usual clinic hours, i.e., evenings and weekends. Exemplary peer counseling programs develop strategies to ensure that peer counselors are available to address a mother's concerns and needs in a timely manner (via telephone, hotline, or face-to-face) and that referral and follow-up are provided.

The supportive documentation should indicate that the local agency has a specific plan in place that addresses how peer counselors address a mother's concerns and needs outside of usual clinic hours.

Examples of Acceptable Supportive Documentation: Policies and procedures or protocols, Training materials, Position descriptions / Roles and Responsibilities

Check the appropriate box (Yes/No) in response to the question.
Attach supportive documentation. Fill in the document title and indicate the page number(s) where the information that answers this question can be found.

Question 3. (1 point)

Do you have opportunities for peer counselors to observe and shadow experienced lactation experts and experienced peer counselors?

Check the appropriate box (Yes/No) in response to the question.

Question 4. (1 point)

Do you routinely monitor the work of peer counselors through spot checks, chart reviews, contact forms?

Check the appropriate box (Yes/No) in response to each question.

Question 5. (1 point)

Do you routinely observe newly trained peer counselors during contacts with mothers to provide guidance and affirmation?

Check the appropriate box (Yes/No) in response to each question.

Question 6. (1 point)

Do you schedule routine meetings to discuss case studies with your peer counselors?

Check the appropriate box (Yes/No) in response to each question.

Question 7. (1 point)

Do you have adequate supervision of peer counselors by staff with advanced lactation training?

Adequate supervision is defined as having at least a .25 full time employee (FTE) supervisor for every 5 peer counselors.

Supervisory responsibilities include mentoring, monitoring, follow-up, and spot checks.

Check the appropriate box (Yes/No) in response to the question.

Question 8. (1 point)

Do you have a written defined scope of practice for a peer counselor that describes the peer counselor's role to provide basic breastfeeding education and support to WIC mothers?

Peer counselors supplement, but do not replace, the work of CPAs and lactation professionals. A peer counselor's scope of practice is to provide basic information and support to new moms, and make referrals when they experience problems beyond their training. The peer counselors' scope of practice summarizes typical situations for which peer counselors can provide services, as well as the types of information they can provide.

The supportive documentation should indicate that the local agency has described a scope of practice peer counselors that is limited to supportive normal breastfeeding. This means providing basic information and support, encouraging and supporting mothers to breastfeed, teaching basic breastfeeding to WIC mothers, supporting mothers when difficulties occur, and yielding (referring) to breastfeeding experts.

Examples of acceptable supportive documentation: Written Scope of Practice, Position description / Roles and Responsibilities, Policy and Procedures, Training Manual, Referral protocol for peer counselors/list of referral topics.

Check the appropriate box (Yes/No) in response to the question.

Attach the supportive documentation. Fill in the document title and indicate the page number(s) where the information that answers this question can be found.

Question 9. (1 point)

Do you have a process/protocol in place that describes when the peer counselors should “yield” breastfeeding concerns and conditions that are outside the scope of practice of the peer counselor to a Designated Breastfeeding Expert?

A peer counselor’s scope of practice is limited to providing basic information and support to new moms about normal breastfeeding, and “yield” (make referrals) when they experience problems beyond their training. WIC mothers who need support outside the peer counselors scope of practice should be referred to the Designated Breastfeeding Expert to provide timely and appropriate follow-up.

The supportive documentation indicates an established process describing how peer counselors refer moms to a Designated Breastfeeding Expert as part of normal clinic operations, during both the prenatal and postpartum periods. An example can be found in “Staffing and Supervision 7: When to Yield” in the FNS Training Curriculum.

Examples of acceptable supportive documentation:

Policy and Procedures, Training Manual, Referral protocol for peer counselors/list of referral topics.

Check the appropriate box (Yes/No) in response to the question.

Attach the supportive documentation. Fill in the document title and indicate the page number(s) where the information that answers this question can be found if using supportive documentation.

Question 10. (1 point)

Do you have a process/protocol in place for WIC staff to refer WIC participants to peer counselors as part of your usual WIC certification, assessment and nutrition education process?

Please describe in a narrative, or attach supportive documentation, that indicates that your local agency has an established process that describes how WIC mothers are referred to peer counselors as part of normal clinic operations, during both the prenatal and postpartum periods.

Peer counselors depend on referrals from local clinic staff to provide timely and appropriate follow-up to WIC mothers. Peer counselors should receive ongoing referrals from local clinic staff as part of the usual WIC certification, assessment and nutrition education process. This includes sharing information about mothers who need breastfeeding support and providing names of pregnant women.

Develop a descriptive narrative OR attach supportive documentation that indicates that the local agency has an established process that describes how WIC mothers are referred to peer counselors as part of normal clinic operations, during both the prenatal and postpartum periods. Narrative not to exceed 500 words.

Check the appropriate box (Yes/No) in response to the question.

Attach the narrative or supportive documentation. Fill in the document title and indicate the page number(s) where the information that answers this question can be found if using supportive documentation.

Question 11. (1 point)

Do peer counselors routinely contact mothers, at a minimum, **monthly** during pregnancy and **weekly** 2 weeks prior to a woman's expected delivery date?

Check the appropriate box (Yes/No) in response to each question.

Question 12. (1 point)

Do peer counselors routinely contact mothers, at a minimum, every 2-3 days in the first week after delivery AND within 24 hours if the mother reports problems with breastfeeding AND weekly throughout the rest of the first month?

Check the appropriate box (Yes/No) in response to each question.

Question 13. (1 point)

Do peer counselors routinely contact mothers after a woman's first month postpartum, at a minimum, monthly, as long as things are going well?

Check the appropriate box (Yes/No) in response to each question.

Question 14. (1 point)

Do peer counselors routinely contact mothers after a woman's first month postpartum, at a minimum, 1-2 weeks before the mother plans to return to work or school AND 1-2 days after she returns to work or school?

Check the appropriate box (Yes/No) in response to each question.

PARTNERSHIP

Although the WIC Program can provide many of the services breastfeeding women in the community need to educate and support breastfeeding families, WIC cannot do it alone. Various community entities such as public health programs, coalitions, schools and employers, influence a mother's ability to initiate and continue breastfeeding. Establishing meaningful partnerships among these relevant community organization/resources is critical to a mother's breastfeeding success.

A partnership is defined as a sustainable ongoing voluntary collaborative agreement between two or more parties based on mutually agreed objectives and a shared vision, generally within a formal structure. The partners agree to work together to achieve a common goal, undertake specific tasks, and share risks, responsibilities, resources, competencies and benefits in order to provide breastfeeding support throughout the continuum of care.

Question 15. (1 point)

Was the partnership developed to solve an existing problem or gap in breastfeeding support services?

Check the appropriate box (Yes/No) in response to each question.

Question 16. (1 point)

Are the resources each partner brings to the partnership clearly delineated?

Check the appropriate box (Yes/No) in response to each question.

Question 17. (1 point)

Does the partnership have goals that have been agreed upon by the members of the partnership?

Check the appropriate box (Yes/No) in response to each question.

Question 18. (1 point)

Are the roles and responsibilities clearly identified and understood by all members of the partnership?

Check the appropriate box (Yes/No) in response to each question.

Question 19. (1 point)

Does the partnership have activities that have been agreed upon by the members of the partnership?

Check the appropriate box (Yes/No) in response to each question.

Question 20. (1 point)

Has the partnership produced results that provide an ongoing benefit?

Check the appropriate box (Yes/No) in response to each question.

OTHER CRITERIA

CLINIC ENVIRONMENT

Positive breastfeeding posters and brochures, comfortable areas for women to breastfeed, and signs that say “Breastfeeding Welcome Here” are all ways a clinic can promote and support breastfeeding through the environment. The manner in which staff communicate and interact with participants should always be supportive of breastfeeding. Additionally, efforts should be made to ensure that nothing in the clinic inadvertently or advertently implies that infant formula feeding is the normal way to feed babies. Educational and promotional materials portray breastfeeding as the preferred method of infant feeding; infant formula, formula displays and logos are not visible anywhere in the clinic; publications that advertise, or promote, formula are not provided to participants; formula coupons are not on display.

Policies should support a clinic environment where participants feel comfortable breastfeeding by providing a space in the clinic for participants to breastfeed and a private space for participants to express their milk.

Question 21. (1 point)

Do you have a supportive clinic environment for breastfeeding that visibly endorses breastfeeding as the preferred method of infant feeding?

Check the appropriate box (Yes/No) in response to each question.

Question 22. (1 point)

Do you have policies that support a clinic environment where participants feel comfortable breastfeeding?

Check the appropriate box (Yes/No) in response to each question.

SUPPORT OF EXCLUSIVE BREASTFEEDING

Exclusive breastfeeding, feeding only breastmilk and nothing else except drops or syrups consisting of vitamins, minerals or medications, is recognized as the optimal feeding practice for infants. It confers the most health benefits for babies and mothers and contributes to a longer duration of breastfeeding. Although women are aware that breastfeeding is the best source of nutrition for their infants, many are uncertain about what to expect and how to actually carry it out (Surgeon General's Call to Action). WIC staff has an important role in educating mothers about exclusive breastfeeding, encouraging new mothers to breastfeed exclusively for 6 months and providing the support necessary for them to feel confident in their ability to do so. The local agency must have policies and procedures in place that ensure benefits and services (support and assistance) are provided which support exclusive breastfeeding.

Staff provides realistic strategies to mothers on how to feed their baby only breast milk and provide appropriate support and/or referrals as needed.

Question 23. (1 point)

Do you have policies and procedures that encourage and support exclusive breastfeeding among prenatal and postpartum WIC participants?

The supportive documentation should indicate that the local agency has established policies and procedures that support exclusive breastfeeding and must include **all** these components:

- encouragement is provided to mothers to exclusively breastfeed for 6 months and continue to breastfeed for at least the first year of life and thereafter as long as desired,
- anticipatory guidance on what mothers should expect and strategies for breastfeeding success,
- efforts are made to contact mothers who intend to breastfeed as soon after delivery as possible to provide timely breastfeeding support during the early postpartum period,
- no routine issuance of infant formula in the first month, and minimal infant formula amounts are provided only when medically necessary or requested (if formula is provided it is based on the infants assessed needs),
- education is provided to mothers on the effects of early formula supplementation of breastfeeding,
- staff promote the fully breastfed food package, making participants aware of the greater quantity and variety of food included in this package
- prohibits the promotion of infant formula

Examples of acceptable supportive documentation: Policies and procedures, Staff training materials.

Check the appropriate box (Yes/No) in response to the question.

Attach supportive documentation. Fill in the document title and indicate the page number(s) where the information that answers this question can be found.

Question 24. (1 point)

Do you ensure that all staff are trained to support the goal of exclusive breastfeeding with WIC participants using the FNS-developed competency-based breastfeeding curriculum, Using Loving Support© to Grow and Glow in WIC or Loving Support© Through Peer Counseling?

Check the appropriate box (Yes/No) in response to each question.

Question 25. (1 point)

Do you have policies and procedures that require staff to assess, and individually tailor food packages to all breastfeeding dyads when infant formula is requested?

The supportive documentation should indicate that individually tailoring of a food package is based on a complete breastfeeding assessment, and routine issuance of infant formula to breastfeeding infants is prohibited.

Examples of acceptable supportive documentation: Policies and procedures, Staff training materials.

Check the appropriate box (Yes/No) in response to the question.

Attach the supportive documentation. Fill in the document title and indicate the page number(s) where the information that answers this question can be found.

STAFF TRAINING

Breastfeeding promotion and support has always been a key part of the WIC Program's mission to improve the health of its target population. However, as the focus on breastfeeding has increased, it has become essential for all staff to have knowledge and skills needed to encourage and support breastfeeding mothers. All local agency staff who interact with WIC participants should be trained to have a level of competence in breastfeeding promotion and support relevant to their tasks and responsibilities.

Question 26. (1 point)

Does new clinic staff orientation include breastfeeding policies and procedures especially related to supporting exclusive breastfeeding?

Check the appropriate box (Yes/No) in response to the question.

Question 27. (1 point)

Do you provide ongoing training to all WIC staff using the FNS-developed competency-based breastfeeding curriculum, Using Loving Support© to Grow and Glow in WIC, WIC Learning Online course, WIC Breastfeeding Basics, or similar State-developed training based on Using Loving Support© to Grow and Glow in WIC or Loving Support© Through Peer Counseling?

Check the appropriate box (Yes/No) in response to the question.

Question 28. (1 point)

Do you have ongoing continuing education on breastfeeding for all staff through regularly scheduled staff trainings and other educational opportunities?

Check the appropriate box (Yes/No) in response to each question.

PRENATAL/EARLY POSTPARTUM SUPPORT

The third trimester of pregnancy and the early postpartum period are critical times in encouraging and supporting mothers who express intention to breastfeed and those who have initiated breastfeeding. These time periods are important to helping mothers establish successful breastfeeding relationships with their babies. During the prenatal period, a mother should be educated about breastfeeding and her ability to produce milk. She should be assured that her baby will get enough milk from her to thrive. During the first few weeks after delivery, mothers need assurance they are successful and support should be provided if problems arise.

Question 29. (1 point)

Do you have policies and procedures that require support for breastfeeding mothers, especially during the early postpartum period, that assist mothers in continuing exclusive breastfeeding for as long as possible?

The supportive documentation must include **all** of the following:

- Early assessment and follow-up for the breastfeeding dyad soon after delivery
- Anticipatory guidance on what to expect (e.g., growth spurts, hunger and satiety cues, signs that baby is getting enough, etc.)
- Staff provide practical strategies to address potential obstacles
- Education and support available to breastfeeding mothers who are returning to work, or school, and mothers breastfeeding multiples.
- Referral system is in place ensuring the mother is connected to the appropriate WIC staff person
- Appropriate referrals to community resources that provide breastfeeding support services

Examples of acceptable supportive documentation: Policies and procedures, Staff training materials.

Check the appropriate box (Yes/No) in response to the question.

Attach the supportive documentation. Fill in the document title and indicate the page number(s) where the information that answers this question can be found.

Question 30. (1 point)

Do you have policies that ensure all participant breastfeeding concerns are addressed according to established time frames?

Check the appropriate box (Yes/No) in response to each question.

Congratulations!!

You have completed the application for the Loving Support Award of Excellence

New Applicants: Please complete the Application Checklist on page 6 and the Application Verification Form on page 7 of the Gold Application.

Previous Gold Awardees: Please complete the top section of the Application Checklist on page 6 and the Application Verification Form on page 7 of the Gold Application.

If you would like to apply for a higher level award, continue on to the application for the Gold Premiere and Gold Elite Awards.

**Thank you for applying for the
WIC Loving Support Award of Excellence**

For more information, visit the FNS WIC Website: <http://www.fns.usda.gov/wic/>



Loving Support Award of Excellence Gold Award Application

Cover Sheet

Local Agency Name

Street Address

City, State, Zip code

Applicant's Name and Title

Telephone Number

Email address

Date

Public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 2 hours per response, including the time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information. An agency may not conduct or sponsor, and a person is not required to respond to, a collection of information unless it displays a currently valid OMB control number. Send comments regarding this burden estimate or any other aspect of this collection of information, including suggestions for reducing this burden, to: U.S. Department of Agriculture, Food and Nutrition Services, Office of Research and Analysis, Room 1014, Alexandria, VA 22302 ATTN: PRA (0584-0591). Do not return the completed form to this address.

Loving Support Award of Excellence

DOWNLOAD AND SAVE INSTRUCTIONS FROM FNS PUBLIC WEBSITE BEFORE BEGINNING APPLICATION. In order to be eligible to apply for an award, your local agency must first be able to verify the following two questions.

Prescreening

1. Has your local agency peer counseling program been in place for at least one year? Yes
2. Does your local agency peer counseling program meet all components of the FNS Loving Support® peer counseling model? Yes

The Loving Support® Model and the required core components can be found in the Application Instructions.

If your local agency received a Gold award in the past 4 years proceed to page 6 Gold Award Application Checklist.

Application

PEER COUNSELING		
<p>1. Do you conduct an annual assessment to determine each of the following:</p> <p>(a) the needs of your target audience;</p> <p>(b) where gaps exist in breastfeeding services and resources within your local agency and the community that can be addressed through peer counseling; and</p> <p>(c) where improvements in your program are needed?</p> <p>Attach narrative. Fill in narrative title.</p>	<p>Yes</p> <p>Narrative Title</p>	<p>No</p>
<p>2. Do you have a protocol that describes how peer counselors address a mother's concerns and needs outside of usual clinic hours, including how peer counselors make after-hour referrals?</p> <p>Attach supportive documentation. Fill in the document title and indicate the page number(s) where the information that answers this question can be found.</p>	<p>Yes</p> <p>Document Title</p> <p>Page Number(s)</p>	<p>No</p>
<p>3. Do you have opportunities for peer counselors to observe and shadow experienced lactation experts and experienced peer counselors?</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>No</p>
<p>4. Do you routinely monitor the work of peer counselors through spot checks, chart reviews or contact forms?</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>No</p>
<p>5. Do you routinely observe newly trained peer counselors during contacts with mothers to provide guidance and affirmation?</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>No</p>

<p>6. Do you schedule routine meetings to discuss case studies with your peer counselors?</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>No</p>
<p>7. Do you have adequate supervision of peer counselors by staff with advanced lactation training?</p> <p>Adequate supervision is defined as having at least a .25 full time employee (FTE) supervisor for every 5 peer counselors.</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>No</p>
<p>8. Do you have a written defined scope of practice for peer counselors, limited to supporting normal breastfeeding, that describes the peer counselor's role to provide basic breastfeeding education and support to WIC mothers?</p> <p>Attach supportive documentation. Fill in the document title and indicate the page number(s) where the information that answers this question can be found.</p>	<p>Yes</p> <p>Document Title</p> <p>Page Number(s)</p>	<p>No</p>
<p>9. Do you have a process/protocol in place that lists when the peer counselors should "yield" breastfeeding concerns and conditions that are outside the scope of practice of the peer counselor to a Designated Breastfeeding Expert?</p> <p>Attach supportive documentation. Fill in the document title and indicate the page number(s) where the information that answers this question can be found.</p>	<p>Yes</p> <p>Document Title</p> <p>Page Number(s)</p>	<p>No</p>
<p>10. Do you have a process/protocol in place for WIC staff to refer WIC participants to peer counselors as part of your usual WIC certification, assessment and nutrition education process?</p> <p>Attach narrative OR supportive documentation. Fill in the document title and indicate the page number(s) where the information that answers this question can be found.</p>	<p>Yes</p> <p>Document Title</p> <p>Page Number(s)</p>	<p>No</p>
<p>11. Do peer counselors routinely contact mothers, at a minimum, monthly during pregnancy and weekly 2 weeks prior to a woman's expected delivery date?</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>No</p>
<p>12. Do peer counselors routinely contact mothers, at a minimum, every 2-3 days in the first week after delivery AND within 24 hours if the mother reports problems with breastfeeding AND weekly throughout rest of first month?</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>No</p>
<p>13. Do peer counselors routinely contact mothers after a woman's first month postpartum, at a minimum, monthly, as long as things are going well?</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>No</p>

14. Do peer counselors routinely contact mothers after a woman's first month postpartum, at a minimum, 1-2 weeks before the mother plans to return to work or school AND 1-2 days after she returns to work or school?	Yes	No
PARTNERSHIP		
<p>A partnership is defined as a sustainable ongoing voluntary collaborative agreement between two or more parties based on mutually agreed objectives and a shared vision, generally within a formal structure. The partners agree to work together to achieve a common goal, undertake specific tasks, and share risks, responsibilities, resources, competencies and benefits in order to provide breastfeeding support throughout the rest of the first month.</p>		
15. Was the partnership developed to solve an existing problem or gap in breastfeeding support services?	Yes	No
16. Are the resources each partner brings to the partnership clearly delineated?	Yes	No
17. Does the partnership have goals that have been agreed upon by the members of the partnership?	Yes	No
18. Are the roles and responsibilities clearly identified and understood by all members of the partnership?	Yes	No
19. Does the partnership have activities that have been agreed upon by the members of the partnership?	Yes	No
20. Has the partnership produced results that provide an ongoing benefit?	Yes	No
OTHER CRITERIA		
21. Do you have a supportive clinic environment for breastfeeding that visibly endorses breastfeeding as the preferred method of infant feeding?	Yes	No
22. Do you have policies that support a clinic environment where participants feel comfortable breastfeeding?	Yes	No

<p>23. Do you have policies and procedures that encourage and support exclusive breastfeeding among prenatal and postpartum WIC participants?</p> <p>Attach supportive documentation. Fill in the document title and indicate the page number(s) where the information that answers this question can be found.</p>	<p>Yes</p> <p>Document Title</p> <p>Page Number(s)</p>	<p>No</p>
<p>24. Do you ensure that all staff are trained to support the goal of exclusive breastfeeding with WIC participants using the FNS-developed competency-based breastfeeding curriculum, Using Loving Support® to Grow and Glow in WIC, or Loving Support® Through Peer Counseling.</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>No</p>
<p>25. Do you have policies and procedures that require staff to assess, and individually tailor food packages to all breastfeeding dyads when infant formula is requested?</p> <p>Attach supportive documentation. Fill in the document title and indicate the page number(s) where the information that answers this question can be found.</p>	<p>Yes</p> <p>Document Title</p> <p>Page Number(s)</p>	<p>No</p>
<p>26. Does new clinic staff orientation include breastfeeding policies and procedures especially related to supporting exclusive breastfeeding?</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>No</p>
<p>27. Do you provide ongoing training to all WIC staff using the FNS-developed competency-based breastfeeding curriculum, Using Loving Support® to Grow and Glow in WIC, WIC Learning Online course, WIC Breastfeeding Basics, or similar State-developed training based on Using Loving Support® to Grow and Glow in WIC or Loving Support® Through Peer Counseling.</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>No</p>
<p>28. Do you have ongoing continuing education on breastfeeding for all staff through regularly scheduled staff trainings and other educational opportunities?</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>No</p>
<p>29. Do you have policies and procedures that require support for breastfeeding mothers, especially during the early postpartum period, that assist mothers in continuing exclusive breastfeeding for as long as possible?</p> <p>Attach supportive documentation. Fill in the document titles and indicate the page number(s) where the information that answers this question can be found.</p>	<p>Yes</p> <p>Document Title</p> <p>Page Number(s)</p>	<p>No</p>
<p>30. Do you have policies that ensure all participant breastfeeding concerns are addressed according to established time frames?</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>No</p>

Loving Support of Excellence Gold Award Application Checklist

Please review the checklist prior to submitting application and supportive documentation.

Previous Gold Awardees		
If your local agency has a valid Gold award, please fill out the year your local agency received the award.	Year Received	
Please enter the full name of your Local Agency without abbreviations or acronyms and complete the Application Verification Form on page 7 of the Application.	Yes	No
Continue on to the application for the Gold Premiere and Gold Elite Awards to apply for a higher level award.	Yes	No
New Applicants		
All 30 questions need to be answered "Yes" to be eligible for the Gold Award. Verify that all questions have been answered.	Yes	No
Narratives and/or supportive documentation must be attached to the application to be eligible for an Award.	Yes	No
If attaching supportive documents make sure you indicate the page number(s) where the information that answers the question can be found.	Yes	No
Please enter the full name of your Local Agency without abbreviations or acronyms and complete the Application Verification Form on page 7 of the Application.	Yes	No
If you would like to apply for a higher level award, continue on to the application for the Gold Premiere and Gold Elite Awards.	Yes	No

Congratulations!

You have completed the application for the Loving Support Award of Excellence at the Gold Award level.

If you would like to apply for a higher level award, continue on to the application for the Gold Premiere and Gold Elite Awards.

The State agency and FNS reserve the right to verify all information on the application and reject applications that are incomplete or otherwise fail to provide accurate information.

Loving Support Award of Excellence Applicant Verification Form

Please read the following statement and sign below if you agree:

I have reviewed this application, and I attest to the accuracy of the information provided. I agree to maintain the standards and procedures indicated in this application for the duration of our award period. Furthermore, I agree to cooperate with USDA and other organizations, upon request, to publicize our efforts.

Local Agency Applicant's Name

Date

**Please upload your completed application and supporting documentation to
<https://www.hightail.com/u/WWRS>.**

**Thank you for applying for the Loving Support Award of Excellence.
For more information, visit the SFPD/WIC Website:
<http://www.fns.usda.gov/wic/breastfeeding-promotion-and-support-wic>.**



Loving Support Award of Excellence Gold Premiere and Gold Elite Award Application

Cover Sheet

Local Agency Name

Street Address

City, State, Zip code

Applicant's Name and Title

Telephone Number

Email address

Date

Public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 2 hours per response, including the time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information. An agency may not conduct or sponsor, and a person is not required to respond to, a collection of information unless it displays a currently valid OMB control number. Send comments regarding this burden estimate or any other aspect of this collection of information, including suggestions for reducing this burden, to: U.S. Department of Agriculture, Food and Nutrition Services, Office of Research and Analysis, Room 1014, Alexandria, VA 22302 ATTN: PRA (0584-0591). Do not return the completed form to this address.

Loving Support Award of Excellence

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1. Have you completed the Gold Award application for this application?

Yes

Application

PEER COUNSELING		
1. Do you have established guidelines for how many hours of observation/shadowing is required as part of peer counseling training/continuing education?	Yes	No
2. Do you have an IBCLC on staff or do you contract with an IBCLC to serve as a referral source for peer counselors?	Yes	No
3. Do you have a referral process in place between hospitals and the WIC Program to facilitate peer counselor follow-up care for newly-delivered WIC mothers after discharge?	Yes	No
4. Do you have a system that electronically documents and tracks peer counseling referrals and contacts?	Yes	No
5. Do you have policies and procedures for home visits as part of your peer counseling program? Attach supportive documentation. Fill in the document title and indicate the page number(s) where the information that answers the question can be found.	Yes Document Title Page Number(s)	No
6. Do you have policies and procedures for hospital visits as part of your peer counseling program? Attach supportive documentation. Fill in the document title and indicate the page number(s) where the information that answers this question can be found.	Yes Document Title Page Number(s)	No <input type="checkbox"/>

7. Do you have a recognition program in place to acknowledge peer counselor accomplishments?	Yes	No
8. Do you include career path structures for upward mobility of peer counselors?	Yes	No
<p>9. Do you have policies and procedures for peer counselors to communicate via social media technologies, e.g., Facebook, text messaging, Twitter, Skype or PalTalk?</p> <p>Attach narrative and supportive documentation that indicate existing policies and procedures for peer counselors to communicate via social media technologies.</p> <p>Fill in both document titles and indicate the page numbers(s) that corresponds to each document.</p>	<p>Yes</p> <p>Narrative Title</p> <p>Document Title</p> <p>Page Number(s)</p>	No
PARTNERSHIP		
<p>A partnership is defined as a sustainable ongoing voluntary collaborative agreement between two or more parties based on mutually agreed objectives and a shared vision, generally within a formal structure. The partners agree to work together to achieve a common goal, undertake specific tasks, and share risks, responsibilities, resources, competencies and benefits in order to provide breastfeeding support throughout the continuum of care.</p>		
<p>10. Does the partnership have a written agreement or a Memorandum of Understanding?</p> <p>Attach supportive documentation. Fill in the document title and indicate the page number(s) where the information that answers this question can be found.</p>	<p>Yes</p> <p>Document Title</p> <p>Page Number(s)</p>	No
<p>11. Have new policies or procedures been developed because of the partnership? Please describe the new procedures in a narrative, or attach supportive documentation, that indicates policies or procedures have been developed as a result of the partnership.</p> <p>Attach supportive documentation. Fill in the document title and indicate the page number(s) where the information that answers this question can be found.</p>	<p>Yes</p> <p>Document Title</p> <p>Page Number(s)</p>	No
12. Does the partnership have a plan for sustainability?	Yes	No

<p>13. Do you partner with stakeholders such as the American Hospital Association to support the Baby-Friendly Hospital Initiative in your community?</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>No</p>
<p align="center">OTHER CRITERIA</p>		
<p>14. Do you have a supportive clinic environment that implements breastfeeding-friendly workplace policies for WIC staff?</p> <p>Attach supportive documentation. Fill in the document title and indicate the page number(s) where the information that answers this question can be found</p>	<p>Yes</p> <p>Document Title</p> <p>Page Number(s)</p>	<p>No</p>
<p>15. Do you provide funding or work hours for education and training for staff to pursue certifications and advanced credentials in breastfeeding? (e.g. CLC, CLE, IBCLC)</p> <p>Attach supportive documentation. Fill in the document title and indicate the page number(s) where the information that answers this question can be found</p>	<p>Yes</p> <p>Document Title</p> <p>Page Number(s)</p>	<p>No</p>
<p>16. Do you provide around the clock assistance to assist mothers working through their breastfeeding problems?</p> <p>Attach narrative. Fill in narrative title.</p>	<p>Yes</p> <p>Narrative Title</p>	<p>No</p>

Loving Support Award of Excellence Gold Award Application Checklist

Please review the checklist prior to submitting application and supportive documentation.

You must be eligible for the Gold Award (30 points) to apply for the Gold Premiere and Gold Elite Award.	Yes	No
Verify that you have met the performance data criteria.	Yes	No
Narratives and/or supportive documentation must be attached to the application to be eligible for an Award.	Yes	No
If attaching supportive documents make sure you indicate the page number(s) where the information that answers the question can be found.	Yes	No
Please enter the full name of your Local Agency without abbreviations or acronyms and complete the Application Verification Form on page 6 of the Application.	Yes	No

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I have reviewed this application, and I attest to the accuracy of the information provided. I agree to maintain the standards and procedures indicated in this application for the duration of our award period. Furthermore, I agree to cooperate with USDA and other organizations, upon request, to publicize our efforts.

Local Agency Applicant's Name

Date

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For more information, visit the FNS/WIC Website:
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