Inter Tribal Council of Arizona, Inc.

WIC Directors' Manual

Managing Your WIC Program

INTER TRIBAL COUNCIL OF ARIZONA, INC.

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Introduction

Congratulations on becoming a WIC Director!

As a new director, you probably have a lot of questions about your role in the administration of the WIC program.

This unit will help to answer your questions and will serve as a resource for you in carrying out your job. This manual will help you understand your role in the WIC program. The areas covered in this manual are:

- **ITCA and the ITCA WIC Program**
- **Role of the WIC Director**
- **Clinic Management**
- **Staff Management**
- **Nutrition and Breastfeeding**
- **Monitoring**
- **Memorandums of Agreement and Application**
- **Budgets/Financial Reporting**
- **Reports**
- **Ordering and Maintaining Equipment and Supplies**
- **STARS**
- **Annual Participant Survey**
- **Outreach**
- **Vendor Management**
- **National WIC Association/USDA**
- **Resources (State plan/Local Agency P&P manual)**

ITCA and the ITCA WIC Program

The Inter Tribal Council of Arizona, Inc. was established in 1952 to provide a united voice for tribal governments in Arizona to address common issues and concerns. ITCA became a non-profit corporation in 1975. ITCA membership is made up of 20 tribes in Arizona. Navajo Nation is not a member of ITCA.

ITCA operates numerous programs and employs about 50 staff to carry out the program goals and objectives. The WIC Program is one of many health related programs that ITCA administers.

ITCA is recognized as a "State Agency" by the USDA in the operation of the WIC Program. This means that ITCA receives funding directly from USDA. ITCA operates independently of the State of Arizona WIC Program.

Role of ITCA

ITCA administers the WIC Program for the member tribes. ITCA is responsible for the basic infrastructure of the WIC program including the development of the WIC State Plan and policies and procedures that reflect federal regulations. ITCA also ensures that other components required to run the program are in place such as a data collection system and a food delivery system. Some of the activities of ITCA are:

- **Developing Policies and Procedures:** ITCA ensures that policies and procedures are developed and implemented that reflect federal regulation and policy. These policies and procedures are updated annually and provided to the local agencies electronically. ITCA also provides updates and clarifications via memorandums and e-mails during the year.

- **Reporting to USDA:** ITCA provides USDA with all required federal reports monthly and annually.

- **Monitoring:** ITCA ensures that the contracted local agencies are following federal and ITCA policy and procedures by doing a monitoring review each year. These reviews will be explained in more detail in a later section.

- **Vendor Management:** ITCA contracts with over 150 stores throughout the state to provide locations where clients can redeem their WIC checks. ITCA is responsible for ensuring that the stores are trained and follow ITCA policies and procedures.

- **Training and technical assistance to local agencies:**
  ITCA provides training for staff to ensure that all staff are competent and receive updated information periodically. ITCA also provides technical assistance to agencies that may need help understanding and complying with the program policies and procedures. Some of the training that ITCA provides is:
  - **Skills Building Training:** Skills Building Training is provided 3 to 4 times per year for new employees or employees that need a refresher course. It is a one-week training that covers the basic information required to provide WIC services including how to use the STARS computer system.

- **Annual Training:** Each year ITCA provides training for all staff to provide updates on WIC-related information. This training is mandatory for all staff.

- **WIC Directors' Meetings:** ITCA hosts 3-4 meetings per year for the WIC Directors. These meetings are used to discuss upcoming regulation and policy changes, funding issues and other administrative issues. These meetings are mandatory and usually last two days.

- **Central Arizona College DEP Classes:** All Directors and CNWs are required to complete eight nutrition and breastfeeding classes through Central Arizona College. R.D.s are exempt from this requirement. Staff must complete all classes within two years. Clerks and R.D.s must complete the two breastfeeding courses.

- **Annual Vendor Training:** ITCA provides vendor training to the local agencies and vendors annually as required by USDA. Training may be provided in a variety of formats such as newsletters, web base training, CD Rom, videos and interactive training. Local agencies are responsible for monitoring vendors within their jurisdictions.

- **Other Training:** Other trainings are available to all or select staff during the year. The WIC Director is notified of these training opportunities as they arise.

- **Development of Materials and Forms:** ITCA develops or purchases nutrition education materials, breastfeeding materials and other forms and documents for the local agencies.

ITCA Staff

The responsibilities of ITCA are divided among the staff positions at ITCA. You should contact the appropriate staff person whenever possible so your questions and concerns can be handled as efficiently as possible. Several ITCA staff have work cell phones and can be reached on these phones when they are away from their desks. Call staff on these phones if you need immediate assistance. All local agencies receive updated ITCA contact information. It is the director's responsibility to provide staff with these updates.

Staff Position	Responsibility
WIC Director	WIC Applications Budgets and Financial Administrative Issues Confidentiality Agreements Homeless Institutions Agreements Dual participation Fraud and Program Abuse Civil Rights Computer and equipment issues
Nutrition Manager	Nutrition Services Formula Authorizations Food Packages Certification Competency Measuring Equipment and HemoCue Equipment and Supplies Approval of Educational Materials Monitoring
Breastfeeding Coordinator	Breastfeeding Services Breastfeeding Peer Counseling World Breastfeeding Week
Vendor Coordinator	Vendor Management Vendor Complaints Client Complaints regarding Vendors Vendor Training Vendor Monitoring (VSRs)
Nutrition Coordinators	Nutrition Services Oversight Formula Authorizations High Risk Counseling Nutrition Plans Vitamin Angels National Nutrition Month
Administrative Assistant	Ordering Supplies DEP classes registration and books Registration for meetings and trainings

ITCA Local Agencies

ITCA has Memorandums of Agreement in place with 11 tribes and one urban Indian health center to provide the direct WIC services to clients. The agencies that WIC provides services to are:

- Tohono O'Odham Nation
- Gila River Indian Community (also serves Ak-Chin)
- Pascua Yaqui Tribe (also serves Guadalupe)
- Hopi Tribe
- Colorado River Indian Tribes
- Havasupai Tribe
- Salt River Pima-Maricopa Indian Community
- San Carlos Apache Tribe
- White Mountain Apache Tribe
- Yavapai Apache Nation
- Hualapai Tribe
- Native American Community Health Center

A Local Agency Staff Directory can be obtained from ITCA. Updated directories are provided to Directors periodically.

Role of the WIC Director

The WIC Director has a critical role in the local agency WIC program. It is the responsibility of the Director to ensure that the local agency follows policies and procedures and provides quality services to the WIC clients. The Director must also ensure that all required reports and information is provided to ITCA on time. The tribe/agency may also have other requirements of the WIC Program and/or the Director.

The WIC Director is responsible for the following:

- Ensures that staff is competent to perform their job duties
- Provides training, coaching and mentoring to assist staff in achieving competency
- Provides assistance to staff in handling problems, questions and complaints
- Evaluates staff frequently to ensure that staff is following policies and procedures and that staff are competent to provide services
- Ensures that good customer service is being provided to clients without discrimination
- Provides a breastfeeding friendly environment to clients and ensures that staff promote and support breastfeeding
- Assists staff in performing WIC services when needed
- Serves as the expert STARS user in the agency
- Provides comments on documents, policies and educational materials as requested by ITCA
- Ensures that ITCA policies and procedures are followed
- Holds periodic staff meetings or in-services to pass along information from ITCA regarding changes in policy and procedure as well as STARS updates
- Completes and submits the Quarterly Reports and other documentation and submits to ITCA by the deadline
- Reviews the budget and expenditures and ensures that the full grant is spent during the fiscal year
- Ensures that expenditures are allowable WIC expenditures, that WIC is not charged for costs that are covered under indirect costs and WIC supplies and equipment are not used for non-WIC purposes
- Reports problems and complaints to ITCA when necessary
- Ensures that all equipment is in working order and reports problems with equipment to ITCA
- Creates clinic calendars and manages staff schedules
- Manages clinic flow to ensure good customer service and short wait times

Clinic Management

A well-managed clinic is appealing and comfortable, child friendly, flows smoothly, has short client wait times, complies with USDA and ITCA policies and procedures; and provides good customer service.

The WIC Director should ensure that the clinic is comfortable for clients and has appealing, appropriate and up-to-date nutrition and breastfeeding information posted. The clinic should also be safe for children and have appropriate toys to entertain children during wait times and visits. The clinic should display appropriate materials to support breastfeeding and should not display formula, formula information or formula manufacturer promotional items.

The WIC Director should evaluate the clinic schedule and how appointments are scheduled to ensure that staff is using time efficiently and clients do not have excessive wait times. Clients should not spend more than 15 minutes waiting for their appointment and staff should not be idle for large periods of time.

The agency should have clear policies on how to schedule appointments, handle walk-ins, late appointments, etc. These policies should be clear to all staff. The receptionist or another staff person checking in clients should triage clients to ensure that the policies are followed and to avoid excessive wait times.

The WIC Director must spend time in the clinic daily to ensure that the clinic is flowing smoothly and should be available to provide assistance as necessary to ensure that clients are served in a timely manner.

The WIC Program provides a service to the community and to eligible clients. Staff should be trained to provide good customer service to clients at all times, regardless of how the client behaves. Good customer service means that staff greets clients in a friendly manner, they treat clients with respect and they are culturally sensitive.

Staff Management

One of the most important roles of the WIC Director is to ensure that the staff is adequate to serve clients and is trained and competent to provide WIC services. WIC is a complex program with many rules and regulations. Staff needs continual training, mentoring and reinforcement to ensure that they are knowledgeable.

Staffing

The program should be staffed to ensure that clients are served in a timely manner and are provided quality WIC services including nutrition education, breastfeeding support, and referrals. The staffing must also be realistic for the budget. Staffing of the program is a balance between caseload management and budget. There are many factors that effect how many staff is required for a clinic including number of remote clinics, distance to remote clinics, caseload, clinic flow and nutrition education format.

Training and Competency

The WIC Director is responsible for ensuring that all staff completes the mandatory ITCA trainings. There are three different required trainings: Skills Building Workshop, Knowledge Modules and four classes from the Dietetic Education Program (DEP). Registered Dietitians are exempt from completing the DEP nutrition classes but must complete a breastfeeding course.

- **Skills Building Workshop**

  The Skills Building Workshop is a two part training that provides a staff person with the minimum skill set to do the most basic WIC tasks. This training includes using STARS, the WIC Automation System, performing anthropometrics and bloodwork, completing nutrition assessments and providing basic nutrition and breastfeeding information. This training is offered as needed by ITCA- usually two times per year. Class schedules are provided to the WIC Directors annually.

- **Knowledge Modules**

  The ITCA Knowledge modules are a set of 12 self-paced modules that staff must complete prior to being certified competent. These provide more in-depth information for staff on providing WIC services. Staff reads over each section of the unit and takes a self-evaluation review of the section. Once the whole unit is complete, the staff person is provided with a short quiz. This quiz must be passed with a score of 80% or better. The Knowledge modules are turned in to ITCA and maintained on file. The local agency should also maintain a copy on file.

- **Nutrition and Breastfeeding Education**

  Nutrition and breastfeeding education is provided through Central Arizona College. Staff is required to take one breastfeeding course and six nutrition courses. These courses must be passed with a “C” or better. Courses are paid by ITCA, however, if a staff person does not receive a “C” or better in two courses, ITCA will not pay for additional courses. The DEP courses may be in person or on-line. Verification of each completed course must be turned in to ITCA for our records.

- **Competency Observation**
  Once staff completes the Skills Building Workshop and the Knowledge modules, a Competency Observation will be completed to determine whether the staff is competent to perform duties in nine different areas.

Although ITCA provides training for local agency staff, much of the training and coaching must occur at the local agency level while serving real clients. Each agency should have a plan for how new staff are trained. Generally, the training would be comprised of observation of competent staff, supervised practice with clients and then unsupervised practice with supervisor sign-off. Staff must have a supervisor sign-off on all certifications until they are certified as competent by ITCA. Supervisor sign-offs must be documented in STARS.

Staff Evaluation
Your local agency likely has policies and tools for evaluating staff. ITCA also requires that staff be evaluated each year on WIC specific activities such as certification and nutrition education. The ITCA Certification Observation Form must be used as part of this annual evaluation.

Nutrition and breastfeeding education must be evaluated at least two times per year to ensure that staff is providing quality nutrition services. The ITCA Nutrition and Breastfeeding Education Observation Forms must be completed during this evaluation. Your local agency nutritionist must complete the evaluation. If you do not have a nutritionist on staff, the WIC Director or clinic supervisor who has been deemed competent by ITCA will complete the evaluation. Single staff agencies are exempt from this requirement.

All forms used to evaluate staff are found in the monitoring section of the State Plan.

Nutritionist's Role
The nutritionist provides the foundation for nutrition services in your agency. She/he oversees the nutrition services provided to ensure that quality nutrition services are provided to WIC clients. The nutritionist must be a Registered Dietitian.

The role of the nutritionist is to:

- Develop the local agency nutrition and breastfeeding plan (goals and objectives)
- Oversee the nutrition services provided at the local agency
- Provide high risk counseling to clients
- Serve as a resource to staff for nutrition and breastfeeding information
- Monitor/evaluate local agency staff in the areas of nutrition and breastfeeding promotion and support
- Evaluate the nutrition and breastfeeding services annually
- Develop nutrition materials as needed (Note: All locally developed nutrition materials must be approved by ITCA prior to use.)

Nutrition and Breastfeeding Services

Nutrition and breastfeeding services are the most important services that WIC provides. This is what distinguishes our program from programs that just provide food such as SNAP. The nutrition information and referrals combined with the supplemental foods are what drive the success of the WIC program.

It is critical that quality nutrition and breastfeeding services be provided to clients. The local agency can achieve this goal by ensuring that staff has completed the following:

- All Knowledge Modules
- All required DEP classes with a "C" or better
- Breastfeeding Course (if DEP BF course not taken)
- Attends Skills Building Workshop (both parts)
- Local agency training process
- Competency Observation
- Evaluation two times per year by nutritionist
- Attend annual ITCA Staff Trainings
- Completes 10 hours continuing education on nutrition and breastfeeding each year

As the Director, it is your responsibility to ensure that each staff person completes all of the above. Staff must have a good knowledge base of nutrition and breastfeeding in order to provide appropriate counseling to clients. Staff must also be able to counsel clients in such a way that they are effective and can promote behavior change.

About Breastfeeding Promotion and Support
ITCA and the WIC program are strong advocates for exclusive breastfeeding throughout a child's first year of life. All staff should be able to promote and support breastfeeding. The clinic environment and staff attitude should reflect a positive breastfeeding message. Your clinic must follow the guidelines below which support breastfeeding as the preferred method of infant feeding.

- All print, audiovisual materials and posters as well as office supplies such as pens and notepads will be free of formula product names and pictures.
- Formula and other bottle-feeding equipment will be stored out of view of WIC clients.
- Staff will not accept formula from formula manufacturer representatives for personal use.
- A supportive environment will be provided for women to breastfeed their infants.
- Breastfeeding posters, handouts, bulletin boards, etc. will be prominently displayed to demonstrate the clinics support of breastfeeding.

Pregnant women must be encouraged to breastfeed their infants and breastfeeding women must be provided with support to overcome any problems they may encounter during the first year of breastfeeding.

Monitoring

Monitoring ensures that policies and procedures at the federal, state and local levels are being followed and that quality WIC services are provided to WIC clients.

Your agency is monitored on several levels including the federal, state (ITCA) and local levels.

Federal Monitoring
ITCA and a selection of its local agencies are monitored each year by USDA to ensure that the ITCA WIC program meets all federal regulations and policies. The areas that are monitored by USDA alternate each year. If your agency is selected for this review, you will be notified in advance. However, USDA is allowed to complete unscheduled monitoring visits without notice. Preliminary questionnaires are provided that must be completed in advance of the visit. As the WIC Director, it will be your role to complete these forms and return them by the due date.

The review varies depending on the areas being reviewed. Generally, the USDA staff is on site for one day. They review files, ask questions of the WIC Director and request supporting documentation. The review ends with an exit interview during which the findings of the visit are discussed with program management and administration. The review is followed by a report identifying the observations and findings of the visit. The local agency must provide a written corrective action plan in response to this report. The WIC Director will complete the corrective action plan and return it to ITCA by the deadline. USDA will review the responses and either request further clarification or will close the review.

ITCA Monitoring
ITCA monitors each local agency on-site at least every other year. ITCA monitors all areas of the WIC program during monitoring visits. The visit is generally 2-3 days. You will be notified at least 45 days in advance that ITCA will be completing an on-site monitoring review of your agency.

Prior to coming on-site, ITCA completes file reviews in STARS and reviews other appropriate documents such as quarterly reports, outreach activities, the self-assessment and the Local Agency Policy and Procedure Manual. Once on-site, ITCA will do staff observations of certification, nutrition education, breastfeeding promotion and support, check issuance and other WIC services. ITCA staff conducts a clinic management evaluation, which includes reviewing relevant logbooks and other supporting documentation to ensure that policies and procedures are followed. ITCA encourages the WIC Director to be fully engaged in the process in order to fully understand the requirements and to help develop the corrective action plan.

The review is completed with an exit interview with the WIC Director and program administration. A draft report will be sent to you within 30 days of the visit which will include your areas of excellence as well as areas that need to be strengthened. You have 7 days to clarify any misunderstandings, correct errors and revise the corrective action plan in the draft report. The final report will be sent to the chief official of the agency, your supervisor and you within a week after receiving your corrections. The WIC Director is responsible for implementing the corrective action plan.

ITCA will review your corrective action plan with you periodically to ensure that it has been fully implemented.

ITCA may determine that technical assistance is required to facilitate the implementation of the corrective action plan. ITCA may also do a follow-up review to ensure that the corrective action plan has been implemented. You will be notified at the exit interview or in the report whether either or both of these will be required for your agency.

Once ITCA feels that the corrective action plan is complete or has confidence that it will be completed, the review will be closed. A letter indicating that the review is closed will be sent to the WIC Director and chief official of the local agency.

In addition to the on-site reviews, ITCA reviews quarterly reports, data quality and other reports and documents generated from STARS or sent to ITCA by the local agency.

A self-assessment must be completed in the years in which ITCA does not perform a monitoring visit. You are responsible for completing this assessment and returning it to ITCA.

Technical assistance visits are also completed during the years in which the agency is not monitored. Technical assistance visits are similar to monitoring visits but target specific areas of concern or need identified by ITCA and/or the local agency. A report is sent to you and your supervisor following the visit with follow-up action that is required. ITCA will follow-up with you periodically to ensure that the follow-up action has been taken.

Local Agency Monitoring

The best way to ensure that your agency will have a successful USDA or ITCA evaluation is to monitor your agency on a continuing basis. Agencies that do frequent monitoring are knowledgeable of their agency's strengths and weaknesses, are able to identify and correct problems early and are better prepared for a USDA or ITCA review.

Local agencies are required to review all staff at least once a year in the area of certification and twice a year in nutrition education and breastfeeding promotion and support. It is a good practice to do more frequent file reviews and observations of all staff (quarterly is recommended) in order to catch problems early and correct them with staff before they become bigger problems.

Memorandums of Agreement and Application

Each local agency has a Memorandum of Agreement with ITCA for a three-year period. The agreement starts on October 1st and ends on September 30th to correspond with the federal fiscal year. Every three years local agencies are required to prepare a new application for providing WIC services in conjunction with the beginning of a new Memorandum of Agreement cycle. The chief official of the agency and the WIC Director are notified in June of the requirements of the proposal. Proposals are usually due in mid-August.

Each year the agency submits a reapplication, which is a shortened version of the application. Often, amendments to the Memorandum of Agreement are included with the reapplication to address any changes that may occur with the new fiscal year. The reapplication is generally sent to local agencies in June and is due in August.

Budgets and Financial Management

Budgets
Each local agency is notified of their budget award in the application or reapplication cover letter. The budget is based on the caseload that the agency is to serve, size of agency and additional services provided to clients.

Agencies submit a budget with their application/reapplication for approval by ITCA. ITCA will notify the WIC Director and the chief official of the agency when the budget has been approved. It is the Director's responsibility to ensure that the funds are expended as outlined in the budget. No more than 10% of the total budget funds can be moved between line items. If a new line item is created or more than 10% is moved between line items, the budget must be revised and sent to ITCA for approval.

Financial Management
The WIC Director is also responsible for ensuring that WIC funds are spent for WIC purposes only. This means that staff funded through the ITCA WIC funds can only perform WIC services as outlined in the Policy and Procedure Manual. Services such as dental fluoride varnishes, car seat distribution and immunizations are outside the scope of WIC services and cannot be funded through WIC. In addition, services must only be provided to WIC applicants or clients.

WIC funds should be used judiciously. You should evaluate your expenditures to ensure that they produce a desired benefit and are allowable. Examples of allowable costs are staff salaries and benefits, supplies and equipment, travel expenses, registration fees for conferences and trainings, breast pumps, WIC-related educational materials and food used for food preparation demonstrations during nutrition education classes for WIC clients. Even if a cost is allowable, it should be reasonable and necessary to carry out the functions and purpose of the program.

Purchase of computer equipment or other capital expenditures over $5,000 requires written approval from ITCA. Expenditures that are shared among programs should be divided among the programs using the item or service. For example, if a copy machine is shared by WIC and another program, the two programs should share the cost of the item as identified in a cost allocation plan based on reasonable criteria. WIC cannot bear the burden of the cost just because the program has more funds available.

There are many costs that are not allowable in WIC. **Unallowable costs** are those that are not related to carrying out the services of the WIC program or for WIC program clients. Call the ITCA WIC Director if there are items that you wish to purchase that are not included on this list.

Examples of Unallowable Costs:

- Food for meetings/trainings or staff
- Food for agency-wide functions, meetings, holiday meals and/or celebrations
- Coffee, creamer, sugar, etc. for any purpose
- Plates, cups and utensils for staff use
- Large and small appliances (refrigerator, microwave, toaster, etc.) that are primarily for staff use
- Ice machines, bottles of water or large containers of bottled water (generally used in dispensers) for staff or clients
- Uniforms
- Construction costs
- Incentive or outreach items costing more than $3 or that are not related to WIC nutrition or breastfeeding messages
  Examples:
    - cash
    - gift cards
    - mugs
    - visors
    - sun screen
    - bottles of water
    - hygiene items (soap, laundry detergent, shampoo, etc.)
    - diapers
    - baby care items (lotion, diaper rash cream, shampoo, etc.)
    - baby bonnets/hats
    - baby booties
    - baby blankets
    - baby bottles, nipples or other bottle feeding equipment
    - diaper bags
    - electrical covers
- Food for nutrition or breastfeeding classes where the preparation of the food is not demonstrated, the clients are not involved in the preparation of the food and/or the food is not tied to the nutrition message in the class
- Christmas/holiday cards
- Any type of gift, prize or reward
- Utilizing staff salaries, equipment or supplies for the following:
    - Personal exercising time
    - Head Start assessments
    - Farmers' Market Program activities including check distribution, education of clients on how to use checks, location of markets, administrative activities, reporting (only exception is nutrition education portion can be charged to WIC)
    - Fluoride varnishes
    - Car seat distribution/installation
    - Tobacco cessation, car seat, or other non-WIC related training
    - Any other program activities not directly related to WIC services
    - HIPPA requirements or training

Examples of Allowable Costs:

- Food used for food demonstrations for WIC clients, food preparation for WIC clients or tied to the nutrition message in a WIC nutrition class AND recipes include WIC foods
- Plates, cups and utensils for use by WIC clients during food demonstrations
- Items used for food preparation such as bowls, pans, knives, large spoons, etc.
- Large and small appliances (refrigerator, microwave, toaster, etc.) that are primarily used for food demonstrations
- Clinic improvements such as new carpeting, paint, etc. in modular buildings owned by the WIC program (contact the ITCA WIC Director for buildings not owned by WIC)
- Incentive or outreach items costing less than $3 or that are related to WIC nutrition or breastfeeding messages
  Examples (those marked with an asterisk are only incentive items not outreach items):
  Note: Outreach items should include at a minimum the program name and phone number.
    - breast pads*
    - reusable water bottles
    - sippy cups
    - toothbrushes
    - grocery bags
    - beach balls
    - jump ropes
    - books
    - jar opener
    - pens
    - notepads
    - calendars
    - magnets
    - cups
    - rubber bracelets
    - measuring spoons
    - rubber spatula
    - measuring cups

You should review your budget and expenditures monthly to ensure that you are fully spending your grant award. If you anticipate that you will not be expending your full budget, you should notify the ITCA WIC Director as soon as possible before September 30th. Your unspent funds can be used to benefit another agency that may be in need of supplies before the fiscal year ends.

Time Study

An annual time study is required by all program staff that is funded by WIC. The time study is used to meet the federal reporting requirement for funding based on four cost categories: Client Services, Breastfeeding, Nutrition and Administration. The time study is applied to your final WIC Expenditure Report at the end of the year to show what your dollar costs were in each category. It is completed for one week each month or for one full month per quarter. The time study is set up in an Excel file that automatically calculates the totals and percentages.

You are responsible for ensuring that your staff completes the time study on an ongoing basis and records their time correctly in each cost category. The definitions for each category are as follows:

- Client services is identified as any time spent providing services to participants including, but not limited to certifying participants, preparing clinics schedules, issuing checks, driving to clinics and answering telephones.
- Nutrition Education is identified as any time spent preparing for or providing nutrition education, developing educational materials, attending nutrition-related training or purchasing educational materials.
- Breastfeeding Promotion is identified as any time spent preparing for or providing breastfeeding promotion or education, developing breastfeeding materials, attending breastfeeding-related training or purchasing breastfeeding materials and supplies.
- Administration includes, but is not limited to staff meetings, supervision activities, reporting and preparing budgets.

In general, most WIC staff will spend the majority of its time providing client services followed by nutrition and breastfeeding with very little time in administration. The WIC Director will have more time in administration depending on his/her job duties.

Details on completing the time study are found in the ITCA Policy and Procedure Manual, Chapter 14. It is essential that the time study be completed on an ongoing basis. It is difficult, if not impossible to remember how much time was spent on each activity months after the fact. If you have any questions or need assistance with the Excel file, please contact ITCA as soon as possible.

ITCA compiles the data from all local agencies and ITCA expenditures in order to demonstrate that we have spent the required amount of funds in the areas of breastfeeding and nutrition according to USDA guidelines.

Reporting

Each WIC agency is responsible for completing the required reporting and submitting it to ITCA. A calendar will be provided to you to remind you of the due dates for each report. Below is a description of each report and its due date. Additional special reports may be requested during the year from ITCA.

Quarterly Narrative Report: Reports the caseload, progress on meeting goals and objectives, problems and announcements for the quarter for your agency. Due on the 20th of January, April, July and October.

Monthly Financial Report: Reports the expenditures for the month and year to date for your agency. Due 30 days from the end of the report month.

Annual Financial Report: Reports your expenditures for each line item and cost category as per your time study and budget. The Time Study is included as part of this submission. Due on November 30th for the previous fiscal year.

Ordering and Maintaining Equipment and Supplies

ITCA provides all of the WIC-related equipment and most of the supplies that are required with the exception of office supplies. Each agency is responsible for the purchasing of its office supplies, however, ITCA may purchase supplies for you if your agency does not have the financial resources to make the purchase.

The ITCA Administrative Coordinator is responsible for maintaining supplies of WIC materials such as nutrition and breastfeeding education handouts, breast pumps, ID folders, etc. Orders are filled quarterly. An order form will be sent to your agency with a due date. Orders are generally filled in January, April, July and October. These months may be changed slightly to coordinate with meetings. January and July are smaller orders for frequently used supplies and bulky supplies such as ID folders, Rights and Responsibilities Forms and breast pumps. The April and October orders are for all materials.

It is important to follow the guidelines below when placing your orders:

- **Submit your order on time.** Late orders may not be filled, as ITCA may not have time to order adequate supplies from manufacturers/printers.
- **Order in quantities that you will use in the next three to six months.** Use your caseload to estimate the quantities of items that you will need. If your caseload is 400 and you have 50 pregnant women, you probably need about 50 "Why Should I Nurse My Baby Booklets."
- **Avoid stocking up on items.** Forms and materials often change and items that are stocked up on will have to be thrown away, wasting our resources.
- **Check your inventory before ordering.** Make sure you really need the items that you are ordering. Filling orders is time consuming and costly. It wastes time and resources if you do not need the items you ordered. Take the time to check your inventory.
- **Keep supplies organized and in one location/area.** Agencies often find stockpiles of items that they did not know they had.
- **Make sure to sign and return the Check Stock Receipt Form to ITCA as soon as possible after receiving checks.**
- **Check your order.** Check to make sure that you received all the items that you ordered or that you were provided information on items that you did not receive.

ITCA also provides equipment that you need for your WIC clinic including the following:

- Computers
- Monitors, keyboards and mice
- Printers
- Printer Cartridges
- Measuring boards and scales
- HemoCue machines, cuvettes and lancets

It is important to keep all of your equipment in good working order. If you or your staff is having a problem with any equipment, you should notify ITCA via telephone or e-mail as soon as possible so it can be repaired or replaced. Examples of equipment problems include:

- Broken or missing keys on keyboards
- Fuzzy or flashing monitors
- Mice that “stick” when you move them
- Battery backups that are missing or not working
- Measuring boards that sag in the middle
- Broken head or foot pieces on measuring boards
- Scales that do not measure accurately
- Faulty on/off buttons on any equipment
- HemoCue machines with error messages
- Not being able to access STARS on your desktop

It is your responsibility to maintain an inventory of all of your equipment. Guidelines for the inventory are in the ITCA Policy and Procedure Manual.

STARS

The Shared Tribal Automated Reporting System (STARS) is the system used to certify clients, collect and store data, issue checks and generate valuable reports to you and your agency. All of your staff should be trained and competent in using STARS. You should be an expert user in STARS and be available to answer your staff questions within the agency. ITCA staff will train you on how to use STARS as well as the following that are not part of the standard STARS training:

- Check In/Check Out Procedures for mobile clinics
- Setting up a mobile clinic with multiple work stations
- Using a Flash Drive
- Procedures for starting up and shutting down the network

However, you should never work around problems or guess at how to handle a given situation.

If you cannot help your staff or if there is an error message, then the STARS Help Desk should be called. ITCA needs to be aware of problems so they can be addressed in future software releases. ITCA may also have another solution for addressing the problem.

If your system is ever down or there is a power outage, you should notify ITCA as soon as possible. ITCA will provide instructions for you to follow in these situations. In the event of a disaster, you should follow the guidelines in the ITCA Disaster Plan.

New versions of the software are released periodically. When this occurs, ITCA will notify you in advance and provide you with a list of the changes to the system. It is your responsibility to review these changes with your staff. ITCA will also coordinate a date with you to release the new version. It is critical that you follow any instructions that they provide to you. For example, if ITCA tells you that all of your remote laptops must be checked in on a certain date, then you should have them checked in prior to that day. If they are not checked in, notify ITCA immediately. If instructions are not followed exactly, errors may occur in the system that would take valuable time and resources from other activities to correct or even worse, your system may not perform properly if at all.

The STARS system is a valuable tool for you to use in running and managing your WIC program. There are many reports that provide data for you to use. Some of the most popular reports are listed below:

Report	**Data/Information**
Caseload Management	Provides the number of clients that were served and the number of clients that are currently enrolled by category. It also identifies the number of exclusively breastfed infants.
Federal Ethnic/Race List	Provides the number and percent of clients in each ethnic and race category.
Participation by Age Participation by Priority	Provides participation by age and priority.

Guided Ad Hoc	Ad Hoc reports are a useful tool in giving you specific data that you need or a list of clients with specific parameters. Ad Hocs give you the opportunity to run reports using different parameters that you select for demographics, certification data, check issuance and contacts. You can enter as little or as much information as required to retrieve the data. For example, you could obtain a list of all the infants who were born from May through July who live in Phoenix.
Breastfeeding	Provides the initiation and duration rates for all clients and by ethnicity, race, mother's risk and baby's risk.
No Show Rates	Provides the number and percent of clients who had an appointment and were not seen.
High Risk	Available from ITCA. Provides a list of all high risk clients for the month and whether they have been scheduled with the RD or seen by the RD.

Contact the ITCA WIC Program Coordinator on ideas for STARS enhancements to better serve your clients or meet needs of your local agency.

Annual Participant Survey

An annual survey of participant satisfaction is required from every local agency. The survey is used to assess how the clients view the WIC services and what they would like to learn about in WIC. The survey also provides valuable information about breastfeeding attitudes and practice.

In order to assist the local agencies with this requirement, ITCA provides survey forms and survey analysis to the local agencies every other year. Surveys are generally sent to the local agencies in January or February. The survey is completed in February and March by clients. The survey results are generally available in September/October.

Outreach

Each local agency develops and submits an outreach plan with the application each year. You are required to outreach to the public and potential WIC clients at least one time per fiscal year. Outreach to meet this requirement includes newspaper advertisements and radio announcements.

You should also do other outreach activities during the year that may include:

- Coordination efforts with Head Start
- Meeting with other agencies such as IHS, Diabetes Programs, Immunizations, etc. to improve referrals from these programs
- Providing outreach handouts to Food Stamps, TANF and AHCCCS programs
- Participating in health fairs

All outreach materials must comply with the Civil Rights requirements as specified in the Policy and Procedure Manual.

All outreach activities must be documented in the Outreach Log as described in the Policy and Procedure Manual.

Vendor Management

Vendors fulfill a valuable role in providing WIC services. They are responsible for ensuring that clients purchase the correct healthy foods at the grocery store. ITCA contracts with over 150 vendors throughout the state. You have several responsibilities in helping ITCA manage vendors. Your responsibilities are:

- **Identify the need for vendors.** You are the best resource for determining whether the contracted vendors are available in areas of need for ITCA clients. If you feel that there is an unmet need or there is a new store in your area, contact the ITCA Vendor Coordinator.
- **Record and address complaints from vendors.** You and your staff should record any complaints that you receive from vendors regarding clients in the Client Services applications of STARS. ITCA will also notify you of any vendor complaints against clients. You should address these complaints with clients at the next visit.
- **Record and address complaints from clients.** You and your staff should record any complaints that you receive from clients regarding vendors in the Local Vendor or Client Services applications of STARS. It is important to put as much detail in the complaint as possible in order for the compliant to be adequately addressed with the vendor. Complaints that are not detailed enough cannot be corrected by the vendor. ITCA will manage and follow-up on any complaints against vendors.
- **Complete Vendor Site Reviews.** ITCA is required by federal regulations to complete a minimum number of reviews each year. To help fulfill this requirement, your agency will be assigned stores that need Vendor Site Reviews. It is your responsibility to ensure that a trained staff person completes these reviews as scheduled. Either you or another staff person in your agency must be trained by ITCA in order to complete the reviews.

National WIC Association and USDA

The WIC program is administered by the Food and Nutrition Service of the USDA. USDA divides the country into regions. ITCA is part of the Western Region. Our regional headquarters are located in San Francisco. The USDA, Western Region Office develops and disseminates policy and provides funding and technical assistance for the WIC Programs in its region. The office is staffed by experts in financial, certification, nutrition, breastfeeding, civil rights, information systems and other areas relevant to the WIC program.

The National WIC Association (NWA) is a non-profit advocacy group for the WIC program. The membership of NWA consists of the 90 state and thousands of local agencies nationwide. ITCA is a member of the NWA. Local agencies have the option to become members of the association as well. NWA is made up of three sections: Directors, Nutritionists and Local Agencies. There is also a Native American section, called the National Indian and Native American WIC Coalition. Each of these sections elects a representative that sits on the board of the organization. Annually elected officers make up the remainder of the board. There are many work groups and taskforces that the membership participates in. NWA sponsors an annual conference in April or May of each year directed at state and local WIC Directors. The association also sponsors a biennial Nutrition and Breastfeeding Conference for nutritionists and breastfeeding coordinators.

Resources

There are many resources available for the WIC Director to utilize in performing job duties. Remember to check the following resources when you have a question or need help. There are often others who have done the same thing that you are trying to do, so benefit from their experience!

ITCA WIC Policy and Procedure Manual (State Plan)
This manual is your most valuable resource. The Policy and Procedure Manual is provided to each agency annually in an electronic format. It is recommended that you load it onto your desktop and make it available for all staff on their desktops. Be sure to update it annually to ensure you have the current policies.

The Policy and Procedure Manual will help you know how to handle certain situations and what procedures to follow. The manual describes all of the policies and procedures that must be followed according to your agreement with ITCA to provide WIC services. It is important that you become familiar with this manual and how to find information in the manual. All of the forms and guidelines for the reports that you are required to submit are found in the manual.

ITCA Knowledge Modules
The knowledge modules provide a more detailed and reader friendly version of the Policy and Procedure Manual. They are an excellent tool for reviewing policies and procedures with staff.

ITCA WIC Directors
Your fellow WIC Directors are an excellent resource for information. They can help you figure out how to implement policies and procedures that you are struggling with. They are also a good resource for examples of reports and other documents that must be submitted to ITCA. Take advantage of their experience and knowledge!

USDA Website
The USDA WIC website at www.fns.usda.gov/wic is a valuable resource for a lot of information about the administration of the WIC program. It provides program information, laws and regulations, reports, data, national conference dates and other information regarding the WIC program.

ITCA Website
The ITCA website at http://www.itcaonline/wic is a valuable resource for forms, the state plan and other information about the WIC program.

WIC Talk
WIC Talk is a national e-mail discussion group that is sponsored by USDA. WIC state and local level staff from across the country are members of WIC Talk. You can submit questions through WIC Talk and reach thousands of fellow WIC workers. You can also share your expertise and knowledge with others by responding to questions posed. To register for WIC Talk, go to http://www.nal.usda.gov/wicworks/Talk/index.html.

WIC Works

The WIC works website http://www.nal.usda.gov/wicworks/ is a resource for state and local staff to share materials and training with other WIC programs. There is a wealth of information on this site covering all WIC related areas. The site contains links to nutrition and breastfeeding educational materials, training curriculums, infant formula database, on-line learning and sample policies.