



TEXAS DEPARTMENT OF STATE HEALTH SERVICES

P.O. Box 149347
Austin, Texas 78714-9347
1-888-963-7111
TTY: 1-800-735-2989
www.dshs.state.tx.us

DAVID L. LAKEY, M.D.
COMMISSIONER

Letter of Amendment

January 20, 2010

Michelle Patrick, WIC Director
LA #071, Collin County Health Care Services
WIC Program
825 North McDonald, Suite 120
McKinney, TX 75069

Dear Ms. Patrick:

We have received your WIC special projects request for fiscal year 2010 (FY 10). The Collin County Health Care Services WIC contract will be amended to add the increase as detailed in the table below. This letter constitutes a formal contract amendment (addition) to your current contract.

Project	Project Contact	Approved Amount	Type of Allocation		
			Admin	NE	BF
Peer Counselor	Jewell Stremler jewell.stremler@dshs.state.tx.us (512) 341-4593	\$70,700			X
Amended Contract Not to Exceed Amount		\$1,509,259.00			

Funds are awarded with the understanding that any procurements using these funds will be in compliance with the Uniform Grants Management Standards (UGMS), WIC policies and 7 CFR Part 3016. **This letter is approval for funding only. It does not relieve the agency from seeking additional approvals as required by WIC Policy.**

In order for the State Agency to track these expenditures, please bill for each special project(s) listed above on a separate *State of Texas Purchase Voucher (B-13)*. Label each voucher with the specific project name as well as allocations to Administrative (Admin), Nutrition Education (NE) and Breast feeding (BF) costs. Vouchers without allocations listed will be applied toward Admin.

Michelle Patrick, WIC Director

January 20, 2010

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For questions regarding funding decisions, please contact Benny Jasso, Program Specialist, Nutrition Education/Clinic Services Unit, WIC Program, at (512) 341-4573, or benny.jasso@dshs.state.tx.us. For questions regarding purchase requests, please contact Alisin Genfan, Contract Development and Support Branch, at (512) 458-7111, extension 3156, or alisin.genfan@dshs.state.tx.us.

Sincerely,



Mike Montgomery, Section Director
Nutrition Services Section

Attachment

cc: Alisin Genfan

Peer Counselor Funding Information

Total FY2010 Award -- Please note the Approved Amount on your Letter of Amendment is the amount of your increase. This is in addition to any peer counselor funding you were awarded earlier in FY2010. The total peer counselor funding award for LA #071 is **\$70,700.00**.

Separate Billing -- Please bill all of your peer counselor expenses for FY2010 on a separate B16 from your regular WIC billing. If you spend more than your FY2010 allocation on peer counselor services the overage will be applied to other appropriate funding. Separate billing for all peer counselor expenses will allow the State Agency to more accurately track the total amount spent on peer counseling services.

If you have any questions about your Peer Counselor Program, please contact Jewell Stremmer, Peer Counselor Coordinator, Nutrition Education/Clinic Services Unit, WIC Program, at (512)341-4593 or Jewell.Stremmer@dshs.state.tx.us.



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December 11, 2009

Michelle Patrick, WIC Director
LA #071, Collin County Health Care Services
825 North McDonald, Suite 120
McKinney, TX 75069

Dear Ms. Patrick:

All local agencies are strongly encouraged to implement Peer Counselor Programs during FY 2010. Congress has appropriated a substantial increase in peer counselor funding endorsing USDA's priority of establishing breastfeeding peer counseling as a core service of the WIC Program. Since this is a clear mandate of the WIC Program nationally, the State Agency is in the process of revising our *State Agency Peer Counselor Policy* to require that all local agencies employ peer counselors.

We are aware that your agency has experienced some barriers to implementing a Peer Counselor Program and we want to work with you to get this program in place. We would like to help you overcome these barriers.

The first step in implementing the program is securing your funding allocation. The *FY 2010 Funding Request Form* and *Funding Request Information Sheet* are attached. Jewell Stremmer, Peer Counselor Coordinator, Nutrition Education/ Clinic Services Unit, will contact you to help you complete the funding request and to provide any assistance you may need to overcome any barriers your agency may have to providing breastfeeding peer counselor services for your clients. Please return your completed *FY 2010 Peer Counselor Funding Request* by fax to Jewell Stremmer at (512) 341-4473 or to Jewell.Stremmer@dshs.state.tx.us, by close of business **Friday, December 18, 2009**.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Linda Brumble", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Linda Brumble, Unit Manager
Nutrition Education/Clinic Services Unit
Nutrition Services Section

Enclosure:

FY 2010 Peer Counselor Program Funding Request for New Programs
FY 2010 Funding Request Information Sheet

Peer Counselor Program Funding Request Information Sheet

Peer counselor funding is provided by USDA with the stipulation that they be used to fund Peer Counselor Programs that meet the *Food Nutrition Services (FNS) Model*. Please consider the following elements of the *FNS Model* as you develop your request:

These funds can be used to pay:

- *peer counselor salaries
- *peer counselor training and continuing education expenses
- *mileage and travel expenses
- *for communications/telephone equipment
- *furniture

Salaries:

USDA approved the *Texas State Plan* to set peer counselors salaries at a rate between the level of a clerk and an LVN or more. The *FNS Model* recommends evaluating the level of peer counselor's salaries to add stability to the program. FNS research found that extremely low peer counselor salaries contribute to turnover and attrition, therefore the model recommends increasing entry-level salaries and increasing the rate of experienced peer counselors to aid retention rates and create a career ladder.

Services:

Peer counselors can perform any or all of the following duties:

- ❖ Counseling pregnant moms at certification, explaining the food packages as well as addressing the client's specific concerns about making a decision to breastfeed and providing motivational information
- ❖ Teaching or assisting in teaching the breastfeeding classes
- ❖ Providing breastfeeding counseling by phone, in the clinic, in the hospital, and making home visits
- ❖ Issuing pumps and assisting new mothers with the transition back to work or school
- ❖ Creating breastfeeding bulletin boards, ordering breastfeeding materials and supplies
- ❖ Answering a breastfeeding helpline, helping new mothers when clinics are closed and help is not readily available
- ❖ Helping new mothers initiate breastfeeding in the hospital
- ❖ Serving as a role model

In addition to clinic services, the *FNS Model* requires that agencies also provide peer counselor services outside usual WIC clinic hours and settings. FNS research found that peer counselors provide a safety net for mothers, by providing critical intervention at times when they would not otherwise have access to breastfeeding support services. Of course, we do not expect you to establish all of these services at once, but hope you are excited about the potential services peer counselors can provide to the clients you serve. Most agencies establish services in the clinic and add the helpline and hospital services once clinic services are well established.

Training and Continuing Education:

The *FNS Model* requires initial training, monthly in-services and peer counselor meetings, and encourages continuing education through attending breastfeeding workshops or conferences.

Staff Meetings:

The model requires that peer counselors attend staff meetings that all other agency staff are required to attend. Peer counselors should attend regular agency-wide staff meetings and/or meetings that all WIC staff are required to attend at their site. Plan enough hours for counselors to attend those meetings in addition to the hours you want them available to work.

Telephone/Communications Type Equipment

Your request may include equipment for implementing a helpline where counselors can routinely pick up messages after hours, i.e., pagers, answering machines, or cell phones. For example, if a site covers vast distances, it may be prudent to provide counselors with cell phones with unlimited long distance. If counselors do not have phones that are readily available in a private area to make follow-up phone calls in the clinic, consider whether the purchase of cordless phones would help counselors provide needed services.