

Customer Service Notes for *wic*

Coping with a Public Health Crisis

Like everyone else, WIC staff are dealing with the biggest public health crisis in their lifetime.

Remember that WIC participants are also coping with this crisis. Through it all, WIC participants remain in need of the services WIC provides, and rely on WIC staff to assist them.

It's important for WIC staff during these challenging times to be mindful of the following:

- Manage your Stress – many people will be more stressed during this pandemic. Use stress management techniques that have helped you in the past. Please do notify your supervisor and get help if the stress becomes overwhelming.
- Maintain a Positive Attitude – as difficult as it may be, try not to dwell on the negative. Read inspirational stories and avoid too many newscasts.
- Be Safe – follow CDC guidelines and take care of your self and others. Wear a mask, social distance, practice good hand hygiene, and avoid crowds. As your office has participants coming in, practice these guidelines and others that have been developed for WIC offices.
- Participants may be More Stressed – if participants seem preoccupied or less friendly, don't take it personally as it's probably because they are more stressed. While you are not a social worker, do what you can to assist participants.
- Support your Co-Workers and Supervisor – being a team player during a crisis is appreciated by colleagues and management. Look for opportunities where you can assist others.

While our interactions with co-workers may be fewer these days, it is important that we gain comfort from speaking with colleagues as we are all in this together. Speaking by phone or Zoom can remind you that you are not alone during this crisis.

Questions for Reflection

1. Do you not take it personally when participants are preoccupied and less friendly during this crisis?
2. Do you continue to speak with your co-workers and supervisor, even if it's simply to see how they are doing?