

**DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA  
LACTATION COMMISSION**

The District of Columbia Lactation Commission held a public meeting on Monday, September 25, 2023, at 6:30 pm, via Teams.

Questions about the meeting may be directed to Maritza Guzman, Public Health Nutritionist at [maritza.guzman@dc.gov](mailto:maritza.guzman@dc.gov).

Notetaker: Angela McClain, Chair and Community Outreach Expert

MINUTES

**I. Call to Order**

The meeting was called to order at 6:37 pm

**II. Roll Call**

Attendance via Teams

Commissioner Angela McClain—Community Outreach Expert Member and Commission Chair

Commissioner Jennifer Tender —Pediatrician/Neonatologist Member

Commissioner Gwendolyn West—Lactation Expert Member

Commissioner Sahira Long—Pediatrician/Neonatologist Member

Representative Sara Beckwith— Nutrition and Physical Fitness Bureau Chief, DC Health

Representative Maritza Guzman—Public Health Nutritionist

Representative Akua (Odi) Boateng — WIC State Director, DC Health

Representative Colleen Sonosky—DC Department of Health Care Finance

Absent:

Representative Quamiece Harris—DC Department of Human Services

Representative Suzanne Henley—Office of the State Superintendent of Education

**III. Adoption of the Agenda**

Commissioner Tender approved the adoption of the agenda and it was seconded by Commissioner McClain.

**IV. Approval of April 2023 Minutes**

The minutes were approved by Commissioner Tender and seconded by Commissioner McClain.

**V. Old Business**

A. Reimagining the DC Lactation Commission Working Groups

1. Mission Statement – Angela
2. Description of Roles – Sara

3. Community Assessment Questionnaire and Stakeholder Directory – Suzanne, Gwen
4. External Engagement, BF data – Colleen, Jenny, ~~Paige~~

Prior to her departure, DC Health Representative Paige Zaitlin drafted a mission statement activity. Commissioner McClain will review this activity to see if it is still relevant and accessible, and share with the commission.

As the commission prepares to recruit new members, it will be important to have clear, written descriptions of each role and responsibility. Representative Beckwith shared the draft descriptions for the chair, public members and government representatives. Commissioners offered feedback.

For the community assessment questionnaire and stakeholder directory, it was shared that the DC Breastfeeding Coalition is conducting a community assessment. It was suggested that the commission consider the findings from it as part of the Lactation Commission's efforts.

#### B. 2023 DC Lactation Commission Calendar

There were no modifications made to the calendar. Commissioners were reminded that as of this month, meetings will be held monthly (the fourth Monday of each month) at 6:30pm via Teams.

### VI. New Business

#### A. Government Updates

##### 1. DC Health

- The Proclamation for National Breastfeeding Month was approved by the Mayor and posted on DC Health social media in August.
- WIC -
  - a. On August 1, WIC held a Pump Act event. The event was co-organized by the Department of Labor (DOL), Wage and Hourly Division (WHD), National WIC Association (NWA), WIC Ward 8 clinics and Mamatoto Village to discuss the new pump act.
  - b. The Mary Center held a breastfeeding event at the Petworth Library for working parents. The event focused on increasing awareness about day care vouchers, rights with WIC, farmers market, and going back to school. The event was held in English and Spanish, and there was a diaper giveaway. Children's Hospital held a similar event at Shaw Library.
  - c. Unity WIC was awarded the USDA Excellence Award Breastfeeding Gold Award. The award recognizes WIC Agents that have provided exemplary breastfeeding promotion and support activities.
  - d. Members of the WIC team attended and had a table at the 2023 Mayor's Maternal and Infant Health Summit on September 19, 2023.
  - e. Overall breastfeeding rates are improving. The year started with rate of 40% and is now at 46%. The sample size for this rating is 0-12 months of all infants enrolled in WIC. This increase can be contributed to WIC's efforts in working with local organizations and having funding to support additional staff. WIC is also seeing a recovery from COVID period. WIC will continue to support DCBFC's IBCLC certification program and Pacify's 24-hour hotline.

- f. WIC will launch a new breastfeeding training to roll-out USDA's new curriculum. The training will be open to the community. It will be held for 4 hours for 10 times or is a 40-hour curriculum.
  - g. For referrals to the WIC program, interested parties can use <https://linkudmv.org/> Representative Boateng will hold a demonstration of the site at the next meeting.
2. DC Health Care Finance (DCHF)
    - It's renewal season!
    - On September 26, there will be a webinar held on perinatal health. DCHF plans to continue with the maternal task force. If a Lactation Commission member wishes to sit on it, the meeting will be open. The focus of the webinar will be perinatal around postpartum coverage and enrollment of doulas. <https://dhcf.dc.gov/publication/perinatal-mental-health-task-force> or further information concerning maternal health projects at DHCF, please contact [dhcf.maternalhealth@dc.gov](mailto:dhcf.maternalhealth@dc.gov)
  3. DC Department of Human Resources (DCHR) - No representative present.
  4. DC Human Services (DHS) - No representative present.
  5. Office of the State Superintendent of Education (OSSE) - No representative present.

**B. Recap of National Breastfeeding Month Activities**

1. Through WIC, DCBFC conducted a second breastfeeding and pregnant family photo shoot.
2. DCBFC also held a virtual bike/run/walk fundraising event called Making Milk Moves.
3. DCBFC held the Latch and Stroll event. This year's theme was to be outside. Community members met at Anacostia Park and were encouragement to bring new members. Plans are underway to hold another event next year.
4. DCBFC plans to release Heros of Lactation series.
5. DCBFC's Resource Guide is being translated in French, Amharic and Spanish.

**C. Debrief on Mayor's Maternal and Infant Health Summit**

1. As mentioned above, WIC had a table at the event.
2. Overall, the commission believes greater advocacy is need for breastfeeding with the Mayor's Office on Women, the organizing agency for the summit.

**D. Recruitment of New Members**

1. The commission brainstormed on ways to recruitment new members. It was suggested that a flyer be created and shared with our networks including DC American Academy of Pediatrics (DCAAP), NGO newsletters (i.e., Mamatoto) and other lactation resources.

**VII. Community News and Events**

There were no upcoming community news and events shared at the meeting.

**VIII. Opportunity for Public Comment**

No public members were present.

**IX. Future Meeting Schedule**

A. October 23, virtual, at 6:30pm.

**X. Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 8:00pm.