



Staff Ideas – Working During Power or Computer Outages

Planning for power or computer outages can allow staff to continue working during these unexpected events. It's difficult to plan for all events, however, especially during inclement weather, it's good to have a plan for what staff might do during a power or computer outage.

Here are some ideas:

Plan Ahead:



We've prepared category-specific worksheets for staff to use in case of a power outage or when the computer is down. We understand, in some cases, staff won't be able to continue to work, i.e. it's too dark, or there's no phone.

However, if it's possible to continue working:

- Print a few of each of the [Cascades WIC Services Worksheets](#) for each category. Keep them in a location that's easy to get to and one you'll remember when the power or computer goes out.
- Read the [Guidelines for Using the Cascades WIC Services Worksheets](#). It's best to be familiar with using the worksheets before you need to use them. Keep a printed copy of the guidelines along with the worksheets for easy reference.
- If you can, print the Daily Schedule at the end of each day, in case you need the information first thing in the morning. The Daily Schedule includes participant phone numbers. Having a printed copy will help you call participants to reschedule or to complete the appointment using the Cascades WIC Services Worksheets.

Connect with Participants:



This is a good time to make connections by phone or by mail. Even if you don't have access to address information, you can write the notes and keep them until you can look them up in Cascades.

For example:

- Write thank-you notes to new participants for becoming a member of WIC. Share [one or two things](#) they may want to know about WIC and include any helpful referrals.
- Write postcards of encouragement. For example, write a note of encouragement for families that plan to breastfeed and include a contact for breastfeeding help. Consider adding [gift tags](#), [magnets](#), and a [breastfeeding handout](#) (order items from myPRINT).



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- Write a note to families with young children to include with a book (order [children's books](#) from myPRINT). Share resources for the library or other community referrals that can be helpful during the winter months when everyone is spending more time indoors. Be sure to include a note about the importance of immunizations and well-child checks. You can also order [Winter Coloring Pages and Newsletters](#) for sharing more seasonal nutrition and active living ideas for families in four languages.



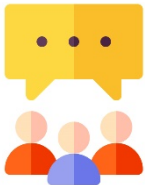
Use this time to call and follow-up with participants

For example:

- Call the participant you saw last week and check in on the struggles they talked with you about.
- Call participants who got a breast pump – check in to see how it's going, or follow-up on an overdue pump.
- Use the No-Activity Report to call participants to reschedule their appointment.



Connect with Each Other:



- Prepare for staff meetings or other team occasions where there's a chance to discuss questions, share information, or a helpful tip you've learned.
- Consider a Book Club for your team. If you have books in your clinic, like *Made to Stick* by Chip and Dan Heath, or other books on counseling skills, or nutrition services, this might be the time to pick them up and start reading. You all might find new energy while sharing ideas.
- Share information about what you like about a particular participant handout. We all tend to have favorites. It's nice to learn from each other what messages in our WIC materials are good to share and why.
- Get together for an impromptu virtual "Walk and Talk" phone-huddle or meeting. If the weather is too stormy to walk outside, consider walking in place or walking inside.



Get Organized:



- Sometimes we wish we had a little time to look at our calendar and pencil in upcoming trainings we'd like to attend, or update our To-Do list for the week, month, or year. This might be the opportunity to re-group, re-organize, and use that planner for the new year.



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- Take some time to review the Nutrition Services Plan and schedule time to work on any outstanding objectives.
- If you work in the office, take some time to organize a supply cupboard or plan a new bulletin board if that’s something that will be seen by participants.

Review staff or participant materials:



If the computer is down, yet the power is on:

- Read a nutrition book, like *Child of Mine Feeding with Love and Good Sense* by Ellyn Satter, or a nutrition book that focuses on maternal-child nutrition of your own choosing.
- Read WIC nutrition and breastfeeding handouts, booklets, or other WIC related materials that you haven’t reviewed in a while. It may be a good time to make sure any materials you’re providing to participants are still current. Report outdated materials to WICPolicySupport@doh.wa.gov, use the subject: WIC Materials.
- You may want to plan for these types of events and have a few things set aside to read, organize, or catch up on. For example, literature reviews, scientific studies, professional magazines, memos, policy information, etc.
- If you still own a DVD player, [myPRINT](#) has DVD sets from Ellyn Satter. These short vignettes, with voice-over, show what works and doesn’t work in child feeding. These videos are a great way to learn about child nutrition, common feeding concerns, and the division of responsibility from Ellyn Satter.



Your Ideas:

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DOH 962-1003 November 2020

