

# Step-by-Step Guide for Calculating the Clinical Practice Hours Required by Pathway 1



- You may use your on-the-job experience to meet the clinical practice requirement.
  - This experience may be from paid or volunteer work.
- Your experience must have been obtained in a setting where you were appropriately supervised.
  - If you have questions about what is considered “appropriate supervision” please read the Frequently Asked Questions found at <http://www.americas.iblce.org/faqs-about-becoming-an-ibclc>

- So long as your experience has been appropriately supervised and was completed before you apply for the IBLCE exam, you must report 1000 hours of clinical practice in providing care to breastfeeding families.
  - If your experience was obtained through your service as a volunteer mother-to-mother support group leader, such as a La Leche League leader, you may receive 500 hours credit for each full year of service. This means that 2 full years of service must be completed before you submit your application for the IBLCE exam.

- If you have not already done so, please download the chart found at [http://www.americas.iblce.org/upload/LactationSpecificClinicalPracticeRecord\\_2011.pdf](http://www.americas.iblce.org/upload/LactationSpecificClinicalPracticeRecord_2011.pdf)
- This chart will guide you through the steps needed to calculate your clinical experience hours. Please use and fill in a copy of this chart as you view the rest of the slides in this presentation.

- Please note that the clinical practice hours required by Pathway 1 are self-reported hours.
- Be careful to calculate your hours correctly. Your supervisor may be asked to verify the hours you report.
- When you apply for the IBLCE exam, you must provide 2 references who can verify the clinical practice hours that you have reported to IBLCE. At least one of these references should be a supervisor.

- When you apply for the IBLCE exam, you must provide 2 references who can verify the clinical practice hours that you have reported to IBLCE.
  - At least one of these references should be one of your supervisors (or the person to whom you report in your job).
  - Someone who is also applying to take the IBLCE exam cannot serve as a reference for you.
    - This means that if your supervisor is also applying for the exam, you will need to provide the name of someone else who can verify the accuracy of the hours you reported.

- Pathway 1 requires 1000 hours of clinical practice that was obtained within the 5 years immediately prior to applying for the IBLCE exam.
  - You must have completed at least 1000 hours before submitting your application for the IBLCE exam.
  - If you are applying for the 2011 exam, do not report hours accumulated prior to January 1, 2006.
    - Likewise, if you plan to take the 2012 exam, you should not report hours accumulated prior to January 1, 2007.

- Having trouble deciding what percentage of your on-the-job time is spent in providing lactation care?
  - Even jobs like being a nurse in postpartum care unit vary widely from hospital to hospital.
  - If your current job involves providing lactation care, keep a time log for one or two weeks.
  - After seeing each breastfeeding family, record how much time you spent providing lactation and breastfeeding care.
  - Use this log to calculate the percentage of time you spent in providing lactation and breastfeeding care.

- For example, let's say that you work 40 hours/week and you keep a time log for 2 weeks. Your time log shows that, during those 2 weeks, you spent 16 hours providing lactation care.
- The percentage of time would be calculated as follows:

$$\frac{16}{80} = 20\%$$

- Another way to determine the percentage of time you spend providing lactation care is to think about a typical situation you encounter with a patient/client.
- Let's say that it is typical for you to spend about 15 minutes with each of your patients/clients.
- Ask yourself, "On average, how much of this 15 minutes involves providing lactation care?"
  - Asking this question requires that you do not include time spent let's say taking the mother's and baby's vital signs.
- After reflecting on this question, you decide that about 5 minutes of your time is spent talking with the mother about breastfeeding concerns.
- This means that about  $\frac{1}{3}$ , or 33%, of your time is spent in providing lactation care.

- The remainder of this presentation will explain each column in the chart that you downloaded. Please use your copy of the chart as we go along.

The screenshot shows a Microsoft Word document titled 'AMS-WS02'. The ribbon includes Home, Insert, Page Layout, References, Mailings, Review, View, Add-Ins, Design, and Layout. The document contains the following instructions:

- Column 5:** If you worked every week of the month, please enter 4 in this column. If you worked 2 weeks each month, please enter 2 in this column.
- Column 6 =** Column 4 x Column 5
- Column 7:** If you worked full time, please enter the number of hours considered full-time for that job. If you worked part-time, please enter the number of hours, on average, that you worked each week.
- Column 9:** The percentage of time, on average, that you spent helping breastfeeding families.
- Column 10 =** Column 8 x Column 9

The table below is the data collection tool:

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Name & Location of Workplace	Start Date (MM/YY)	End Date (MM/YY)	Months per Job	Weeks Worked per Month	Total Weeks Worked	Hours Per Week	Hours Per Job	% Time in Lactation Care	Lactation Care Hours per Job
Sample Job	05/07	10/09	29	4	116	40	4640	20%	928
<b>Total Lactation Care Hours</b>									

The status bar at the bottom indicates 'Page: 1 of 1' and 'Words: 244'. The Windows taskbar shows the time as 5:22 PM on 1/25/2011.

# Column 1

- For all the jobs in which you provided lactation and breastfeeding care in the past 5 years, enter the name of your employer and the employer's location.
  - The name of the organization that employed you (or for whom you were a volunteer) is sufficient.
  - The state/province and country of your employer is all that is required for the location.

## Columns 2 & 3

- Column 2: Enter the date that you started working for each employer.
  - The month and year you started is sufficient.
- Column 3: Enter the date that your employment ended for each job listed.
  - The month and year the job ended is all that is necessary.

## Column 4

- Using the information you provided in columns 2 & 3, calculate how many months you worked at each job.
- For example, if on the first job listed, you worked from March 2008 until May 2010, you worked 2 years and 2 months, or 26 months.

## Column 5

- Please use the following guidelines to complete this column.
  - If you worked full-time, please enter the number "4."
  - If you worked half-time, please enter the number "2."
  - If you worked 3 weeks each month, enter the number "3."
  - If you worked 1 week each month, enter the number "1."

## Column 6 & 7

- Column 6: Multiply column 4 by column 5.
- Column 7: Enter the average number of hours you worked per week for each job listed.
  - **Please Note:** Full-time for some jobs may be 40 hours per week; for other jobs, full-time may be 32-36 hours per week.
  - If the job was a part-time job with irregularly scheduled hours, please make a calculation of the average number of hours per week.
    - For example, suppose you worked weekends twice per month. This means that on average, you worked 16 hours per week.

## Columns 8 & 9

- Column 8: Multiply column 6 by column 7.
- Column 9: Estimate the amount of time your job involved providing care to breastfeeding families. Enter this estimate as a percentage.
  - For example, if you estimated that about 1/3 of your time was spent providing lactation care, enter 33% in column 9.

## Column 9 (continued)

- As pointed out earlier in this presentation, it may help for you to think about this estimate on a daily or weekly basis. Or, it might be helpful to think about a typical patient or client.
- Use the method that is easiest for you and do your best to make a reasonable estimate.

## Column 9 (continued)

- If you are feeling unsure about your calculations, err on the side of underestimating.
  - The clinical practice experience is crucial to your preparation for becoming an IBCLC.
    - You may not be successful on the exam if you overestimate your clinical practice hours.
    - Erring on the side of caution when making estimates is to your learning and financial advantage.
- If you are anxious about making this estimate, keep a time log for 2 weeks and use this 2 week long as a basis for your estimation.
  - Then, if IBLCE asks for verification, you can provide a copy of your time log as evidence.

# Column 10

- Multiply column 8 by column 9.
  - Remember that percentages are actually decimal numbers.
  - For example, when multiplying, convert 25% into 0.25
  - In the example shown on the chart, column 10 is calculated by the following formula:
    - $4640 \text{ hours} \times 0.20 = 928 \text{ hours}$

# Total Lactation Care Hours

- Once you have calculated the number of lactation care hours for each job, calculate the total number of hours that you have accumulated over the past 5 years by adding together the hours for each job.
- Enter this total in the last box of the chart.

# Still confused?

- If you are still confused about calculating your clinical practice hours, please contact us at [iblce@iblce.org](mailto:iblce@iblce.org) and put "Calculation of Clinical Practice Hours" in the subject line.
- In your email, please be specific about your remaining questions.
- An IBLCE staff member will be in touch by return email to answer your questions.