

The Scope of Practice for IBCLC Certificants was published by IBLCE before the transition to the IBCLC Commission Structure on September 9, 2022.



Scope of Practice for International Board Certified Lactation Consultant® (IBCLC®) Certificants

International Board Certified Lactation Consultant (IBCLC) certificants have demonstrated specialised knowledge and clinical expertise in breastfeeding and human lactation and are certified by the International Board of Lactation Consultant Examiners® (IBLCE®).

This Scope of Practice encompasses the activities for which IBCLC certificants are educated and in which they are authorised to engage. The aim of this Scope of Practice is to protect the public by promoting that all IBCLC certificants provide safe, competent and evidence-based care. As this is an international credential, this Scope of Practice is applicable in any country or setting where IBCLC certificants practice.

I. IBCLC certificants have the duty to uphold the standards of the IBCLC profession by:

1. Working within the framework defined by the IBLCE Code of Professional Conduct and the Clinical Competencies for IBCLC Practice.
2. Integrating knowledge and evidence from the disciplines defined in the Detailed Content Outline when providing care for breastfeeding families.
3. Working within the legal framework of the respective geopolitical regions or settings.
4. Maintaining knowledge and skills through regular continuing education.

II. IBCLC certificants have the duty to protect, promote and support breastfeeding by:

1. Acting as an advocate for breastfeeding as the child-feeding norm.
2. Educating families, health professionals and the community about breastfeeding and human lactation.
3. Providing comprehensive, skilled care and evidence-based information for breastfeeding and human lactation, from preconception to weaning, for

- breastfeeding families.
4. Facilitating the development of policies which protect, promote and support breastfeeding.

III. IBCLC certificants have the duty to provide competent services for clients and families by:

1. Acknowledging parental and child health and mental status in the context of breastfeeding.
2. Performing comprehensive maternal, child and feeding assessments related to breastfeeding and human lactation.
3. Developing and implementing an individualised feeding plan in consultation with the client.
4. Providing evidence-based information regarding use, during breastfeeding and human lactation, of medications (over-the-counter and prescription), alcohol, tobacco and addictive drugs, and herbs or supplements, and their potential impact on milk production and child safety.
5. Providing evidence-based information regarding complementary and alternative therapies during lactation and their impact on milk production and the effect on the child.
6. Integrating cultural, psychosocial and nutritional aspects of breastfeeding and human lactation.
7. Providing support and encouragement to successfully meet breastfeeding goals.
8. Using effective counselling skills when interacting with clients and health care team members.
9. Using the principles of family-centred care while maintaining a collaborative, supportive relationship with clients.
10. Using principles of adult education when teaching clients, health care providers and others in the community.

IV. IBCLC certificants have the duty to support the client and infant by:

1. Recording all relevant information, truthfully and fully, concerning care provided and, where appropriate, retaining records for the time specified by the local jurisdiction.
2. Reporting, when necessary, truthfully and fully to the client's primary health care provider, to the health care system, and/or to the appropriate social services.

V. IBCLC certificants have the duty to preserve client confidence by:

1. Respecting their privacy, dignity and confidentiality.

VI. IBCLC certificants have the duty to act with reasonable diligence by:

1. Providing information that is evidence-based and free of conflict of interest.
2. Providing follow-up services as required.
3. Making referrals to other health care providers and community support resources when necessary.
4. Working collaboratively and interdependently with other members of the health care team to deliver coordinated services to families.
5. Reporting to IBLCE if they have been found guilty of any offence under the criminal code of their country or jurisdiction in which they work.
6. Reporting to IBLCE if they have been sanctioned by another profession.
7. Reporting to IBLCE any IBCLC who is functioning outside this Scope of Practice.