

# Resources for Becoming an IBCLC

The National Lactation Consultant Alliance (NLCA) was created to support the holders of the IBCLC® credential and to advocate for the clinical lactation consultant profession at the local, state, and national levels. However, many who wish to become an IBCLC® face challenges in securing the needed elements of education, clinical hours, and the funds necessary to accomplish IBCLC® certification. The International Board of Lactation Consultant Examiners (IBLCE) administers the certification exam and details all the requirements to be acquired prior to sitting for the exam. See [www.iblce.org](http://www.iblce.org). NLCA has assembled this resource as a central repository for learning where to go for the information you need on your path to becoming an IBCLC®.

## College Preparation

14 health science courses are required that must be taken from an accredited institution of higher learning. These are available individually from colleges, universities, junior or community colleges, and on-line. There are a few colleges that offer the required college courses within a program, with some also offering the required clinical hours. Check with these colleges and universities to see if there is scholarship money available.

Georgia Northwestern Technical College, Calhoun, Georgia

<http://gntc.smartcatalogiq.com/en/2021-2022/Semester-Catalog/Nursing-and-Allied-Health-Technologies/Human-Lactation-Diploma>

UC San Diego Extension, La Jolla, California

<https://extension.ucsd.edu/courses-and-programs/lactation-consultant-pathway-2>

Henry Ford College, Detroit, Michigan

<https://catalog.hfcc.edu/programs/lactation-consultant-cert>

Johnson C. Smith University, Charlotte, North Carolina

<https://www.jcsu.edu/academics/lactation-program>

North Carolina Agricultural and Technical State University, Greensboro, North Carolina

<https://www.ncat.edu/caes/departments/family-and-consumer-sciences/lactation-cert.php>

University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, North Carolina

<https://sph.unc.edu/cgbi/lactation-consultant-training/>

Union Institute & University, Cincinnati, Ohio

<https://myunion.edu/academics/bachelors/maternal-child-health/>

Portland State University, Portland, Oregon

<https://ohsu-psu-sph.org/lactation/>

Drexel University, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

<https://drexel.edu/cnhp/academics/certificates/Human-Lactation-Consultant-Program/>

Arizona State University, Tempe, Arizona

<https://nursingandhealth.asu.edu/continuing-education/lactation>

Bastyr University, San Diego, California and Kenmore, Washington

<https://bastyr.edu/>

## **Lactation Specific Education**

IBLCE requires 95 hours of education specific to lactation and breastfeeding, including 5 hours focused on communication skills. If you did not acquire these hours through a college program, then you will need to find this education through specific programs, through on-line education, distance learning, or independent study modules. Some educational programs offer the 95 hours, some offer fewer hours. This education can also be acquired through conferences, webinars, workshops, and seminars. Many state breastfeeding coalitions offer conferences as do state chapters of the US Lactation Consultant Association. Check to see when your state breastfeeding coalition will be offering their conference.

### **Educational programs**

Lactation Education Resources (LER)

[www.lactationtraining.com](http://www.lactationtraining.com)

The B.L.A.C.K Course

<https://theblackcourse.com>

Breastfeed LA

<https://www.breastfeedla.org/lactation-education/>

Mom2Mom Global

<https://www.mom2momglobal.org>

Healthy Children Project, Inc.

<https://centerforbreastfeeding.org/>

International Breastfeeding Institute

[https://internationalbreastfeedinginstitute.com/?gclid=Cj0KCQiAi9mPBhCJARIsAHchl1wLtq2jD2gQ9cDuBZm1KprlKJNMlpgxnMVUwzWJ3QpVTTcz9bV8SoaAg7lEALw\\_wcB](https://internationalbreastfeedinginstitute.com/?gclid=Cj0KCQiAi9mPBhCJARIsAHchl1wLtq2jD2gQ9cDuBZm1KprlKJNMlpgxnMVUwzWJ3QpVTTcz9bV8SoaAg7lEALw_wcB)

Lactation Literacy

<https://www.lactationliteracy.com/breastfeedingeducator>

CAPPA (Childbirth and Postpartum Professional Association)

<https://cappa.net/>

Lactation Education Consultants

<https://lactationeducation.com>

CHEER Center for Health Equity, Education, & Research

<https://www.cheerequity.org/indigenous-breastfeeding-counselor-course.html>

HealthConnect One

<https://www.healthconnectone.org>

Reaching Our Sisters Everywhere

<http://www.breastfeedingrose.org>

Institute for the Advancement of Breastfeeding & Lactation Education (IABLE)

<https://lacted.org/>

The Lactation College

<https://thelactationcollege.substack.com/>

Color-filled Breastfeeding: Clinical Lactation Training Program

<https://ksbreastfeeding.org/color-filled-breastfeeding-clinical-lactation-training-program/>

### **Online continuing education/conferences**

Gold Learning

<https://www.goldlearning.com/>

iLactation

<https://ilactation.com/>

Health e-learning

<https://www.health-e-learning.com/>

### **National organizations conferences and workshops**

International Lactation Consultant Association

[www.ilca.org](http://www.ilca.org)

US Lactation Consultant Association

[www.uslca.org](http://www.uslca.org)

National Lactation Consultant Alliance

[www.nlca.us](http://www.nlca.us)

La Leche League International

[www.llli.org](http://www.llli.org)

Academy of Breastfeeding Medicine  
<https://www.bfmed.org/>

National WIC Association  
<https://www.nwica.org/>

## **Funding your IBCLC<sup>®</sup> preparation**

Funding the preparation for a profession can be expensive no matter what the profession. The expense of preparing to become an IBCLC<sup>®</sup> has been identified as a significant barrier for many people. NLCA has assembled a listing of resources from which funds might be available. These resources have funding and scholarships available for coursework, IBLCE exam fees, conferences/webinars, and recommended books. If you are enrolled in a college program, scholarship funds may be available from the college or university. Some of the organizations offering lactation specific education may have scholarship funds for their students. Check to see if any of these would be helpful to you.

Monetary Investment for Lactation Consultant Certification  
<https://milcc.org/>

State breastfeeding coalitions  
<http://www.usbreastfeeding.org/p/cm/ld/fid=44>

US Lactation Consultant Association (USLCA)  
<https://uslca.org/scholarship/>

USLCA chapters in various states  
<https://uslca.org/providers/membership/chapters/#!/directory/map>

Felix Biancuzzo Memorial Scholarship  
<https://mariebiancuzzo.com/scholarship/>

Health e-learning  
<https://www.health-e-learning.com/trudi-szallasi-memorial-scholarship>

MilkyMama  
<https://milky-mama.com/scholarships/>

iLactation  
<https://ilactation.com/conferences/little-bit-lllove-scholarship/>

Breastfeeding Resource Center  
<https://breastfeedingresourcecenter.org/sponsors-and-programs-2022/>

US Department of Veterans Affairs/ GI Bill  
If you are a veteran or dependent spouse, you may be eligible for educational assistance through the GI Bill.  
<https://www.va.gov/education/eligibility/>

Lactation Education Counselor Scholarship

UC San Diego Extended Studies

<https://breastfeeding.org/scholarship/>

### **Acquiring clinical hours**

Between 300 and 1000 hours of lactation specific clinical experience must be accrued prior to sitting for the IBCLC® exam depending on your background and the IBLCE pathway you are following. These hours constitute actual provision of lactation care, not just observation. Some lactation-specific educational programs provide clinical hours as do some of the college and university programs. Check for mentors through your state breastfeeding coalition.

IBLCE has a listing of recognized breastfeeding support counselor organizations where clinical hours may be obtained.

[https://iblce.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/05/2022\\_May\\_RBSCO\\_ENGLISH.pdf](https://iblce.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/05/2022_May_RBSCO_ENGLISH.pdf)

The US Lactation Consultant Association has a searchable directory of mentors.

<https://uslca.org/resources/find-mentorships/>

Oklahoma Breastfeeding Resource Center University of

Oklahoma Health Science Center

<https://obrc.ouhsc.edu/Become-an-IBCLC/Program-Checklist>

<https://obrc.ouhsc.edu/Become-an-IBCLC/Education-Checklist>

Uzazi Village, Kansas City, Missouri

<https://uzazivillage.org/lactation/>