

# Documenting Clinic Scale Testing

UPDATED JUNE 2015

**Instructions:** Record the location of scale and date tested. Document the total weight of the test weight(s) if different than amounts noted on the form. In column *Scale Reading*, record *actual reading* from scale, then determine if values match within the allowed tolerance. See attached instructions.

**Example of how to use the form – Sample only**

<b>Infant Scale</b>	<i>Location: Bedlam clinic SECA</i> <i>If multiple scales in clinic, identify specific scale being tested:</i>		<b>Date:</b> 01/09/2013
<b>Value of Test Weights</b>	<b>Scale Reading</b>	<b>Allowed Tolerance</b>	<b>Meets Criteria?</b>
5#	5#	½ ounce	Yes
15#	15# 0.3 oz.	½ ounce	Yes
30#	30# 1.0 oz.	½ ounce	No
<b>Adult Scale</b>	<i>Location Bedlam Clinic SECA scale</i> <i>If multiple scales in clinic, identify specific scale being tested:</i>		<b>Date:</b> 01/09/2013
<b>Value of Test Weights</b>	<b>Scale Reading</b>	<b>Allowed Tolerance*</b> see instructions below	<b>Meets Criteria?</b>
15#	15#	0.10 #	Yes
60#	60#	0.10 #	Yes
Staff person's Weight + 25# 147.5# + 25 = 172.5# <i>OK to enter only last digit and fraction of pound</i>	172.5 or __ .25#	0.10 #	Yes
<b>Any action required? Describe:</b> Adult scale ok, but infant SECA scale must be sent for correction – Mary Smith			

**\* To determine allowed tolerance:** The allowed tolerance depends on the specific scale.

- For *digital scales*, check user's manual.
- For *adult digital scales*, tolerance depends on the increment of measurement. If the scale weighs in 1/10th (0.10) pound increments, the tolerance is +/- 1/10 (0.10) pound. If the scale weighs in 2/10th (0.20) pound increments, the tolerance is +/- 2/10 (0.20) pound.
- For *adult balance beam scales*, allowed tolerance is +/- ¼ pound.
- For **all infant scales**, allowed tolerance is ½ ounce.

EXHIBIT 5 - K: DOCUMENTING CLINIC SCALE TESTING

**Instructions:** Record the location of scale and date tested. Document the total weight of the test weight(s) if different than amounts noted on the form. In column *Scale Reading*, record *actual reading* from scale, then determine if values match within the allowed tolerance. See attached instructions.

<b>Infant Scale</b>	<b>Location:</b> <i>If multiple scales in clinic, identify specific scale being tested:</i>	<b>Date:</b>	
<b>Value of Test Weights</b>	<b>Scale Reading</b>	<b>Allowed Tolerance</b>	<b>Meets Criteria?</b>
5#		½ ounce	Yes/No
15#		½ ounce	Yes/No
30#		½ ounce	Yes/No
<b>Adult Scale</b>	<b>Location:</b> <i>If multiple scales in clinic, identify specific scale being tested:</i>	<b>Date:</b>	
<b>Value of Test Weights</b>	<b>Scale Reading</b>	<b>Allowed Tolerance*</b> see instructions below	<b>Meets Criteria?</b>
15#			Yes/No
60#			Yes/No
Staff person's Weight + 25# <i>OK to enter only last digit and fraction of pound</i>			Yes/No
Any action required? Describe:			

<b>Infant Scale</b>	<b>Location:</b> <i>If multiple scales in clinic, identify specific scale being tested:</i>	<b>Date:</b>	
<b>Value of Test Weights</b>	<b>Scale Reading</b>	<b>Allowed Tolerance</b>	<b>Meets Criteria?</b>
5#		½ ounce	Yes/No
15#		½ ounce	Yes/No
30#		½ ounce	Yes/No
<b>Adult Scale</b>	<b>Location:</b> <i>If multiple scales in clinic, identify specific scale being tested:</i>	<b>Date:</b>	
<b>Value of Test Weights</b>	<b>Scale Reading</b>	<b>Allowed Tolerance*</b> see instructions below	<b>Meets Criteria?</b>
15#			Yes/No
60#			Yes/No
Staff person's Weight + 25# <i>OK to enter only last digit and fraction of pound</i>			Yes/No
Any action required? Describe:			

**\*To determine allowed tolerance:** The allowed tolerance depends on the specific scale.

For *digital scales*, check user's manual.

For *adult digital scales*, tolerance depends on the increment of measurement. If the scale weighs in 1/10th (0.10) pound increments, the tolerance is +/- 1/10 (0.10) pound. If the scale weighs in 2/10th (0.20) pound increments, the tolerance is +/- 2/10 (0.20) pound.

For *adult balance beam scales*, allowed tolerance is +/- ¼ pound.

For **all infant scales**, allowed tolerance is ½ ounce.

## Instructions for Testing Scales for Accuracy

### TESTING INFANT SCALES

Digital and balance beam scales must be checked for accuracy using standard weights at least two times each year (approximately every six months). Clinics with high volumes should test scales more often. It is recommended that staff test scales quarterly in locations with monthly caseloads of 1,000 or more participants.

**Procedure:** Zero the scale. Test three different amounts of weight, beginning with a small standard weight, then using a weight at the mid-range of the scale's capacity, and then using a weight near the scale's capacity. Most infant scales in WIC clinics have a capacity of 40 to 50 pounds. Zero the scale and then add standard weights sequentially. For example:

- Place a standardized 5# weight on the scale, then read and record the result.
- Remove the 5# weight and allow to zero.
- Then place a 10# & 5# weight on the scale together. Read and record the result.
- Remove these weights and allow to zero.
- Place a combination of weights amounting to 30 - 35#. Read and record the result.

Local agencies may have a different combination of standard weights, in which case the procedure will be the same, using the test weights available.

**Documenting:** A form that can be used to document testing is provided. Local agencies may use their own form, *as long as the pertinent information is included*: date, scale tested, weight tested, and results of tests.

Infant scales should weigh the test weights **within ½ ounce**. For example, if the test weight is 15#, it is acceptable if the scale measures **between** 14# 15½ oz. and 15# ½oz.

If the scale measures the test weight differently than the test weight's value plus or minus the allowed tolerance (in this case ½ ounce), **the scale must be calibrated**. Check the scale's "User's Manual" for directions for calibrating the scale or consult with the scale's manufacturer.

If you have questions, you should contact your State WIC Consultant.

### TESTING ADULT SCALES

Digital and balance beam scales must be checked for accuracy using standard weights **at least two times** each year. Clinics with high volumes should test scales more often.

**Procedure:**

- Zero the scale.
- Add standardized 5 and 10# weights. Record the result.
- Remove the weights and allow to zero.

## EXHIBIT 5 - K: DOCUMENTING CLINIC SCALE TESTING

- Place standardized 5, 10, 20 and 25# weights on the scale. Record the result. Remove the weights.
- Have a staff person step on the scale and note the weight. Have them step off the scale and allow the scale to zero. Then the staff person will return to the scale while holding a standardized 20 or 25 # weight. Record the result.
- Compare the scale's reading with the value of the combined weights that were measured.

Local agencies may have a different combination of standard weights, in which case the procedure will be the same, using the test weights available.

**Electronic scales** measure the fractional pounds in one-tenths (0.1) or two-tenths (0.2) of a pound. So, the scale must measure ***within 1/10th pound*** or ***within 2/10th pound*** of the value of the standardized weight depending on the scale increments. For example, using a scale that measures in 0.10 increments, if the staff person weighed 135.8 pounds, plus the 25# weight test weight, a measurement of 160.7 up to 160.9 is acceptable. In this example if the scale measured in 0.20 increments, the allowed tolerance would be 160.6 up to 161.0 pounds.

**Balance Beam Scales** should measure ***within ¼ pound (4 ounces)***. So, the scale must measure within ¼ pound of the value of the standardized weight. In this example, the staff person weighed 135 ¾ pounds and held a 25# weight. The scale must read between 160 ½ up to 161 pounds.

If the scale measures outside of this range, the scale must be calibrated. Check the scale's "User's Manual" for directions on calibrating the scale or consult with the scale's manufacturer.

**Documenting:** A form that can be used to document testing is provided. Local agencies may use their own form, *as long as pertinent information is included*: date, scale tested, weight tested and results of tests.

If you have questions, you should contact your State WIC Consultant.

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