



A WORLDWIDE NETWORK OF LACTATION PROFESSIONALS

Hello!

Thank you for your interest in the lactation consultant profession! I am happy to provide you with information on becoming a lactation consultant and/or an International Board Certified Lactation Consultant (IBCLC).

Be sure to visit the International Board of Lactation Consultant Examiners (IBLCE) website at [www.ams.iblce.org](http://www.ams.iblce.org). There is a great deal of helpful information on this site, and many of your questions will be answered here.

One of your first steps is to go to this link:

[http://americas.iblce.org/eligibilityRequirements\\_v2.php](http://americas.iblce.org/eligibilityRequirements_v2.php). From this page you can determine which of the three Pathways describe your situation. Most non-healthcare professionals will fall under Pathway 3, which is a Mentored Education Plan. View more info and download the 27-page Guide to Developing a Mentored Lactation Education Plan at this link:

<http://americas.iblce.org/pathway3.php>

Once you've determined your Pathway, you will need to view education opportunities. For a listing of approved courses, visit this link: <http://www.ilca.org/i4a/pages/Index.cfm?pageID=3353>.

If you are following Pathway 3, you will also need to find a mentor. If you are in the U.S., the best way to find a mentor is through your local Chapter. To view a list of U.S. Chapters, click on this link: <http://uslcaonline.org/chapters.html>, and click on the appropriate state. Another way to look for a mentor is by visiting our FALC (Find a Lactation Consultant) Directory (<http://www.ilca.org/i4a/pages/index.cfm?pageid=3337>) and entering your zip code, which will bring up a list of ILCA members who may be able to be a mentor, or may not of someone to refer you.

In addition, I have included membership information for joining the International Lactation Consultant Association. You do not have to wait until you are certified to join ILCA—our members consist not only of lactation consultants, but also of nurses, doctors, social workers, midwives, mothers, and people interested in supporting the profession in general. It is a wonderful way to network among your peers who share the same interests as you.

ILCA members enjoy a number of benefits including a subscription to the *Journal of Human Lactation*, monthly newsletter (*eGlobe*), and access the Members Only section of the ILCA website at [www.ilca.org](http://www.ilca.org). The Members Only section of the website is quickly becoming the hub of much IBCLC activity from the Career Mart to teaching tips to resources for promoting your practice. Other features include discussion boards, FAQ's, conference session presentations, and access to the online Journal of Human Lactation. Additionally, members get a discounted rate on several products in the ILCA Bookstore online as well as discounted rates to the annual conference.

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INTERNATIONAL LACTATION CONSULTANT ASSOCIATION

2501 AERIAL CENTER PARKWAY, SUITE 103 • MORRISVILLE, NC • 27560 • USA  
PHONE: 919-861-5577 • FAX: 919-459-2075 • E-MAIL: [INFO@ILCA.ORG](mailto:INFO@ILCA.ORG) • WEB: [WWW.ILCA.ORG](http://WWW.ILCA.ORG)



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I hope you will seriously consider joining ILCA as you work towards becoming an IBCLC. I am always here if you have any questions, please do not hesitate to write or call. Thank you again and good luck in fulfilling your goal to become a Lactation Consultant!

Sincerely,

*Glenna Thurston*

Glenna Thurston  
Membership Coordinator  
Direct Line: (919) 459-6100  
Email: [glenna@ilca.org](mailto:glenna@ilca.org)

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