

USDA Food & Nutrition Service

Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants & Children (WIC):

Quick Facts

Programs

- Food Stamp Program
- National School Lunch Program
- School Breakfast Program
- Summer Food Service Program
- Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants & Children (WIC)
- Senior Farmers' Market Nutrition Program
- Special Milk Program
- Child and Adult Care Food Program
- Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program
- Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservations
- WIC Farmers' Market Nutrition Program
- Nutrition Assistance Block Grants
- Commodity Supplemental Food Program
- The Emergency Food Assistance Program
- Disaster Assistance

Description

- Provides nutritious supplemental foods, nutrition education, and health and social services referrals at no charge to low-income pregnant, postpartum, and breastfeeding women; and infants and children up to the age of five years.
- Provides participants in most States with monthly checks or vouchers to buy specific foods designed to supplement their diet with specific nutrients. A few State agencies distribute the WIC foods through warehouses or deliver the foods to participants' homes.
- Provides nutritious foods that include iron-fortified infant formula and infant cereal, iron-fortified adult cereal, vitamin C-rich fruit or vegetable juice, eggs, milk, and cheese. Soy-based beverages, tofu, fruits and vegetables, baby foods, whole-wheat bread, and other whole-grain options were recently added.
- Provides WIC services through county health departments, hospitals, mobile clinics, community centers, schools, public housing sites, Indian reservations, migrant health centers and camps, and Indian Health Service facilities.
- Operates in all 50 States, 34 Indian Tribal Organizations, American Samoa, District of Columbia, Guam, Puerto Rico, the Virgin Islands, and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands. These 90 WIC State agencies administer WIC through 2,200 local agencies and 9,000 clinic sites.

Background

- The program was created in 1972 as a pilot program. WIC has operated as a permanent nutrition assistance program since 1974.

Participants

- 8.1 million people participated in FY 2006 (monthly average).
- An applicant's family income must be at or below 185% of the U.S. Poverty Income Guidelines (\$38,203 for four-person household as of July 1, 2007). A person who participates or has family members who participate in certain other benefit programs, such as the Food Stamp Program, Medicaid, or Temporary Assistance for Needy Families, automatically meets the income eligibility requirement.

Budget

- \$5.3 billion in FY 2006 and \$5.2 billion in FY 2007 (est.)

Contact Information

- For complete information about WIC, visit www.fns.usda.gov/wic or contact the State agency that administers WIC. View Agency listings at www.fns.usda.gov/wic, select "State Contacts."



The USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.