

WOMEN, INFANT, AND CHILDREN (WIC) NUTRITION PROGRAM FAQ

1. Does the intake process happen remotely?
Yes. The intake is made over the phone. Families must call a WIC office. Ideally, they must have a WIC medical referral form from their doctor.
2. For parents who would prefer not to update their enrollment over the phone, is there an online option?
There is no online option for enrollment. They can request to apply to WIC online, but that's not going to make the application process complete. Parents would need to contact a WIC office by phone to do the intake.
3. Is the medical or nutritional risk requirement mandatory for a WIC referral?
No. Moms can be referred if they comply with other eligibility requirements. In general, every family will have some form of nutritional risk because nobody's diet is perfect.
4. How long does it take to get certified?
1-7 days depending on the parent's availability to provide documentation and pick up an eWIC card.
5. What are common issues for not getting certified?
If prospect beneficiaries don't live in NYS or their income is over the guideline for their household size.
6. How many days of food WIC can provide for a child?
It is hard to estimate but a basic monthly food package consists of the following:

 - Milk – 4 gallons (whole milk for age 1-2 yrs; 1% or nonfat milk for 2-5 yrs)
 - *Note: allowable substitutions include: Cheese, Yogurt, Lactose-free milk, Soymilk, Tofu
 - Eggs – 1 dozen
 - Cereal – 36 ounces (around 3 boxes)
 - Juice – 128 ounces (4 oz per day)
 - Beans or Peanut Butter – 1 pound
 - Whole Wheat Bread or Brown Rice – 2 pound
 - Vegetables & Fruits - \$9 (currently thru September: \$35)
7. Can WIC help cover the cost of a breastfeeding pump?
Yes, WIC will provide breast pumps for moms. They will need a doctor's prescription (describing if electric). After that, mom will have an appointment with WIC to get the pump.
8. How much cash benefit a child receives?
\$35 for everyone for September 2021.
9. Is food/cash benefit quantity allocated based on family's income?
No. Food packages and cash benefits may vary on family's preferences or medical conditions, but essentially quantities are the same for everyone regardless of income.
10. Can juice be swapped out for more fruits or vegetables?
No. Families will get juice. Juice is part of the food package and it is not part of the cash benefit. Approved juice is not that much, around 4 oz per day per child. Families should use their \$35 cash benefit to buy fruits and vegetables. From the medical standpoint, it's better for parents not to buy juice at all because children may want more than 4 oz per day and the parent will need to spend from their own money for more juice.

11. If a child is under 6 months and stops breastfeeding, how is the transition for adding formula to the food package?

Nutritionists will determine how much formula can be approved. They will speak with the mom to know about breastfeeding frequency. If breastfeeding is not as frequent (1-2 times per day), 1 can of formula will be approved, but if during the month, mom feels that a can is not enough, they can speak with WIC to adjust formula quantity. Having said this, WIC has a certain maximum formula quantity to provide monthly. Mom may need to purchase formula on her own if the child's needs are not met with WIC. Refer to WIC for requests about change of approved formula quantity.

Additionally:

- For babies 1-month old, one can of formula is approved for all moms. After that, WIC encourages breastfeeding on demand to promote milk production and less attachment to formula.
- Non-prescription approved formula brands are the only ones provided. Requests about getting different formula brands will not be accepted. If the child has a medical condition and cannot take regular non-prescription formulas, their pediatrician must fill out a WIC formula form. WIC advises that doctors write down a quantity range for medical formula rather than a set number. If a set number is indicated, WIC cannot go over this amount. Sometimes, the prescribed set quantity may not meet the needs of the child so a range is more beneficial.

12. Are Farmer's Checks/Health Bucks part of the cash benefits, or is this an additional benefit?

Farmer's Checks are separate from the cash benefit. Farmer's checks are a one-time benefit for each child; one check will be given per (certified) child in the household. Many families do appreciate the checks for the farmer's markets! Some families do decline the check though. WIC Farmers Market Nutrition Program (FMNP) coupons are \$4.

13. Do parents have mandatory nutrition classes?

Group classes are optional, but the parents do need to speak with the nutritionist in order for WIC to assess them and issue their benefits. Moms that are breastfeeding may participate in breastfeeding support groups with WIC. Meetings are happening remotely.

14. If a parent moves their residence within the state, are there issues in re-enrolling/applying?

If they move, they can just contact their closest WIC program to transfer their case.

15. What are some organic food options available through WIC?

Yogurt (32 oz plain), Tofu, Soy milk, Vegetables & Fruits.

16. Are WIC paper-checks still given in NYS?

No. WIC provides eWIC cards that will have loaded the types of food and quantities approved for the month.

17. Can food packages be modified every month based on families' preferences?

WIC can make changes depending on medical or dietary conditions affecting the mom or the child. Generally, WIC encourages families to keep approved food packages as they are but they can make changes.

18. If all the food is not purchased within the month, can food items carry over to the next?

No. Families should aim for getting all the food approved and do purchases as soon as benefits get in to the card to sort out any issues that may present before the monthly benefit expires

LIST OF WIC APPROVED FOODS

- 19. Milk**
- 20. Soy Beverage**
- 21. Eggs**
- 22. Cheese**
- 23. Peanut Butter**
- 24. Canned fish**
- 25. Yogurt**
- 26. Mature beans, peas, and lentils (can and dry)**
- 27. Tofu**
- 28. Baby Food (vegetables and fruits, meats, and infants cereal)**
- 29. Breakfast cereals**
- 30. Hot cereals**
- 31. Brown rice**
- 32. Whole grain tortillas**
- 33. Whole grain bread**
- 34. Fresh vegetables and fruits**
- 35. Canned fruits (quantity)**
- 36. Frozen fruits (quantity)**
- 37. Frozen vegetables (quantity)**
- 38. Juice**