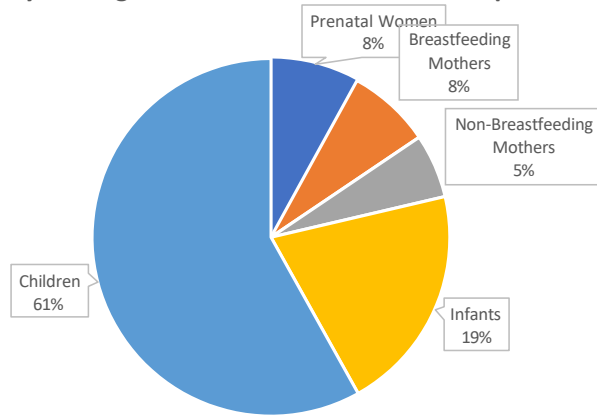




California WIC Program: WIC Works!

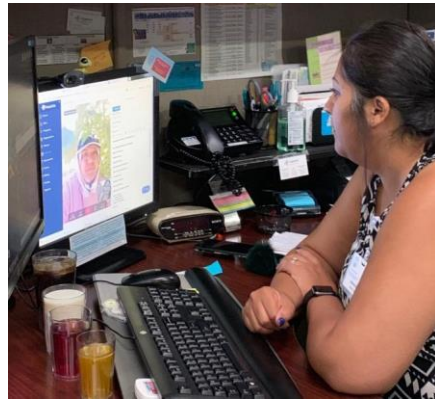
California WIC Participation by Certification Category
Monthly Average over FFY 2022: Oct. 2021 - Sept. 2022



54% of all infants born in California in 2018 were certified by WIC in their first year!

68.9% of eligible individuals participate in the California WIC Program in 2019.

Over 950,000 participants were served by CA WIC in September 2022



Technology

A very popular option for WIC families has been the ability to use a variety of ways to access WIC support and services including: interactive texting, videoconferencing, online education, phone and email.



WIC Fruit and Vegetable Bump

In June 2021, the WIC fruit and vegetable benefit was bumped (with funding from the American Rescue Plan Act) from \$9-11/month to \$35/month. The continuing resolution passed by Congress in September 2021 extended the WIC bump through the end of December at \$24-47, and the second continuing resolution extended it through the end of March. WIC participants have been very appreciative of the increased fruit and vegetable benefit, saying that they are now able to provide their families with fresh produce throughout the entire month! The USDA's proposed changes to the WIC food package would make the fruit and vegetable benefit bump permanent.

Modernizing WIC Shopping

Families now have an electronic WIC card and shopping app to purchase healthy WIC foods, such as fruits and vegetables, milk and cheese, eggs, beans, tofu and many more foods. California WIC participants purchased an estimated \$780 million in groceries in 2021 from local retail grocers. Efforts are underway at USDA and in pilot projects to expand online shopping for WIC. During the pandemic and with ongoing high costs of living, WIC foods help young families stretch their earnings.



WIC Serves Military Families

In California, there are 10 WIC clinics located on or near military bases. WIC benefits can also be used at commissaries – in January 2022, WIC benefits spent at commissaries amounted to \$111,192 spent by 1,690 WIC families. All twenty-three active commissaries redeemed WIC benefits during the same time period.



California Farmer's Markets and WIC

With the new electronic WIC cards, efforts are underway to support shopping at Farmers' Markets. The year-round monthly fruit and vegetable benefits that can be used at grocery stores can also be used at farmers' markets, and also extra seasonal benefits only for farmers' markets.

WIC Lactation Support in California

Lactation support is a core part of WIC services. While 94% of parents begin lactation in the hospital, with 70% exclusively using human milk, various challenges make it difficult to continue. Working with hospitals, community health centers, and employers, WIC uses multiple strategies to support lactation initiation and duration. All staff are trained in lactation support and high quality breast pumps are provided for problems getting started, and return to work and school. Participants have access to culturally and linguistically competent peer counselors, lactation educators and consultants.



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