WIC: The Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children

1. What is WIC?

WIC is a nutrition program for women, infants and children. It teaches young families how to stay healthy through better nutrition and how to stretch a tight food budget. It also provides supplemental foods and helps families access health and medical services. Some WIC clinics provide childhood immunizations, and others can refer families to the nearest shot clinic. WIC educates women about the benefits of breastfeeding, and it offers guidance and support to breastfeeding women.

2. Who is eligible?

- Women who are pregnant, breastfeeding, or have an infant younger than 6 months.
- Infants and children younger than 5.

Applicants must have a household income at or below 185% of the U.S. poverty level (see the guidelines below), they must be a state resident, and they must qualify nutritionally. U.S. citizenship is not a requirement. WIC applicants who participate in Food Stamps, Medicaid, or TANF automatically meet the income eligibility requirements.

**WIC INCOME GUIDELINES**

The WIC income guidelines below are effective beginning July 1, 2006

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Family Size</th>
<th>Weekly</th>
<th>Bi Weekly</th>
<th>Twice Monthly</th>
<th>Monthly</th>
<th>Annual</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>349</td>
<td>698</td>
<td>756</td>
<td>1,511</td>
<td>18,130</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>470</td>
<td>940</td>
<td>1,018</td>
<td>2,035</td>
<td>24,420</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>591</td>
<td>1,182</td>
<td>1,280</td>
<td>2,560</td>
<td>30,710</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>712</td>
<td>1,424</td>
<td>1,542</td>
<td>3,084</td>
<td>37,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>833</td>
<td>1,665</td>
<td>1,804</td>
<td>3,608</td>
<td>43,290</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>954</td>
<td>1,907</td>
<td>2,066</td>
<td>4,132</td>
<td>49,580</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>1,075</td>
<td>2,149</td>
<td>2,328</td>
<td>4,656</td>
<td>55,870</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>1,196</td>
<td>2,391</td>
<td>2,590</td>
<td>5,180</td>
<td>62,160</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Each Additional Family Member</td>
<td>+ 121</td>
<td>+ 242</td>
<td>+ 263</td>
<td>+ 525</td>
<td>+ 6,290</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
3. **What does it mean to “qualify nutritionally”?**

Examples include, but are not limited to – anemia, obesity, growth failure, infants born prematurely or born with other high-risk health problems, inadequate or too much weight gain in pregnancy, current or history of a high-risk pregnancy, nutritionally inadequate diet (low in specific vitamins and/or minerals, high in non-nutritious foods, low in daily servings of fruits and vegetables, etc.), breastfeeding problems, diabetes, and many other health and medical conditions that have an impact of nutritional health.

After applicants are determined income eligible, they are screened by a health or nutrition professional. This will include measurement of height and weight, a simple blood test for anemia, a dietary assessment, and a medical history. There are no costs for the screening. Eligibility lasts anywhere from 6 to 12 months, depending on the age of the participant.

4. **What foods do WIC participants receive?**

WIC participants are given vouchers that allow them to purchase specific foods each month at a nearby grocery store. The foods are high in protein, calcium, iron, and vitamins A and C, and folic acid.

WIC foods include routine infant formulas (and also specialty formulas for infants with high-risk medical conditions), infant cereal, iron-fortified adult cereal, fruit or vegetable juice, eggs, milk, cheese, and peanut butter or dried beans or peas.

5. **What is the WIC Farmers Market Nutrition Program?**

WIC participants in 59 of the 254 Texas counties receive coupons during the late spring and early summer months. These coupons can be used to purchase fresh fruits and vegetables at their local farmer’s market.

7. **Who do people call for WIC information in Texas?**

Call this toll free number 1-800-942-3678 or 1-800-WIC-FOR-U