

THE WIC PROGRAM: Improving Maternal and Child Health and Food Security in CALIFORNIA

The Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) provides pregnant, postpartum, and breastfeeding individuals, infants, and children up to 5 years of age from households with low incomes with nutritious foods, nutrition education and counseling, breastfeeding support, and referrals to health care and social services.

ACTION IS NEEDED TO KEEP WIC STRONG AND TO CONNECT MORE ELIGIBLE PEOPLE TO THE PROGRAM.

Poverty, Hunger, and Health in CALIFORNIA

14.5%

Children living in **POVERTY** during 2022–2024¹

12.5%

Households reporting **FOOD INSECURITY** during 2022–2024²

10.1

MATERNAL MORTALITY per 100,000 live births during 2019–2023³

4.1

INFANT MORTALITY per 1,000 births during 2022–2023⁴

WIC's Impact⁵

NUTRITION AND HEALTH IMPACT

 Reduces food insecurity and poverty.

 Improves health and birth outcomes.

 Improves dietary intake.

CHILD AND FAMILY IMPACT

 Supports learning and development.

 Supports healthy growth.

 Supports economic stability.

ECONOMIC AND COMMUNITY IMPACT

 Reduces health care costs.

 Bolsters local economies through purchases made at food retailers.

Every \$1 in prenatal WIC services saves about \$2.48 in medical, educational, and productivity costs over a newborn's lifetime.⁶

WIC's Reach in CALIFORNIA⁷

1,003,810

PEOPLE SERVED BY WIC IN FISCAL YEAR 2025

WIC provided essential nutrition and health support to **211,629** women; **176,326** infants; and **615,855** children.⁸

\$1,398,092,604

FEDERAL DOLLARS DRAWN INTO CALIFORNIA THROUGH WIC IN FISCAL YEAR 2025

WIC spent **\$835,366,871** at food retailers; provided **\$185,930,403** in formula rebates; and provided **\$376,795,330** in nutrition education, breastfeeding, and administration funding.⁹

72.4%

ELIGIBLE PEOPLE PARTICIPATED IN WIC IN 2023¹⁰

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CALIFORNIA'S RANKING FOR REACHING WIC-ELIGIBLE PEOPLE among the 50 states and the District of Columbia¹¹

TAKE ACTION TO PROTECT WIC



Call on Congress to provide WIC with enough funding each year to serve all eligible people and maintain the prescriptive benefits and services.



Urge your Members of Congress to pass the **MODERN WIC Act/21st Century WIC Act**, which would make flexible service options permanent.



Learn more with **FRAC's WIC resources.**

