

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

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 ILLINOIS

**13.8%**

Children living in **POVERTY** during 2022–2024<sup>1</sup>

**13.3%**

Households reporting **FOOD INSECURITY** during 2022–2024<sup>2</sup>

**20**

**MATERNAL MORTALITY** per 100,000 live births during 2019–2023<sup>3</sup>

**5.8**

**INFANT MORTALITY** per 1,000 births during 2022–2023<sup>4</sup>

## WIC's Impact<sup>5</sup>

### 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.<sup>6</sup>**

## WIC's Reach in ILLINOIS<sup>7</sup>

**175,003**

**PEOPLE SERVED BY WIC** IN FISCAL YEAR 2025

WIC provided essential nutrition and health support to **39,942** women; **44,552** infants; and **90,508** children.<sup>8</sup>

**\$261,340,493**

**FEDERAL DOLLARS DRAWN INTO ILLINOIS** THROUGH WIC IN FISCAL YEAR 2025

WIC spent **\$144,243,379** at food retailers; provided **\$59,238,211** in formula rebates; and provided **\$57,858,903** in nutrition education, breastfeeding, and administration funding.<sup>9</sup>

**44.3%**

**ELIGIBLE PEOPLE PARTICIPATED** IN WIC IN 2023<sup>10</sup>

**44**

**ILLINOIS' RANKING FOR REACHING WIC-ELIGIBLE PEOPLE** among the 50 states and the District of Columbia<sup>11</sup>

**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.**

