

Legislation: More Options to Develop and Enhance Remote Nutrition (MODERN) WIC Act (H.R. 1464)

Bill sponsors: Rep. Brian Fitzpatrick (R-PA) and Rep. Suzanne Bonamici (D-OR)

Summary: Creates permanent options for remote enrollment, services, and benefits issuance for the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC).



Background

WIC, a federal nutrition program, is widely recognized as an important safeguard for protecting and improving the health and nutrition of pregnant, postpartum, and breastfeeding individuals, and infants and children up to 5 years of age from households with low incomes. WIC provides nutritious foods, education and counseling, and referrals to health care and social services.

Modernizing WIC

During the COVID-19 pandemic, waivers were enacted that allowed WIC agencies to make advancements to modernize the delivery of WIC to increase its accessibility. While protecting program benefits integrity, these waivers allow states and local WIC agencies to permit participants to be certified/recertified by phone or video appointments, defer collection of health-screening data for 90 days, and receive WIC benefits remotely.

Providing families with remote service options helps reduce long-standing barriers families face with in-person appointments, such as transportation challenges, securing appointments that align with their work schedules, and arranging child care. Remote service options also create efficiencies for WIC agencies and bring WIC services more in line with modern health services.

Without congressional action, these essential modernizations will expire in September 2026. Congress must pass the MODERN WIC Act to make these vital service options permanent.

Why Is This Bill Important?

The MODERN WIC Act allows for the following:

- **Remote certification options:** Video and telephone certifications are permitted, removing logistical hurdles and streamlining the process for families to access essential nutrition benefits.
- **Guaranteed accessibility:** In line with the Americans with Disabilities Act, the bill ensures that remote services are fully accessible.
- **Prompt nutritional evaluations:** Nutritional risk assessments within 90 days through remote methods are required, ensuring timely support and intervention.
- **Immediate access to benefits:** Families can immediately qualify based on income, with subsequent nutritional assessments, speeding up the support process.

The MODERN WIC Act will make WIC a more efficient and accessible program and ensure that pregnant individuals, infants, and children have access to the nutritional supports they need.

Congress must pass the MODERN WIC Act to seize on proven strategies to modernize WIC and increase accessibility and efficiency before waivers expire in September 2026.

Take Action

Urge your Members of Congress to support the MODERN WIC Act by cosponsoring the bill today.