

# HOW WIC HELPS CALIFORNIA



## State WIC Director

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### Mission of WIC

Assuring healthy pregnancies, birth outcomes, growth and development for mothers, babies, and young children to age 5 who are at nutritional risk. Providing nutritious supplemental foods, breastfeeding promotion and support, education on healthy eating, and referrals to healthcare and critical social services.



**43%**

OF INFANTS BORN IN CALIFORNIA PARTICIPATE IN WIC



**66%**

OF ELIGIBLE INDIVIDUALS IN CALIFORNIA PARTICIPATE IN WIC

### WHO PARTICIPATES IN WIC IN CALIFORNIA?

**964,415**  
WIC PARTICIPANTS

|                       |                |
|-----------------------|----------------|
| Pregnant women.....   | <b>75,300</b>  |
| Breastfeeding women.. | <b>85,017</b>  |
| Postpartum women..... | <b>43,202</b>  |
| Infants.....          | <b>178,697</b> |
| Children.....         | <b>582,198</b> |

### BREASTFEEDING IN WIC

California WIC breastfeeding initiation rates did not change between 2010 and 2020.



Among WIC infants who initiated breastfeeding in California in 2020, **33 percent** continued breastfeeding at 6 months.



**Fruit and Vegetable Benefit:** Congress enhanced WIC's fruit and vegetable benefit to align with scientific recommendations. Current monthly benefit amounts are \$26 for children, \$47 for pregnant and postpartum participants, and \$52 for breastfeeding participants. In FY 2023, WIC provided an estimated **\$287.2M** in fruit and vegetable benefits to **785,718** participants in California.

### CHILDHOOD OBESITY IN WIC IN CALIFORNIA

The obesity rate among WIC toddlers in California decreased **8 percent** between 2010 and 2020.

Childhood obesity rate, WIC toddlers, 2020..... **17%**

### MORTALITY AND BIRTH OUTCOMES IN CALIFORNIA

Maternal mortality per 100,000 births, 2017-2021... **9.5**

Infant mortality per 1,000 live births, 2021..... **4.1**

Preterm birth rate, 2021..... **9%**

### CALIFORNIA WIC PARTICIPANT CHARACTERISTICS

**\$19,935**

AVERAGE FAMILY INCOME

**68%**

RECEIVED MEDICAID

**\$64.04**

AVERAGE MONTHLY FOOD COST IN FY 2023

### HOW WIC SUPPORTED THE CALIFORNIA ECONOMY IN FY 2023

**\$741.2M**

TO SPEND AT FOOD RETAILERS

**\$178.4M**

FORMULA REBATES RECEIVED

**\$355.5M**

NUTRITION, BREASTFEEDING SERVICES & ADMIN

Sources: WIC eligible individuals participating from USDA WIC Eligibility Estimates report for 2021 (<https://www.fns.usda.gov/wic/eligibility-and-program-reach-estimates-2021>). WIC participants and economic impact from USDA WIC Data Tables for fiscal year (FY) 2023 (<https://www.fns.usda.gov/pd/wic-program>) as of January 30, 2024. Participant characteristics for 2020 and WIC breastfeeding and rates for years displayed from USDA WIC Participant and Program Characteristics reports (<https://www.fns.usda.gov/wic/participant-program-characteristics-2020>). WIC fruit and vegetable benefit calculated as the sum of FY 2023 issuance rates multiplied by average participation rates for each participant category from USDA WIC Data Tables. Maternal mortality from America's Health Rankings ([https://www.americashealthrankings.org/explore/measures/maternal\\_mortality\\_c](https://www.americashealthrankings.org/explore/measures/maternal_mortality_c)). Infant mortality and preterm birth rate from CDC ([https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/pressroom/stats\\_of\\_the\\_states.htm](https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/pressroom/stats_of_the_states.htm)). Obesity outcomes from CDC (<https://www.cdc.gov/obesity/data/obesity-among-WIC-enrolled-young-children>).