



National WIC Association

# Harnessing the Latest Technology to Lift Up Your Voice for WIC

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2017 NWA Technology Conference

- <https://www.ncoa.org/public-policy-action/advocacy-toolkit/advocacy-basics/nonprofit-advocacy-rules-regulations/>
- [https://www.councilofnonprofits.org/sites/default/files/documents/Make a Difference RG%5B1%5D.pdf](https://www.councilofnonprofits.org/sites/default/files/documents/Make%20a%20Difference%20RG%5B1%5D.pdf)
- Attendees will be trained in how to use these key messages, along with data, research, and personal stories, to effectively educate stakeholders about the value of WIC using a variety of platforms.
- The presenter will focus on how to use **online communication tools, online resources, and multimedia storytelling** to effectively lift up your WIC voice.
- Lobbying isn't bad!
- Keep it basic – spell out acronyms

# Session Plan

- Risks for WIC in 2017 and Beyond
- NWA Legislative Priorities
- Lifting Up Your WIC Voice
  - Key Messages
  - Knowing Your Audience
  - Personalizing Your Messages
  - Using NWA Resources Effectively

# WIC is facing some risks

- Caseload declines
- Across the board cuts to non-defense discretionary spending
- Attacks on adjunctive eligibility
- Legislative changes to WIC food package
- More dire risks
  - Deeper cuts: Trump administration wants to cut \$10 trillion in domestic spending over the next 10 years
  - Block grants
  - Citizenship screening and citizen only eligibility

# Caseload declines

- WIC caseloads have been declining for the past 7 years – from a high of 9.2 million in 2010 to a current participation of ~7.5 million
- Why? Many possible reasons (do not have rigorous data yet re: what has contributed)
  - Positive reason: Improving economy
  - Neutral reason: Declining birthrates
  - Negative reasons: Lack of outreach, lack of access (due to clinic closings, limited hours, etc.), recent immigration issues, and the hassles associated with WIC participation (e.g., shopping experience) make moms think WIC participation isn't "worth it"

# Why does caseload decline matter?

<b>WIC Eligibles and Coverage by Participant Group, CY* 2011</b>				
<b>Participant Group</b>	<b># Eligible (Millions)</b>	<b>% of All Eligibles</b>	<b># Participating</b>	<b>Coverage Rate</b>
Infants	2.52	17.6%	2.10	83.4%
Total Children Ages 1-4	8.89	62.3%	4.76	53.6%
Children Age 1 <sup>a</sup>	2.33	16.3%		
Children Age 2 <sup>a</sup>	2.15	15.1%		
Children Age 3 <sup>a</sup>	2.18	15.3%		
Children Age 4 <sup>a</sup>	2.23	15.6%		
Pregnant Women	1.29	9.1%	0.90	69.5%
Postpartum Women	1.58	11.1%	1.20	76.0%
Breastfeeding Women	0.81	5.7%	0.58	71.1%
Nonbreastfeeding Women	0.77	5.4%	0.62	81.2%
<b>All Participant Groups</b>	<b>14.28</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>8.96</b>	<b>62.7%</b>

# FY 2018 Funding Outlook

- CR
- Omnibus
- Possibility of shutdown in December
- Large amount of WIC carryover funds due to declining caseload
  - Appropriators could use carryover as reason to reduce WIC's topline funding number
  - We have leftover food dollars but NSA funds are being completely spent – the ratio of food dollars: NSA funding is not flexible

# NWA FY 2018 Appropriations Asks \*



REQUEST	AMOUNT
Total Funding Request	\$6.36 Billion + Contingency Fund
Set Aside for Breastfeeding Peer Counselor Program	\$90 Million
Set Aside for WIC Infrastructure	\$14 Million
Set Aside for Program Initiatives and Evaluation	\$15 Million
Maintain the Contingency Fund at \$200 Million	Up to \$200 Million

# \* Didn't ask for new funds for MIS/EBT

**FY 2016 Law** (last time Appropriations bills were actually passed – in the form of an Omnibus bill)

- \$220 million from unobligated balances for MIS/EBT (eWIC) until 2020



**In the future we could be looking at deeper cuts – Trump administration wants to cut \$10 trillion in domestic spending over the next 10 years**

# Attacks on Adjunctive Eligibility

- Became a target because some states' Medicaid eligibility for pregnant women and infants is above 185% FPL
  - USDA data shows that only about 1% of WIC participants have income > 185% FPL
- Adjunctive eligibility is important because:
  - Removes barrier to participation
  - Links prevention to healthcare
  - Streamlines administration, lowering costs

# Block grants

- No explicit threats, but threats to Medicaid and SNAP could mean WIC might also be targeted
- Block grants consolidate funding for many programs into one allocation to each state, giving state discretion about how the money gets used
- If we changed to block grants, the results would be extremely damaging:
  - Inadequate funding (competing with other programs for the same pot of state funding)
  - Lack of federal oversight and enforcement of WIC standards such as nutrition standards
  - State governments would have the authority to make other potentially damaging changes to WIC

# Citizenship check and/or changes in public charge definition

- Draft Executive Order (EO) leaked last month
  - Public charge = Someone likely to be dependent on government for survival and for that reason is subject to deportation
  - WIC is currently excluded from public charge consideration
  - EO expands definition of public charge to health and nutrition programs
- If and until EO is signed, we don't know if WIC will be affected
- However, rumors of EO, combined with other immigrant-hostile executive actions and political rhetoric, have created fear among WIC participants

**Food Package Challenge: Congress  
deciding to put whatever they  
want in the food packages  
rather than go through the  
rule-making process.**



# NASEM Recommendations: January 2017

- NWA is very excited about, and supports, NASEM's recommendations. Highlights:
  - CVV amount should be increased across all food packages
  - Reduce juice and allow CVV option
  - Reduce milk
  - More choice and flexibility around package sizes
  - Reduce amount of formula
- Alas, the recommendations given by NASEM are just that – RECOMMENDATIONS.
- It is up to FNS to determine which recommendations will be implemented. We do not know how long this will take.

# Brat bill



**WIC is more vulnerable to legislative threats like the ones described above because Child Nutrition Reauthorization never passed in 2015 or 2016**

# WIC Reauthorization – Quick Overview

- Occurs every 5 years
- Changes WIC Policy
- Committees of jurisdiction
  - House Education and the Workforce Committee
  - Senate Agriculture Committee

# 2015 Reauthorization Process:

- House and Senate Committees missed original deadline (September 30, 2015)
- Senate Agriculture Committee passed bipartisan bill in January 2016
  - Contained several positive WIC provisions including WIC to Six, 2 year infant certifications, and protecting adjunctive eligibility with a 3 year study
- House Ed and Workforce Committee passed partisan bill in April 2016
  - Bad for WIC and other child nutrition programs; no positive WIC provisions
- Neither bill passed in the full chamber
- Now, unlikely that CNR will be taken up in 2017 or 2018 due to other competing legislative priorities in these committees

# NWA Legislative Priorities

- **First and foremost, protecting WIC from funding cuts and structural changes**
- Also urging policy makers to:
  - Protect and Strengthen WIC's Breastfeeding Peer Counselor Program
  - Support WIC's Transition to Electronic Benefits Transfer (EBT) in all 90 "states"
  - Maintain Adjunctive Eligibility and Strengthen WIC-Medicaid Linkage
  - Protect and Preserve the Scientific Integrity of the WIC Food Packages

# Lifting Up Your WIC Voice

- It is essential given our new political environment that we all work together to protect WIC from potential threats
- Policymakers and other stakeholders need to learn about the value of WIC
  - Lack of information/knowledge allows opportunity for negative stories or misperceptions to fill the void
  - **You can advocate without lobbying**



National WIC Association  
WIC for a Healthier America



## Advocacy vs. Lobbying

### Advocacy

Advocacy refers to speaking out on issues or supporting a proposal or a cause.

### Lobbying

Lobbying is one type of advocacy legally defined by the Internal Revenue Service (IRS). The IRS defines two types of lobbying – direct lobbying and grassroots lobbying.

#### Direct Lobbying

A direct lobbying communication is any attempt to influence legislation through communication with any member or employee of a legislative body or any other government official or employee who may participate in the formulation of the legislation through communication that refers to specific legislation and reflects a view on that legislation.

#### Grassroots Lobbying

A grassroots lobbying communication is any effort to influence legislation by attempting to affect the opinions of the general public or any segment of the public through communication that refers to specific legislation, reflects a view on that legislation, and encourages the recipient to contact a legislator, employee of a legislative body, or any other government official or employee about the legislation.

As the nation's premier public health nutrition program, WIC is a cost-effective, sound investment—insuring the health of our children.

#### NWA'S MISSION

NWA inspires and empowers the WIC community to advocate for and promote quality nutrition services for all eligible mothers and young children, and assure effective management of WIC.

Examples of Direct Lobbying	Examples of Grassroots Lobbying
Emailing a member of Congress to vote yes on H.R. 2112 while on paid work time	Sending an action alert to a listserv to encourage them to email their Congressmen and telling them to vote yes on H.R. 2112
If a bill is introduced that contains a provision that cuts WIC funding, speaking out against that funding cut measure to a Congressional staff member	If a bill is introduced that contains a provision that cuts WIC funding, telling people in your email address book to speak out against that funding cut measure to a Congressional staff member
Telling a member of Congress to support the President's budget proposal for WIC	Requesting friends and colleagues to urge a Member of Congress to support the President's budget proposal for WIC

# Advocacy vs. Lobbying

Are state and local WIC staff allowed to advocate? The answer is YES!

Often, members of the WIC community confuse advocacy with lobbying—then quickly shy away from any activities that might be construed as lobbying.

But the truth is there are lots of ways WIC staff members can advocate to improve policies, programs, and services for WIC participants—without running afoul of any federal, state, or local policies.

# Advocacy vs. Lobbying


## Advocacy

- Advocacy refers to speaking out on issues or supporting a proposal or cause.
- Advocacy involves helping policymakers and other stakeholders find specific solutions to persistent problems.

## Lobbying

- **Lobbying is one type of advocacy** legally defined by the Internal Revenue Service (IRS)
- A lobbying communication:
  - Refers to **specific legislation or measures** in a piece of legislation
  - **Reflects a view** on that legislation, and
  - **Involves a communication** with any member or employee of a legislative body or any other government official or employee who may participate in the formulation of the legislation (direct lobbying) **OR encourages the recipient to contact** a legislator, employee of a legislative body, or any other government official or employee (grassroots lobbying)

# Non-lobbying Advocacy

- **Educating** the public and members of Congress about WIC
  - **Highlighting** the achievements of WIC clinics in the media
  - **Hosting** events that promote, celebrate, or inform about WIC
- 
- A decorative graphic consisting of several overlapping, wavy, pink lines that sweep across the lower-left portion of the slide, creating a sense of movement and flow.

# Activity: Lobbying vs. Advocacy

- The House is voting on a budget bill that would harm WIC, so you call your Congressman and tell him to vote against the bill.
- You get an NWA action alert to sign a letter stating the benefits of WIC, so you click to email your member of Congress.
- You do an interview with the local radio station on how funding shortfalls are influencing client services.

# Activity: Lobbying vs. Advocacy

- You host your district's member of Congress at the clinic, explaining all the wonderful aspects of WIC. The Congresswoman ends up talking with a WIC client who is aware of a bill to cut funding for WIC. The client expresses her disapproval.
- There's a bill to restore funding to WIC, so you tell your friends to call their Congressmen and request support of the bill.

# You are Permitted and Encouraged to Lobby

- It is your democratic right
- Each state has specific laws for state employees about lobbying efforts while on the job
- Private money can be used on lobbying, federal funds cannot
- If you are confused...
  - Limit lobbying efforts to coffee breaks, lunch breaks, after hours and other times not considered “work time”
  - Focus your time on educating about the value of WIC



**Now more than ever, we need your  
voice for WIC families!**

# Being Strategic and Having a Plan

- First identify what your goals and priorities are
  - Why do you want to speak with your Congressperson about WIC?
  - What are you most passionate about?
  - What part of your WIC story do you think will be most compelling?
- Know your audience – target messages
- Stay on message – avoid straying from your key points
  - Time will likely be limited!

# 2017 WIC Key Messages

- ❖ WIC has strong bipartisan support.
- ❖ WIC adds value and provides solid returns on investment.
- ❖ WIC is a short-term program with long-term benefits.
- ❖ WIC supports military families.

# WIC has strong bi-partisan support



- Historically bi-partisan supported and championed
- Admired across political, ideological, ethnic, and socio-economic groups, and voters overwhelmingly oppose cutting funding for WIC

# WIC adds value and provides a solid return on investment

- WIC helps children to be healthy – reducing healthcare costs in the long run.
- WIC supports and promotes breastfeeding – breastfeeding reduces healthcare costs for mothers and children.
- WIC reduces the number of low and very low birth weight babies. For very low birth-weight babies, a shift of one pound at birth saves approximately \$28,000 in first year medical costs.
- WIC is efficient – administrative costs account for only 6-9% of overall WIC costs each year.

# WIC is a short-term program with long-term benefits

- WIC is targeted, time-limited, and supplemental.
- There is clear evidence that good nutrition during pregnancy and in the first few years of life has long-term positive impacts on health.
- WIC has led to a significant decline in preschool obesity levels. Children are five times more likely to be obese as an adult if they are overweight or obese between the ages of three and five years.



# WIC supports military families



Photo credit: Vanessa Simmons, Normalize Breastfeeding

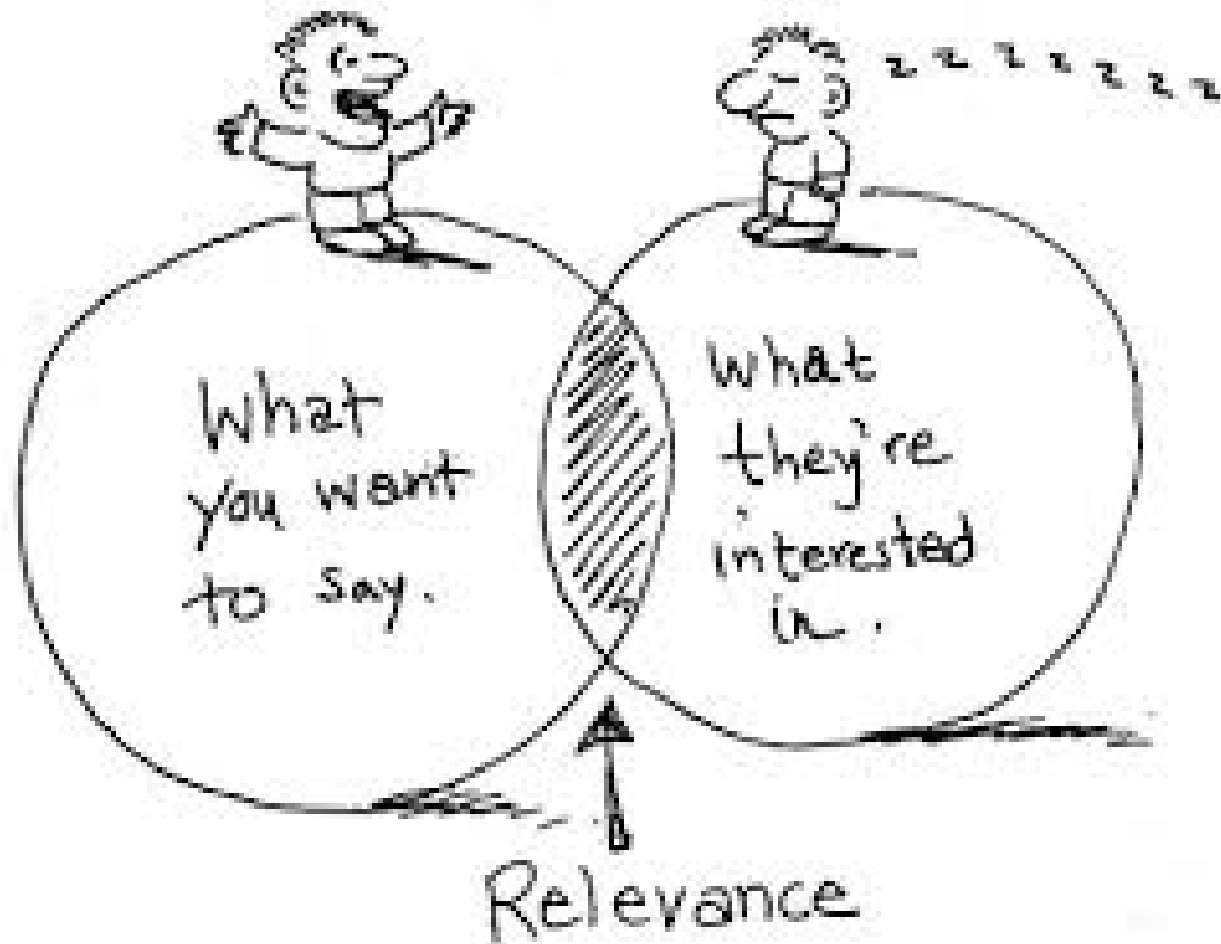
- Many military bases have on-site WIC clinics.
- WIC is often essential for families of enlisted personnel.
- WIC supports military families to access healthy food, breastfeeding support and nutrition education.
- Many commissaries are WIC authorized vendors.
- Military families value WIC.

# Key Messages v. Talking Points

**Key Messages** – The BIG picture topics that will appeal to your audience.

**Talking points** – concisely demonstrate a key message and help you transition to stories or data.

# Knowing Your Audience



# Targeting Messages to Democrats and Republicans

## Progressives/Liberals/Democrats

### Core values:

- Communitarian: Greater together than on our own
- Everyone gets a fair shot, plays by the same rules

### More likely to champion these issues:

- Increased access to healthcare
- Hunger/poverty
- Prevention
- Children's health and Education

## Conservatives/Republicans

### Core values:

- Limited Government
- Maximizing individual freedom

### More likely to champion these issues:

- Strong military and national security
- Strong economy
- Business

# Examples of Targeted Messages

**Democrat:** WIC education & food package helps improve health & nutrition intake in families.

**Republican:** WIC improves family health, helping children grow smart and strong to contribute to society and improve our national security.

**Democrat & Republicans:** WIC provides significant return on investment. The small investment in WIC saves future healthcare dollars and results in healthier families.

**Democrat:** WIC is able to serve participants through formula manufacturers' rebates

**Both:** WIC is a lean program that yields positive health outcomes & cost savings

# Targeting Your Messages to Elected Officials

- What issues do your Members of Congress focus on?
- What interests do they have?
- Do they have a family?
- What is their political ideology?

# Personalizing Your Messages

**You** are the experts!

**You** bring a unique perspective!

**You** know WIC's value, first hand!

# Focus Your Communications

- Your role in WIC is unique
- You can speak firsthand to certain messages
- Focus on these



# Support Your Message with User-Friendly Data and Stories


- Appeal to logic, reason and emotion
- Frame and package info:
  - The **KISS** -**Keep It Simple Sweetie!** – method is always best
  - Font should be large enough to read
  - Colors should be easy to see
  - The illustration should be easily read online

# Using NWA Resources Effectively

www.nwica.org/advocacy

-Nourishing | Indivisible Guide | Promoting Breastfeed | Collaborating for Equi | Truth, Racial Healing & | Will Dr. Price 'do no h

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 **National WIC Association**  
NWA is the non-profit education arm and advocacy voice of the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children (WIC).


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**ADVOCACY CENTRAL**

LEGISLATIVE AGENDA  
REAUTHORIZATION LEGISLATIVE AGENDA  
WIC FUNDING PROCESS  
POSITION PAPERS AND FACT SHEETS

## Advocacy Central

 Learn about and take action on our latest WIC-related advocacy activities & efforts.

### Your WIC Voice Toolkit

No one knows WIC as well as WIC staff! That knowledge and experience present you and your colleagues with the unique opportunity to be a Voice for WIC. The National WIC Association has an online toolkit to walk you through a variety of advocacy activities with tips, worksheets, and examples of how you can elevate Your WIC Voice.

**In this toolkit you will find:**

- **Why Education Matters!** Information about why it's important to talk about WIC on a local, state and national level.
- **Advocacy vs Lobbying** - What are they? How are they different?
- **Funding Basics** - A quick explanation of how WIC is funded.
- **How to Engage Partners** - Strength in Numbers! *Coming soon*
- **Key Messages** - Important messages for 2016 and every year along with tips for how to tailor messages and talking points.
- **Talking Points** - Important points to support our 2016 Key Messages.
- **Developing Your Messages** - A worksheet to help you develop messages about WIC for policymakers, the media, or community groups about WIC.
- **Contacting Elected Officials** - Now that you've got your talking points created, here are some tips for contacting policymakers.
- **Something Bad Happened!** At some point, you will probably need to respond to something negative, here is some advice. *Coming soon*
- **Talking to the Media** - Doing media interviews is a great way to raise Your WIC Voice. We've put together a few tips to help you prepare.
- **How to Pitch a Story** - Don't just wait for the media to notice WIC, reach out and let them know what you're up to!
- **Writing an Op-Ed** - Op-eds are a great way to reach more people. See our guide for writing and submitting.

# Keep informed about WIC policy

- Weekly Legislative Updates NWA's Monday Morning Report
- All Legislative Updates are posted on NWA's blog to get up to speed on the latest issues



## National WIC Association

*NWA is the non-profit education arm and advocacy voice of the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children (WIC).*



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### NEWS & BLOG

#### WASHINGTON UPDATE

## Weekly WIC Policy Update

*February 9, 2015*

**2016 Budget Update:** House Appropriations Committee Chairman Hal Rogers (R-KY) has scheduled several hearings this week on President Obama's FY 2016 budget request. Hearings on the president's budget will also take place before other committees in the House and Senate this week.

**Affordable Care Act Update:** Last week, the House passed H.R. 596 by a vote of 239-186. H.R. 596, if enacted, would repeal the 2010 Affordable Care Act and direct three House committees to draft replacement legislation. Senate Majority

#### SHARE



#### WASHINGTON UPDATE

Get email updates on WIC policy news and action alerts.

[SUBSCRIBE](#)

# Using State Fact Sheets



## HOW WIC HELPS THE BUCKEYE STATE

### MISSION OF WIC

To safeguard the health of low-income women, infants, and children up to age 5 who are at nutrition risk by providing nutritious foods to supplement diets, information on healthy eating, and referrals to health care.

### FUN FACTS

OHIO WIC HAS  
BREASTFEEDING PEER  
HELPERS IN ALL LOCAL  
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### FROM OUR PARTICIPANTS

"Switching the WIC program to the electronic debt cards was a great move for retailers and makes managing my store much easier. The hand held unit I received from Soli Systems works perfect, and the support they supply is excellent. It was very easy to program thru their web site and update prices as needed."

Grocer Participant, Ohio

"I would like to take a moment to thank you and the delightful staff of the Northeast WIC clinic for all the care and resources you made available to my daughter, myself, and family, when times were a little hard. The monthly benefits were extremely appreciated and the program's generosity made a huge impact on my family. It's been a true struggle, but our family is finally in a financial place where we will no longer be needing the services offered at your clinic...Thanks again for everything!"

WIC Participant, Ohio

### WHO PARTICIPATES IN WIC?

Ohio WIC Funding FY 2015



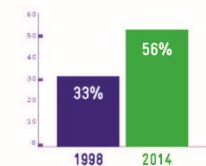
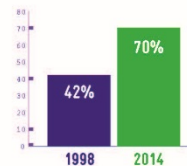
Pregnant Women	24,227
Fully Breastfeeding Women	6,140
Total Breastfeeding Women	13,128
Postpartum Women	20,502
Infants	65,871
Children	120,473
Total	244,201
Coverage (% eligible)	57.3%

### WIC IS EFFICIENT

Ohio WIC Food and Services Benefits  
FY 2015

\$\$ food value per participant	\$34.76
Pre-rebate wic funding (food)	\$101,852,969
Total money PNS to state	\$217,601,538
Rebate	\$62,606,858
Admin cost (Nutrition Service Benefits)	\$53,141,711

### BREASTFEEDING



Source: USDA 2014 WIC Participant and Program Characteristics (PC) Report. PC data allows for standardized comparisons to demonstrate overall progress. Some states collect more data than required by the PC report and may yield different and more current results than shown.

### EBT STATUS

Ohio has implemented WIC EBT statewide as of August 10, 2015. All state WIC programs must transition from paper vouchers to electronic benefit transfer cards (EBT) by 2020.

### WIC SUPPORTS MILITARY FAMILIES

Ohio WIC provides every allowable deduction to income that is allowed by USDA. Ohio WIC has approved the Commissary at Wright-Patterson AFB as an Authorized WIC vendor.

### CONTACT DETAILS

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**Questions?**