

# HOW WIC HELPS PUERTO RICO



## State WIC Director

Jeanette Canino  
Munoz Rivera #268  
San Juan, PR 00928

787.766.2805  
jcanino@salud.pr.gov

### 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.



**78%**

OF INFANTS BORN  
IN PUERTO RICO  
PARTICIPATE IN WIC



**88%**

OF ELIGIBLE INDIVIDUALS  
IN PUERTO RICO  
PARTICIPATE IN WIC

### WHO PARTICIPATES IN WIC IN PUERTO RICO?

**84,979**

WIC PARTICIPANTS

Pregnant women..... **8,080**

Breastfeeding women..... **5,523**

Postpartum women..... **4,743**

Infants..... **14,993**

Children..... **51,641**

### BREASTFEEDING IN WIC

Puerto Rico WIC breastfeeding initiation rates increased by **50 percent** between 2004 and 2020.



### CHILDHOOD OBESITY IN WIC IN PUERTO RICO

The obesity rate among WIC toddlers in Puerto Rico decreased **40 percent** between 2010 and 2020.

Childhood obesity rate, WIC toddlers, 2020..... **12%**



**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 **\$25.5M** in fruit and vegetable benefits to **69,986** participants in Puerto Rico.

### PUERTO RICO WIC PARTICIPANT CHARACTERISTICS

**\$9,043**

AVERAGE FAMILY  
INCOME

**65%**

RECEIVED  
MEDICAID

**\$131.83**

AVERAGE  
MONTHLY FOOD  
COST IN FY 2023

### HOW WIC SUPPORTED THE PUERTO RICO ECONOMY IN FY 2023

**\$134.4M**

TO SPEND AT  
FOOD RETAILERS

**\$5.4M**

FORMULA  
REBATES  
RECEIVED

**\$37.9M**

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>).