

# WIC Local Agency Conference Call

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 18, 2026, 8:30-9:30 AM

## Agenda and summary notes

### Agenda items:

- General program updates - Kate
- Minnesota WIC Participant Survey Results– Rachel
- New recruitment for Participant Advisory Group (PAG) – Tina
- Shopping Guide Updates – Rebecca

### General program updates- Kate

#### FNS Instruction 113-1

State WIC Agencies received a memorandum from the USDA Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) dated March 3, related to modifications in civil rights guidance. The memorandum indicated that FNS is modifying the FNS Instruction 113-1: *Civil Rights Compliance and Enforcement – Nutrition Programs and Activities*. Our current Minnesota WIC Civil Rights policy and procedures utilize the guidance from this FNS document as referenced in [MOM Section 1.10 Civil Rights](#).

FNS indicated that a new guidance tool is under development and will be released when it is finalized. MDH WIC will share the new guidance with local agencies and will update our civil rights policy at that time. The memo also states, “In the interim, civil rights and nondiscrimination laws and regulations remain in effect, along with related compliance and enforcement requirements.”

### Other program updates

#### Minnesota WIC Participant Survey Results – Rachel

National WIC Association (NWA) every two years completes a participant satisfaction survey. This round was administered June - September 2025. Nationwide, 27 state agencies participated to understand WIC participant perspectives. Minnesota had 3379 responses with 89% speaking English, and 11% Spanish. Respondents were over half white with some college education, 44% are not working or in school at all. Household characteristics include over half participating in WIC for three or more years, 43% in rural and 46% urban communities. They were asked about food security and 43% indicated food secure, while 57% food insecure. There was an increase in food insecurity through the pandemic and a decline from 2023. Another question asked, “how are families supplementing foods,” about 30% indicate friends, 30% SNAP, 27% food shelf, and 20% school meals. Regarding the WIC Food package, a question asked is “what do you think about the food overall you now get from WIC.” They indicated food item amounts they receive are enough except for infant formula and eggs. For fruit and vegetable benefits for women about 50% respond they are getting enough, yet for children 77% indicate \$26 is not adequate. The reasons respondents indicate they participate in WIC, say fruits and vegetable benefits, food package 96%, 77% nutrition information and 52% breastfeeding support.

There is a set of questions on WIC services. Satisfaction is high where 98% indicated they were satisfied with customer services they received, and 96% indicated they were satisfied with the nutrition education they received. The survey shows nutrition education changes feeding, where 87% reported at least a little or a lot created change. A question asked if they have experienced any challenges receiving WIC services and 78% said it is not difficult, where 14% indicate WIC appointments are hard to fit into their schedule, and 5% report the WIC site not easy to get to.

Perceptions of WIC efforts to create a welcoming environment were high with 98% agree staff make they feel welcome. They are satisfied with in-person and remote services 98% and 61% said they used an electronic method to submit documents to WIC.

A question to note on the WIC shopping experience is “why don’t you use all your WIC benefits,” 27% reported using all benefits, 32% said did not like some of the food choices, 25% ran out of time to use the benefits, 20% forgot to use, and 15% could not find WIC foods.

The use of WIC card and App indicated 99% satisfaction of the card and 98% with the app.

Individual county information will be shared on the local agency portal. Within the information agencies will be able to select their county and how many and responses received. Zip codes were used to link respondents to a clinic, and it was noted that participants can cross county borders. Results will be posted by the end of the month. Watch the Weekly Update for more information.

#### **PAG recruitment – Tina**

We will be starting recruitment for the next PAG. Six participants were in the first cohort. The group meets bimonthly for one hour. They are all virtual meetings. Participants receive a stipend of \$50/hour to participate. A variety of topics are covered with the group, for example food package, WIC participation and seeking other participant information. A flyer will be shared with WIC coordinators after the meeting. The flyers include why they should join, how to apply (QR code) and eligibility information. The goal is to have the first meeting with the new cohort in October. Please post the information and help recruit for this group, we value their input!

#### **Shopping Guide Updates – Rebecca**

New Food Package information and resources are posted to the website for local agency staff [Food Package Updates](#) and WIC participants [WIC Food Package](#). Rebecca reviewed where to find the information on the website. The WIC shopping guide and pictorials will be available to order from Brush Art in April, watch the weekly update for announcements.

## **Questions & Answers**

**Do you have any insight as to what the civil rights changes will be or is there anymore that you can share?**

I do not have any insight into what the changes will be with the civil rights guidance being updated. In the meantime, there have been no changes communicated to WIC state agencies to date.

**How much is the stipend/payment for participating in the PAG?**

\$50/hr.

**If they were on the Advisory Group before, can they be on it again?**

Priority is to get new participants in the group if possible. All are welcome to apply though.

**Which regions were not represented on the PAG in this last round?**

We didn't have representatives from the Southwest, Northwest, or South-Central regions. Additional note - we had most all regions with a participant that completed an interest form but perhaps did not get into the group due to not following up or returning calls for interviews.

**Is there tribal agency specific data available on the portal?**

Yes, it will be posted to the portal.

**When will our county results be posted?**

Information will be posted to the local agency portal in about a month.

**Are we able to create default food packages prior to participant appointments and then customize the food package later with the participant present?**

June food packages should be created at the time June benefits are issued and when the participant is on the phone or present in person. At that point, create the June food prescription using the updated NEW food items and discuss the options with the participants.

**Why does the children's juice show 2 RTU & 3 frozen concentrates in the pictorial?**

The thought was to have images that show varieties. This is currently being edited to only show one variety and pictorials will be reposted to the local agency [Food Package Updates](#) website.

**Will the default food packages always be incorrect/need to adjusted or is there a plan to correct this in the future?**

The incorrect quantities in the default food package are a transition issue. Once the current food items are removed when they expire at the end of May the default food prescriptions will work as they should. All staff should review the WINNIE [Update Document – Phase 3 Food Package Changes](#) to ensure they are aware of the transition issue and the correct default food prescriptions.

**Will there be an InfoView report that will help us identify new food package issuance with missing items and/or inadequate quantities?**

Yes, this is currently under development. Watch the Weekly Update and WINNIE the Scoop for communication on availability.

**When adding juice versus CVB, it shows 600 available, but only 300 technically is. Correct?**

Yes, this is due to the juice quantity max limits being higher during the transition. This is another transition item that will be resolved when the old food items can be removed. Please review the WINNIE Update Document.

## References – Complete Listing of Hyperlinks

[MOM Section 1.10 Civil Rights 2025 Outreach Grant Projects](https://www.health.state.mn.us/docs/people/wic/localagency/addfunding/grantsproj25.pdf)

(<https://www.health.state.mn.us/docs/people/wic/localagency/addfunding/grantsproj25.pdf>)

[Food Package Updates](https://www.health.state.mn.us/people/wic/localagency/fdpgupdts.html) (<https://www.health.state.mn.us/people/wic/localagency/fdpgupdts.html>)

[WIC Food Package](https://www.health.state.mn.us/people/wic/foods/changes.html) (<https://www.health.state.mn.us/people/wic/foods/changes.html>)

[Update Document – Phase 3 Food Package Changes](https://www.health.state.mn.us/docs/people/wic/localagency/winnie/releasedocs/fpfeb2026.pdf)

(<https://www.health.state.mn.us/docs/people/wic/localagency/winnie/releasedocs/fpfeb2026.pdf>)

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