



ALL THE FACTS from OPPCA
Office of Public Policy & Client Advocacy
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Let's Help Families Apply for WIC!

WIC (Women, Infants and Children), a special supplemental nutrition program for women, infants, and children, is one of the most underused benefit programs in New York City with only 48% of eligible families receiving these vouchers. At CAS, case handlers have the opportunity to help parents apply for this benefit.

WIC, which has been proven responsible for reducing low birth-weight babies and for saving Medicaid costs, provides nutritious food supplements and nutrition education to:

- Low-income pregnant women
- Women who are breastfeeding
- Infants
- Children up to the age of five

Participants get vouchers that they can redeem at supermarkets, small grocery stores, bodegas, pharmacies (formula), and farmer's markets for foods that include infant formula (although WIC encourages breastfeeding), milk, cheese, eggs, juice, cereal, and peanut butter, among others.

Eligibility depends on income and medical or nutritional risk. Applicants can get medical referrals to WIC from their physician or from over 100 WIC sites in New York City.

The applicants can get referral forms from doctors, nurses, or nutritionists, who determine whether the individual is at nutrition risk. This can be done at a CAS clinic or at a WIC clinic, or by another health professional, such as the applicant's doctor.

There are three areas of eligibility for WIC:

- Residential: Must live in New York State
- Categorical:
 - Pregnant, postpartum (up to 6 months after birth or end of pregnancy), or breast feeding (up to 12 months after the child's birth)
 - Infant or child under the age of five (must re-certify every 6 months)
- Nutritional: A WIC clinic or health professional, such as a physician, nurse, or nutritionist, must determine whether the individual is at nutrition risk
 - Medical: for example, anemia, under-weight or history of poor pregnancy outcome
 - Dietary condition: poor nutrition intake
 - Inadequate diet: due to migration or homelessness

Individuals in programs like Medicaid, free or reduced school meals, or Temporary Aid to Needy Families (TANF) are eligible, and others can be eligible if they have income below the following limits:

Household Size*	Yearly Gross Income	Monthly Gross Income	Weekly Gross Income
1	\$18,130	\$1,511	\$349
2	\$24,420	\$2,035	\$470
3	\$30,710	\$2,560	\$591
4	\$37,000	\$3,084	\$712
5	\$43,290	\$3,608	\$833
For each additional, add:	\$6,031	\$503	\$116

*Pregnant women count as two individuals.

Call the Growing Up Healthy Hotline at (800) 522-5006 to find the nearest WIC office, or call OPPCA at (212) 358-8930 for more information or advocacy. Parents must call in advance and schedule an appointment to apply for WIC.