# WIC – Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children

Division of Health Promotion & Chronic Disease Prevention
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www.idph.state.ia.us/wic/default.aspx

*Promoting & Protecting the Health of Iowans*

IDPH Iowa Department of Public Health

When money is tight, difficult decisions must be made. For some Iowans, that means buying a used car instead of a new one. But for others, the decision may be between paying the rent and buying food. The IDPH WIC program ensures that some of the most vulnerable Iowans — low-income pregnant, breastfeeding, or postpartum women and their children up to age five — never have to go without good nutrition.

WIC services are the gateway to good health. Families looking for help with food through WIC also find access to other services such as prenatal care, well-child care, immunizations, lead screening, and many others that help families stay healthy.

Through WIC, all Iowa children and their mothers have access to a healthy start.

## Did you know?

Each month, the Iowa WIC Program serves approximately 67,000 women, infants, and children, which is approximately 88% of those estimated to be eligible for services.

## Why is WIC important to promoting and protecting the health of Iowans?

- More than 51% of infants born in Iowa receive WIC.
- One in every three pregnant women in Iowa receives WIC.
- Nearly one in five children in Iowa between ages 1 and 5 participates in WIC.
- WIC strengthens families by influencing lifetime nutrition and health behaviors.
- The WIC program coordinates services with many other programs including prenatal and postpartum care, well child care, immunizations, lead poisoning prevention programs, early intervention services, child care, Head Start, *hawk-i*, breastfeeding support, parenting education programs, food assistance programs, and more.

## Which Iowa Public Health Goals are we working to achieve?

Promote healthy behaviors

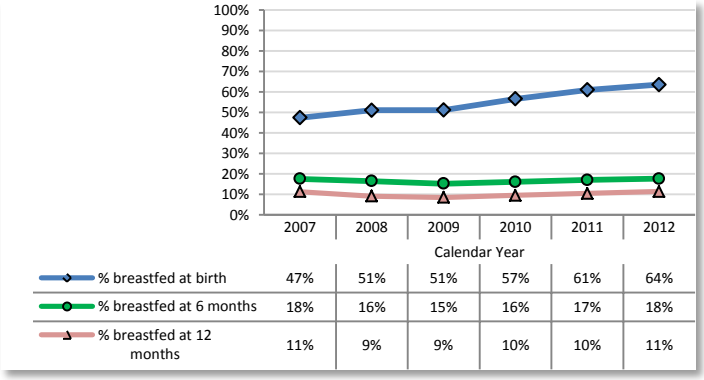
Strengthen the public health infrastructure

## What do we do?

- Provide access to nutrient-rich foods.
- Offer nutrition education and support in making positive behavior changes in diet and physical activity.
- Provide breastfeeding education and support.
- Make referrals for health care and social services.
- Offer community-based services through 20 local contractors.
- Improve access to Iowa grown fruits and vegetables through the WIC Farmers Market Nutrition Program (in cooperation with the Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship).
- Stimulate the Iowa economy by buying over $45 million dollars of food from more than 650 Iowa grocery stores and pharmacies that accept WIC checks for the prescribed supplemental foods.
- Support Iowa agriculture by providing supplemental foods produced in the state (milk, fruit juice, whole wheat bread, and eggs).
- The Iowa WIC Program is a steward of federal money through the careful monitoring reviews of local agencies and compliance monitoring of authorized WIC vendors. Monitoring results in a program with strong integrity and compliance with federal regulations.

## How do we measure our progress?

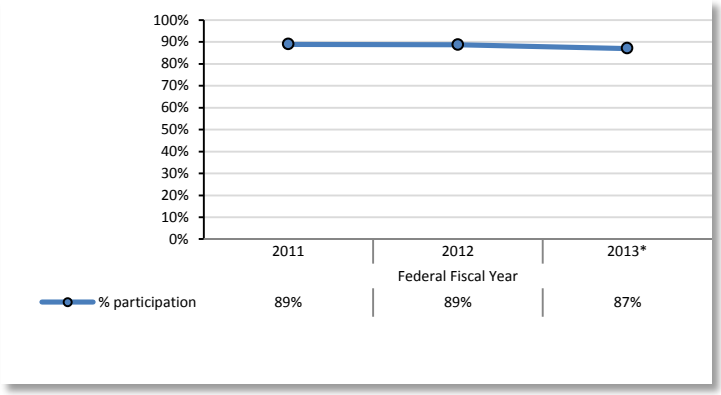
❶ **Percent of WIC infants breastfed at birth.**
❷ **Percent of WIC infants breastfeeding at 6 months.**
❷ **Percent of WIC infants breastfeeding at 12 months.**




Data Source: Iowa WIC Information Network (IWIN).

**How are we doing?** Duration rates have increased, but at a much slower pace. Duration rates are particularly a challenge because Iowa has a high rate of maternal employment for families with children under age 6. Many of the women served by WIC are also more likely to work in places that do not support breastfeeding. Of all Iowa infants born to women served by WIC in 2012, only 18% are still being breastfed at 6 months of age.

❹ **Percent of participation among WIC enrollees.**




Data Source: Iowa WIC Information Network (IWIN). *Through April 2013.

**How are we doing?** WIC monitors participation rates (number of enrolled participants receiving WIC checks from their local agency) to ensure enrollees are accessing their WIC benefits. Over the past three years, about 90% of WIC enrollees are actively using the program.

## What can Iowans do to help?

1. All Iowans can promote and support breastfeeding. Breastfeeding is the best way to feed healthy newborns. To learn more about breastfeeding, go to www.idph.state.ia.us/wic/breastfeeding.aspx.
2. All Iowans can refer potentially eligible families to WIC. For more information about WIC, go to www.idph.state.ia.us/wic/families.aspx.
3. All Iowans can provide information about WIC services in your community. Free outreach materials are available from the state WIC office. Go to www.idph.state.ia.us/wic/Resources.aspx?SubPg=Outreach to access the online website to order materials.

## Expenditures

Program caseload levels are dependent upon the number of individuals who can be supported with the funds that are allocated. However, substantial cost savings are achieved through manufacturer rebates on infant formula, enabling WIC to serve more participants. The dollar amounts of the rebates are shown in the table to the right. **Total expenditures** reflect the actual amount of money spent using federal funds ***plus*** the savings from the rebates.

Federal funds: 0153-0508/0512/0514/0516/0608/0652/0678

| | State Fiscal Year 2011 Actual | State Fiscal Year 2012 Actual | State Fiscal Year 2013 Estimate |
|---|---|---|---|
| State funds | $0 | $0 | $0 |
| Federal funds | $47,887,429 | $46,993,651 | $49,283,698 |
| Manufacturer rebates | $13,985,236 | $12,008,014* | $15,297,844 |
| **Total expenditures** | **$61,872,665** | **$59,001,665** | **$64,581,542** |
| FTEs | 14.03 | 14.11 | 14.90 |

**Note:** Funding information is intended to provide an overview of funding related to the program area. It does not include all federal and state requirements and/or restrictions for the use of funds. Contact the program area for more detailed budget information.

*August and September 2011 rebates not billed due to federal reporting changes.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