



WIC COVID-19 PANDEMIC UPDATES

WIC IS STILL OPEN FOR BUSINESS – WIC serves nearly 8 million mothers and young children per month (including 53% of all infants born in the United States) through 10,000 local agencies nationwide in all 50 states.

In the state of Wisconsin, our 69 WIC local agencies are continuing to serve WIC families, although we are adjusting the way we handle appointments. Most are being conducted remotely over the phone.

WIC BENEFITS REMAIN VALID – We are not planning to make any changes to the way participants receive their benefits. Benefits are issued remotely to a participant's eWIC card.

WIC FOODS ARE STILL AVAILABLE – Grocery stores are especially busy, and in a lot of cases, stock levels for WIC-approved foods are low. Please be assured that this is not a food shortage. Manufacturers' warehouses are fully stocked with WIC-approved foods. Grocery stores are waiting for their regular shipments, so we're encouraging participants to shop early in the morning to increase the likelihood of finding fully stocked shelves.

WIC IS SHARING THE FACTS – Due to the uncertainty around the ever-evolving COVID-19 issue, some WIC-related misinformation has been spreading on social media. We've addressed the misconceptions on our website, wicmomstrong.com. Myths addressed include the following:

- **Myth:** *If my grocery store runs out of formula, I can make my own at home.*
 - » **Fact:** Homemade formula is not safe for your baby. Warehouses are fully stocked with formula, and grocery stores are just waiting for their normal shipments to come in. Getting to the store early in the morning when shipments arrive may increase the likelihood that formula will be on the shelves. If you're unable to find formula, please contact your local WIC agencies for assistance.

- **Myth:** Current WIC benefits will end or my eWIC card will be locked at the end of the month.
 - » **Fact:** Your WIC benefits are valid, and your eWIC card will not be locked. We are not planning any changes to the way your benefits are distributed. If you have questions about your individual benefits, please contact your local WIC agencies.
- **Myth:** Non-WIC participants are not allowed to purchase WIC-approved brands.
 - » **Fact:** Lately, we've seen messages on social media encouraging people who are not WIC participants to avoid purchasing WIC-approved foods, if possible. This ensures WIC participants have access to the brands they need. While we appreciate the sentiment behind this message, we want to clarify that this does *not* mean WIC-approved brands are off limits to anyone.
- **Myth:** If I test positive for COVID-19, I should stop breastfeeding to avoid passing it on to my baby.
 - » **Fact:** Breastfeeding with COVID-19 is safe. In fact, if you're breastfeeding and become ill, it's important not to interrupt nursing. Breast milk protects infants against many illnesses, and COVID-19 has not been detected in breast milk. Following good hygiene practices will help reduce the transfer of the virus.
- **Myth:** Kids can't get COVID-19, so play dates with friends are a good way to keep them busy.
 - » **Fact:** While adults make up most of the known cases of COVID-19 to date, some children and infants have tested positive for the disease. Kids could also spread the virus without showing symptoms, so it's important to keep them home as much as possible, avoid play dates for now, and encourage them to wash their hands often.
- **Myth:** Non-WIC participants should avoid shopping at the beginning of the month because that's when WIC benefits are renewed.
 - » **Fact:** WIC participants' first day to use their benefits varies depending on which local agency they're part of. We do appreciate those who are thinking of our WIC families, but there's no need to avoid shopping at the beginning of the month.

WIC REMAINS IN TOUCH – WIC is keeping participants updated with the latest information during this time and providing resources on [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#) at @WICMomStrong.