

## **WIC Contract Announced for 2023**

November 3, 2022

(Crocker, MO) The Pulaski County Health Center has announced that a contract to continue to provide WIC services for federal fiscal year 2021 has been signed with the Missouri Department of Health & Senior Services. Under the terms of the contract, the Pulaski County Health Center will be able to serve 1,167 eligible persons for WIC every month.

Women, Infants and Children (WIC) is a special Supplemental Nutrition Program providing services to pregnant women, postpartum women, infants, and children up to five years of age who are at nutritional risk, based on medical and income eligibility. WIC is federally funded and administered by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) with services provided through local WIC providers. To be eligible for WIC, applicants must have an income of less than or equal to 185% of the federal poverty level and be determined by a health professional to be at nutritional risk. Migrant families are also eligible.

The Missouri WIC program provides health screening and risk assessment, nutrition education and counseling, breastfeeding promotion and support, and referrals to healthcare and social service programs. Nutritious supplemental food is provided at no cost to the participants.

WIC supplemental food packages are specially chosen to provide foods high in protein, iron, calcium, and vitamins A and C. Eligible women and children receive fortified milk, cheese and yogurt, eggs, whole grain bread products and hot or cold cereals, 100% fruit juices and fresh or frozen fruits and vegetables. The WIC program recommends breastfeeding, provides breastfeeding support, baby foods and infant cereal. For women who cannot or choose not to breastfeed, infants may receive supplemental iron fortified formula.

WIC has become faster, more flexible and simpler. WIC agencies have moved from providing checks to using electronic benefit transfer (EBT) to deliver WIC food benefits. This transition to EBT, referred to as eWIC, creates an easier shopping experience. WIC families are able to purchase products over multiple trips to the store rather than purchasing everything at one time during the month.

WIC's goal is to improve health by informing families about good health practices and by providing nutritious foods to eligible participants. Every year, thousands of women, infants and children receive health screenings, nutrition assessments and health education from the Missouri WIC program. Studies confirm that pregnant women who enroll in WIC during the early months of pregnancy have fewer low birth weight babies, experience fewer infant deaths, see the doctor earlier in pregnancy and eat healthier.

There are two offices in Pulaski County to better serve participants: at the Pulaski County Health Center in Crocker on last Mondays from 7:00 a.m. – 4:30 p.m. and in Waynesville at 704 Historic Route 66 Suite 104 on Monday - Thursday from 7:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m. Call 573-736-2218 or 573-774-3115 to see if you qualify or to make an appointment. You can also learn more about the program at [www.pulaskicountyhealth.com](http://www.pulaskicountyhealth.com) and on Facebook.

Individuals and families can also check eligibility and begin the application process online by visiting <https://health.mo.gov/living/families/wic/>.

“This institution and the USDA are equal opportunity providers.”

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