



# Minnesota WIC Program Overview

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House Early Childhood Finance and Policy Committee

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PROTECTING, MAINTAINING AND IMPROVING THE HEALTH OF ALL MINNESOTANS

# WIC Program Overview



- **Public Health Nutrition and Breastfeeding program**
- **Helps eligible pregnant women, new mothers, babies and young children eat well, learn about nutrition, and stay healthy.**
- **Provides nutrition education and counseling, nutritious foods, and referrals to health and other social services.**

## Eligibility Criteria: Income, Category, Nutrition Risk

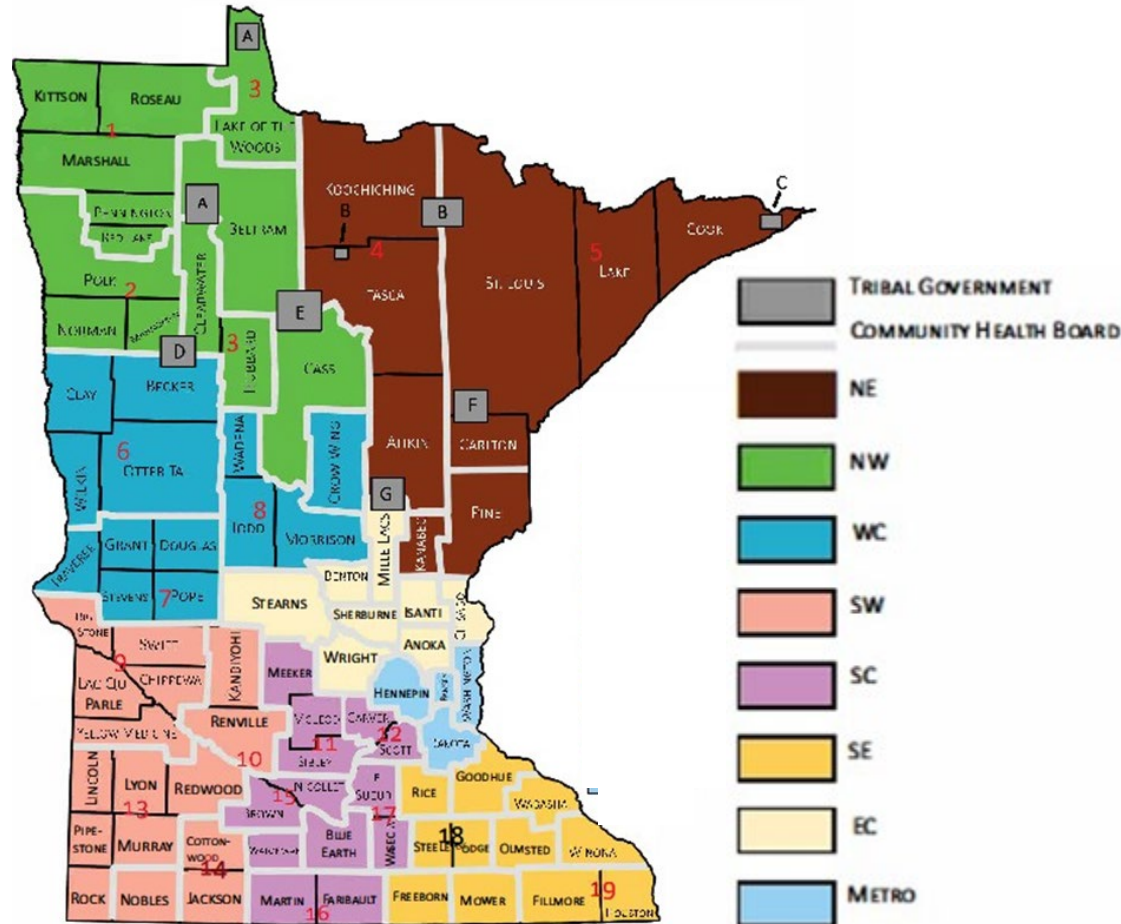
- **Income: 185% FPG or Adjunctive Eligibility**
- **Category: pregnant, breastfeeding & postpartum women; infants; & children up to 5<sup>th</sup> birthday**
- **Nutrition Risk: Determined to be at nutritional risk**

- **Adjunctive Eligibility: Enrollment One of the Following**
  - Medicaid
  - SNAP (Food Stamps)
  - MN Family Investment Program (MFIP)
  - Fuel Assistance
  - Free or Reduced School Meals
  - Head Start
  - Supplemental Security Income (SSI)

# WIC Program Funding

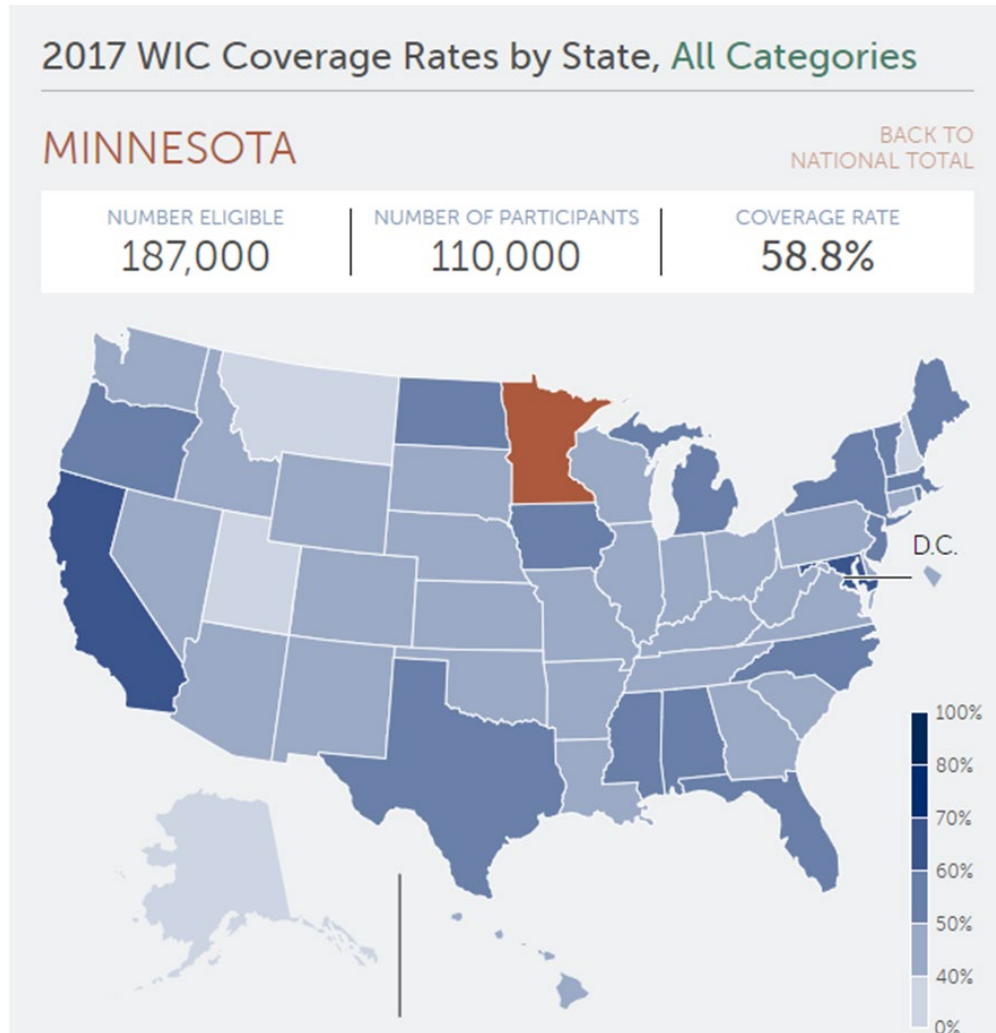
- Federal grant funding from USDA Food and Nutrition Service (FNS)
- Annual grant
  - Approx. \$30 million for Nutrition Services and Administration (NSA)
  - Approx. \$57 million for WIC food benefits
- Infant formula rebate contract
  - Approx. \$26 million rebate income to cover food costs
- 75% of NSA funding goes to local WIC grantees through per participant funding formula

# Minnesota WIC Regions and Grantees 2017



- 8 WIC Regions (87 counties)
- 54 WIC grantees represent:
  - 45 CHBs
  - 7 Ojibwe Tribes
  - 2 Community Action Partnership (CAP) organizations

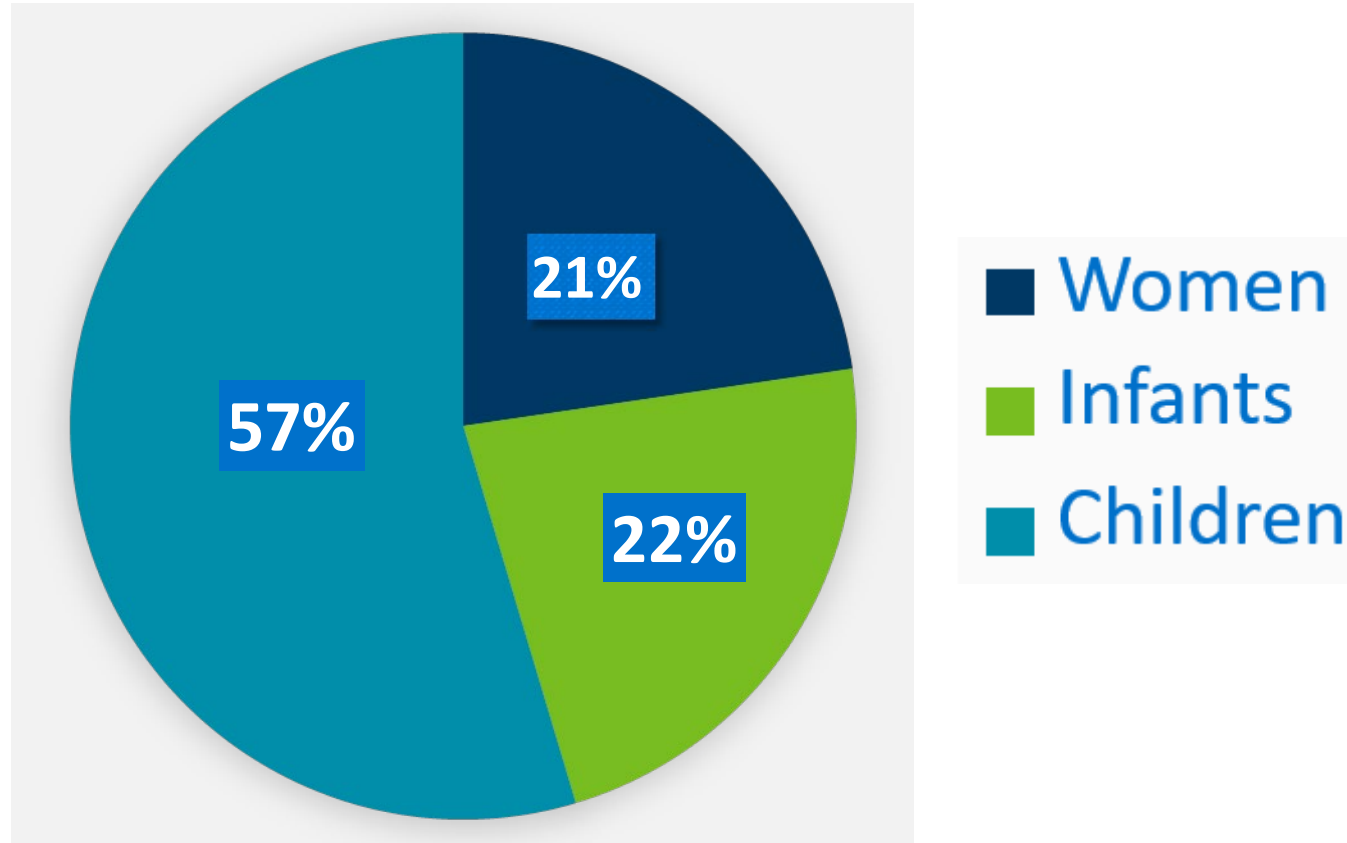
# Minnesota WIC 3rd in Nation for Serving Eligible Individuals



National WIC eligibility and coverage rates (the share of people eligible for WIC who receive benefits) varies substantially across states

The overall WIC coverage rate generally increased between 2005 (when it was 56.5 percent) and 2011 (when it was 63.5 percent nationally). Since 2011, the overall WIC coverage rate has generally declined, sitting just over 51 percent nationally as of 2017.

# WIC Average Monthly Participation 2020



**WIC served an average of 100,829 women, infants & children per month in 2020**

**MN WIC served 40% of all infants born in MN in 2019**















- **WIC participation improves health outcomes**
  - Reduces low-birth weight
  - Increases intake of key nutrients
  - Contributes to healthy weight among preschool children
  - Increases breastfeeding initiation
- **Prenatal and early WIC participation is associated with cognitive and academic benefits**
- **WIC participation saves money**
  - Medicaid participants on WIC average 29% lower Medicaid costs for infant hospitalization
  - Every WIC dollar spent on pregnant women saves \$4.21 in Medicaid costs for mother & newborn.



# WIC Supplemental Foods

## WIC OFFERS A HEALTHY FOOD PACKAGE\*

 BEANS	 WHOLE GRAINS	 FRUITS & VEGETABLES	 100% FRUIT JUICE
 CHEESE	 CEREAL	 EGGS	 INFANT FORMULA
 CANNED FISH	 PEANUT BUTTER	 MILK	 INFANT CEREAL & BABY FOOD

Average value of  
monthly food  
package for child  
approx. \$76.00

(3 gallons milk, 1 quart yogurt, 1  
pound cheese, 36 oz. cereal, 1 dozen  
eggs, 2 pounds whole grains, 2  
containers 100% juice, 1 jar peanut  
butter, and \$9 fruits and vegetables)

\*Check your state for specific guidelines.

Nutrition Education distinguishes WIC from other nutrition assistance programs.

Individualized nutrition assessment and education with goal setting to build healthy habits

# Breastfeeding Support and Education

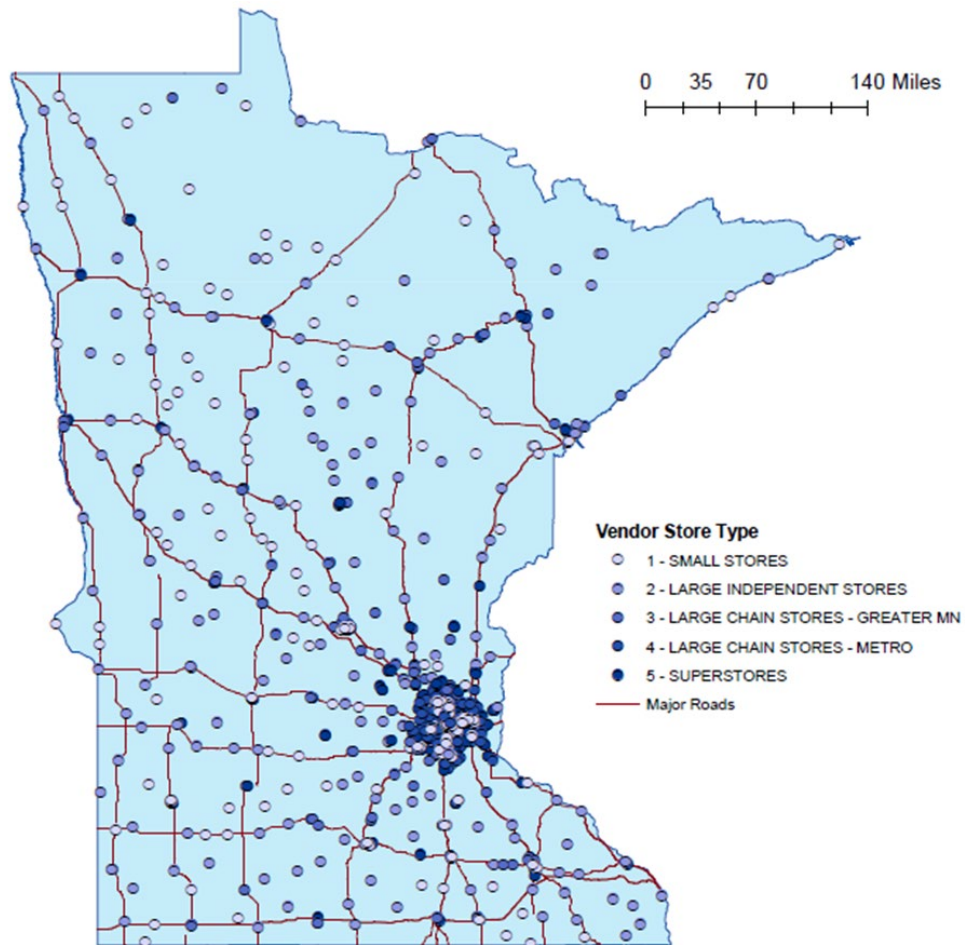
- **Discuss thoughts and concerns and learn about why breastfeeding is important for mom, baby and family**
- **Information about breast pumps, where to get one and ideas on how to continue breastfeeding when women return to work**
- **How to get additional breastfeeding help if you need it and services available to you in your community**
- **WIC provides extra foods for breastfeeding women**

# WIC Peer Breastfeeding Counselors



- Peer counselors are recruited from the communities they serve and often speak the same language.
- They have similar life circumstances and experiences as their clients.
- Peers connect mother-to-mother with their clients and are a trusted source of information and support.

# WIC Authorized Retail Food Stores

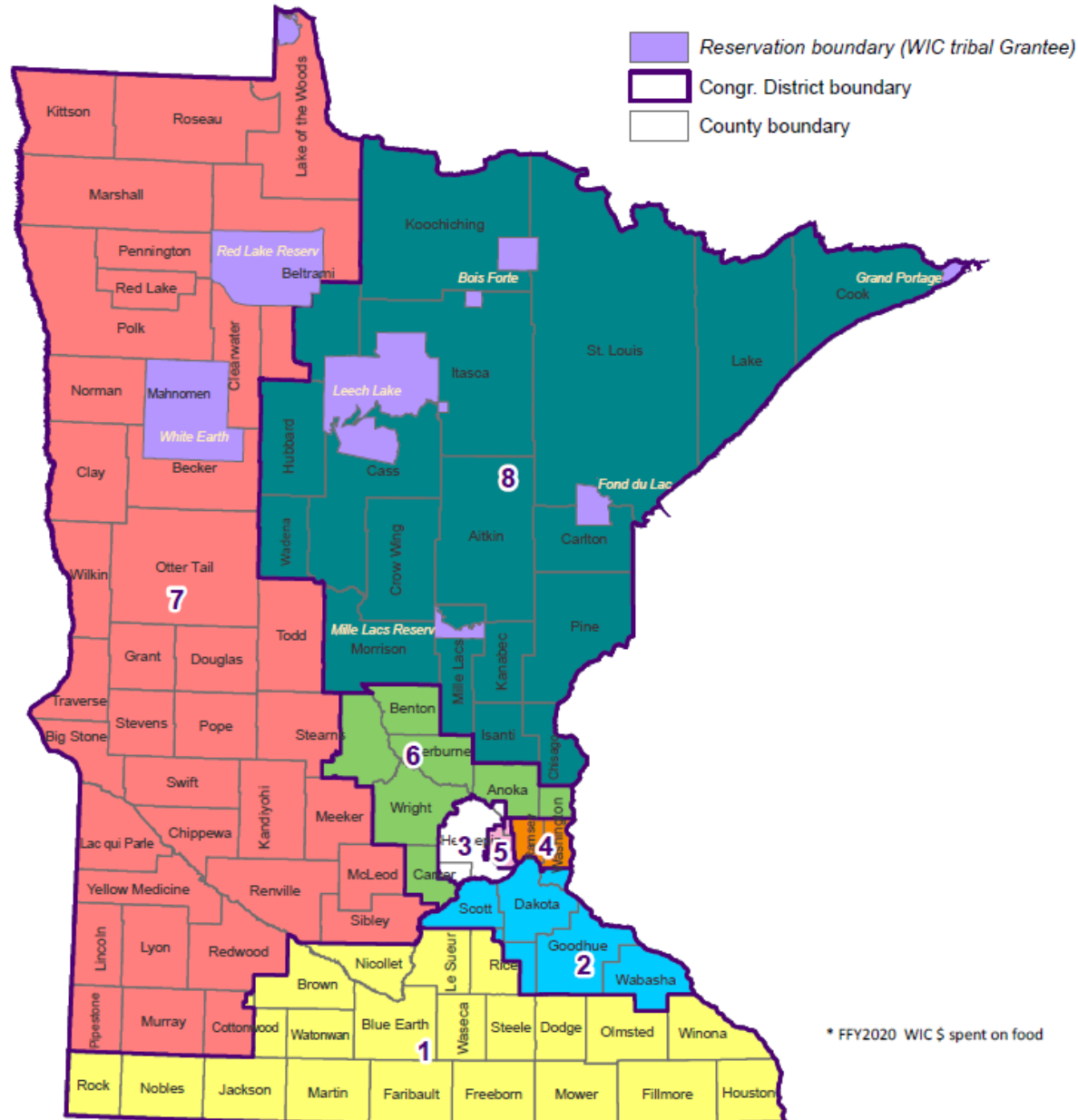


**834 Retail Food Stores total**

- **288 Small stores**
- **198 Large Independent Stores 219 Large Chain stores**
- **129 Superstores**
- **154 Pharmacy Vendors, not pictured**



# WIC Dollars Spent in Local Grocery Stores on Food by Congressional District, FFY2020



\* FFY2020 WIC \$ spent on food

Congressional Districts		
	# Monthly Average WIC Participants (FFY2020)	Annual WIC Dollars Spent in Local Grocery Stores
District 1 - Hagedorn	14,000	\$ 9,500,000
District 2 - Craig	9,000	\$ 6,600,000
District 3 - Phillips	10,000	\$ 7,500,000
District 4 - McCollum	17,000	\$ 13,000,000
District 5 - Omar	15,000	\$ 8,700,000
District 6 - Emmer	13,000	\$ 9,400,000
District 7 - Peterson	15,000	\$ 10,000,000
District 8 - Stauber	12,000	\$ 7,800,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>105,000</b>	<b>\$ 72,400,000</b>

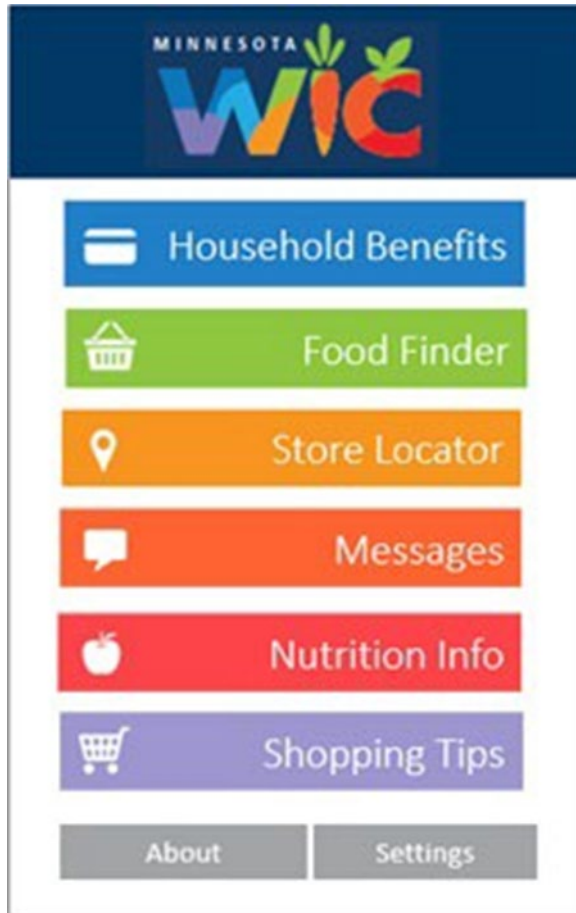


- **MN WIC Transitioned to eWIC or WIC EBT in 2019 ahead of 2020 federal mandate**
- **Food benefits are “loaded” on the card for each month**

[Welcome to WIC Video](#)



# My MN WIC App



- **Household Benefits:** shows current & future benefit balances
- **Food Finder:** links to their benefit balance, and indicates if scanned food item is in their benefit balance and if they have enough remaining to purchase the item
- **Store Locator:** participant can search for WIC-authorized stores within a certain distance of a specific address or their phone
- **Messages:** will notify them of benefit expirations and foods remaining for that month, appointment reminders, etc.
- **Nutrition Info:** links to topics such as *Recipes* and *wichealth.org*
- **Shopping Tips:** links to topics such as *How to use your WIC card* and *Shopping Guide*

## WIC Regulatory Waivers Connected to National Public Health Emergency Declaration

- Physical Presence
- Anthropometric measurements – Height/Length and Weight
- Hematological measurements – hemoglobin
- Remote benefit issuance

## Transition to Remote Services

- In March 2020, all WIC clinics quickly transitioned to doing remote WIC services
- WIC services provided by phone or video with online and text options for communication and ongoing nutrition education

# Thank you.



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