

NEWS RELEASE

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WIC Program Announces New Income Levels for Eligibility

BISMARCK, N.D. – Income eligibility guidelines for the North Dakota Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children (WIC) have increased based on changes in the federal poverty levels. Effective May 1, 2016, a family of four can earn up to \$3,747 each month (or \$865 each week for the household) and still meet income eligibility requirements.

Funded by the U.S. Department of Agriculture, the WIC Program has improved children’s health, growth and development, and prevented health problems for 40 years. WIC benefits include quality nutrition and breastfeeding education, and access to other services. Monthly foods are made available that are rich in calcium, iron, and protein to help bolster the health of pregnant, postpartum, and breastfeeding women; babies; and children younger than 5 years. WIC foods are designed to fit the nutritional needs of each participant and include only milk, eggs, cheese, peanut butter, 100 percent fruit juice, beans, whole grains and cereals, and fresh fruits and vegetables. WIC supports breastfeeding as the optimal way to feed infants, but infants who are not breastfeeding receive iron-fortified formula and older infants also receive baby food.

“Studies show the proper nutrition WIC children receive helps them enter school ready to learn,” said Colleen Pearce, director of the North Dakota Department of Health’s WIC Program. “WIC is a cost-effective, sound investment that helps ensure the health of our children.”

Families who qualify must reside in North Dakota, meet the income requirements, and have a nutritional or medical need for WIC services, such as anemia or inadequate diet. Need is determined by measuring the child’s or woman’s height and weight, performing a hemoglobin test, and taking a health and dietary history. To find out if you qualify, contact the WIC agency in your community or refer to the WIC web page at www.ndhealth.gov/wic.

For more information, contact Colleen Pearce, North Dakota Department of Health, at 701.328.2496.

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