



# Oregon WIC Program

Oregon's WIC Program is the largest program in the Nutrition & Health Screening Section. We work to ensure every Oregon family achieves optimal nutrition and lifelong health for their children. The Breastfeeding Peer Counseling Program and Farm Direction Nutrition Program are optional programs that expand services.

**The Nutrition & Health Screening State Program Office (SPO)** has 40 staff that support Oregon's 33 local WIC agencies. The SPO's main functions include training and professional development for local staff, policy and program development, data analysis, technical assistance, development and support of a statewide management information system, funding, compliance reviews, retail grocer authorization and business functions. Within these functions, the SPO focuses on ensuring the provision of nutrition services, ensuring local WIC programs provide access to high quality, family-friendly services, and partnership development.

WIC services are in line with the Public Health Modernization Foundational Program of Access to Clinical Preventive Services and supports attainment of the majority of the CCO performance metrics.

## WIC Funding

- 33 Local Public Health Authorities (LPHAs), tribes & nonprofits receive funding through Program Element 40 to provide nutrition & health screening, nutrition & breastfeeding education & support, health referrals & issuance of food benefits to eligible women, infants & children.
- Current Funding Formula;
  - Utilizes community needs and agency past performance to determine caseload
  - Distributes funding on a per capita basis using assigned caseload

## WIC Services



**Breastfeeding Support**  
Promoting breastfeeding as a critical component of early nutrition.



**Nutrition Education** Learning healthy habits through individual counseling, & group & online classes.



**Community Resources**  
Connecting families with healthcare support.

## Impacts at a Glance



**131,912** Oregon women, infants and children were served by WIC in 2108. **48%** of women outside of metro/urban areas & **33%** in metro areas used WIC during their pregnancy.



**Supporting local economies:**  
\$49.6M in healthy food purchases  
\$962K directly to local farmers  
350 local staff employed & trained



**Higher immunization rates:**  
Children on WIC have immunization rates equal to higher SES children



WIC families receive non-emergency medical transportation to approved appointments



Obesity rates among WIC kids ages 2-5 have declined since a peak in 2009/2011.



Children who participate in WIC enter kindergarten better ready to learn.



## Access to Preventive Clinical Services in WIC

**State Health Improvement Plan (SHIP):** Addresses the leading causes of death, disease, and injury in Oregon through evidence-based and measurable strategies intended to improve the health of all Oregon people by 2020.

### WIC SHIP Targets and Goals



#### Healthy Families

- Improve availability of affordable, healthy food and beverage choices
- Increase access to fruits and vegetables among low-income families
- Scale up food insecurity screening in local WIC clinic settings
- Leverage WIC minimum stocking requirements for contracted grocers to increase availability of fresh and frozen fruits and vegetables for entire communities
- Increase availability of culturally appropriate foods in the WIC package
- Increase number and variety of referrals for WIC families
- Adopt and plan for implementation of DHS/OHA Workplace Breastfeeding Support Policy at state and local DHS and OHA field offices

### WIC System Challenges

- Policymakers, some partners and the public do not recognize WIC as a public health nutrition program. They often couple it with safety net support programs such as SNAP.
- Challenges retaining program participants for the full time they are eligible. This is particularly true for 2-5 year old children.
- In a state with high hunger and food insecurity, WIC participants do not use their full healthy food benefit and federal funds are returned.
- Workforce challenges to fill Registered Dietitian (RD/RDN) and International Board Certified Lactation Consultants (IBCLC) positions, especially outside of urban areas.
- As a 100% federally funded discretionary program, funding is often uncertain for a large portion of any fiscal year.

Oregon WIC Program Nutrition  
and Health Screening

[www.healthoregon.org/wic](http://www.healthoregon.org/wic)

