



CLINIC LAGNIAPPE

Louisiana WIC's Clinic Staff Newsletter



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IMPORTANT DATES

- January 23, 2023 Phase 1 of MyWIC
- January 24 – 26, WIC Basics
- January 26, 2023 Monthly Clinic Webinar Series (topic for EBT managers only)
- March 20, 2023 Phase 2 of MyWIC

Wrapping Up 2022!

Thanks for another great year!

By: Leslie Lewis, Nutrition Operations Manager, Bureau of Nutrition Services

It is hard to believe that we are wrapping up another year! 2022 was a year like no other! Not only did Louisiana WIC clinic staff continue to navigate the COVID-19 waivers, but the Abbott Nutrition formula recall in February 2022 created a shortage that made finding infant formula extremely difficult for our families. Louisiana WIC State Agency can't thank our WIC clinic staff enough for helping our families navigate this stressful situation.

The national Public Health Emergency is still active, allowing us to provide remote services (curbside); however, many of our WIC clinics are offering in-person services again. Louisiana WIC will be requesting all clinics to offer in-person services by early spring and will send out guidance about preparing families and staff for this transition. Clinic staff will need to educate participants on this, as some of our families have only been receiving WIC via curbside services.

Louisiana WIC has lots of exciting changes planned for 2023 including:

- a new outreach project to Medicaid recipients (read more on page 6)
- Roll out our new WIC app called MyWIC

Thanks again for all you do to improve the health of our Louisiana WIC families and we look forward to a new year with you all!

Leslie Lewis
Clinical Services/Nutrition Operations Manager

2022 Year in Review

In 2022, Louisiana WIC State Agency:

- Started offering Pacify, a mobile lactation app, to all WIC participants at no cost in January of 2022 (see page 4 for enrollment data)
- In the spring of 2022, partnered with a social marketing company to send targeted emails and placed clings on buses in metro New Orleans and Jefferson Parish
- Offered 10 statewide webinars
- Offered 4 WIC Basics training sessions (3 virtual and 1 in-person)
- Convened a formula recall task force to discuss the challenges Louisiana faced in regards to the formula recall
- Provided a one-day virtual Louisiana WIC Conference in May
- Started a training newsletter to help streamline training information
- Contracted with Benefits Data Trust, a non-profit that helps provide targeted outreach to “eligible but not participating in WIC” individuals
- Sent out mass messages to families who are “enrolled, not participating,” reminding them of their benefits
- “Enrolled, not participating” (ENP) means they are certified on Louisiana WIC but haven’t picked up benefits for that month – in August this reduced our ENP rate by 5%
- Conducted 19 management evaluations for State Fiscal Year (SFY) 22
- Received over 8,340 pre-applications in English and Spanish



LA WIC Vendor Shopping Experience Form

Louisiana WIC Vendor Operations recently created an online [LA WIC Vendor Shopping Experience Report Form](#) which allows WIC participants and WIC staff to share both positive and negative WIC shopping experiences. The form is designed to capture all of the information Vendor Ops staff need to conduct a complaint investigation such as the Vendor Name and Address, Date of the attempted Transaction, the Participant PAN, as well as information on the specific item the participant attempted to purchase. Since fully implementing the form in Federal Fiscal Year (FFY) 2023, we have reduced the average time it takes to investigate and close a complaint from 9.6 days to 6.5 days! Please help us continue to investigate and address complaints by encouraging WIC participants to submit their experiences via the [LA WIC Vendor Shopping Experience Report Form](#). The form is also available in Spanish – [Formulario de Experiencia de Compra](#). Links to both versions of the form can be found on the LA WIC Vendor Hub website at ldh.la.gov/wicvendor in the LA WIC Authorized Vendor Essential Documents and Links section.

Proposed WIC Food Package Rules

By: L'Asia George, Southern University Dietetic Intern, Class of 2023

The USDA is required to conduct a comprehensive scientific review of the WIC food package at least every ten years and update the food package, as needed, to reflect current nutrition science, public health concerns, and cultural eating patterns. The proposed changes illustrated below are based in science and influenced by the National Academies of Science, Engineering, and Medicine (NASEM) report and the 2020 – 2025 Dietary Guidelines for Americans to accommodate the latest healthy diet patterns, special dietary needs, and cultural preferences.

In addition to those changes, the USDA Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) proposes making the temporary increase to the cash value benefit for fruits and vegetables permanent, providing participants with up to four times the amount they would otherwise receive. FNS also proposes revisions that give participants a wider range of fruits and vegetables to choose from, and reduces the quantity of juice to reflect nutrition regulation, which emphasizes whole fruits and vegetables.

The USDA proposed changes will continue to further the mission of the WIC Program to enhance the lives of the participants by increasing flexibility, education, and expanding the network of foods that reflect their culture.


Food and Nutrition Service
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

PROPOSED UPDATES TO THE WIC FOOD PACKAGES



OVERVIEW
 WIC is a powerful public health program, proven to help moms, babies, and young children thrive. USDA's Food and Nutrition Service is recommending science-based updates to the food provided to WIC participants to best meet their nutritional needs and foster healthy growth and development. Some of the proposed changes are highlighted below.



BREASTFEEDING SUPPORT
 Increase support for mothers who mostly, but not exclusively, breastfeed **to support individual breastfeeding goals**



SEAFOOD
 Improve access to **canned fish** to reflect the latest dietary guidance



DAIRY AND EGGS
 Provide more options, such as different sizes of yogurt containers or substituting soy yogurt for milk or tofu for eggs



FRUITS AND VEGETABLES
 Increase fruit and vegetable benefit **by 3-4x**, focus on whole fruit, and increase variety of fruits, veggies, and legumes offered



GRAINS
 Expand **whole grain options** to include things like quinoa, blue cornmeal, and whole wheat bagels

USDA is an equal opportunity provider, employer, and lender.
November 2022

Call to Action: Please check out the National WIC Association's webpage on how to submit a comment to USDA showing support of these proposed updates at:
<https://nwica.salsalabs.org/WICFoodPackageComments/index.html?eType=EmailBlastContent&eld=788faca4-4537-4db2-bde2-d662478127e9>

Breastfeeding

During the month of August, many Louisiana WIC clinics celebrated National Breastfeeding Month in a multitude of ways, including attending the annual ROSE conference in New Orleans.

REGION 8 CELEBRATING NATIONAL BREASTFEEDING MONTH!



Region 8 Collage including Franklin Parish Health Unit, Ouachita Parish Health Unit and ROSE



Region 4- Our Peer Counseling Program Designated Breastfeeding Experts Caroline Dumesnil and Laurie Credeur at the Acadiana Breastfeeding Coalition (ABC) Event representing WIC



Pacify Data

As of 11/30/2022 Louisiana Pacify has :

- 1,193 Total Enrollments
- 817 Total Calls
- 4.7 Average Star Rating (out of 5 stars)

Let's continue to promote Pacify to Louisiana moms. Visit www.pacify.com/la-wic-staff to access the latest staff resources. For more information contact [Tara Landry](#).

Cheers for Peers



Deja'Lynn Hicks has been a Peer Counselor for 9 months and has already helped change the breastfeeding journeys of so many moms and babies in the Greater New Orleans area. Deja has a true passion for helping moms throughout their pregnancies and breastfeeding experiences. Deja works well alongside moms, making sure they know their goals are important and achievable. Deja's dedication shines through from comments received on Louisiana WIC's "Compliments and Problems" webpage. A first time mom wrote "Deja'Lynn has been calling me every week and she has truly been a big help. When I need advice

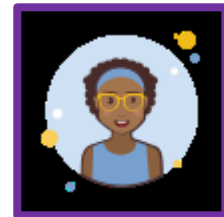
or have a question she's right there ready to answer." Another mom shared "From the first time we spoke to each other, it's as if I've known her for years. She makes it easy for me to ask any questions and is always there to give me the best advice. She provided all and any information within seconds. Thank you Deja for making my breastfeeding journey go so smooth!!!!" Thank you, Deja'Lynn, for the personalized help you provide to each of the families you serve. So glad you are a part of our team!

Introducing Luna – Louisiana WIC's own chat bot!

How to
Apply



Chat with us

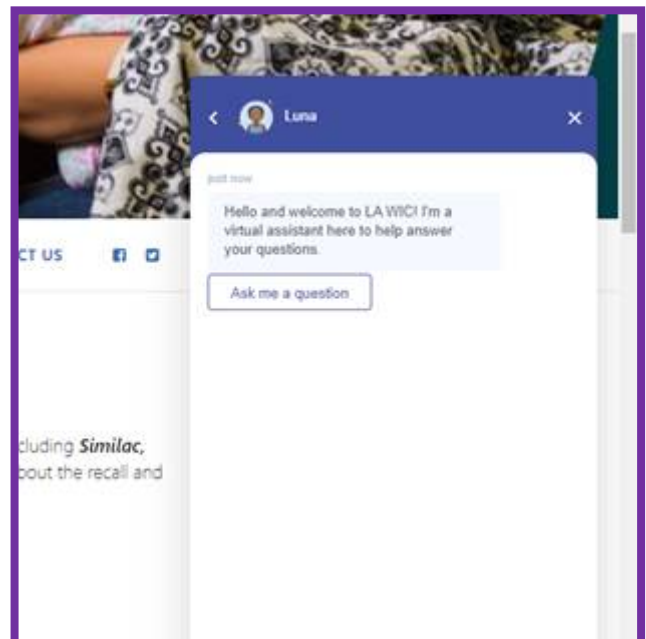


Welcome Luna!

If you have been on the Louisiana WIC website lately, you may have noticed Luna! Luna is a chat bot that can help answer some of the common questions LA WIC clinic staff receive. Luna will hopefully cut down on clinic calls and increase participant satisfaction.

<https://louisianawic.org/>

*Please note that the LA WIC website will be down until mid-January. We will notify staff when it is available for use.



Staffing Updates

Welcome to the Team!



Join us in welcoming Sheena Crochet to Louisiana WIC State Agency! Sheena joined BONS on November 2, 2022 as our Complaint and Management Evaluations Program Monitor. Sheena will work with complaints, fraud, and dispute investigations as well as conduct WIC clinic Management Evaluations. Please join us in welcoming Sheena!



Louisiana WIC and Benefits Data Trust

Louisiana WIC and Benefits Data Trust (BDT), a non-profit organization that works on modernizing benefit programs and reducing the amount of food benefits and assistance that goes untapped each year, have formed a partnership to conduct outreach to children that receive Louisiana Medicaid but are not currently enrolled in Louisiana WIC. Starting in late January, eligible households (with a child 4 years old and younger enrolled on Louisiana Medicaid but not certified on Louisiana WIC) will receive a text message with a call to action! The call to action will inform them that their child adjunctively qualifies for WIC and encourages them to call their WIC clinic to schedule an appointment.

Louisiana WIC sees the same nationwide trends of declining participation between children ages 1 to 5 years old and BDT has worked successfully with other states to increase their child participation rates.

To learn more, check out this paper published by BDT in 2021: <https://louisianawic.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/12/Matching-Data-Across-Benefit-Programs-Can-Increase-WIC-Enrollment.pdf>

Join us on Thursday, January 19th at 3 pm for a Kick Off call via zoom! Calendar invite will go out soon!

Contribute to the Newsletter!

Clinic Lagniappe is the perfect place to share information. We want to know what is going on in your region and local clinic. If you're interested in submitting content for the newsletter, please email Kate.Andrus@LA.GOV.

Join Our Mailing List

This newsletter will automatically be sent to Regional Nutritionists to share with WIC Clinic Managers. WIC Staff may also sign-up to receive this newsletter directly by registering. If you would like to join the **WIC Clinic Lagniappe** mailing list, please email Kate.Andrus@la.gov

