

**Special Supplemental Nutrition Program  
For Women, Infants and Children (WIC)**

**2022 STATE AGENCY PLAN OF  
PROGRAM OPERATION AND ADMINISTRATION**

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**VERMONT DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH**

# Vermont WIC State Plan

## 2022 Goals, Objectives, and Planned Activities

### Nutrition Services - Nutrition Education

**Goal:** Improve delivery of nutrition education services to WIC participants.

**Objective 1:** Improve/increase staff capacity to deliver quality nutrition services.

**Activities:**

- Provide staff training using revised VENA resources to support increased knowledge, skill development and expertise in nutrition education methods for staff.
- Continue to support and provide training in motivational interviewing and behavior change, incorporating resources from the WIC Breastfeeding Training Curriculum.
- Provide WIC Nutrition staff training on breastfeeding; Level 3 for all certifiers, and Level 4 for Breastfeeding Coordinators.
- Continue to provide nutrition resources, including curriculum guides, displays, textbooks, and client education materials to staff who deliver WIC Services.
- Improve staff use of technology to deliver nutrition information and resources to families.
- Supporting WIC Nutrition staff to attend national conferences.
- Continue to facilitate the statewide nutrition education workgroup to coordinate the implementation and assessment of nutrition education activities and projects, including sharing best practices among local WIC offices.

### Nutrition Services – Breastfeeding

**Goal:** Exclusive breastfeeding to six months of age will be the norm for infant feeding in Vermont.

<b>Breastfeeding Prevalence - January - December 2020</b>	
Ever Breastfed	84%
Exclusive breastfeeding at 3 months	39%
Any Breastfeeding at 3 months	52%
Exclusive Breastfeeding at 6 months	21%
Any Breastfeeding at 6 months	43%
Any Breastfeeding at 1 year	38%

**Objective 1:** Increase to 86 percent the proportion of infants who are ever breastfed.

**Objective 2:** Increase to 42 percent the proportion of infants who are exclusively breastfed at 3 months of age.

**Objective 3:** Increase to 25 percent the proportion of infants who are exclusively breastfed at 6 months of age.

**Reference:** Healthy People 2030 Goal MICH–15: Increase the proportion of infants who are breastfed exclusively through age 6 months - target 42.4 %

**Reference:** Healthy People 2030 Goal MICH–16: Increase the proportion of infants who are breastfed at 1 year - target: 54.1%

### **Activities:**

#### **Within VDH/WIC**

- Provide electric breast pumps to eligible WIC participants not eligible for Medicaid pumps.
- Train all WIC staff and invite community partners to Breastfeeding Essentials training.
- Coordinate training opportunities with the Vermont Lactation Consultants Association (VLCA), Strong Families Vermont, Home Health Agencies, Parent-Child Centers, Children's Integrated Services, Home Visiting, Head Start, EFNEP, AAP VT Chapter and medical care providers.
- Provide bi-monthly trainings for Peer Counselors and WIC Certifiers on breastfeeding and lactation management. Support eligible staff to achieve the IBCLC credential.
- Maintain statewide expansion of peer counseling services.
- Continue to support Peer Counseling programs to maintain trained peers and recruit replacements. Assess the need for bi-lingual peer counselors in the immigrant and refugee communities. Add peers who speak the languages that are currently dominant in our communities.
- In partnership with games and app developer and Tufts University, develop interactive mobile application or website to provide breastfeeding education throughout pregnancy and early weeks postpartum. Application will complement existing breastfeeding support offered by qualified WIC professionals. This project is funded by the THIS-WIC telehealth initiative.

#### **With Community at Large**

- Implement activities identified in the statewide breastfeeding strategic plan.

#### **With Worksites**

- Continue to promote awareness of State and Federal laws and the breastfeeding provisions of the Affordable Care Act.

#### **With Providers**

- Support public health detail visits to OB, Pediatric, and Family Practice provider offices to strengthen the collaboration between WIC and health care providers with the goal of increasing enrollment in WIC prenatally and referring postpartum families to WIC for breastfeeding support.
- Continue to partner with health care providers in the hospitals and community to provide prenatal and postpartum education (virtual and hopefully in person again someday) and support for breastfeeding dyads.

### **Nutrition Services - Risk-Related**

**Goal I: Improve birth outcomes for both mothers and infants.**

**Objective 1:** Increase to at least 38 percent the proportion of women entering WIC during pregnancy who are at a healthy pre-pregnancy weight.

Baseline: 34.4%, data source: Vital Records, Vermont Resident Births between January 1, 2018 and December 31, 2020.

**Reference: Healthy People 2030 Goal MICH–13:** Increase the proportion of women delivering a live birth who had a healthy weight prior to pregnancy to 47.1%

**Activities:**

- Build on Body Positive training from 2020 WIC Conference to deliver effective messages to pregnant people focused on nutrition for energy and health.
- Analyze PNSS data and create data briefs to better understand trends in the health status of the participant population at a regional level.

**Objective 2:** Reduce to 30 percent the proportion of pregnant WIC participants who report smoking during their pregnancies.

**Objective 3:** Increase to 45 percent proportion of pregnant WIC participants who are smoking at WIC entry who accept a referral to a quit resource.

**Reference: Healthy People 2030: Increase abstinence from cigarette smoking among pregnant women — MICH-10.**

Increase abstinence from cigarette smoking among pregnant women to 95.7%.

**Activities:**

- Continue to work with MCH/OLH and the Tobacco program to ensure that all pregnant women who smoke and want to quit are referred to appropriate resources.
- Continue to refer eligible pregnant women to incentive-based smoking cessation programs.

**Goal II: Improve the health status of Vermont WIC participants.**

**Objective 1:** Reduce to not more than 10 percent the proportion of two-, three- and four-year old children that have BMIs above the 95th percentile. Reduce to not more than 10 percent the proportion of two-, three- and four-year old children that have BMI's between the 85th and 95th percentile.

**Reference: Healthy People 2030 Goal NWS–04:** Reduce the proportion of children and adolescents with obesity to 15.5%

**Activities:**

- Continue to work to establish consistent physical activity messages with pediatricians, family practice physicians, other health care and childcare providers.
- Work with districts, partner agencies and programs to incorporate Fit WIC activities into ongoing prevention efforts.
- Participate in the Farm to Early Childhood Coalition and work with childcare providers to promote and coordinate nutrition education options for childcare and provide outreach tools to district staff to promote to WIC to eligible families.
- Analyze PedNSS data to better understand trends in the health status of the participant population at a regional level and study changes in overweight and obesity trends over time by replicating the methodology used in the JAMA article with Vermont specific data.

**Objective 2:** Increase the proportion of fruit and vegetable cash value benefits redeemed each month from 77% to 85%.

**Activities:**

- Promote cross programmatic goals with Vermont Nutrition Education Committee partners, including Hunger Free Vermont and the Vermont Foodbank.
- Promote full redemption of CVB through social media, newsletter, text message and WICShopper App, including ARPA funded CVB increase.