

SECTION 6
Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) and
Community Nutrition Services

Women, Infants, and Children and Community Nutrition

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The WIC program provides high quality nutritional care and food to low income pregnant, breastfeeding, and postpartum women and children up to age five. The program provides milk, cheese, eggs, juice, cereal, dried beans or peas, and peanut butter. Vouchers for iron-fortified formula are also provided.

The Virginia WIC Program promotes breastfeeding:

- as the preferred infant feeding method
- by creating a positive health care setting environment
- by providing information on the health benefits of breastfeeding
- by supporting breastfeeding women through the peer counselor program.

Goals

- To improve infant and family health by making breastfeeding the cultural norm
- To improve the rates of breastfeeding initiation and duration in Virginia's WIC program to meet the National Healthy People 2010 Breastfeeding Objective of:
 - 75% of women breastfeeding at hospital discharge
 - 50% breastfeeding their infants at 6 months and
 - 25% breastfeeding their infants at 1 year of age.

Administration

The breastfeeding promotion of the WIC program is administered through the Division of WIC and Community Nutrition at the Virginia Department of Health.

Breastfeeding Friendly

All clinics in local health departments are monitored to be "Breastfeeding Friendly."

- Positive breastfeeding messages must be included in educational activities materials, and outreach efforts.
- Formula advertisements and cans must not be visible in clinics.
- Clinics must provide a comfortable, discreet area for clients to breastfeed.

Pump Loan Program

Electric breast pumps are loaned and attachment kits given to breastfeeding WIC moms if they need to be away from their babies for long periods of time to establish, maintain, or collect breast milk.

Manual pumps are also given to moms who request it for their personal use and are not

reused.

Other breastfeeding equipment is available for WIC moms if needed.

WIC Breastfeeding Benefits

- Breastfeeding women receive WIC benefits up to one year whereas non-breastfeeding women are eligible for only 6 months.
- Breastfeeding women receive more variety and quantity of food than do non-breastfeeding women.
- Breastfeeding women who exclusively breastfeed (babies receive no formula on WIC) receive a food package which includes tuna fish and carrots.

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