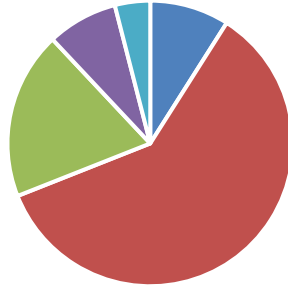


## FFY 2023 Participant Categories



■ Breastfeeding ■ Children ■ Infants ■ Pregnant ■ Not Breastfeeding

**54%** of all infants born in California in 2018 were certified by WIC in their first year!

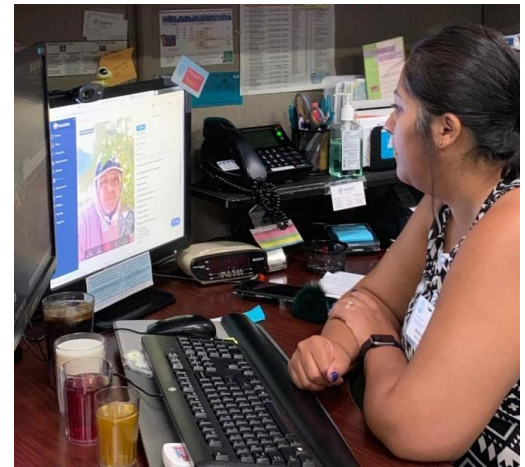
**65%** of eligible individuals participate in the California WIC Program in 2020.

**Nearly 980,000** participants were served by CA WIC in September 2023



## Modernizing WIC Shopping

Families now have an electronic WIC card and shopping app to purchase healthy WIC foods, such as fruits and vegetables, milk and cheese, eggs, beans, tofu and many more foods. California WIC participants purchased a total of \$929,529,877 million in groceries in 2023 from local retail grocers. Efforts are underway at USDA and in pilot projects to expand online shopping for WIC. During the pandemic and with ongoing high costs of living, WIC foods help young families stretch their earnings.

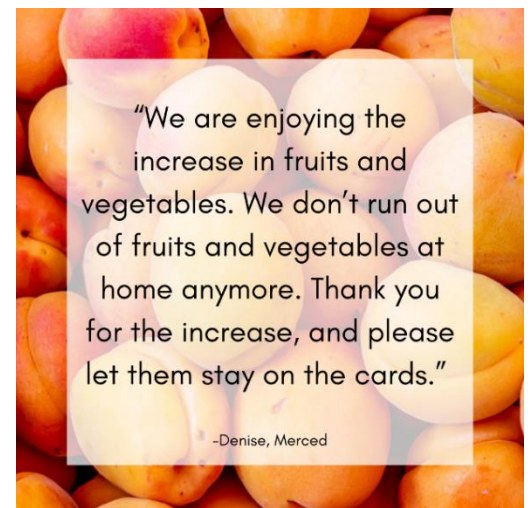


## Technology

A very popular option for WIC families has been the ability to use a variety of ways to access WIC support and services including interactive texting, videoconferencing, online education, phone and email.

## Fruit and Veggies With WIC

In recent years the WIC fruit and vegetable benefit was bumped from \$9-11 per month per participant to its current level of \$26-52 per month per participant. The current levels reflect expert recommendations from the National Academies of Science Engineering and Medicine and have increased the amount of fruit and vegetables WIC kids eat on a daily basis. WIC participants have been very appreciative of the increased fruit and vegetable benefit, saying that they are now able to provide their families with fresh produce throughout the entire month!



## WIC Serves Military Families

In California, there are 10 WIC clinics located on or near military bases. WIC benefits can also be used at commissaries - in September 2023, WIC benefits spent at commissaries amounted to \$131,427 spent by 2,030 WIC families. All twenty-three active commissaries re-deemed WIC benefits during the same period.



## WIC Lactation Support in California

Lactation support is a core part of WIC services. While 94% of parents initiate lactation in the hospital, with 70% exclusively using human milk, various challenges make it difficult to continue. Working with hospitals, community health centers, and employers, WIC uses multiple strategies to support lactation initiation and duration. All staff are trained in lactation support, and high-quality breast pumps are provided for problems getting started and returning to work and school. Participants have access to culturally and linguistically competent peer counselors, lactation educators and consultants.



## California Farmer's Markets and WIC

With the new electronic WIC cards, efforts are underway to support shopping at Farmers' Markets. The year-round monthly fruit and vegetable benefits that can be used at grocery stores can also be used at farmers' markets, and extra seasonal benefits only for farmers' markets.

