



United States Department of Agriculture



January 18, 2024

Dear Faith and Community Leaders,

On behalf of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), we write to highlight the vital role that the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) plays to support the health and well-being of moms, young children, and babies nationwide. **We firmly believe that no child should go hungry in America and we ask that you** amplify the importance of WIC among your faith-based community partners and congregations.

About WIC

WIC remains one of the nation's most successful, cost-effective public health nutrition programs and serves nearly half of our nation's babies, along with millions of young children up to age 5 and their mothers. WIC provides healthy food, nutrition education, breastfeeding support, along with critical health and social services referrals. WIC participants are also more likely to have a more nutritious diet and [better health outcomes](#). Participation in WIC is tied to fewer infant deaths, fewer premature births, increased birth weights, and lower health care costs.

WIC is a vital tool towards advancing health equity and food and [nutrition security](#) and is a key component in the Biden-Harris Administration's [National Strategy](#) on Hunger, Nutrition, and Health. The Biden-Harris Administration remains committed to providing America's children with an opportunity to live the healthiest life possible. Thanks to the American Rescue Plan Act, the USDA Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) has been able to target federal dollars to prioritize [WIC outreach](#), improve the WIC shopping experience, invest in and diversify the WIC workforce, and enhance technology and service delivery. As WIC participation continues to increase, the Biden-Harris Administration has asked Congress to fully [fund WIC](#) at the level needed to support this increased participation.

To learn more about WIC, please visit <https://www.fns.usda.gov/wic> or [reach out and we can connect you to local partners to learn more about its impact directly in your community](#).

How YOU can help

To maximize WIC's reach faith and community leaders can:

- Spread the word about [WIC](#) and where to [find](#) local WIC offices through your daily interactions with your community and through your formal sermons, homilies, or other speaking engagements;
- Get involved with local community partners serving WIC participants (and we can help connect you if needed!); and
- Connect where possible with WIC Community Innovation and Outreach (CIAO) Project [Grantees](#) in your communities (we can help make the connection if helpful!).

Each of you have an important voice and role as we work together toward ensuring that moms, young children, and babies have the food and nutrition they need to live a healthy life.

Thanks for all the work that you do and for considering ways you can help us maximize WIC's reach.

Sincerely,



Rev. Dr. Que English
Director, Center for Faith-based and
Neighborhood Partnerships
U.S. Department of Health and Human
Services (HHS)



Samantha Joseph
*Director, Center for Faith-Based and
Neighborhood Partnerships*
U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA)

Additional Background:

- Following Topline Budget Agreement, Congress Must Act to Fully Fund WIC in 2024: <https://www.usda.gov/media/press-releases/2024/01/11/following-topline-budget-agreement-congress-must-act-fully-fund-wic>
- Congress Must Act to Fully Fund WIC in 2024, Or Risk Nutrition Security for Millions of Women, Infants and Children: <https://www.usda.gov/media/press-releases/2023/12/13/congress-must-act-fully-fund-wic-2024-or-risk-nutrition-security>
- WIC is Vital – but Vastly Underutilized, Research Finds - Study underscores the need for Congress to continue bipartisan commitment to fully fund WIC: <https://www.fns.usda.gov/news-item/usda-0226.23>