



NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release:
April 11, 2011

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WIC Program Announces New Income Levels for Eligibility

BISMARCK, N.D. – Income eligibility guidelines for the North Dakota Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children (WIC) have increased, according to Colleen Pearce, WIC Program director with the North Dakota Department of Health.

Effective April 1, 2011, a family of four can earn up to \$3,446 each month (or \$796 each week for the household) and still meet income eligibility requirements.

Funded by the U.S. Department of Agriculture, the WIC Program has improved children's health, growth and development and prevented health problems for over 30 years. WIC benefits include quality nutrition and breastfeeding education, access to other services and monthly foods rich in calcium, iron and protein to help bolster the health of pregnant, postpartum and breastfeeding women; babies; and children younger than 5 years. WIC foods are designed to fit the nutrition needs of each WIC participant and include only milk, eggs, cheese, peanut butter, 100 percent fruit juice, beans, whole grains and cereals and fresh fruits and vegetables. WIC supports breastfeeding as the optimal way to feed infants, but infants who are not breastfeeding receive iron-fortified formula and older infants also receive baby food.

“Studies show that the proper nutrition WIC children receive helps them enter school ready to learn,” said Colleen Pearce, director of the Department of Health's WIC Program. “WIC is a cost-effective, sound investment that helps ensure the health of our children.”

To qualify for WIC, families must reside in North Dakota, meet the income requirements and have a nutritional or medical need for WIC services, such as anemia or inadequate diet. Need is determined by measuring the child's or woman's height and weight, performing a hemoglobin test, and taking his or her health and dietary history. To find out if they qualify, North Dakotans can call their local WIC agency or the state WIC office at 1.800.472.2286. For more information, contact Colleen Pearce, North Dakota Department of Health, at 701.328.2496.

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