

State of Louisiana

Department of Health and Hospitals

Office of Public Health

Center for Preventive Health

Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children

SERVICE SPECIFICATIONS

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I. INTRODUCTION

A. Overview, Purpose or Need

The Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children, (WIC), mandated by Congress in Public Law 95-627, is specifically designed to provide a nutritious food package and nutrition education to eligible individuals. The Program is intended to serve as an adjunct to ongoing preventative healthcare. During critical times of growth and development, good nutrition in combination with good healthcare result in preventing health problems and improving health status.

The WIC Program provides supplemental foods, nutrition education and counseling, breastfeeding support and promotion, and health and social service referrals to categorically and income eligible women, infants, and children less than five (5) years of age found to be at nutritional risk.

In Louisiana, WIC is administered by the Louisiana Department of Health and Hospitals, Office of Public Health, the Nutrition Services Section. The WIC Program operates through parish health units and contracted local agencies, selected by the State Agency in accordance with federal regulations. As the administrator of the program, the State Agency has developed a policy and procedure manual. It was written to clarify and interpret all federal regulations and State Agency policies. All parish health units and local contract agencies are expected to operate within these guidelines.

B. Description of the Goals of the Service

The WIC Program is cost effective in protecting or improving the health and nutritional status of low income women, infants and children less than five (5) years of age. Goals and objectives include: improved birth outcomes and savings in healthcare; improved diet and health; improved infant feeding practices through breastfeeding; improved immunization rates and access to regular source of medical care; improved cognitive development; reduction of obesity; and improved preconception nutritional status.

C. Description of the Target Population to be Served

The target population must reside in Louisiana, be categorically and income eligible and have a nutritional risk.

Pregnant, breastfeeding (up to one year postpartum), and non-breastfeeding (up to six months postpartum) women, infants and children less than five (5) years of age are categorically eligible.

Income eligibility is set at 185% of the Federal Poverty Level (FPL). Reciprocal eligibility is income eligibility provided for those eligible for the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) formerly the Food Stamp Program, Medicaid, and Temporary Assistance for Needy Families or Temporary Assistance for needy Families and Foster Children.

A nutritional risk can be medically based (such as, but not limited to, anemia, poor growth, underweight, maternal age, history of pregnancy complications or poor pregnancy outcomes, substance abuse) or diet-based (such as, but not limited to, inadequate or inappropriate dietary patterns that may impair or endanger health). Risk factors may also include being homeless or a foster child.

II. SCOPE OF WORK

The scope of work encompasses the following tasks and responsibilities:

A. Service Activities (Minimum and /or Mandatory Tasks and Responsibilities)

The following activities are performed in accordance with the Louisiana WIC program policies and procedures and the USDA Food Nutrition Services (FNS) rules and regulations:

- 1. Certifications, Eligibility and Coordination of Services**
 - a. Determine eligibility and certify eligible applicants for the WIC Program. Process applications within the 10 (for pregnant women) to 20 (for infants & children) day processing standard.
 - b. Maintain confidentiality of information obtained from applicants and participants.
 - c. Maintain on file and have available for review, audit, and evaluation all documentation on certification, income verification used, and specific criteria used to determine nutritional risk. Retain these records for four years as required.
 - d. Provide information on other health related and public assistance programs. When appropriate, refer to such programs.

- 2. Nutrition Education**
 - a. Provide nutrition education counseling, classes, breastfeeding support and promotion to participants.
 - b. Follow the Nutrition Educational Program provided by the LA WIC State Agency.
 - c. Provide client accessibility to services from permanent and/or satellite sites, which may include extended hours of operation such as lunch hours, evenings and/or weekends to ensure accessibility.

- 3. Food Delivery/Food Instrument Accountability and Control**
 - a. Provide food instruments (FIs) upon completion of certification. Grant/award FIs up to three (3) months dependent upon assessed needs during the certification period.
 - b. Control and provide accountability for the receipt, issuance of FIs. Further, provide secure storage of unissued FIs.

4. Civil Rights

- a. Comply with civil rights requirements, handle complaints and provide for fair hearing procedures.
- b. Utilize information provided by the LA WIC State Agency to assist applicants and participants with limited English proficiency (LEP).
- c. Utilize information provided by the LA WIC State Agency to assist Hearing-Impaired applicants and participants.

B. Management Requirements (Minimum/Mandatory Requirements)

1. Agency Staffing

- a. Employ and maintain the minimum staffing levels to provide effective and efficient services to WIC participants.
- b. At program initial start-up with a caseload of up to 375 participants, the contractor shall employ a minimum of two individuals at full time equivalent. Staffing shall be incrementally increased as caseload increases to ensure minimum staffing of three full time equivalents for a caseload of 376 to 1000; four full time equivalents for a caseload of 1001 to 1500; and five full time equivalents for a caseload of 1501 to 2000.
- c. The responsibilities of the two individuals employed to initiate WIC Program services shall include the duties of a Competent Professional Authority (CPA) and a clerk/nutrition educator. When the CPA is not a nutritionist, the local agency must also employ a nutritionist who meets the qualifications of a Public Health Nutritionist 3 as defined by the Louisiana Department of Civil Service to provide high risk nutrition counseling.
- d. A WIC Coordinator and a Breastfeeding Coordinator must be designated. Ideally these duties should be assigned to a nutritionist, but at a minimum these duties must be assigned to a CPA.

2. Administrative

- a. Provide secure American Disabilities Act (ADA) compliant facilities for office, clinic, storage space and restroom of sufficient square footage to accommodate the proposed program's equipment, computers, furnishings, materials, staff and participants and which will provide the privacy needed to ensure client confidentiality.
- b. Manage assigned caseload.

- c. Complete State Agency provided training(s) and manuals to achieve the knowledge, abilities and skills needed to adequately perform the responsibilities of the position. Ensure that required staff members attend mandated WIC training/updates sponsored by the state agency.
- d. Maintain the WIC Public Health Automated Management Enabler (PHAME) system by complying with all requirements and specifications.
- e. Abide by the USDA Non-discrimination Policy Statement: "The USDA prohibits discrimination in its programs on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age or disability" which is to be posted in all offices and in all languages appropriate to the local population, including alternative means of communication (Braille, large print, audiotape, etc.).

3. Quality Assurance and Evaluation Specifications

Conform to all requirements for established standards of service including, but not limited to:

- a. Nutrition service standards.
- b. Plan of quality assurance, which includes staff commitment and understanding of the Program protocols and standards.
- c. Appropriate methods of evaluation of all program components.
- d. A mechanism for feedback from participants.
- e. Review of evaluation results and follow-up.
- f. Proper training and continuing education for staff.
- g. Complete self-management evaluations.

4. Performance Measurements

- a. Meet goals and objectives for each year of the contract as established by the LA WIC State Agency.
- b. To provide facilities and staff to:
 - Recruit potentially eligible individuals to apply for WIC program participation
 - Determine eligibility for program participation
 - Conduct nutrition risk assessment
 - Provide nutrition education
 - Develop nutrition care plans
 - Issue food instruments for use in exchange for supplemental foods
 - Train and monitor WIC vendors (grocery stores)

5. Coordination of Services

The applicant shall demonstrate the capability to coordinate services with other agencies and resources in the community. Priority will be given to clinics co-located with healthcare centers. Any written agreements necessary for an agency in order to provide consideration for experience as defined above shall be submitted with this proposal.

III. FINANCIAL PROCESS

Contractor shall follow financial goals and objectives for each year of the contract as established by the LA WIC State Agency.

A. Reporting Requirements for Program and Fiscal Data

1. Submit accurate reports and information to the State Agency in accordance with timelines and format, including ad-hoc, monthly, quarterly and annual reports.
2. Maintain appropriate client, fiscal, statistical and administrative records pertaining to operations and make them readily accessible to authorized Federal and State representatives upon request.

B Cost Reimbursement

Contract agencies are reimbursed by the LA WIC State Agency for actual allowable expenses not to exceed the negotiated contract agreement. A fee schedule for monthly reimbursement is as follows:

Number of Participants per Month	Rate of Pay per Participant
monthly participation X	\$10.00

This fee covers administrative and operational program expenses. WIC mandated travel, nutrition education and related expenses are eligible for reimbursement pending approval by the LA WIC State Agency.

The WIC State Agency is responsible for providing all necessary forms, food instruments, training, technical assistance and procedure manuals. The LA WIC State Agency also provides clinic computers, lab measuring equipment, Magnetic Ink Character Recognition (MICR) printers, label printers and maintenance and is responsible for all food instrument reconciliation.