

October 16, 2020

MCHD receives grant to work on WIC facility in Citronelle

MOBILE, Ala. — The United States Department of Agricultural has announced the Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) special supplemental nutrition program managed through Mobile County Health Department (MCHD) has been awarded a general infrastructure award of \$228,572. The funds will be used to renovate the WIC facility located adjacent to the Citronelle Health Center.

“This project is an opportunity to provide the participants of Citronelle a separate clinic location in which to conduct WIC business in a healthy environment with improved privacy,” said Amanda Arnold, the District Nutrition Director for MCHD.

Arnold said the Citronelle WIC staff currently conducts its program in the same building as the Citronelle Health Clinic.

“The waiting area is not large enough to accommodate both clinic patients and WIC participants,” Arnold said. “The Citronelle WIC Clinic would like to offer its participants an independent building space to receive the WIC program’s nutrition education and food benefits.”

The three-person WIC staff provides services to the northern Mobile County community two days each week with an average caseload of 490. By renovating an existing building, the Citronelle WIC staff will be able to provide services in a healthier environment away from ill patients.

“Currently because of space constraints, additional appointments cannot be scheduled as there is no office space for another staff member,” Arnold said. “We believe that renovating this building will improve the current WIC experience and allow for expansion of the WIC program in the future.”

Participants in the WIC program receive free nutrition education and breastfeeding peer counseling support. In addition, participants have the option to receive up to three months of nutritious food benefits at a time for each qualified family member. Food benefits are redeemable at WIC-authorized stores throughout Alabama and are now issued by the way of electronic food benefits statewide.

WIC participants must have both a limited income and a nutritional need. Families who receive Medicaid, SNAP (formerly known as Food Stamps), or Family Assistance (formerly known as TANF or Temporary Assistance to Needy Families) already meet the income qualifications for WIC. Even families who do not qualify for these programs may be eligible for WIC because of its higher income limits.

MCHD’s Office of Nutrition Services manages the local WIC program. A monthly average of 12,473 participants received WIC food instruments during 2019. MCHD estimates \$10,199,529.18 WIC food dollars were spent in Mobile County last year.

To qualify, a person must meet the income guidelines, be a resident of Alabama, and have been seen by a health professional at the WIC clinic. Options to apply remotely are available because of COVID-19. For more information, call 251-690-8829 or visit www.mchd.org and look for WIC under the “Services” tab.