



NEWS RELEASE

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April 15, 2016

Income guidelines to apply for WIC program set to change

MOBILE, Alabama — A notice announcing revised Income Eligibility Guidelines for the Women, Infants and Children (WIC) special supplemental nutrition program was published in the Federal Register last month. The adjusted income eligibility guidelines are used by state agencies in determining the income eligibility of persons applying to participate in the WIC program.

The Alabama Department of Public Health will implement the new guidelines on Monday, April 18. State agencies must use the revised income guidelines at the same time they implement revised income eligibility guidelines for the Medicaid program.

On January 25, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) published its annual update of the poverty guidelines [81 FR 4036]. The HHS guidelines are used by a number of Federal programs, including WIC and the Medicaid Program, as the basis for determining and updating program income eligibility limits. To be eligible on the basis of income, applicants' gross income (i.e. before taxes are withheld) must fall at or below 185 percent of the U.S. Poverty Income Guidelines. For Alabama residents, the guidelines are as follows:

Family Size *	Annual	Month	Week
1	\$21,978	\$1,832	\$423
2	\$29,637	\$2,470	\$570
3	\$37,296	\$3,108	\$718
4	\$44,955	\$3,747	\$865
5	\$52,614	\$4,385	\$1,012

*** For a pregnant woman, count each unborn baby in the family size.**

To be eligible for WIC, the person must be either a pregnant woman, a breastfeeding woman, a woman who just had a baby, or an infant or a child under 5 years of age.

Pregnant women and children 1 to 5 years old may get milk, eggs, cheese, juice, cereal, whole grain bread or brown rice, beans or peanut butter, and fresh fruits and vegetables. Breastfeeding women may get all these foods plus canned tuna or salmon and extra milk, cheese and eggs. Infants may get infant formula if not fully breastfed, and infant cereal, fruits and vegetables.

The Mobile County Health Department's Office of Nutrition Services manages the local WIC program. A monthly average of 13,203 participants received WIC food instruments during 2015. MCHD estimates \$10,728,387.26 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. For more information, call 251-690-8829 or visit <http://mchd.org> and look for WIC under the "Services" tab.