



COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA

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MEMO

TO: VA WIC Local Agencies
FROM: VA WIC State Agency
DATE: September 29, 2023
SUBJECT: GUIDANCE ON VA WIC OPERATIONS AFTER SEPTEMBER 30, 2023

This memo serves to guide VA WIC Local Agencies on the plan of action to continue VA WIC Program operations in the event of a lapse in federal funding on October 1st, 2023. The VA Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) program is one of the most effective maternal child health programs and serves about 125,000 women, infants, and children in the Commonwealth of Virginia. VA WIC is committed to sustaining its improved program access in the past year and avoiding the perception of a lack of access to WIC services in the coming weeks as this has an impact on community confidence and long-term sustainability of the WIC Program.

VDH is working closely with our federal partners to ensure continued WIC Program operations on October 1. The VA WIC State Agency will use all available resources to ensure sustained operation of WIC after September 30, 2023. The US Department of Agriculture (USDA) Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) provided states with the following preliminary guidance. Please note that federal guidance will continue to evolve as the situation progresses.

On Sunday, October 1, 2023, FNS plans to recover all estimated funds remaining FY 2023 funds from WIC Local agencies for reallocation starting on October 2, 2023.

- While this differs from USDA's typical recovery process, this recovery will be much faster, ensuring that these funds are available for immediate use in FY2024.
- Funds will then be reallocated according to a formula that considers the State's average monthly expenses. This approach ensures a substantial amount of FY 2024 funding is available to state agencies in early October.

The VA WIC State Agency is providing Local Agencies with the following guidance:

- Preliminary funds will be allocated according to a formula that considers the local agency's monthly expenditures using FY 2023 information. This approach ensures a substantial amount of FY 2024 funding is available to local agencies in early October. To support the sustainability of the program in these times, local agencies are expected to

prioritize essential WIC expenses and practice cost containment measures in the first few months of FY 2024.

- VA WIC will establish a weekly situational update call with all WIC Local Agency Directors until the FY2024 funding situation is resolved.
- VA WIC State Agency plans to allocate additional recoveries and contingency funding to local agencies as needed if the shutdown continues.
- The Breastfeeding Peer Counselor Grant will not be affected by the shutdown as this grant has an expiration of FFY 2025. Breastfeeding Peer Counselors will not be eligible for furloughs.

We will continue to work with you to identify any funding issues and communicate VA WIC's needs to USDA to continue to support the VA WIC Program and its participants.

Thank you for your continued support and dedication to serving Virginia residents. Please extend our appreciation to your team members and organization.