



# CLINIC LAGNIAPPE

LOUISIANA WIC's Clinic Staff Newsletter



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## IMPORTANT DATE:

**December 2, 2021**  
**Anti-Hunger Summit**

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## Hurricane Ida – WIC Disaster Assistance

### LA WIC Staff Response and Support During Hurricane IDA

By: Jennifer Nicklas, MS-MPH, RDN, Director, Bureau of Nutrition Services

Hurricane Ida made landfall on the 16th anniversary of Hurricane Katrina, and the Bureau of Nutrition Services (BONS) staff recognize that this made the event more stressful and traumatic for many of our Louisiana WIC clinic staff and residents. We recognize how difficult the past year has been. In addition to entering the second year of the coronavirus pandemic, we experienced three hurricanes, a tropical storm and a severe winter weather storm that closed down most of the state for several days in February.

We see how hard you are working during these stressful times and the dedication you have for our Louisiana WIC families. In addition to worrying about your and your family's health and wellness during a global pandemic, many of you now have the added challenge of rebuilding your homes and/or communities. The Bureau of Nutrition Services staff cannot thank you enough for your continued dedication and service. Our Louisiana WIC families also agree: We have received over 4,000 survey responses from our participants! These surveys consistently tell us the same thing: the families you serve daily are so grateful for your dedication and service. Thank you for your kindness and for being the face of our program.

We are quickly approaching the 2021 holiday season. Our hope for our LA WIC clinic staff is that each and every one of you can take some time to relax, recharge, and spend quality time with your friends and family.

## State Agency Support During Ida Recovery

### WIC Pop-up at Winn Dixie in Luling

By: Celia Bridgeforth, MPA, RDN, LDN  
Nutrition Education/ Exempt Formula Program Manager

In response to the Hurricane Ida disaster, the Louisiana WIC state agency staff organized and operated a pop-up WIC clinic in Luling. The pop-up WIC clinic was housed at the local Winn-Dixie to accommodate local and surrounding WIC clients affected by Hurricane Ida. State agency staff members Kate Andrus, Celia Bridgeforth and Barbara Cerniauskas operated the clinic and provided disaster response information to WIC clients and local residents. Twenty-six families received their WIC benefits and enjoyed the convenience of immediately redeeming their benefits at Winn-Dixie. Louisiana WIC state agency will like to thank Ray Price, Regional Nutritionist, and the Winn Dixie store management for assisting in the organization of the pop-up WIC clinic. For information on Louisiana WIC Hurricane Ida disaster response, visit [www.louisianawic.org](http://www.louisianawic.org).

### Verification of Certification During Hurricane Ida

By: LaNaya Carter, Program Monitor

The Verification of Certification (VOC) process allows WIC participants to transfer from one service delivery area to another, which includes transfers between states. In the days following Hurricane Ida, many WIC families living in areas impacted by the storm relocated to other states. Neighboring states were ready to assist Louisiana families with obtaining WIC benefits, and worked with State Agency and clinics to obtain VOCs.



## NEW! Disaster Information on Louisiana WIC Website

Check out the new Disaster Information webpage on [LouisianaWIC.Org](http://LouisianaWIC.Org), created during Hurricane Ida in an effort to provide information and assistance to participants affected by the storm. The new disaster webpage will be a hub for disaster and emergency information, including those that impact clinic services.

Visit the LA WIC Disaster Information webpage:  
<https://louisianawic.org/la-wic-disaster-information/>



#### WIC Services in a Disaster - FAQ

Review the Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) for more information about WIC Services in a Disaster.



#### Using Benefits - In State or Out-of-State

Learn more about transferring WIC benefits to another state during a disaster or how to use benefits in another LA parish.

## COVID-19 Vaccinations for Children

The USDA has asked LA WIC staff to remind parents that the COVID-19 vaccine is the best way to keep children ages 5 and older safe from COVID:

1. The long-term effects of a pediatric COVID case can be serious and last months; the most common side-effect of the COVID vaccine is a sore arm. The best way to protect children against COVID-19, including the Delta variant, is to get them vaccinated.
2. Like other pediatric vaccines, the COVID-19 vaccine was thoroughly tested.
3. If you have questions, talk to a pediatrician, school nurse, or another trusted healthcare provider about your child and the COVID-19 vaccine, call the Vaccine Hotline at 1-855-453-0774 or go to [covidvaccine.la.gov](http://covidvaccine.la.gov).

# Did You Know?

By: Patty Abraham, MPH, RDN, CNS, CDCES, LDN Program Monitor

## LA WIC Pre-Application

Louisiana WIC launched a pre-application in March 2021 to assist potential participants with applying for WIC. The LA WIC pre-application is available on the [Louisiana WIC website](#), and to date, over 4,000 pre-applications entries have been submitted. Submitted applications are received by State Agency staff and sorted based on the applicant parish. Regional Nutritionists receive a weekly email of the submitted applications for their regions, and forward the information to local clinics. Local clinics contact the applicants to set up appointments and complete the WIC eligibility process.

**LAWIC Fun Fact: The pre-application webpage is the 3<sup>rd</sup> most frequently visited page on LouisianaWIC.org.**

## Customer Satisfaction Survey

In June 2021, LA WIC initiated customer satisfaction surveys. The surveys are distributed to families that have selected SMS (text) or email as their preferred contact method, and are sent out the week after a clinic visit/food benefit issuance. More than 4,000 participants have completed the survey. Additionally, in October 2021, the survey questions were expanded to include questions about food preferences and familiarity with WIC apps and tools.

### Survey Highlights

**When asked why a clinic visit was “good,” participants shared the following:**

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*“Quick and informative.”*

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*“They did everything on time and didn’t have a long wait.”*

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*“People that waited on me was very professional and very nice.”*

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*“I was able to check in right away and didn’t have to wait long.”*

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*“They made sure I had everything I needed before leaving.”*

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*“I made a mistake on the date and time and the ladies still fit me in to make sure the newborn was able to get the formula WIC card.”*

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## Staff Updates

### WIC Apps

Louisiana WIC offers two FREE phone apps to help participants with WIC shopping – *WICShopper App and Bnft App*.

Participants completing the Customer Satisfaction Survey are asked questions regarding their knowledge of available apps, and if they would like to receive more information about the apps. Respondents who request more information receive the newly created [WIC Apps Flyer](#) that is also available on the LA WIC website. The flyer provides information on how to use the apps and a comparison of the app offerings.

Please share the app flyer with participants to help them learn more about using the apps for WIC shopping and managing WIC benefits.

**Your WIC Shopping Just Got Easier!**

Louisiana WIC offers FREE phone apps and websites to help make your WIC shopping easy.

**Available Apps**

The WICShopper App and Bnft App are available for download from the App Store and Google Play.

| APP        | Show WIC Allowed Foods | Show YOUR WIC Shopping List | Food Benefit Release | Fruit and Veggie Release | Recipes and Other Tips |
|------------|------------------------|-----------------------------|----------------------|--------------------------|------------------------|
| Bnft       | ✓                      | ✓                           | ✓                    | ✓                        |                        |
| WICShopper | ✓                      |                             |                      |                          | ✓                      |

**How To Use the Apps**

The WICShopper app makes WIC shopping easy and fun by using a product scanner to verify WIC eligibility as you shop. This app also includes food lists, recipes, and other great resources. You can put in your zip code and the WICShopper app will display an up-to-date list of WIC vendors closest to your location. It is available in English and Spanish.

1. Install WICShopper from your app store.  
 2. Get the Location in your WIC Agency.  
 3. Scan products using the app to verify WIC eligibility as you shop.  
 4. View your receipt, make, acknowledge for the app.

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WICShopper



Bnft

## Contract Clinic Corner

By: Celia Bridgeforth, MPA, RDN, LDN

Nutrition Education/Exempt Formula Program Manager

### Exempt Formula

The State Agency thanks you for your continued dedication to our WIC participants. To continue to help us best serve you and our participants, please see the following updates for the exempt formula packing slip and additional requirements of the agencies.

**For all WIC exempt formula orders, Louisiana WIC Contract Agencies exempt formula packing slips are no longer required to be submitted to the State Agency for the formula shipment.**

- Contract agencies will be responsible for the maintenance of files for exempt formula invoices, damaged and/or missing goods, credits due to damaged and/or missing goods, and all other documentation and information pertaining to the goods received.
- Contract agencies must file a claim with the formula company within two (2) business days to receive replacement product or a credit and notify the State Agency via email to [LAWICFinance@la.gov](mailto:LAWICFinance@la.gov) of any damaged and/or missing goods and credits for proper processing of payments.
  - The email subject line must include the WIC Contract Agency name, site name, formula company name and vendor invoice number (example: Healthy Ways WIC Bayou City Nutricia Invoice #9182736).
  - The email should include if the items were damaged and/or missing, if a credit is being issued for the items and an attachment of the scanned documentation.
- The State Agency will send monthly reminders to all contract agencies for the submission of invoicing errors, and the contract agency staff will have three (3) business days to respond to the request.
- The State Agency will be implementing audit procedures quarterly to ensure proper documentation for the ordering and receiving of these products. The State Agency will conduct a random sampling and the contract agency will be asked to provide supporting documentation for paid invoices.

If you have any questions or concerns about these requirements, please do not hesitate to email [LAWICFinance@la.gov](mailto:LAWICFinance@la.gov) or call the State Agency Business Operations Section at 504-568-8229.

## Clinic Spotlight

### Shining a Light on Clinic Activities

By: LaNaya Carter, MPH, BONS Program Monitor

#### Crescent City WIC - Maternal Health Diabetes Prevention Project

Crescent City WIC is participating in a Maternal Health Diabetes Prevention Project being implemented by Tulane School of Public Health and Tropical Medicine. The principal investigators for the project are Dr. Kirsten Dorans and Dr. Emily Harville. The project will include piloting a diabetes prevention program within a WIC clinic setting. The evidence-based diabetes prevention program is a lifestyle intervention focused on diet and physical activity. WIC Nutritionists will deliver the diabetes prevention program to WIC participants who meet the criteria for the project (ex. gestational diabetes mellitus). Additionally, the project includes an Advisory Committee that will provide input on factors related to gestational diabetes, the diabetes prevention program pilot and the project’s progress. We look forward to sharing more about the project over the coming months.

## Breastfeeding Maps

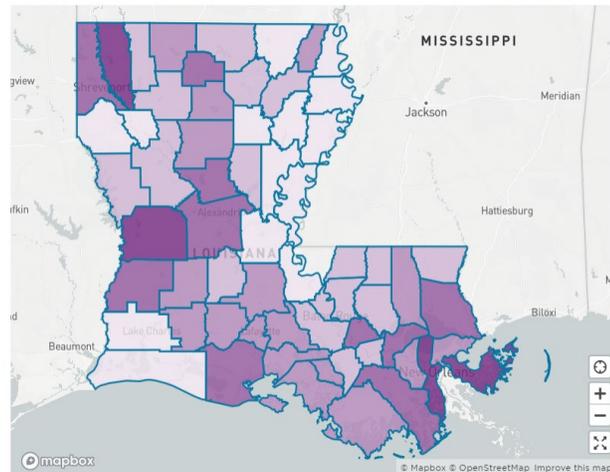
By: Kate Andrus, MPH, RD, LDN, CLC  
Deputy Nutrition Operations Manager

BONS recently collaborated with Tulane School of Public Health and Tropical Medicine to provide a Maternal and Child Health (MCH) practicum. Adrian Garcia, Tulane MCH Intern, utilized [My Sidewalk](#) to develop breastfeeding maps for Louisiana WIC. The breastfeeding maps provide data by participant status – *fully breastfeeding, partially breastfeeding, and fully formula fed*. To view the interactive maps, click the links below.

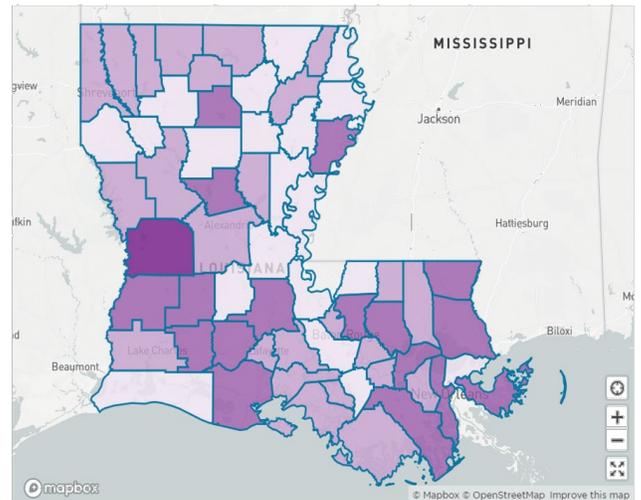
#### Louisiana Breastfeeding Maps on My Sidewalk

- [Fully Breastfeeding Map](#)
- [Partially Breastfeeding Map](#)
- [Fully Formula Fed Map](#)

BFDLA\_2020 Partially BF Layer



BFDLA\_2020 Fully BF Layer



About My Sidewalk **mySidewalk**

My Sidewalk offers data tools that allow users to track key community indicators, answer questions about community progress, and create reports and data dashboards that drive awareness and action.

## Anti-Hunger Summit

### Addressing Hunger in Louisiana

In partnership with Feeding Louisiana, the Louisiana Department of Health Office of Public Health's Bureau of Nutrition Services will convene partners working in the food security, anti-hunger and emergency feeding sectors to "share information, expertise and resources in an effort to coordinate public, private and charitable sectors to abate hunger in Louisiana".

We value the perspective of WIC Clinic Staff on how we can appropriately address the hunger crisis in Louisiana now and in the future. If you are interested in participating in the Anti-Hunger Summit, please consult with your clinic supervisor about attending the event.

To learn more about the legislation that calls on the Anti-Hunger Summit, view the 2021 Louisiana Regular Session [Senate Resolution Number 77](#) by State Sen. Fred Mills.

**Feeding Louisiana** provides a unified voice for Louisiana's hungry by providing short-term food relief while seeking long-term solutions to hunger through advocacy, education, and leadership. Feeding Louisiana is made up of the five Feeding America member food banks in Louisiana, serving all 64 parishes through a network of more than 900 community- and faith-based organizations. To learn more about Feeding Louisiana visit <https://www.feedinglouisiana.org>.

### Anti-Hunger Summit

Thursday, December 2, 2021  
9:00 am to 4:00 pm

### VIRTUAL EVENT

[Click here](#)  
to register for the  
Anti-Hunger Summit on  
Eventbrite

*WIC Clinic Staff  
consult with your supervisor  
about participating in the summit*

For more information,  
please contact:  
Jennifer Taylor  
Bureau of Nutrition Services  
Phone: 225-219-2183  
[Jennifer.Taylor3@la.gov](mailto:Jennifer.Taylor3@la.gov)

Thanks for making the first volume of the Clinic Lagniappe newsletter a success.  
See you in 2022!



### Join Our Mailing List

This newsletter will automatically be sent to Regional Nutritionists to share with WIC Clinic Managers. WIC Staff may also sign-up to receive this newsletter directly by registering. If you would like to join the **WIC Clinic Lagniappe** mailing list, [click here](#).

### We Want Your Feedback!

We'd love to hear from you! Send us your thoughts, comments, and suggestions.

[CONTACT US](#)

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