



CLINIC LAGNIAPPE

Louisiana WIC's Clinic Staff Newsletter



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IMPORTANT DATES

Get ready to mark your calendars for important dates in 2022. See page 2 for more information on trainings and events scheduled for this year.

WELCOME TO A NEW WIC YEAR!

Exciting News for Louisiana WIC in 2022

By Leslie Lewis, Nutrition Operations Manager, Bureau of Nutrition Services

Welcome to Volume 2 of our Clinic Lagniappe! We created this newsletter to share information and spotlight the great work happening in Louisiana WIC clinics by thoughtful and dedicated staff in all regions of the state. Since the transition to LAWIN and WIC EBT in 2019 and the Gateway in 2020, Louisiana WIC has been continuing to modernize and adapt to the changing needs and demands of our WIC participants in various ways while also hoping to appeal to a broader base of participation to help increase our participation rates.

In 2021, the Bnft app allowed WIC participants to check their benefit balance, which an overwhelming amount of participants requested in the various participants surveys that we conducted. In 2021, Louisiana WIC also launched an online pre-application tool on the LA WIC website. This feature continues to be popular without any promotion; each week we receive about 100 pre-applications. Thank you to all of the staff that follow up with the individuals that complete the pre-application to schedule their initial certification appointment!

In 2022 Louisiana WIC will continue to take advantage of technology to enhance the WIC experience. In January, we are launching the Pacify app to connect Louisiana WIC participants to on-demand virtual lactation support 24/7, which seems more important now than ever before. Pacify will serve as a level of support when a Breastfeeding Peer Counselor or WIC clinic staff is not available. You can read more about Pacify on page 6 of this issue.

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Other 2022 technology projects include working on a data-sharing project to provide more targeted outreach to our adjunctively eligible families, as well as continuing to provide more enhancements to the louisianawic.org website, including a chat bot that can answer many basic questions to reduce calls to the clinics and provide immediate answers to participants' questions after hours. For National Nutrition Month there are many special activities planned including a special celebration of our Louisiana WIC RDN's and the important role they plan in WIC. Finally, a major focus of Louisiana WIC State Agency in 2022 is health equity. This issue spotlights some of the important health equity work happening in our WIC clinics.

Thank you again to all WIC staff for your continued dedication to our WIC families. May 2022 be one of our best years!

SAVE THE DATE

Mark your calendars for these important trainings and events scheduled for 2022.

Trainings

Monthly Policy Webinars

Last Thursday of the Month, 3:00 pm - 4:00 pm

In 2021, LA WIC State Agency began offering monthly policy webinars to clinic staff to help communicate the policies outlined in the Louisiana WIC Policy and Procedures Manual. The webinar survey feedback has been overwhelmingly positive and we have heard from multiple WIC clinic staff that the webinars are very helpful. Based upon this feedback, the monthly webinar series will continue into 2022.

As in 2021, the webinars will be held on the last Thursday of the month from January 2022 to October 2022. A calendar invite was sent out via the Regional Nutritionists. Please email Kate Andrus at kate.andrus@la.gov if you want to be added to the calendar invite directly.

Conference

2022 National WIC Association Annual Education and Training Conference

May 22 - May 26, 2022 — New Orleans, LA

The 2022 conference theme is ***NWA Celebration: Reuniting, Reflecting and Reimagining!*** This is currently scheduled as an in-person event. For more information visit the NWA Conference [page](#).

Health Observances

National health observances are special days, weeks or months dedicated to raising awareness about important health topics. View page 3 for monthly health observances that clinics can highlight this year.

2022 Health Observances

January

- National Birth Defects Prevention Month
- January 6-12: Folic Acid Awareness Week

July

- Healthy Vision Month

February

- National Children’s Dental Health Month
- American Heart Month

August

- National Breastfeeding Month
- National Immunization Awareness Month

March

- National Nutrition Month® 2022
- March 9: Registered Dietitian Nutritionist Day

September

- National Childhood Obesity Awareness Month

April

- April 11-17: Black Maternal Health Week
- April 24-30: National Infertility Awareness Week

October

- National Domestic Violence Awareness Month
- National Breast Cancer Awareness Month

May

- May 8-15: National Women’s Health Week
- Preeclampsia Awareness Month

November

- American Diabetes Month

June

- Fatherhood Awareness Month

December

- December 5-11: National Influenza Vaccination Week

For more information on health observances, visit the following websites:

- U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Office of Disease Prevention and Health Promotion – [National Health Observances](#)
- Centers For Disease Control - [CDC/Women/Healthy Living](#)
- World Health Organization - [WHO Global Health Days](#)

STAFF UPDATES

New WIC Foods and Changes Effective January 1, 2022

Many WIC items remained the same, but some have changed. View the [New WIC Foods and Changes Brochure](#) for a complete listing of the updates for 2022. Updates include:

- New foods and brands; discontinued brands
- Changes to milk purchases
- Least expensive brand is no longer required for milk, cheese and eggs

Clinics will receive the *New WIC Foods and Changes One-Pager* to distribute to participants. The one-pager should be provided with the 2020 WIC Program Guide as a supplemental document. Additionally, the WIC shopping apps have been updated to reflect the new foods and changes to items.

Change of Clinic Information

The beginning of a new year is the perfect time to review your clinic's contact information that is listed on the Louisiana WIC website – [WIC locations](#) page. It is important to have accurate information to ensure participants will be able to contact and find local clinics.

To review contact information, click the appropriate region on the map to open the Regional Clinic Sites document. If a clinic needs to make changes or update information, complete the [Change of Clinic Information form](#) located in the WIC Library/Clinic Resources, and submit to LaNaya.Carter@LA.GOV. Use this form to submit requests any time there is a change to clinic information (e.g. hours, clinic address, clinic phone number).

Did You Know?

Updates to Louisiana WIC Formulary

By Celia Bridgeforth, Nutrition Education/Exempt Formula/WIC Farmers' Market Manager

Effective January 1, 2022, the Louisiana WIC formulary has been amended to include the following WIC-eligible nutritionals and formulas:

- **Abbott Pediasure Harvest**
- **Abbott Similac Special Care 24 calories High Protein**
- **Nestle Alfamino Infant Formula**
- **Nestle Alfamino Junior (Unflavored and Vanilla)**
- **Nutricia Neocate Syneo**

These additional WIC-eligible nutritionals and formulas will assist with filling in the availability gaps caused by supply chain disruptions experienced by the various formula manufacturers. The updated formulary is available in the WIC library. In addition, exhibit A and the WIC-48 were updated and uploaded to the Louisiana WIC and Louisiana Department of Health websites. WIC staff are encouraged to share these updates, along with the updated WIC-48, with their local medical providers.

Each of these WIC-eligible nutritionals and formulas are exempt. Clinic staff should follow the current Louisiana WIC policies and procedures relating to procurement and issuance of exempt formulas and WIC-eligible nutritionals. Please be advised that each of the formula manufacturers continues to experience supply chain disruptions and cannot guarantee the availability of all of their products. WIC staff will need to continue assessing each formula request for availability and substitutions as needed.

The Louisiana WIC State Agency staff would like to express our appreciation to all staff for your diligence and patience in this matter. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at Celia.Bridgeforth@la.gov.

Clinic Spotlight

DePaul Community Health Centers - Region 1

Advancing Health Equity to Achieve Diversity and Inclusion (AHEAD) in WIC project

By Stephenie Marshall, DePaul Community Health Centers

DePaul Community Health Centers of Louisiana was awarded the **Advancing Health Equity to Achieve Diversity and Inclusion (AHEAD)** grant from the National WIC Association (NWA). The grant helped with funding a community navigator position, in an effort to address social determinants of health (SDOH) within a WIC clinic setting. The goals of DePaul's project are:

- To identify SDOH among WIC participants by screening during the WIC intake.
- To assist WIC participants in addressing SDOH by providing referrals to programs and services.
- To assist with reducing maternal and infant mortality by interacting with every maternal woman receiving services at the health center to introduce the WIC program; assist scheduling an immediate appointment.

DePaul's project focuses on identifying conditions affecting the health of current WIC clients, such as housing, transportation or access to health and social services. The WIC-AHEAD Community Navigator works closely with WIC staff to address conditions identified during the intake process, and connects participants to resources to improve their health and quality of life. The project also focuses on identifying potential clients who are in need of WIC services but not already enrolled in WIC.

The grant funding period is from July 2021 to February 2022. We look forward to sharing the final outcomes of the AHEAD project at DePaul Community Health Center later this year.

About the AHEAD Project

NWA selected seven WIC agencies to pilot projects grounded in racial equity as part of NWA's work to advance racial equity through the AHEAD in WIC project. These projects are guided by the promising practices that integrate a racial equity lens in WIC. Learn more about AHEAD project by visiting NWA's [website](#).

What are Social Determinants of Health?

Healthy People 2030 defines Social Determinants of Health (SDOH) as the conditions in the environments where people are born, live, learn, work, play, worship and age that affect a wide range of health, functioning and quality-of-life outcomes and risks¹.

SDOH Domains:

- Economic Stability
- Education Access and Quality
- Healthcare Access and Quality
- Neighborhood and Built Environment
- Social and Community Context

Visit [Healthy People 2030](#) to learn more about SDOH and current efforts to address the social, economic and physical conditions that impact health.

Social Determinants of Health



Social Determinants of Health
Copyright: NWA

Healthy People 2030

1. Healthy People 2030, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Office of Disease Prevention and Health Promotion. Retrieved January 14, 2022, from <https://health.gov/healthypeople/objectives-and-data/social-determinants-health>

Breastfeeding Information and Resources

Introducing Pacify!

By Tara Landry, Breastfeeding Program Manager



Louisiana WIC has partnered with Pacify Health to provide a new service and resource for WIC participants helping improve breastfeeding success to the families we serve. This new partnership will allow WIC participants to have 24-hour, 7-day-a-week unlimited video-enabled access to lactation support experts through the Pacify App. The app has helped improve breastfeeding rates and outcomes for clients in WIC programs across the United States by providing critical support during times when a participant is not able to get the help she needs. The Pacify app will help support our Breastfeeding Peer Counselor program and will provide access to lactation experts in both English and Spanish. WIC staff will be able to enroll participants in Pacify during WIC appointments, lactation counseling visits or through virtual support group via a unique sign-up code. Participants can call Pacify support anytime and any day for assistance, and can connect directly to their local WIC clinic through the Pacify app. Louisiana WIC is confident that this new participant benefit supports its mission of improving health equity by connecting our participants to breastfeeding services, especially for those clients living in rural areas with limited resources.

Pacify Resources

Visit the Louisiana Pacify Staff Resource page at www.pacify.com/la-wic-staff for information about the Pacify app. The website includes a staff resource library with flyers, signs, introduction videos, enrollment videos, postcards, FAQs and more!

You can also order marketing materials directly from Pacify by completing the order form and emailing to Katelyn McAdams at katelyn@pacify.com

Breast Pumps

By Tara Landry, Breastfeeding Program Manager

Single-user pump availability continues to be a problem when ordering with our distributor McKesson secondary to global supply chain issues and major shipping delays. It is important for clinics to forecast their pump needs accordingly and let Breastfeeding Program Manager Tara Landry know when inventory levels are low, keeping in mind some orders may take approximately two months to be fulfilled. State Agency continues to recommend that clinics follow the guidance below when issuing single-user pumps:

- All clinics should have supplies of manual pumps that can be issued to participants with minor breastfeeding difficulties.
- Refer to policy Ch15.06 on *Increasing Milk Supply* as this is the most common reported breastfeeding concern with WIC participants and is easily managed with support and guidance.
- Single-user pump issuance should be reserved for participants with a developed milk supply.
- Hospital-grade pumps can be loaned for those participants with separation from infant and serious breastfeeding issues.
- Refer participants to the Breastfeeding Peer Counselor program via BFPCReferrals@la.gov for support.

Breastfeeding Peer Counseling Program



BFPC Staffing Updates

The Breastfeeding Peer Counseling Program continues to expand staff and coverage to provide extra care and support to WIC participants in their breastfeeding journeys. **Evon Lavergne-Prudhomme** has just begun a new role as a Breastfeeding Peer Counselor Program Manager 1 A along with Jana McDonald. Evon has been with the Peer Counselor program in various capacities for the past decade and has also worked in WIC clinical services in the public health unit. We welcome the expertise and energy she brings to the peer counselor program.

In addition, the BFPC program will soon fill five vacant peer counselor positions: two for Region 1, one for Region 8 and two statewide bilingual Spanish speakers. The new peer counselors will begin their training in February. An additional peer counselor will join the BFPC training for Region 8. She will be part of an exciting new pilot project in which the peer counselor is employed and managed by her WIC clinic but trained by and follows guidance from the USDA Peer Counseling management model. She will also be part of the BFPC team. We are so excited to have new staff on board to serve more WIC participants!

Cheers For Peers

Breastfeeding Peer Counselor Spotlight

By Jana McDonald, Breastfeeding Peer Counseling Program Manager

Kristin has been giving extra encouragement to WIC prenatal and breastfeeding participants in Region 9 since starting with the BFPC Program six months ago. Kristin recently provided extra care and inspiration to a mother who was facing physical difficulties with breastfeeding.

Kristin began following this mom during her pregnancy and provided support and made the appropriate referrals as mom struggled with supply issues due to infant cleft lip and palate. Kristin spoke with the mom several times and educated her on supply and demand but she was still struggling to pump effectively.



After a rather emotional discussion with the participant, Kristin called the Livingston Parish Health Unit and the staff was able to get her an expedited appointment that day to obtain a hospital-grade pump. The teamwork between the peer counselor and clinic gave the participant amazing care and showed how WIC is an important part of the circle of care to the moms of Louisiana. Baby is now 6 weeks old and still getting breastmilk. Great job, Kristin and Livingston Parish Health Unit employees!

Becoming a Breastfeeding Peer Counselor (BFPC)

[BFPC Application](#)

Do you know a WIC participant who is interested in becoming a peer counselor? The minimal qualifications are that she has been on WIC and has breastfed for at least six months. The BFPC program accepts applications at any time and keeps them on file for potential future openings.

Please direct any interested participant to email Evon.Lavergne@la.gov or Jana.McDonald@la.gov. Applications are also available online at LouisianaWIC.org – WIC Breastfeeding.

Meet Your State Agency Team

Nutrition Services

The LA WIC State Agency Team is here to assist you with clinic operations. Your Clinical Supervisor or Regional Nutritionist should be your first point of contact but if you have further questions, State Agency is here to help for questions related to WIC clinic policies and procedures, breastfeeding support, outreach, LAWIN, exempt formula and nutrition education.

LA WIC State Agency Team provides support to 106 clinics throughout the state. The contact information for each team member is listed below.

Nutrition Services <i>Area of Responsibility</i>	State Agency Team Member	Contact Information
Program Management	Leslie Lewis, Nutrition Operations Program Manager	Leslie.Lewis@LA.GOV
	Kate Andrus, Program Manager	Kate.Andrus@LA.GOV
Management Evaluations	Evaluation and Policy Program Manager (Vacant)	
	Patty Abraham, Program Monitor	Patty.Abraham@LA.GOV
Complaints, Disputes, Civil Rights, Fraud Investigations and VOCs	Wendy Terrell, Program Manager <i>Primary Contact for Disputes, Civil Rights and Fraud Investigations</i>	Wendy.Terrell@LA.GOV 225-342-7900
	LaNaya Carter, Program Monitor <i>Primary Contact for Complaints and VOCs</i>	LaNaya.Carter@LA.GOV 504-568-3018
Breastfeeding Services and Peer Counseling Program	Tara Landry, Program Manager	Tara.Landry@LA.GOV
	Jana McDonald, Peer Counseling Program Manager	Jana.McDonald@LA.GOV
	Evon Lavergne-Prudhomme, Peer Counseling Program Manager	Evon.Lavergne@LA.GOV
LAWIN and WIC Education	Barbara Cerniauskas, Program Manager	Barbara.Cerniauskas@LA.GOV
	Jessica Farris, Program Monitor	Jessica.Farris@LA.GOV
Nutrition Education and Exempt Formula	Celia Bridgeforth, Nutrition Education/Exempt Formula/WIC Farmers' Market	Celia.Bridgeforth@LA.GOV
Program Outreach	LaNaya Carter, Program Monitor	Lanaya.Carter@LA.GOV

Highlights from the Anti-Hunger Summit

By Kate Andrus, Deputy Nutrition Operations Manager

In partnership with Feeding Louisiana, the Louisiana Department of Health, Office of Public Health's Bureau of Nutrition Services (BONS) convened partners working in the food security, anti-hunger and emergency feeding sectors to host the state's first Anti-Hunger Summit on Thursday, December 2, 2021. This was done in response to Senate Resolution Number 77, which called on the Louisiana Department of Health to convene such a summit and then submit a report with recommendations and action items to the Louisiana Senate. Over 125 attendees joined the Anti-Hunger Summit, learning about anti-hunger work happening in Louisiana and creating action items that will be included in the report.

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

Contribute to the Newsletter!

Clinic Lagniappe is the perfect place to share information. We want to know what is going on in your region and local clinic. If you're interested in submitting content for the newsletter, please email LaNaya.Carter@LA.GOV.

Newsletter Survey – Your Input Matters

We want to hear your thoughts so we can improve the Clinic Lagniappe newsletter, and deliver the information you want, when you want it. Take the newsletter survey to share your thoughts related to overall satisfaction and the type content that you would like to see.

Click the link below or scan the QR code with your phone to complete the survey.

[Newsletter Survey Link](#)



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We Want Your Feedback!

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

[CONTACT US](#)