

A GUIDE TO Foster Children and WIC

All foster children under age 5 are automatically eligible for WIC.

Foster parents play an important role in their children's growth and development. WIC offers foster families nutrition education, tips on healthy eating, and nutritious foods tailored to a foster child's needs. Good nutrition is essential to good health.

A foster child shall be considered a one person family where SCDSS is legally responsible for the child. Payments made by SCDSS for the care of the foster child shall be considered the income for the child.

WIC accepts referral data (height, length, weight, hemoglobin, etc.) that is no more than 60 days old by health care providers.

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WIC will provide nutrition counseling tailored to meet the needs of your foster child and assign benefits to buy healthy foods.

What is WIC?

WIC is a federally funded special supplemental nutrition program serving low- and moderate-income pregnant, breastfeeding, and postpartum women, infants, and children up to age 5 who are found to be at nutritional risk. WIC provides:

- Nutrition education
- Healthy food
- Referrals to other health & social services

Registered dietitians are available for high-risk participants. Some special formulas are available with a prescription from health care provider. Talk with a nutritionist for more information.

WICHealth.org (online education) is an option for nutrition education classes. Every effort will be made to allow credit for all foster children in the home.

Apply for WIC now:
1-855-4-SCDHEC
(1-855-472-3432)

- ### What to bring?
- DSS foster parent contract
 - Proof of SC residence
 - Your foster child or a statement from health care provider.
 - Proof of identity



Frequently Asked Questions

Healthy eating is an important skill that helps children grow and prevents them from developing health problems later in life. Since eating habits are established early in life, it is important to teach good nutrition as early as possible. WIC can give your child the best possible start, a healthy one. Nervous about your first visit to your clinic? We got you covered with some frequently asked questions.

1. How can I enroll my foster child in WIC? What do I need to bring to my WIC appointment?

It's easy! Call the local WIC office in your community to set up an appointment or call 1-855-472-3432. You will need to bring these items with you to your appointment:

- DSS statement of foster care payments
- DSS document showing foster care status
- Proof of Identification (see question 3)
- Proof of South Carolina residence
- Your foster child (for details on possible exemptions see question 8).

2. How does WIC work?

At your appointment, a WIC nutritionist will talk with you about your foster child's health history and diet to identify nutrition and/or medical needs. WIC will provide you with nutrition counseling tailored to meet the needs of your foster child and benefits to buy healthy foods like milk, eggs, cereal, vegetables, fruit and legumes, and whole grains. Food benefits are provided on an eWIC card. It operates like a debit card.

WIC Works For Foster Children!

Kids enrolled in WIC have better vocabularies when they reach 4 and 5 years of age.

WIC significantly improves children's diets and intake of important vitamins and nutrients like iron, vitamin C, protein, niacin and vitamin B6.

3. What is acceptable documentation of proof of identification?

There are various allowable sources of identification. A full list of acceptable documentation can be found at scdhec.gov/health/wic-nutrition-program/apply-wic-its-easy.

4. What are the income requirements? Is the board payment counted as income?

Foster children are eligible based on the child's income, not based on the foster parent's income. You will be asked to prove that you are the court appointed foster parent.

Updates on the board rates for South Carolina can be found at dss.sc.gov/foster-care/current-foster-parent/board-rate.

5. What proof of income is needed?

Foster child placement letter or foster parent award letter showing the amount received for foster care. A full list of acceptable documentation can be found at scdhec.gov/health/wic-nutrition-program/apply-wic-its-easy.

6. What is acceptable documentation for proof of SC residence?

Proof of South Carolina residence or something that shows your current address is acceptable. A full list of acceptable documentation can be found at scdhec.gov/health/wic-nutrition-program/apply-wic-its-easy.

7. What formulas are WIC approved?

The SC WIC program is a supplemental program and cannot provide all the formula an infant or child may need each month. For infants who require a "special" medical formula, medical documentation is required from the child's primary care physician. A full list of WIC approved formulas can be found at scdhec.gov/health/wic-nutrition-program/what-does-wic-offer/wic-approved-baby-formulas.

8. Can documentation from a health care provider allow the foster child to omit visits to their local WIC office?

SC WIC requires all applicants be physically present at each annual WIC certification. Participants who are exempt from this requirement are individuals with disabilities that meet the following standards:

- a. Has a medical condition that requires medical equipment that is not transportable
- b. Is confined to bed rest
- c. Has a serious illness that would be exacerbated by coming to the WIC clinic.

In these cases, documentation from the medical provider is required. The documentation should include height, weight, and hemoglobin.

9. Can I use a Primary Care Provider dietitian instead of a WIC dietitian?

Yes

10. If there are multiple children in the home participating in WIC, can I take an online class once and it counts for all the children in the household?

Yes, after completed the online class for one child, the foster parent should call their local WIC office to report the class completion and provide the identification numbers of all the other WIC eligible children in the household. Benefits will be loaded onto each child's eWIC card.

11. Can I use a proxy to visit my WIC office and sign for WIC?

Proxies can attend class, bring a child in for the mid-certification (6-month) evaluation, load benefits on the eWIC card (must have the WIC ID card present), and redeem WIC food benefits at the grocery store. Proxies are not allowed to do the following:

- a. Apply for a new or annual certification
- b. Update address, telephone number, or email contacts
- c. Initiate transfers
- d. Request food package changes
- e. Reissue a new WIC ID card.

This institution is an equal opportunity provider.