



DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Food and Nutrition Service

Agency Information Collection Activities: Proposed Collection; Comment

Request –

The Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children (WIC) Breastfeeding Award of Excellence

AGENCY: Food and Nutrition Service (FNS), USDA.

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: In accordance with the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, this notice invites the general public and other public agencies to comment on this proposed information collection. This collection is a revision of a currently approved collection for awarding local agencies for excellence in WIC breastfeeding services and support. The Child Nutrition Act of 1966 at 42 U.S. Code § 1786(h)(4)(B), requires that the Department of Agriculture (USDA) establish a program to recognize WIC local agencies and clinics that demonstrate exemplary breastfeeding promotion and support activities.

DATES: Written comments must be received on or before [INSERT DATE 60 DAYS AFTER DATE OF PUBLICATION IN THE FEDERAL REGISTER].

ADDRESSES: The Food and Nutrition Service, USDA, invites interested persons to submit written comment.

- **Preferred Method:** Federal eRulemaking Portal. Go to <http://www.regulations.gov> and follow the online instructions for submitting comments electronically.
- **Mail:** Send comments to: Kristin Garcia, Director, Food Safety and Nutrition Division, Supplemental Nutrition and Safety Programs, Food and Nutrition Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture, 1320 Braddock PI, Alexandria, VA

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All responses to this notice will be summarized and included in the request for Office of Management and Budget approval. All comments will be a matter of public record.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Requests for additional information or copies of this information collection should be directed to Valery Soto, Chief, Nutrition Services and Promotion Branch, Food Safety and Nutrition Division, Supplemental Nutrition and Safety Programs, FNS, USDA, 1320 Braddock PI, Alexandria, VA 22314.

Email: Valery.Soto@usda.gov, Telephone: (703) 305-2742.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Comments are invited on: (a) whether the proposed collection of information is necessary for the proper performance of the functions of the agency, including whether the information shall have practical utility; (b) the accuracy of the agency's estimate of the burden of the proposed collection of information, including the validity of the methodology and assumptions that were used; (c) ways to enhance the quality, utility, and clarity of the information to be collected; and (d) ways to minimize the burden of the collection of information on those who are to respond, including use of appropriate automated, electronic, mechanical, or other technological collection techniques or other forms of information technology.

Title: Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) Breastfeeding Award of Excellence

Form Number: Not applicable

OMB Number: 0584-0591

Expiration Date: 12/31/2026

Type of Request: Revision of a Currently Approved Collection

Abstract: This information collection is mandated by the Child Nutrition Act of 1966 at 42 U.S. Code § 1786(h)(4)(B), herein referred to as the Child Nutrition Act. The Child

Nutrition Act requires USDA to implement a program to recognize exemplary breastfeeding support practices at WIC local agencies and clinics. The WIC program provides breastfeeding promotion and support for pregnant and postpartum mothers as a part of its mission to improve the health of the approximately 6.7 million Americans it serves each month. Breastfeeding is a priority in WIC and WIC mothers are strongly encouraged to breastfeed their infants unless medically contraindicated.

In recognizing exemplary local agencies and clinics, the Child Nutrition Act requires the Secretary to consider the following criteria: (1) performance measurements of breastfeeding; (2) the effectiveness of a peer counselor program; (3) the extent to which the agency or clinic has partnered with other entities to build a supportive breastfeeding environment for women participating in WIC; and (4) other criteria the Secretary considers appropriate after consultation with state and local program agencies. The information will be submitted voluntarily by WIC local agencies who will be applying for an award. FNS will use the information collected to evaluate the components of existing breastfeeding programs and support in WIC local agencies and make decisions about awards. This program is expected to provide models of breastfeeding support excellence and motivate local agencies and clinics to strengthen their breastfeeding promotion and support activities.

A notable improvement from past collection requests is that FNS plans to explore ways to streamline the application questions and instructions for local agencies. WIC state agencies will continue to conduct their evaluation on PartnerWeb, which was modernized in fiscal year (FY) 2025 for a better user experience. The total estimated time for local WIC agencies to complete the application is not expected to change.

Affected Public: State, Local and Tribal Government: Respondent groups identified include local and WIC state agencies.

Estimated Number of Respondents: The total estimated number of respondents is 258: 170 local WIC agencies and 88 WIC state agencies.

Since the inception of the program in 2015, a total of 1,137 awards have been given. In FY 2023, 143 eligible local agencies applied for awards; in FY 2024, 136 eligible local agencies applied for awards; and in FY 2025, 216 eligible local agencies applied for awards. FNS estimates that applications will increase from a range of 130-150 to 130-170 annually. FNS estimates that 7-8 percent (13 applications) of local agency applications are small entities as they do not come from health departments. The estimated number of respondents for the state agency application verification is derived from the total number of WIC state agencies, which has decreased by one since the previous burden collection.

Estimated Number of Responses per Respondent:

The estimated number of responses per respondent for the WIC local agency is one, as each eligible WIC local agency can submit one application. The estimated number of responses per respondent for the WIC state agency is 2.0, as each WIC state agency will evaluate approximately 2.0 applications annually. These estimates were derived by dividing the total number of responses for the WIC local agency application or the WIC state agency evaluation by the respective number of respondents. Overall, the estimated number of responses per respondent across the entire collection is 1.3, which is derived by dividing the total number of annual responses (346) by the total estimated number of respondents (258).

Estimated Total Annual Responses: 346

Estimated Time per Response: FNS estimates the WIC local agency application response is 2.0 hours, and the WIC state agency response is 1.2 hours. Overall, the average estimated time for all the award participants is 1.6 hours. The estimated average number of hours per response was derived by dividing the number of estimated

total hours (551), by the number of total annual responses by all respondents (346). The time for the WIC local agency is an estimated time for the agency to voluntarily review the instructions, fill out the “WIC Breastfeeding Award of Excellence” application, and attach supportive documentation. The time for the WIC state agency is an estimated time for the agency to review the instructions, evaluate the components of the local WIC agencies applications, and make a recommendation for an award.

Estimated Total Annual Burden on Respondents: 551.2 hours.

See the Burden table below for estimated total annual burden for each type of respondent.

| Respondent | Estimated # Respondent | Responses annually per Respondent | Total Annual Responses | Estimated Avg. # of Hours Per Response * | Estimated Total Hours |
|-------------------------------|------------------------|-----------------------------------|------------------------|------------------------------------------|-----------------------|
| Reporting Burden | | | | | |
| Small Entity Application | 13.0 | 1.0 | 13.0 | 2.0 | 26.0 |
| WIC Local Agency Application | 157.0 | 1.0 | 157.0 | 2.0 | 314.0 |
| WIC State Agency Evaluation | 88.0 | 2.0 | 176.0 | 1.2 | 211.2 |
| Total Reporting Burden | 258.0 | 1.3 | 346.0 | 1.6 | 551.2 |

*Estimated average # of hours per response includes .5 hours for reviewing instructions

Parick A. Penn,
Deputy Under Secretary,
Food, Nutrition and Consumer Services.

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