



City of Long Beach
Working Together to Serve

Memorandum

Date: December 30, 2019

To: Thomas B. Modica, Acting City Manager *T.M.*

From: Kelly Colopy, Director of Health and Human Services *KC*

For: Mayor and Members of the City Council

Subject: **Introducing the New Women, Infants and Children Card**

On November 11, 2019, the Women, Infants, and Children Program (WIC) Program in the City of Long Beach Health and Human Services Department (Health Department) went live with a modernized web-based system and WIC electronic benefits card (WIC Card). This memorandum provides a summary of the changes to Long Beach WIC, and includes contact information for families to learn more about program benefits.

Background

The Health Department works to promote the health and wellbeing of all Long Beach residents. One of the keys to good health is optimal nutrition and access to healthy foods. For over 40 years, the Health Department has supported these goals through the Long Beach WIC program. The WIC program serves families in Long Beach with pregnant or breastfeeding mothers, infants or children aged five years and under. To qualify, families must meet the income criteria set by the Federal USDA of 185 percent of the Federal Poverty Level (FPL) and have nutritional risks. WIC assists with the most important and fundamental human need of healthy foods and nutrition education to foster health and support Long Beach's children in growing and living to their fullest potential. By participating in WIC, families receive nutrition education, lactation promotion, education and support, resources and referrals to health and social services, as well as supplemental food benefits to purchase healthy foods such as dairy, protein, vegetables, fruits, whole-grains, eggs, and infant formula from local grocers.

Last year, WIC served 24,454 families, in all zip code areas of Long Beach. WIC benefits contribute approximately \$13.4 million into the local economy through food purchased at 59 participating Long Beach grocery stores, ranging from nationwide corporations to locally-owned grocers, in all corners of the City.

Program Update

The California Department of Public Health/WIC replaced the current computer system with a new system called the WIC Web Information System Exchange. With these changes, WIC has transitioned from issuing food checks to issuing food benefits via the WIC Card, similar to the CalFresh EBT card. The WIC Card will offer a convenient way to issue food benefits,

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as well as improve the shopping experience for WIC families and grocers. See below for a sample image of the new WIC Card:



Each family will receive one WIC Card with all their family's monthly food benefits. The WIC Card will provide a more flexible way for families to shop for WIC foods and select only what they need at each shopping trip. One major improvement of the WIC Card over previous WIC payment methods is that families will no longer lose their WIC food benefits if their WIC Card is lost, stolen, or damaged.

Contact Information for Families

To enroll in WIC, families can call (562) 570-4242, or walk in to any of our five WIC locations at:

Health Department

2525 Grand Ave
Long Beach, CA 90815
M 8:30 am - 7:00 pm
Tues-Fri 8:30 am - 6:00 pm
Two Saturdays* per month 8:30 am – 12 pm

North WIC

5166 Atlantic Ave
Long Beach, CA 90805
Monday-Friday 8:30 am - 6:00 pm
1 Saturday* per month 8:30 am – 12 pm

Central Facilities Center WIC

1133 Rhea Street
Long Beach, CA 90806
Monday-Friday 8:30 am - 5:30 pm
(Located in Martin Luther King Jr. Park)

St. Mary's WIC

1043 Elm Ave Suite 401 (4th Floor)
Long Beach, CA 90813
Monday-Friday 8:30 am - 6:00 pm

West Facilities Center WIC

2125 Santa Fe Ave (2nd Floor)
Long Beach, CA 90810
Monday-Friday 8:30 am - 5:30 pm
(Located in Admiral Kidd Park)

* For Saturdays, please call ahead to confirm dates.

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For further information please contact me at Kelly.Colopy@longbeach.gov or (562) 570-4016.

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