



## SUMMARY REPORT

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**Agenda Date:** 4/30/2024

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**To:** Sonoma County Board of Supervisors  
**Department or Agency Name(s):** Department of Health Services  
**Staff Name and Phone Number:** Tina Rivera, 707-565-4774  
**Vote Requirement:** Majority  
**Supervisorial District(s):** Countywide

**Recommended Action:**

Adopt a Gold Resolution commemorating the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of California's Women Infant Children Program

**Executive Summary:**

This item requests the Board adopt a resolution commemorating the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of California's Women Infant Children (WIC) program. The WIC program safeguards the health of low-income women, infants, and children by providing healthy foods, health care referrals, nutrition education and counseling, and breastfeeding promotion and support to low-income pregnant, breastfeeding, and non-breastfeeding postpartum women, and to infants and children up to the age of five.

**Discussion:**

Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) is an evidence-based, cost-effective nutrition intervention program. Participation in the WIC program has resulted in longer pregnancies, fewer premature births, lower incidence of moderately low and very low birth weight infants, fewer infant deaths, a greater likelihood of receiving prenatal care and a health care cost savings. Children enrolled in the WIC program have a lower incidence of iron deficiency anemia and improved intellectual development. WIC serves half of all infants born in the United States. WIC participation has been shown to increase the initiation and duration breastfeeding rates nationwide.

The Department's WIC program provides healthy foods, health care referrals, nutrition education and counseling, and breastfeeding promotion and support to low-income pregnant, breastfeeding, and non-breastfeeding postpartum women, and to infants and children up to the age of five. WIC loans electric breast pumps to participants and has a hospital pump exchange program with local hospitals. Lactation services are also provided by an International Board Certified Lactation Consultant (IBCLC).

WIC has grown to be a breastfeeding resource for many families. In 2004, Food and Nutrition Administration (FNS) launched the Breastfeeding Peer Counseling Program. The initiative brought forth the importance of breastmilk for human babies. Overwhelming evidence shows breast milk provides optimal nutrition for infants, and breastfeeding offers the best health outcomes for both infants and mothers.

The Department's WIC Breastfeeding Peer Counseling program won the USDA Loving Support Award of Excellence in 2015, 2020, and 2021 for providing exemplary breastfeeding support. The Department has taken a lead role in Sonoma County in promoting the importance of breastfeeding to community partners, through leading the Sonoma County Breastfeeding Coalition in its collaborative work to ensure all low-income women and babies have the support they need to exclusively breastfeed as recommended by the American Academy of Pediatrics. Together we are creating a sustainable system of care that supports breastfeeding in vulnerable

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families from birth through the postpartum period and beyond.

The Department's WIC program hosts an annual summer farmers' market at the Santa Rosa WIC location every Thursday in July and August. This has become a community event that helps WIC participants link to local community partners and obtain local fresh fruits and vegetables. In 2023, a total of \$1,482,513 worth of fruits and vegetable were purchased through WIC participation, and \$29,670 Farmers' Market vouchers were redeemed.

This year WIC celebrates its 50th anniversary.

**Prior Board Actions:**

None

**FISCAL SUMMARY**

**Narrative Explanation of Fiscal Impacts:**

N/A

**Narrative Explanation of Staffing Impacts (If Required):**

N/A

**Attachments:**

Attachment 1 - Resolution

**Related Items "On File" with the Clerk of the Board:**

None