

**Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants & Children (WIC)
Public Hearing Minutes**

September 13, 2024

2:30 - 3:30 pm

Via Teams

The State WIC Office held the WIC Public Hearing on Friday, September 13, 2024. Members of the public attended either via Teams or in-person at the WIC Learning Center in Framingham. The WIC Public Hearing began with a brief overview of the program. This was followed by a review of key State Plan goals. The hearing was then opened for public comments.

The WIC Nutrition Program received the following comments:

State Plan Priorities

Staffing

- Provide local WIC program staff with higher pay. Competitive wages would support staff staying with local WIC programs for as long as they desire.
- Staff pay should be equitable.
 - Nutritionists in the same geographic area are compensated differently
 - Programs in same geographic area currently pay different hourly rates
- Pay program assistants more and include equitable pay language in the next Request for Responses (RFR)
- Pay staff with additional skills (e.g., language ability) more
- Consider contracting for Registered Dietitian (RD) services to increase credibility of WIC
- Re-consider the role of the Community Coordinator outreach position
 - Tasks are more digital
 - Could there be a regional Community Coordinator position managed by the State Office, like the regional IBCLCs?
 - Can local WIC programs use TikTok for outreach?
- Support a route for Nutritionists to become Registered Dietitians
 - Invest in staff development
 - Offer more competitive wages for RDs
- Fund a full-time Family Support Coordinator at every local program

Operations

- Adjust the local WIC program funding formula to reflect current operations to increase its accuracy
- Reassess funding formula and the staff-to-participant ratio, ensuring accuracy for a more appropriate/accurate staffing plan and deployment
- Increase access to EMR systems for WIC teams; consider ability to require collaboration with health care partners to ensure EMR access
- Support/champion digital health literacy with families

Comments Submitted Online After the Public Hearing

- More fruits & veg
- More programs for new moms
- Provide diapers & wipes
- Fruits instead of juice
- More whole grain options
- Almond milk, oat milk
- More vegan options (egg replacement)
- Dairy free yogurt
- Replace milk with cheese
- 1 paid dietitian on staff (regional dietitian)