New Mexico WIC providing curbside service during COVID-19 pandemic

April 15, 2020 - 2019 Novel Coronavirus - Awareness

The New Mexico Department of Public Health's Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) program reminds clients all main offices remain open during the COVID-19 pandemic, with services modified to a curbside service to limit direct contact and practice social distancing while expediting services.

The WIC program safeguards the health of New Mexico's low-income pregnant, postpartum and nursing (breastfeeding) women, infants and children up to age 5 who are at nutritional risk by providing nutritious foods to supplement diets, information on healthy eating including nursing promotion and support and referrals to healthcare.

Due to the pandemic, the WIC program is now providing four months of food benefits instead of three to further limit direct contact for services.

Applicants and participants may request services by contacting local WIC offices, or visiting the NM WIC website, nmwic.org, and requesting an appointment using the Contact Us page. WIC staff will reply to applicants/participants to schedule appointments to provide curbside service, or existing participants may keep their regularly scheduled appointments and follow posted instructions when arriving at the clinic.

WIC staff are providing appointment information via phone and text and are working to process as much as possible before applicants/participants arrive at the clinics. Required documentation such as income, NM residency, and personal ID are requested and delivered electronically when possible, and some can be taken verbally. Those without internet access can still bring documentation, which will then be reviewed by utilizing recommended safety precautions. Applicants/participants that require a full nutrition assessment will be advised if the process can be waived and/or collected during the initial phone call.

Upon arrival at any WIC clinic, applicants/participants will see clear signs directing them to stay in their vehicles and to call the clinic's WIC number. WIC staff will instruct applicants/participants on next steps depending on the appointment type. Most of the appointment communication takes place via two-way texting or phone and exchange of documents, ID verification, and WIC EBT cards is handled in a safe manner, maintaining the recommended personal protection equipment and social distancing protocols.

If participants do not have access to a smart phone, transportation, or encounter other challenges, they are welcomed to contact the local WIC clinic, visit the NM WIC

website (nmwic.org), or call the Customer Service Hotline (866-867-3124), and WIC staff will provide options for providing needed benefits. Some options include completing services via phone and mailing EBT cards in some cases. The hotline is available Monday through Saturday from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m.

Families who want to apply for WIC services should:

- Live in the state of New Mexico
- Include one or more of these individuals:
    - a person who is currently pregnant
    - a person who is nursing (breastfeeding) a baby under one year of age
    - a person who had a baby or was pregnant in the last six months
    - a baby who is less than one year old
    - a child who is less than five years old

Applicants should also meet income guidelines for the number of family members.

If someone in your family received income in the last 30 days, that income may be considered. (During the COVID-19 situation, families with recent loss of income due to layoff/furlough/closure may qualify with proof of job loss.)

Eligibility for Medicaid, SNAP (Food Stamps), TANF (Cash Assistance), and/or FDPIR could mean that your family already meets WIC income guidelines. Please let the WIC clinic know if anyone in your family is eligible for any of these programs.

If any processes are changed due to the COVID-19 situation, WIC will inform participants via text message and phone contact, and changes are posted as they happen on the www.nmwic.org website. For more information about COVID-19 visit the New Mexico Department of Health dedicated webpage to include the latest COVID-19-related

news, statewide screening and test sites and more at https://cv.nmhealth.org/.

Media Contact

We would be happy to provide additional information about this press release. Simply contact David Morgan at 575-528-5197 (Office) or 575-649-0754 (Mobile) with your questions.

Versión en Español

En un esfuerzo para hacer que nuestros comunicados de prensa sean más accesibles, también tenemos disponibles una versión en español. Por favor presione el enlace de abajo para acceder a la traducción.

WIC Nuevo México ofreciendo servicios de acera durante la pandemia COVID-19