

SUPPORTING STATEMENT PART B

OMB No. 0584-NEW

WIC Participant and Program Characteristics Study

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Part B: Collection of Information Employing Statistical Methods

B.1 Respondent Universe and Selection Methods

Describe (including a numerical estimate) the potential respondent universe and any sampling or other respondent selection method to be used. Data on the number of entities (e.g., establishments, State and local government units, households, or persons) in the universe covered by the collection and in the corresponding sample are to be provided in tabular form for the universe as a whole and for each of the strata in the proposed sample. Indicate expected response rates for the collection as a whole. If the collection had been conducted previously, include the actual response rate achieved during the last collection.

The sampling plan described in part B is a contingency plan for WIC State agencies (SAs) that are not able to provide a complete census of participants from their eligibility systems. The purpose of this section is to document any statistical procedures used for the WIC PC2016 and PC2018 studies. We estimate that the collection will have a 100 percent response rate without using a contingency sampling plan in PC2016 and PC2018, as it has had in previous years.

The data collection normally involves a census of participants enrolled in WIC in the study month of April for each of the 90 State agencies (SAs) that administer WIC; these SAs serve the 50 States, the District of Columbia, 5 U.S. territories, and 34 Indian tribal organizations (ITOs). In order to submit a census of participants, WIC SA personnel download information on all participants certified to receive WIC during the reference month (April) and submit that file to the contractor conducting the data collection via secure FTP server. WIC SA personnel abstract

the data needed for the study from the certification system, so no actual field contact with participants is necessary. For PC2014, data on 9,303,253 active participants were collected; for PC2012, data on 9,734,468 were collected. The PC2016 and PC2018 studies are expected to collect data on a similar number of participants.

These data may not be available due to unforeseen circumstances—for example, if a management information system upgrade results in loss of data, or if staff- or technology-related problems cause widespread data integrity issues. As in past WIC PC studies, the first attempted solution would be to have the WIC SA submit data from another month close to the study month, such as March or May. However, in the event a WIC SA was not able to provide a census of participants for any month, the contractor would advise the WIC SA on how to employ the statistical procedure outlined in section B.2 to sample a subset of records.

For a WIC SA unable to provide a census of participants for any month, the universe would include all WIC participants enrolled to receive benefits through the WIC SA during a month that the SA is able to sample. This could vary greatly depending on the size of the SA; those in some large States serve more than a million participants, while those in some smaller ITOs serve several dozen. Since the process outlined here would serve as an alternative means of data collection, the size of the universe and the size of the sample will differ based on the details of the situation. The sampling plan is not the primary means of data collection, so many normally required details cannot be reported here because these details would vary depending on the specifics of the situation that necessitated the use of sampling.

B.2 Procedures for the Collection of Information

Describe the procedures for the collection of information including:

- **Statistical methodology for stratification and sample selection**
- **Estimation procedure**
- **Degree of accuracy needed for the purpose described in the justification**
- **Unusual problems requiring specialized sampling procedures**
- **Any use of periodic (less frequent than annual) data collection cycles to reduce burden**

This is an alternate means of data collection for WIC SAs that are unable to provide a census of participants. We do not expect to use sampling during data collection. However, in the interest of covering all contingencies, the following sampling plan was developed for use in the event that a WIC SA cannot provide a census of participants for any month.

B.2.1 Statistical Methodology for Stratification and Sample Selection. The target population for the data abstraction would include all WIC participants enrolled to receive benefits through the WIC SA that is unable to provide a full census of participants. The timeframe would be the 1 to 3 months surrounding the April reference month of the study year.

The sampling frame for the affected WIC SA would be constructed from administrative records of WIC participants known to be enrolled through the WIC SA and eligible for WIC during the target timeframe of the 1 to 3 months surrounding the April reference month of the study year.

Since the WIC PC studies aim to represent the entire population of WIC SA participants, we would develop a procedure for the affected WIC SA to select a stratified, systematic sample of 380 of its WIC participants. Prior to sample selection, we would first ask the WIC SA to stratify the data based on seven certification categories (pregnant women younger than 18 and aged 18 or older, breastfeeding women, postpartum nonbreastfeeding women, infants 0–4 months of age, infants 5–11 months of age, and children aged 1–4).

The sample size of 380 WIC participants would be allocated proportionally to each stratum based on the size of that stratum related to the size of the WIC population for that WIC SA. One benefit to this approach is that all weights are equal; as such, there is no “oversampling” of certain strata causing variation in the weights.

The affected WIC SA will then be asked to perform systematic sampling within each of the stratum (the seven certification categories). This method involves sorting the participants by local agency and numbering the WIC participants in the population from 1 to N (where N equals total records in the population). To select a sample of n participants, we select a participant at random from the first k participants (where $k = N/n$), and every k th participant thereafter until the appropriate number of participants is achieved in the stratum. In this way, each participant in the sampling frame will be given a known, nonzero probability of selection, so weighted inferences can be made about the entire population of participants.

The WIC SA would then extract data from its eligibility system or case files and submit the data to the contractor for WIC PC.

B.2.2 Estimation Procedure. The purpose of the analyses is to estimate various characteristics about the WIC population enrolled through the affected WIC SA. Following receipt of the sample from the WIC SA, sample weights (or base weights) for WIC participants in the sample will be prepared based on initial probability of selection. The resulting weighting scheme will inflate participant records to represent the entire universe of WIC participants in the WIC SA.

B.2.3 Degree of Accuracy Needed for the Purpose Described in the Justification. The overall sample will be designed to achieve (within WIC SA estimates) 95-percent, two-tailed confidence intervals of between 3.0 and 5.0 percentage points for the affected WIC SA. This will give reliable estimates of the characteristics in the WIC SA that is unable to provide a census of participants.

B.2.4. Unusual Problems Requiring Specialized Sampling Procedures. The sampling strategy described in this section is an alternative strategy to be used in the event that a WIC SA cannot provide a census data file. We do not anticipate using sampling, and do not anticipate any additional specialized procedures.

B.2.5. Any Use of Periodic Data Collection Cycles to Reduce Burden. WIC PC data are collected every 2 years.

B.3 Methods To Maximize Response Rates and the Issue of Non-Response

Describe methods to maximize response rates and to deal with issues of non-response. The accuracy and reliability of information collected must be shown to be adequate for intended uses. For collections based on sampling, a special justification must be provided for any collection that will not yield “reliable” data that can be generalized to the universe studied.

Since data will come from WIC SA administrative records, no methods to maximize response rates are required for this study. We anticipate receiving data on 100 percent of WIC participants from each WIC SA.

B.4 Tests of Procedures

Describe any tests of procedures or methods to be undertaken. Testing is encouraged as an effective means of refining collections of information to minimize burden and improve utility. Tests must be approved if they call for answers to identical questions from 10 or more respondents. A proposed test or set of tests may be submitted for approval separately or in combination with the main collection of information.

Each WIC SA already collects these data in the course of administering WIC, and as such, no instrument or procedure would need to be tested before data collection can occur.

B.5 Consultants

Provide the name and telephone number of individuals consulted on statistical aspects of the design and the name of the agency unit, contractor(s), grantee(s), or other person(s) who will actually collect and/or analyze the information for the agency.

Carole Trippe and Betsy Thorn of Insight Policy Research, Inc., (Insight) will provide consultation on the statistical aspects of the design. Insight is also responsible for collecting and analyzing all data for this study. Table B.5.1 identifies the individuals responsible for collecting and analyzing the data.

Table B.5.1. Individuals Responsible for Statistical Aspects and Data Collection and Analysis

Name	Title (Project Role)	Organizational Affiliation and Address	Phone Number
Carole Trippe	Senior Advisor	Insight Policy Research, Inc. 1901 N. Moore Street, Suite 1100 Arlington, VA 22209	703.504.9498
Betsy Thorn	Project Manager	Insight Policy Research, Inc. 1901 N. Moore Street, Suite 1100 Arlington, VA 22209	703.504.9488