



To: [EMAIL ADDRESS OF LA]

Subject: USDA FNS WIC Child Retention Survey

Dear [LA CONTACT NAME]:

The USDA Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) has contracted with 2M Research and its subcontractor, Mathematica, to conduct a study of the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) to examine why child participants discontinue participation in WIC and to identify local policies and practices that may help improve child retention in WIC.

The Study Team requests your help with selecting a participant to complete a 20-minute survey about child retention in WIC. Please nominate a WIC clinic-level staff member affiliated with any of your WIC local agency (LA) sites who meets ALL of the following criteria:

- Works directly with WIC participants, performs clinic-level duties, and who is also knowledgeable of the certification process, caseload management, and/or local agency no-show follow up for child participants.
- Has [FILL WITH YEARS OF EXPERIENCE CATEGORY] performing clinic-level duties and working directly with WIC participants at clinic sites operated by your LA. *If no one has the desired years of experience, we prefer you select a clinic-level staff member with a minimum of 2 years of experience.*
- Usually works full-time, primarily at the clinic level (*if no staff are full-time, then please consider a part-time staff member*).

Should no one in your WIC LA sites fulfill the requirements above, you may self-nominate if you believe you fulfill the provided criteria.

Please reply to this message with the name, phone number, email, and clinic name and address of a WIC clinic-level staff member who meets the above criteria and is willing to participate in the survey.

WIC Clinic-Level Staff Member Name	
Phone Number	
Email	
Clinic Name and Address	

We have included a Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) attachment that should answer any questions about the study. For other questions about this study, please contact the Study Team by email at usdawicretention@2mresearch.com or by phone at **1-877-440-0050** (toll-free) from 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Eastern Time Monday through Friday. If you call outside of these hours, please leave a message, and we will return your call the following business day. The FNS contact person for this study is Alexander Bush, who may be reached by email at Alexander.Bush@usda.gov.

Thank you in advance for your help with this study.

Linda Piccinino

Project Director | 2M Research

Enclosed: FNS Endorsement and Frequently Asked Questions

This information is being collected to assist the Food and Nutrition Service in understanding why children ages 1 to 4 years leave the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC). This is a voluntary collection and FNS will use the information to better understand Local Agency strategies related to improving child retention in the WIC Program. This collection does not request any personally identifiable information under the Privacy Act of 1974. According to the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, an agency may not conduct or sponsor, and a person is not required to respond to, a collection of information unless it displays a valid OMB control number. The valid OMB control number for this information collection is 0584-0613. The time required to complete this information collection is estimated to average 0.29 hours per response, including the time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information. Send comments regarding this burden estimate or any other aspect of this collection of information, including suggestions for reducing this burden, to U.S. Department of Agriculture, Food and Nutrition Service, Office of Policy Support, 1320 Braddock Place, Room 555, Alexandria, VA 22314 ATTN: PRA (0584-0613). Do not return the completed form to this address.



FNS Letter of Endorsement

The USDA Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) has contracted with 2M Research and its subcontractor, Mathematica, to conduct a study to better understand why eligible child participants leave the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) and to identify local policies and practices that may help improve child retention in WIC. This study is part of a new FNS effort to facilitate quick-turnaround studies through short on-line surveys designed to be less burdensome for WIC State and local agency staff.

WIC clinic-level staff across the country will be invited to participate in a 20-minute survey to share their perspectives on child retention in WIC. LA Directors will be asked to identify clinic-level staff members who have direct experience with WIC participants, perform clinic-level duties, and who are also knowledgeable of the certification process, caseload management, and/or local agency no-show follow up for child participants. The Study Team will then reach out directly via email to the identified clinic-level staff members. We anticipate survey data collection will take place from [DATE] to [DATE].

If selected LA or clinic staff reach out to you, we ask that you please encourage their participation in this important study. If you have any questions or need additional information, the FNS contact for this study is Alexander Bush (Alexander.Bush@usda.gov).

Thank you in advance for your assistance.

Sincerely,

Sarah Widor
Director, Supplemental Food Programs Division
USDA Food and Nutrition Service

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Frequently Asked Questions

Q Why is USDA conducting the study?

A This study is being conducted to examine why child participants leave the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC). This information will be used to provide the USDA Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) with recommendations for improving child retention at the Federal, State agency, and local agency (LA) level. Input from clinic-level staff is critical to understand barriers to child retention.

This study will address the following research objectives:

- (1) Identify and describe the reasons why parents, guardians, or caretakers of eligible child participants discontinue receiving WIC benefits before the child turns 5 years old.
- (2) Describe how LAs operationalize certification, scheduling, and other service-related policies and procedures that may promote continued participation among children 1 through 4 years of age.
- (3) Identify clinic staff recommendations for programmatic policies and procedures that could promote continued participation among children 1 through 4 years of age.

Q Why did you select our LA for the survey?

A Your WIC office was chosen to help USDA FNS survey WIC clinic-level staff about reasons why child participants leave WIC, as well as other recommendations WIC clinic-level staff have for improving child retention in WIC. The selected LAs have been chosen as a nationally representative sample across the United States.

Q Are we required to take the survey?

A We kindly request your participation in this study. The Code of Federal Regulations for WIC stipulates that State and local WIC agencies must cooperate in studies and evaluations conducted by or on behalf of the USDA FNS [7 CFR 246.26(k)].

This is also your chance to voice your opinion about ways to improve retention of children in WIC.

Q Who should complete the survey?

A The survey should be completed by a clinic-level staff member affiliated with the LA who meets ALL the following criteria:

- Works directly with WIC participants, performs clinic-level duties, and who is also knowledgeable of the certification process, caseload management, and/or LA no-show follow-up for child participants.
- Has the designated experience outlined in the survey notification, preferably a minimum of 2 years at the clinic-level.
- Usually works full-time, primarily at the clinic level (if no staff are full-time, then please consider a part-time staff member).

If you have any more questions about the survey, please call us at **1-877-440-0050** (toll-free) between the hours of 9:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m. Eastern Time Monday through Friday or email us at usdawicretention@2mresearch.com. If you call outside of these hours, please leave a message, and we will return your call the following business day.

Q How does USDA protect the privacy of the information provided?

A Your feedback will only be used for research purposes and may not be disclosed or used in identifiable form for any other purpose. This means that your personal information (name, telephone number, etc.) will be kept confidential, and the answers you provide will not be associated with your personal information or your WIC office. Your answers will be grouped together with other respondents across the country and be reported at the aggregate level. In addition, WIC headquarters will not be able to link your responses to you or your LA.

Q **What if we do not have time or staff to complete the survey?**

A We understand that your time is valuable. The survey has been carefully designed to collect the required information with the least burden to the clinic-level staff member who has direct experience with WIC participants, performs clinic-level duties, and who is also knowledgeable of the certification process, caseload management, and/or LA no-show follow-up for child participants. The study will collect this information using a brief (average of 20 minutes) survey.

Q **Who should I contact if I have questions about the study or survey?**

A If you have questions or concerns, please contact the Study Team by email at usdawicretention@2mresearch.com or by phone at 1-877-440-0050 (toll-free) between the hours of 9:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m. Eastern Time Monday through Friday. If you call us outside of these hours, please leave a message, and we will return your call the following business day.

Q **What is the contact information for the USDA FNS Project Officer?**

A USDA FNS Project Officer: Alexander Bush
Phone: 703-305-2127
Email Address: Alexander.Bush@usda.gov