



Food and Nutrition Service
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

WIC Modernization and Food Package Changes

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Who Does WIC Serve?

- Pregnant and postpartum/breastfeeding women
- About half of all infants in the United States
- Children up to age 5
- Currently reaching 50% of those eligible

WIC Benefits

- Nutritious foods
- Information on healthy eating
- Breastfeeding promotion and support
- Referrals to healthcare and support services



A photograph of three women and their children, overlaid with a teal semi-circular graphic on the right side. The woman on the left has dark curly hair and is wearing a grey sweater. The woman in the middle has long dark hair and is wearing a brown top. The woman on the right has dark curly hair and is wearing a striped shirt. They are all smiling and holding their children. The child on the left is a young girl with dark hair, wearing a pink shirt and white pants. The child in the middle is a young girl with blonde hair, wearing a white shirt and white pants. The child on the right is a young girl with dark hair, wearing a white shirt and white pants.

**WIC is uniquely positioned to reduce
disparities in maternal and child
health outcomes.**

Who Are We Reaching?

Coverage rates, among those who are participating:

- 81.9% of post-partum breastfeeding women
- 81.7% of infants
- 45.6% of pregnant women
- 23.8% of 4-year-old children



www.fns.usda.gov/wic/program-participant-characteristics-2020





USDA's WIC Modernization Goals

- Enroll more eligible families.
- Retain all eligible participants.
- Increase redemption of food benefits.
- Expand program access and equity among diverse populations.

WIC Shopping Must be Simple and Convenient





Expanding Online Shopping

Advancing Equity so WIC Shoppers Can Shop Like Other Shoppers

- Pursuing rulemaking
- Offering waivers to bridge the gap
- Providing grants and technical support to State agencies

WIC Must be Easy to Access

A young child with short brown hair, wearing a red hoodie, is smiling and holding a small piece of orange fruit in their right hand. The background is a blurred outdoor market or festival setting with various stalls and people. On the left side of the image, there is a green rectangular overlay containing the text "WIC Must be Easy to Access" in white, with a small orange horizontal line below it.



Telehealth

- Technology gives families access to experts
- We are leveraging technology to advance WIC's nutrition services
- Making services available virtually is especially important in rural and remote areas

VENA – Value Enhanced Nutrition Assessment

- **2006 VENA Guidance Issued**
- **2020 VENA Guidance Updated**
 - Nutrition and health determinants
 - Outcomes
 - Behavior change
 - Continuous improvement through observation and evaluation
 - The use of technology



Using VENA to Guide WIC Services

Resources for Trainers and Mentors



VENA

Value Enhanced Nutrition Assessment in
the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program
for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC)

Training Resources

- Released December of 2023
- Tools Include:
 - Online modules
 - PowerPoint with lesson plans and lecture notes
 - Facilitated group discussions
 - Tools for practicing skills

Guided Goal Setting – Helping Participants Meet Their Goals



Individual Learning

- Online modules
- Practice ideas for CPAs
- Desktop tipsheets

Group Learning

- Facilitated group discussions
- Activities
- Observational tools

Enhancing WIC Appointments While Using Technology

Technology Resources

- Using Technology to Optimize VENA
- Using Technology to Conduct Remote WIC Appointments



We are Supporting the WIC Workforce



www.fns.usda.gov/wic/modernization/investing-workforce

The WIC Food Packages - Nourishing the Future



www.fns.usda.gov/wic/food-package-qas



WIC Food Packages are Supplemental

- The food packages build on what participants already eat for a balanced and nutritious diet during critical times of development

WIC Supplemental Foods

Federal regulations specify amounts and categories of food in each food package.
WIC State agencies develop product list with authorized foods.



Fruits and vegetables
(cash-value benefit)



Legumes & eggs



Peanut butter



Whole-grain cereals



Infant cereal, meats, and
fruits and vegetables



Juice



Canned fish



Milk & milk substitutions



Whole-grain options



Infant formula

PROPOSED UPDATES TO THE WIC FOOD PACKAGES



OVERVIEW

WIC is a powerful public health program, proven to help moms, babies, and young children thrive. USDA's Food and Nutrition Service is recommending science-based updates to the food provided to WIC participants to best meet their nutritional needs and foster healthy growth and development. Some of the proposed changes are highlighted below.



BREASTFEEDING SUPPORT

Increase support for mothers who mostly, but not exclusively, breastfeed to support individual breastfeeding goals



FRUITS AND VEGETABLES

Increase fruit and vegetable benefit by 3-4x, focus on whole fruit, and increase variety of fruits, veggies, and legumes offered



SEAFOOD

Improve access to canned fish to reflect the latest dietary guidance



DAIRY AND EGGS

Provide more options, such as different sizes of yogurt containers or substituting soy yogurt for milk or tofu for eggs



GRAINS

Expand whole grain options to include things like quinoa, blue cornmeal, and whole wheat bagels

REVIEW OF WIC FOOD PACKAGES Improving Balance and Choice

Final Report



The National Academies of
SCIENCES • ENGINEERING • MEDICINE



DGA Dietary Guidelines for Americans
2020 - 2025

Make Every
Bite Count With
the Dietary
Guidelines



DietaryGuidelines.gov

**USDA received over 17,000
submissions, including 1,795
unique comments.**





The revised WIC Food Packages
advance nutrition security and equity.

A pregnant woman with dark hair and sunglasses on her head is looking down at a basket of fresh vegetables in a grocery store. She is wearing a blue t-shirt and a red jacket. The background shows shelves stocked with various food items.

More choices to ensure access
to essential nutrients that support
healthy growth and development.



More balance to address
key nutritional needs and
support healthy dietary patterns.



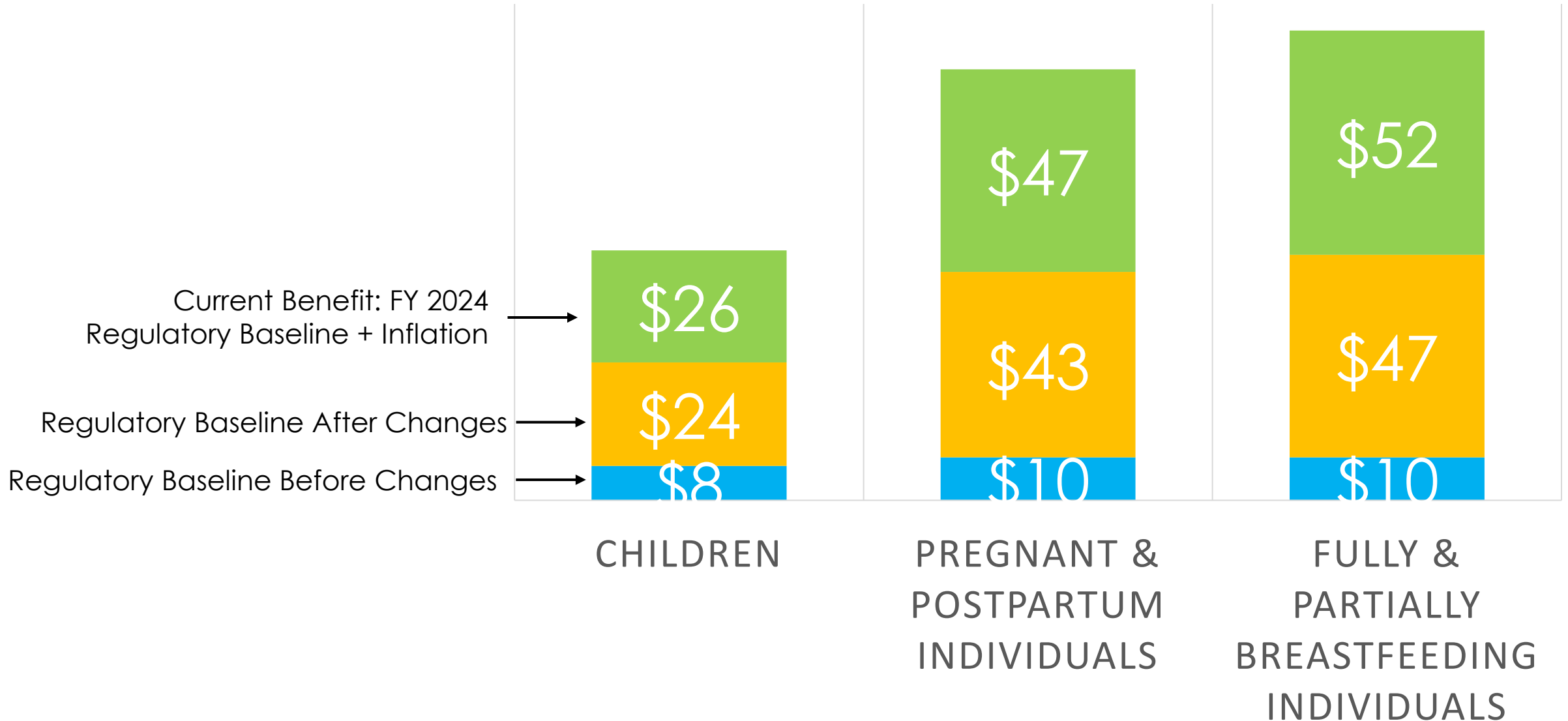
The changes provide **more flexibility** to accommodate personal and cultural food preferences and special dietary needs.



WIC Participants will have better access to the variety of key nutrients found in fruits and vegetables.

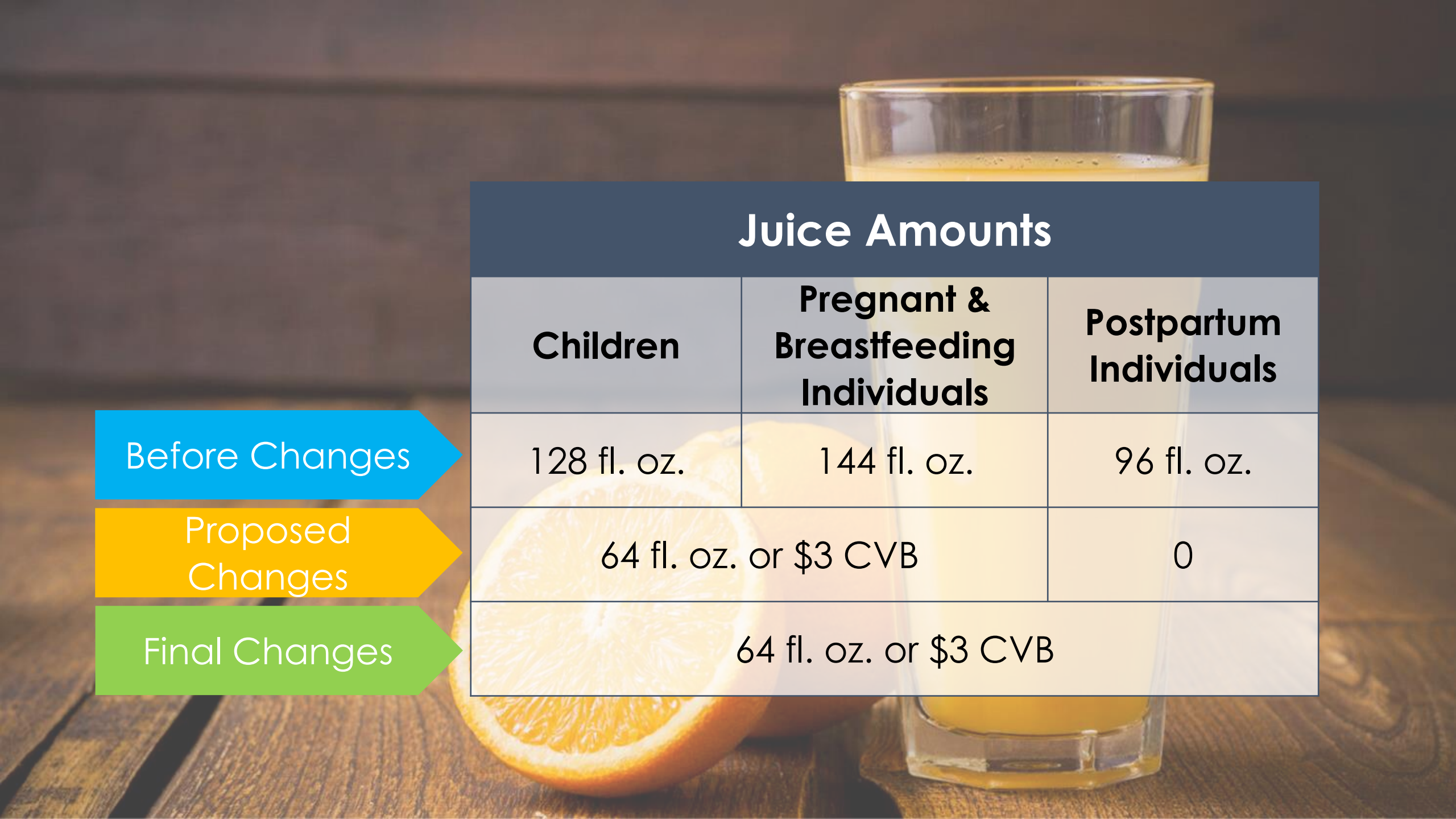


We are encouraging participants to eat more fruits and vegetables by increasing the Cash-Value Benefit (CVB).



We are
recalibrating **juice**
amounts to better
align with current
nutritional science.



A glass of orange juice and an orange slice on a wooden surface.

Juice Amounts

Children

**Pregnant &
Breastfeeding
Individuals**

**Postpartum
Individuals**

Before Changes

128 fl. oz.

144 fl. oz.

96 fl. oz.

Proposed
Changes

64 fl. oz. or \$3 CVB

0

Final Changes

64 fl. oz. or \$3 CVB

We will continue to support access to wholesome **dairy** products, including milk, which contains important nutrients.





We are **providing more substitution options for milk** for more flexibility and variety, and to better accommodate participants' special dietary needs and cultural eating patterns.





Milk Amounts

Children		Pregnant & Partially Breastfeeding Individuals	Fully Breastfeeding Individuals	Postpartum Individuals
12 – 23 months	2 – 4 years			
16 qt.		22 qt.	24 qt.	16 qt.
12 qt.	14 qt.	16 qt.		
12 qt.	14 qt.	16 qt.		

Before Changes

Proposed Changes

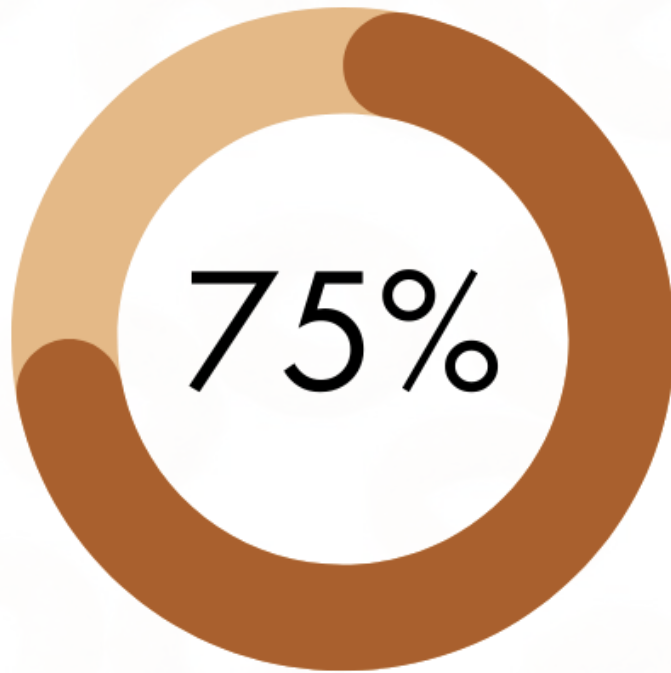
Final Changes

We are encouraging participants to eat more **whole grains** by strengthening whole grain standards and providing more variety.

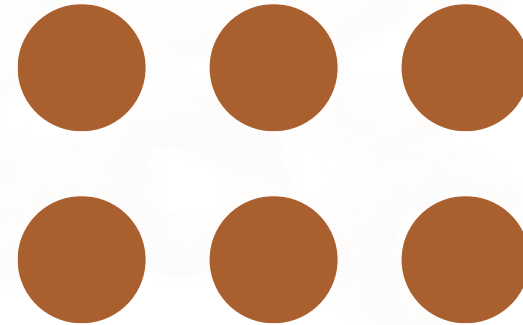


Participants will receive a better balance of whole wheat and whole grain bread.

Whole Wheat & Whole Grain Bread, Whole Grain Options Amounts	
	Pregnant, Breastfeeding, & Postpartum Individuals
Children	
Before Changes	32 oz.
Proposed Changes	16 oz.
Final Changes	48 oz.
	48 oz.



of breakfast cereals
must be whole
grain.



Breakfast cereals must
contain ≤ 6 grams added
sugar per 1 dry ounce.

We are adding
canned fish to more
food packages to
increase equitable
access to this under-
consumed, nutrient-
rich food.





WIC State agencies can **authorize nut and seed butters** to accommodate special dietary needs, cultural eating patterns, or participant preferences.

The final changes to
infant feeding
encourage healthy
dietary habits at an
early age.



With the **revised CVB**, parents and caretakers can introduce infants to a wider variety and texture of fruits and vegetables at an earlier age.



Implementation Timeline

Revised CVB
amounts for
participants

60 days

June 17, 2024

Majority of
provisions

24 months

April 20, 2026

Vitamin D
requirement
for yogurt

36 months

April 19, 2027



Learn more about the final changes to the WIC Food Packages

fns.usda.gov/wic/wic-food-packages

Thank You

