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DHEC Provides WIC Participants Access to Increased Food Choices During COVID-19 Pandemic

COLUMBIA, S.C. – In response to demand for nutritious foods during the COVID-19 pandemic, DHEC is providing additional food items to South Carolina WIC participants.

“Currently there is no disruption to the food distribution supply chain, however some participants have experienced food item shortages due to people purchasing more food items than normal,” **said South Carolina State WIC Director Berry Kelly.** “By expanding food options on WIC approved items, our WIC families will have more flexibility and increased access to nutritious foods.”

Beginning April 27, 2020, and until further notice, participants will have more purchasing options for milk, yogurt, fruits, and vegetables.

The following changes will go into effect:

- Participants can purchase 1% milk, non-fat milk, 2% milk, lactose-free 2% milk, lactose-free 1% milk, lactose-free non-fat milk, or soymilk.
- Participants can purchase any fat content of yogurt (Whole, Low-fat, or Non-fat).
- Participants who choose to receive Cash Value Benefits (CVB) instead of infant baby foods can purchase fresh, frozen, or canned fruits and vegetables.

This latest expansion is another way that DHEC is helping South Carolina’s WIC participants stay well during the pandemic. In March, WIC [expanded food items](#) that participants could purchase

at stores where supplies were running low and [began offering 100 percent of WIC nutritional services over-the-phone](#) in early April.

“Year-round, our WIC program is focused on helping pregnant women, infants and children eat healthy, nutritious meals,” **said Kelly.** “Unique circumstances, like COVID-19 have challenged us to find new and creative ways to continue providing services and nutritious foods to our state’s WIC participants.”

These changes were made possible by programmatic waivers issued by the United States Department of Agriculture in response to COVID-19 and product shortages.

DHEC encourages South Carolina families who are experiencing loss of income related to COVID-19 to apply to our WIC program. Since March, more than 4,000 new participants have enrolled in South Carolina’s WIC program. To apply for WIC, call 1-[855-472-3432](#) to make an appointment. If you are a WIC participant and have questions or concerns, please contact your local [WIC office](#).

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