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DOH Launches Updated WIC Food Packages for Infants, Expands Access to Nutritious Options

The VI Department of Health has launched updated WIC food packages for infants, including increased monthly benefits, earlier eligibility, and more flexible food options. Expanded benefits for women and children will follow later this year.

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The V.I. Department of Health's Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) Program has officially launched the first phase of newly updated food packages aimed at improving nutrition for participating families across the territory. The rollout, which began Tuesday, focuses on infants and marks a key step in a nationwide effort led by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) to promote healthier dietary outcomes.

The updated food packages include expanded food choices, permanent increases in the monthly cash value benefits for fruits and vegetables, and adjustments that align with the latest science-based nutritional guidelines. The enhancements are designed to provide greater nutritional value and more flexibility for families.

According to Health Commissioner Justa Encarnacion, the changes are a crucial step in helping Virgin Islands families access the healthy foods they need. “The VI Department of Health is proud to support these much-needed enhancements to the WIC Program that make it easier for families in the Virgin Islands to access nutritious food, especially in collaboration with the VI Department of Agriculture,” said Encarnacion. “By increasing the value of fruits and vegetables and offering culturally appropriate options, we are empowering families to make healthier choices from the start—supporting lifelong wellness.”

The current phase focuses on infants, with broader changes for women and children scheduled for rollout later this year as part of phase two.

Key updates to the WIC food packages include:

- A permanent increase in monthly cash value benefits for fruits and vegetables:
 - \$26 for children
 - \$47 for pregnant and postpartum women
 - \$52 for fully or partially breastfeeding women
 - \$22 for infants receiving cash value benefits instead of jarred baby food
- Earlier eligibility for infant cash value benefits, beginning at 6 months instead of 9 months
- Expanded options for whole grains and non-dairy substitutes
- Inclusion of fresh herbs under the fruit and vegetable benefit

“These changes demonstrate our ongoing commitment to offering greater variety—more fresh produce, more flexibility—and support healthy eating habits from infancy onward,” said Lorna Concepcion, Director of the USVI WIC Program. “It is a privilege to introduce these updated infant packages to our WIC families.”

WIC participants across the U.S. Virgin Islands can begin accessing the updated infant food packages starting this month, DOH said. The WIC Program continues to offer a range of services that promote health and well-being for women, infants, and young children, including nutrition education, breastfeeding support, and access to healthy foods.

For more information about the WIC food package updates, visit the USDA Food and Nutrition Service website at fns.usda.gov/wic.

To apply for WIC benefits or learn more about local program services, visit doh.vi.gov/women-infants-and-children or contact your local clinic at 340-718-9157 or 340-776-1770.

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