

WWA NEWS BREAK



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Advocacy & Legislative Updates

The National WIC Association Policy Conference 2025:

Key Takeaways:

The NWA Policy Conference brought together leaders, advocates, and policymakers to discuss the latest developments in maternal and child nutrition, WIC modernization, and food security. Held in Washington, D.C., this year's conference focused on strategies to strengthen WIC programs, improve accessibility, and advocate for policy changes that benefit families nationwide.

Key Highlights:

- ◆ WIC Modernization: Experts shared updates on digital tools, online shopping pilots, and expanded outreach efforts to improve program participation.
- ◆ Advocacy in Action: Attendees engaged with lawmakers to push for stronger nutrition policies and increased funding.
- ◆ Research & Data: New findings reinforced the importance of WIC in reducing food insecurity and improving health outcomes for mothers and children.

Full WIC Funding Secured

A major victory for WIC advocates—Congress passed a Continuing Resolution (CR) ensuring full funding for WIC in Fiscal Year 25. This critical step prevents enrollment cuts and guarantees access to nutrition support for all eligible families.

As we move forward, continued advocacy and collaboration will be essential in shaping policies that support equitable access to nutrition. Stay tuned for updates on how you can get involved!

The WIC Action Network holds calls the 2nd Wednesday of each month 2:30pm CST (**new** date/time as of October 2024), sharing the latest updates on WIC Policy, legislative activity and advocacy opportunities. Meetings are open to all WWA/NWA members. **Don't miss out – register today!**





NWA Policy Conference Summaries

Alex Forsythe, Registered Dietitian at 16th St WIC, Milwaukee:

"Thank you to WWA for providing me with the opportunity to attend the virtual NWA Policy Conference. The conference taught me how to better advocate for WIC and renewed my sense of passion for the program. It was inspiring hearing from WIC legends in the

advocacy world and how they have used their voices to strengthen the program over the past thirty plus years. I learned that for every dollar invested in WIC, approximately \$2.48 is returned in healthcare cost savings. To me, it's a no brainer - WIC works!

My favorite part of the conference was sharing impact stories from my local agency to the staffers of Wisconsin legislators during the virtual Capitol Hill Education Day. It was reassuring learning that most state staffers, regardless of political affiliation, seemed to care about the WIC program and families we serve. Three main asks were shared during Capitol Hill Day including full funding for WIC in Fiscal Year 26, making remote services permanent, and advancing the new food package without delay.

During the unprecedented times our country is facing, I am so grateful I had the opportunity to attend the policy conference and advocate for the WIC program. Our voices truly matter, and the future of the program depends on it! Never underestimate your abilities at the local level to move the needle."

Ashely Chrisinger, Project Director at Portage County WIC

"As a new WIC employee, this conference gave me great insight into what shapes our program, and why WIC functions the way it does at the ground level - from the info collected from families to the balance of nutrition in the food packages. It was eye opening to meet legislative staff on Hill Day. I was hesitant about how effective this would be virtually but seeing them as just another person on a zoom screen was perfect. They're all human too.

I learned a lot from the questions they asked, and the info that they seemed most interested in. It's clear that there is an administrative agenda that changes year to year; a language that catches staffers attention, and WIC seems to be keeping up with this such as the naming of the WIC "modernization" act. This experience also showed how engaged national WIC has been with legislators and gave me a lot of security in a time when politics and the future of community programs feels very insecure.

At the end of an appropriately intense Hill Day, it was reassuring to see that WIC is in fact a bipartisan program. Both sides support the program for different reasons, and now I know how to speak to both sides.

After this experience, I am prepared to better communicate with my legislators and their staffers. If I don't get the opportunity to speak with them virtually or in person, I'll better know how to send a letter or email that speaks to why they currently support WIC, and why to continue. Thanks so much for your support in my attendance."

Advocacy Opportunities

TAKE ACTION TO SUPPORT WIC

Use NWA's action alert to send a message to legislators urging them to support the resources needed to ensure WIC can continue to support families with nutritious options and streamlined access.

Take Action Now!
bit.ly/WIC/25



INVITE YOUR MEMBER OF CONGRESS OR CONGRESSIONAL STAFF FOR A WIC CLINIC VISIT

NWA is here to help you with resources for your visits. NWA has a recorded webinar available to members so you can learn effective strategies for organizing these visits, engaging clinic staff, and using personal stories to educate Members of Congress on the importance of sustained support for WIC.

Learn more:
bit.ly/wicedu



HELP US COLLECT WIC MILITARY FAMILY STORIES

NWA is leading an advocacy campaign to collect stories from WIC staff and military families. Help share the campaign with your participants!

Spread the word:
bit.ly/wicmilitary



WWA Members Discussion

Thank you to those who attended WWA's first Members Discussion on Thursday, March 11th. The discussion took place via Zoom over the lunch hour and centered around "hot topics" in WIC. Some of the information shared from WWA members included the necessity of remote services at their local agencies in addition to the fear some families are facing related to the future of immigration policies. As a reminder, these calls are a safe place for members to share their experience at the ground level. Based on the post-survey results, in the future, WWA will allow more time for discussion by extending the length of these calls.

During uncertain times, the message remains clear from the State WIC Office: WIC remains fully functioning with no changes in program eligibility. It is "Business as Usual." The flow chart (pictured right) shows communication pathways within WIC.

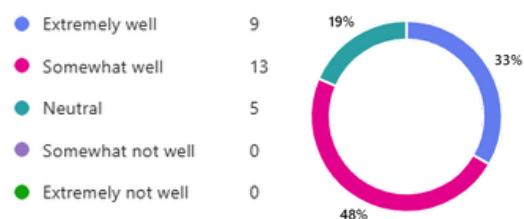


Communication flow chart shows connection local WIC agencies, Wisconsin WIC Association (WWA), State WIC Office and National WIC Association (NWA). Updated March 2025.

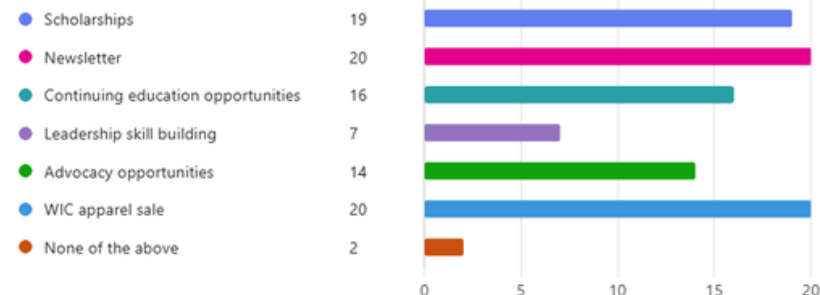
WWA Membership Survey Results 2024

Thanks to the WWA members who completed the annual membership survey. 27 responses were received.

How well are we communicating with WWA members?



Which WWA Membership benefits are you aware of?



Join a WWA Committee!

WWA has four committees supporting different aspects of the association. Please visit the [WWA Committees page](#) to learn about them and see which one would be a good fit for you! All the committees are currently accepting new members. If interested in joining a committee, please sign-up [here](#).

Scholarship Opportunities

Scholarships are available for WWA members to pursue professional development opportunities that impact WIC. Apply for scholarships [here](#). Below are links to other organizations with educational opportunities that positively impact WIC. Scholarships can be used towards WIC related and non-WIC related events.

Professional Development

Upcoming Webinar:

Examining the role of food parenting practices in the development of children's eating behaviors and their relationship with food

Thursday, April 17th 2025 1:00-2:00PM

Meet your Regional Representatives



Kim Damrow, RDN, CD, CLC, Northern Regional Representative
Bay Area WIC Program, Nutrition Coordinator

"Hello! I am the WWA Northern Regional Representative and Past Chair of WWA. I started with WWA in 2023 when I was elected to the board. I have learned about advocacy and what it takes to keep WIC funded "behind the scenes". I encourage all WI WIC staff to learn more about the work we do at a legislative level. I love working with WIC families, especially pregnancy nutrition and lactation support. If I wasn't a WIC superstar, I would be a teacher or full-time homesteader as I love to garden, cook and spend time outside."



Rachel Bauer, RDN, CD, CLS, Northeastern Regional Representative
Kewaunee County WIC, WIC Director

"I have been serving as the NE Regional Representative and WWA secretary since 2022. WWA has taught me a lot about advocacy and the importance of having our voices heard. If I were not a WIC superstar, I would be living up in the UP on the beach searching for cool rocks. My husband is an environmental scientist and in his spare time, he has taken up the hobby of cutting rocks, polishing, and turning them into pendants. I found myself getting sucked into the "rock hunting" part. It is so relaxing and the feeling I get from the long day of walking/hiking to remote locations and finding cool rocks brings me a joy that I can't even begin to explain. I would love to live in Grand Maris or Munising, my two favorite places so far. I absolutely LOVE the clarity of Lake Superior."



Amy Richter, MS, RDN, CD, Western Regional Representative
Pierce - Pepin WIC, Registered Dietitian

"I'm honored to serve as the Western Region Representative for the Wisconsin WIC Association, supporting local agencies and advocating for strong, equitable access to WIC services. With a background in nutrition and health, I'm passionate about helping families thrive through nutrition and community support. Outside of work, I enjoy biking, walks with our dogs, Bebe and Archie, cooking Middle Eastern meals with my fiancé, and tending to our garden. If I was not a WIC superstar, I'd be an anthropologist working along side Dr. Bones at the Smithsonian."



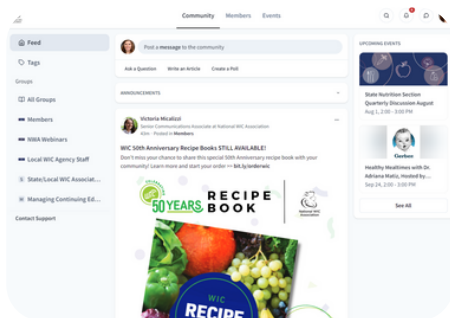
Alex Forsythe, MS, RDN, CD, CLC, Southeastern Regional Representative
Sixteenth Street WIC, Registered Dietitian

"Greetings! I have been serving as the SE Regional Representative the past year and a half. I love WIC! It was the first setting I worked in as a RD in Visalia, CA and am happy to now be a part of WI WIC. Serving on the WWA board and Connection Committee has advanced my professional skill development and ignited my passion for advocacy work. If I was not a WIC superstar, I'd be a flight attendant. I love customer service and traveling. I think that lifestyle would suit me well."

Emily Seltzner, MS, RDN, CD, Southern Regional Representative
Columbia County WIC, WIC Director

WWA Chair Beth Scheelk is the temporary contact for the Southern Regional while Emily is on leave. Please direct questions to Beth.scheelk@outagamie.org.

WWA is seeking applications for [At-Large Representatives](#) for the 2025-2027 term. If you are interested in becoming part of the board, please submit an [application here](#). We look forward to continuing to diversify our team with a variety of WIC staff members.



NWA Membership Information

Did you know all Wisconsin WIC staff are members of the National WIC Association? Here to [log in](#).

NWA has an online Member Community where you can connect and share with other WIC staff across the country and access webinars and other resources. Access the online member community [here](#). NWA website and Online Member Community use the same login information.

2025 WWA Board



Executive Committee

Chair: Beth Scheelk

Vice Chair: Vacant

Past Chair: Kim Damrow

Secretary: Rachel Bauer

Treasurer: Shawn Handfelt

Past Treasurer: Morgan Thums

Regional Representatives

Northern: [Kim Damrow](#)

Northeastern: [Rachel Bauer](#)

Southeastern: [Alex Forsythe](#)

Southern: [Emily Seltzer](#)

Western: [Amy Richter](#)

At-Large Representatives

[Alyssa Gallon](#)

[Beth Scheelk](#)

[Heidi McCann](#)

[Marlena Oechsner](#)

[Morgan Thums](#)

[Shawn Handfelt](#)

WWA Meetings & Minutes

Board Meetings are open to WWA Members.
Upcoming meeting dates, times and link:

- [April 30th, 2025 Spring Business Meeting-Closed](#)
- [May 22, 2025 12-1 pm](#)
- [June 26th, 2025, 12-1 pm](#)
- [July 24th, 2025, 12-1 pm](#)

**[View Recent
Board
Meeting
Minutes
Here](#)**

