

# WWA NEWS BREAK



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## NWA Announces 2026 WIC Priorities

This year, NWA has four key policy priorities:

- **Fully fund WIC through appropriations:** For nearly 30 years, Congress has worked on a bipartisan basis to fully fund WIC and serve every eligible applicant. It is critical that lawmakers uphold this commitment to protect participant trust and safeguard WIC's longstanding public health success. This includes providing the full evidence-based food package.
- **Maintain modern service delivery:** USDA modernization waivers have significantly advanced service delivery, most notably by allowing WIC agencies to offer virtual appointments by phone or video, reducing barriers like transportation for families. However, unless Congress acts, these critical flexibilities will expire on September 30, 2026, reversing years of progress. NWA calls on Congress to modernize WIC's physical presence requirement and create permanent hybrid services to preserve participants' access and choice.
- **Protect WIC access and eligibility:** Given recent efforts to restrict eligibility for basic needs programs, it is critical to ensure WIC remains accessible to all eligible families, including immigrant and mixed-status families. NWA urges lawmakers to reject any attempts to limit access to WIC; to protect participant data from being used for non-program purposes; and to uphold WIC's foundational role as a public health program that maintains community trust.
- **Prevent dismantling of critical administrative infrastructure:** WIC State Agencies rely on the collaboration and expertise of USDA FNS program staff. Since January 2025, FNS has lost more than 500 of its 1,800-member staff, leading to challenges and delays in WIC operations. Reorganization plans for USDA risk further staff loss. NWA calls on Congress to urge USDA to pause reorganization plans until stakeholder feedback is fully considered and ensure departmental changes do not jeopardize the infrastructure and expertise WIC staff depend on.

More information is shared in the [2026 Policy Agenda](#).

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.

## Advocacy Opportunities

### Save the Date: 2026 NWA Virtual Policy Conference and Hill Day

The National Policy Conference runs from February 24–26, 2026, and is NWA’s annual forum to explore emerging and pressing WIC policy issues, strengthen leadership skills, and prepare for effective WIC advocacy at the local level – including topics for Hill Day visits.

The conference concludes with NWA’s Annual Capitol Hill Education Day on Thursday, February 26, offering members the opportunity to virtually engage with Congressional leaders and their staff about the importance of WIC’s services.

All WIC staff are encouraged to participate in Hill Day, especially in meetings with legislators from their own districts. WWA will share meeting details as they are confirmed. If you are interested in participating please send email to [wic.wi.association@gmail.com](mailto:wic.wi.association@gmail.com).

If you are registered to attend we would love to hear your thoughts and opportunities to learn from your experience.

## 2026 Members Discussion Dates

WWA will begin its second year of hosting Members Discussions.

Members discussions are held and open to all WWA members to discuss challenges, current WIC topics, ideas for WWA, etc.. What makes these discussions unique is that all local WIC agency staff are welcome to attend, they are closed to local agency staff only (no regional or state WIC staff, and they are not recorded).

WWA co-chairs will bring forth any pressing issues to the State WIC office in an anonymous way.

Dates with registration links below. Please see the [WWA Calendar](#) for these and more offerings.

[February 19<sup>th</sup> 12:00-1:00pm](#)    [May 19<sup>th</sup> 12:00-1:00pm](#)  
[August 19<sup>th</sup> 12:00-1:00pm](#)    [November 18<sup>th</sup> 12:00-1:00pm](#)

## WIC Action Network

NWA holds a monthly call the 2nd Wednesday of each month at 2:30pm CST, 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!](#)

Find your Congressional District Representatives and Senators [here](#).

### **Collect WIC Testimonials!**

Have you heard stories about the impact WIC has on the families you serve? WWA wants to hear them! Use the link to have a WIC staff or participant share their story. Topics related to the Modern WIC Act are especially helpful at this time!



### **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](https://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](https://bit.ly/wicmilitary)



## Professional Development

### Scholarship Opportunities

Scholarships are available for WWA members to pursue professional development opportunities that impact WIC. Apply for scholarships [here](#).

Scholarships can be used towards WIC sponsored and non-WIC sponsored events. Below are some organizations that put on continuing education that would fit the scholarship requirements.

If you have questions about scholarships, please email WWA at [wic.wi.association@gmail.com](mailto:wic.wi.association@gmail.com)

[Apply here!](#)



## 2026 Conferences

### WALC Conference

March 5-6, 2026

Oshkosh Marriott Waterfront Hotel & Convention Center, Oshkosh

Early bird registration ends 2/2/2026

### WAND Conference

April 16<sup>th</sup>, 2026

The Ingleside Hotel, Pewaukee

### National WIC Association 2026

- Virtual National Policy Conference (Feb 24-26)
- In Person Annual Education & Training Conference in Dallas, TX (May 27-30)
- In Person Nutrition Education & Breastfeeding Conference in Atlanta, GA (Nov 16-18)



## 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 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](#).

## Local Agency Spotlight - Washington Ozaukee

On December 16<sup>th</sup>, the Washington Ozaukee Public Health Department distributed holiday toys to 82 WIC families with 181 children. Our Holiday Toy Give Away day takes a great amount of planning and teamwork to make the day a success.

The toys are donated in partnership with the United Way of Ozaukee County and Kapco Kids2Kids. All families who attended also received nutrition education from the community event. The event was also featured in the Ozaukee Press:

Submitted by:  
Marlena Oechsner, BFPC at  
Washington Ozaukee WIC

Has your agency recently done something noteworthy?

Please email advocacy, community events, or agency milestones to be in the Local Agency Spotlight for the next WWA Newsletter!

### It's a Christmas toy giveaway in Ozaukee County



The Washington Ozaukee Public Health Department's Women, Infants and Children (WIC) program, in partnership with United Way and Kapco Kids2Kids, made some children's Christmas a lot brighter last week at the Ozaukee County Administration Center by distributing toys collected by Kapco. Helping distribute toys were (left photo) Washington Ozaukee Public Health Nurse Emily Jacoby and (photo at right, left to right) WIC nutritionists Amanda Mandl and Alexia Arolano. "This year we were able to help bring the magic of Christmas to 82 families with 181 children at our site. This is one of our department's favorite days of the year," Washington Ozaukee Public Health Director Kim Buechler said.



## WWA Committee Spotlight - Executive Committee

The Executive Committee is made up of two co-chairs, two co-treasurers and a secretary. It is elected and supported by the 11 member board and serves as the foundation of the Wisconsin WIC Association for moving the organization forward. This committee provides general oversight of WWA board, operations and maintains integrity of the association as a liaison for all members.

Our 2026 goal is to **increase engagement with WWA members**. As we work to achieve the vision of WWA, to be the leader in advocating for the voices of the WIC community, we hope to provide members with opportunities, education and information on becoming advocates for WIC and your community. We look forward to connecting in 2026!



"My name is Rachel Bauer, and I serve as the WWA Secretary and Northeast Region Representative. In my role as Secretary, I attend all WWA Board meetings and am responsible for recording and maintaining official meeting minutes. I also manage the board member roster, which I am currently updating for 2026.

I value this position because it allows me to gain insight into the activities and initiatives of the various WWA committees. Serving as Secretary has been an excellent opportunity to learn more about WWA and understand how the organization functions as a whole. In my capacity as the WWA Northeast Region Representative, I share this information with local administration during regional meetings to support communication and alignment." -Rachel

## WWA WIC Apparel Online Store

The WWA Apparel sale is still going strong. Need some new office swag? New items added! Check out some of the orders so far!



Outagamie County WIC  
Item DT6105  
Heathered Sage and  
Heathered Grey



Bay Area WIC  
Crew: DT6154  
Hoodie: DT6150  
Color: Smoky Amethyst

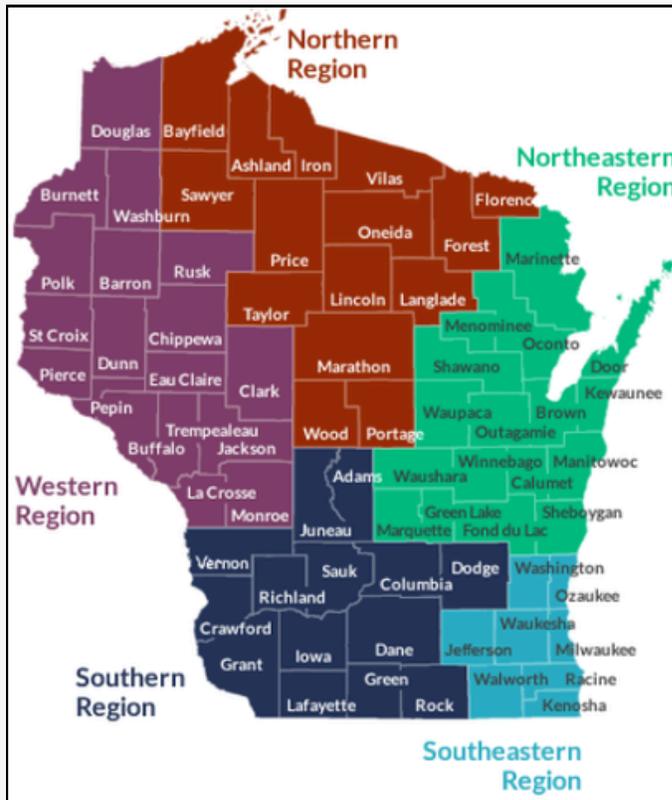


### Help us Celebrate WIC Breastfeeding Support!

Get ready to show your creativity! WWA is excited to announce its 1st Annual T-Shirt Design Contest. This year's theme is **Breastfeeding Promotion**.

Watch for an e-mail from WWA for more details SOON!

## 2026 WWA Board



### Executive Committee

Co-Chair: Beth Scheelk  
 Co-Chair: Robyn Voge  
 Secretary: Rachel Bauer  
 Co-Treasurer: Shawn Handfelt  
 Co-Treasurer: Megan Zanon

### Regional Representatives

Northern: [Kim Damrow](#)  
 Northeastern: [Rachel Bauer](#)  
 Southeastern: [Megan Zanon](#)  
 Southern: [Robyn Voge](#)  
 Western: [Amy Richter](#)

### At-Large Representatives

[Beth Scheelk](#)  
[Heidi McCann](#)  
[Marlena Oechsner](#)  
[Laura Tourdot](#)  
[Shawn Handfelt](#)  
[Jessica Sepers](#)

## WWA Meetings & Minutes

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

### WWA Monthly Board Meetings:

- February 16<sup>th</sup> at 12:00-1:00 pm
- March 16<sup>th</sup> at 12:00-1:00 pm
- April 20<sup>th</sup> at 12:00-1:00 pm
- May 18<sup>th</sup> at 12:00-1:00 pm

### Committee Meetings:

- Advocacy Committee: February 18<sup>th</sup>, 2026 12:00-1:00pm
- Connection Committee: March 12<sup>th</sup> 12:00 - 1:00pm
- Finance Committee: Ad lib
- Professional Development Committee: April 16<sup>th</sup> 12:00-1:00 pm

[View Recent Board Meeting Minutes Here](#)

