



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ABOUT THE INCREASED FRUIT AND VEGETABLE BENEFIT (Updated: 10/14/2021)

What's going on?

Most WIC participants get fruits and vegetables as part of their benefits. Before this year, a woman on WIC could get \$11 per month to buy fruits and vegetables. A child between ages 1-5 could get \$9 per month. Today, those amounts are increased. A breastfeeding woman may receive up to \$47, a pregnant or postpartum woman will receive \$43, and a child will receive \$24 per month through December 2021.

Do all family members get the increased benefit?

This increased benefit goes to most active women and all children between ages 1-5 on WIC. If you are a fully breastfeeding woman on WIC and you have a child between ages 1-5, you will have \$71 of benefits (\$47 + \$24) to spend on fruits and vegetables every month.

When do I see the increased benefit?

If you are on Maryland WIC, you should see the increased benefit right now!

Wait. Didn't we already have increased fruit and vegetable benefits?

Yes. In June 2021, the fruit and vegetable benefit was increased to \$35 per person. Starting in October 2021, the benefit is now up to \$47 per month for a breastfeeding woman, \$43 per month for a pregnant or postpartum woman, and \$24 per month for a child.

Why do we have increased benefits and why did the amounts change in October?

On March 11, 2021, President Biden signed the American Rescue Plan into law. One thing the American Rescue Plan did is increase the fruit and vegetable benefit for WIC participants to \$35 per person. However, the American Rescue Plan only allowed this increase for four months.

On September 30, 2021, President Biden signed the Extending Government Funding and Delivering Emergency Assistance Act (which some people call a "Continuing Resolution") into law. One of the things the Continuing Resolution did was change the fruit and vegetable benefit to up to \$47 for breastfeeding women, \$43 for pregnant and postpartum women, and \$24 for children. These benefit amounts are once a month for the months of October, November, and December 2021.

If the Continuing Resolution had not passed, would the fruit and vegetable benefit have returned to \$11 for women and \$9 for children?

That is correct.

What happens in December?

December will be the last month that you receive the increased fruit and vegetable benefit. The exact timing depends on your benefit start date. For example, if your benefit start date is on the 21st of the month, you will see an increased benefit on December 21.

Does my increased benefit end on December 31?

Probably not! It depends on your benefit start and end date. For example: If your benefits start on December 21, your end date will be January 20, 2022.

Why is this ending in December? Can't this be permanent?

The Continuing Resolution only lasts until December 2021. Extending the WIC fruit and vegetable benefit for longer would require Congress to pass another law. If this is important to you, we encourage you to contact your representatives in Congress to make your voice heard.