



CITY-COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT

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NEWS RELEASE

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WIC Vegetables and Fruits Benefit Increase Improves Nutritional Access

Great Falls, MT – It's the Summer of Veggies! All summer long, Montana's Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children (WIC) is offering increased fruit and vegetable benefits to all WIC participants.

Fruits and vegetables are essential for a healthy diet for pregnant and post-partum women, infants, and children. WIC's vegetable and fruit voucher – known as the Cash Value Benefit (CVB) – was first introduced in 2007 as part of a decades-long effort by the National WIC Association (NWA) to increase the nutritional quality of WIC-approved foods. The CVB is credited with improving the [dietary quality](#) of WIC participants and reducing the prevalence of [childhood obesity](#) among WIC toddlers.

On March 12, 2021, the American Rescue Plan Act authorized State WIC Agencies to enhance the CVB benefit for a period of four months, expanding the vegetable and fruit voucher from \$9/month for children and \$11/month for women to **\$35/month per participant**. Cascade County WIC is implementing the CVB increase from **June 1, 2021 through September 30, 2021**.

Rev. Douglas Greenaway, President & CEO of the National WIC Association, issued the following statement:

"With far too many families struggling during the COVID-19 pandemic to afford the healthy foods that help grow healthy children, this temporary boost to the WIC benefit is an investment in our nation's future," said Rev. Douglas Greenaway, President & CEO of the National WIC Association. "Increased access to vegetables and fruits is a critical step toward ensuring that children have access to vital nutrients, curbing childhood obesity rates while strengthening our local farm economies. In communities across the country, WIC is ready to help as parents continue to navigate the COVID-19 crisis."

For more details on the Summer of Veggies, or to find out if you are eligible for benefits, please call the Cascade County WIC office at **406-868-6897 or 406-454-6953**.

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For media opportunities, please call Ben Spencer: 406-217-8578
If you are a member of the public, please call 406-868-6897 or 406-454-6953