



**POLICY:** All WIC participants shall receive nutrition education according to broad federal regulations, federal and state guidelines and program goals.

**PURPOSE:** To furnish the broad context for providing nutrition education to WIC participants.

**RELEVANT REGULATIONS:** 7 CFR §246.11—Nutrition Education ¶(a) General and ¶(b) Goals  
7 CFR §246.14—Program Costs

**OREGON WIC PPM REFERENCES:** ♦215—Local Program Monitoring and Review  
♦315—Fiscal Reporting Requirements  
♦830—Nutrition Education: Documentation

**DEFINITIONS:** *Nutrition education* Individual or group education sessions and the provision of information and educational materials designed to improve health status, dietary habits and physical activity habits, and to emphasize the relationships between nutrition, physical activity and health, all in keeping with the individual’s personal, cultural, and socioeconomic preferences.

**PROCEDURES:**

**Primary mission: nutrition education** 1.0 The primary mission of the WIC program is to provide nutrition education to participants along with supplemental foods and referrals to other health and social services. Although participation in the WIC program is short-term for most participants, nutrition education is the mechanism to improve the long-term health of participants.

**General federal regulations** 2.0 The federal regulations offer the following general guidance on providing nutrition education:

2.1 “Nutrition education shall be considered a benefit of the Program, and shall be made available at no cost to the participant. Nutrition education shall be designed to be easily understood by participants, and it shall bear a practical relationship to participant nutritional needs, household situations, and cultural preferences including information on how to select food for themselves and their families. Nutrition education shall be thoroughly integrated into participant health care plans, the delivery of supplemental foods, and other Program operations.”

2.2 “The state program shall ensure that nutrition education is made available to all participants. Nutrition education may be provided through the local programs directly, or through arrangements made with other agencies. At the time of certification, the local program shall stress the positive long-term benefits of nutrition

**NUTRITION EDUCATION: Introduction and Overview, cont.**

education and encourage the participant to attend and participate in nutrition education activities. However, individual participants shall not be denied supplemental foods for failure to attend or participate in nutrition education activities.”

**Goals of nutrition education**

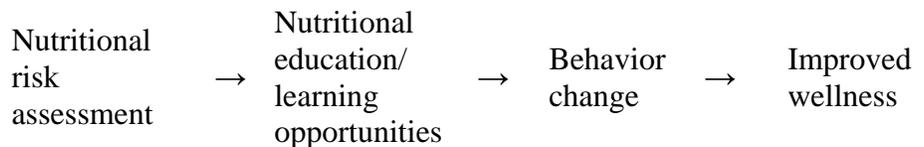
- 3.0 The federal regulations establish the following goals for nutrition education.
  - 3.1 Nutrition education shall be designed to achieve the following two broad goals:
    - “Stress the relationship between proper nutrition and good health with special emphasis on the nutritional needs of pregnant, postpartum, and breastfeeding women; infants and children under five years of age.”
    - “Assist the individual who is at nutritional risk in achieving a positive change in food habits, resulting in improved nutritional status and in the prevention of nutrition-related problems through optimal use of the supplemental foods and other nutritious foods. This is to be taught in the context of the ethnic, cultural and geographic preferences of the participants and with consideration for educational and environmental limitations experienced by the participants.”

**Monitoring**

- 4.0 The state will assure compliance with these federal regulations through health record review and observation at local program monitoring visits. See ♦830—Nutrition Education: Documentation, and ♦215—Local Program Monitoring & Review, for more information.

**Oregon philosophy**

- 5.0 The Nutrition Education Subcommittee adopted the following philosophy statement as part of a long-term plan for the Oregon WIC program in October 1989:
  - 5.1 “Nutritional status is a key component in the health and wellness of individuals and the community as a whole. The purpose of nutrition education is to enable clients (participants) to modify their lifestyles and eating habits in order to improve and/or maintain their nutritional status and general health.
  - 5.2 “The first priority in this plan is to promote the wellness of public health clients and particularly pregnant and breastfeeding women, infants, and children through nutrition education and learning opportunities. The health continuum we strive to follow is:



**NUTRITION EDUCATION: Introduction and Overview, *cont.***

***Fiscal  
requirements  
for nutrition  
education***

- 6.0 Local programs are required to spend at least one-sixth of their yearly grant on nutrition education.
- 6.1 Report nutrition education expenses on the “Revenue and Expenditure Report” and submit this to the state WIC office. See ♦315—Fiscal Reporting Requirements, for details in reporting nutrition education expenses. ★

- REFERENCES:**
- 1. Minutes of the Nutrition Education Subcommittee, Oregon WIC Program, October 1989.

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