



**STATE OF HAWAII**  
*KA MOKU 'ĀINA O HAWAII*

**JOSH GREEN, M.D.**  
GOVERNOR  
*KE KIA'ĀINA*

**DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH**  
*KA 'OIHANA OLAKINO*

**KENNETH S. FINK, M.D., MGA, MPH**  
DIRECTOR  
*KA LUNA HO'OKELE*

**DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES**  
*KA 'OIHANA MĀLAMA LAWELawe KANAKA*

**RYAN I. YAMANE**  
DIRECTOR  
*KA LUNA HO'OKELE*

**HAWAII SNAP AND WIC PROGRAMS WORK TOGETHER  
TO SUPPORT HEALTHY FAMILIES ACROSS THE STATE**

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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HONOLULU — The Hawai'i State Department of Health (DOH) and the Hawai'i State Department of Human Services (DHS) are strengthening coordination between the [Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program \(SNAP\)](#) and the [Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children \(WIC\)](#), to help more families access nutritious food and vital health supports.

SNAP provides monthly food benefits to low-income individuals and families, helping them purchase healthy foods through an Electronic Benefit Transfer (EBT) card accepted at participating grocery stores statewide. WIC complements this support by serving pregnant and postpartum individuals, infants and children under age 5 who are at nutritional risk, offering healthy foods, nutrition education, breastfeeding support and referrals to health and social services.

“When families have access to nutritious food, it supports not just physical health, but stability, dignity and opportunity,” said DHS Director Ryan Yamane. “By strengthening the connection between SNAP and WIC, we are making it easier for families to receive the full range of support available to them during some of life’s most important stages.”

Research shows that WIC participation improves pregnancy outcomes, reduces premature births and infant mortality, supports healthy child development and lowers long-term health care costs. WIC food benefits include fruits and vegetables, milk, cheese, yogurt, eggs, whole grains, infant foods and other nutritious options tailored to the needs of participants.

Families receiving SNAP benefits may be automatically income-eligible for WIC. Through a new referral process, Hawai‘i SNAP now shares monthly referrals with WIC to help identify families who may qualify, but are not yet enrolled. After a referral, WIC staff typically reach out within a few business days by phone, text or email to offer a brief appointment, which can be completed by phone or in person.

“Our goal is to meet families where they are and make the process as welcoming and simple as possible,” said Melanie Murakami, chief of the DOH WIC Services Branch. “WIC is about more than food. It is about supporting healthy pregnancies, healthy keiki and confident caregivers with practical tools and trusted guidance.”

Eligibility for WIC is not based on citizenship status. Hawai‘i residents who are pregnant, postpartum, breastfeeding or have a child under age 5 may qualify if they meet income guidelines and are determined to be at nutritional risk by a health professional. Proof of pregnancy is not required to apply.

Families who are unsure or not ready to enroll can receive additional information and decide later. Participation is voluntary and all services are provided at no cost.

To learn more about the SNAP and WIC programs, including eligibility, visit [snapandwic.hawaii.gov](https://snapandwic.hawaii.gov).

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**Media contacts:**

Brandin Shim  
Information Specialist  
Family Health Services Division  
Hawai‘i State Department of Health

Phone: 808-586-4120

Email: [brandin.shim@doh.hawaii.gov](mailto:brandin.shim@doh.hawaii.gov)

Kristen Wong

Information Specialist

Hawai'i State Department of Health

Mobile: 808-953-9616

Email: [kristen.wong@doh.hawaii.gov](mailto:kristen.wong@doh.hawaii.gov)