



# ALLEGHENY COUNTY

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **WIC Families Urged to Redeem Checks for Free Produce** *Reminder Provided as Part of National Farmers' Market Week*

**PITTSBURGH** – The Allegheny County Health Department (ACHD) is reminding Women, Infants and Children (WIC) families to pick up their Farmers' Market Nutrition Program (FMNP) checks. They will be available through September 29 or until the FMNP checks run out. The reminder comes during the week of August 6 through 12, designated by the U.S. Department of Agriculture as National Farmers' Market Week.

Each WIC participant receives \$20 worth of free Pennsylvania-grown fresh fruits and vegetables, for the summer, at participating farm markets and stands. The vouchers are redeemable at more than 60 participating locations in Allegheny County. To find a location, either call your local WIC office or see the list on the Health Department's WIC website: <http://www.achd.net/wic/2017FMNPList.html>.

"Eating more fruits and vegetables contributes to improved health. As part of our *Live Well Allegheny* campaign, we're encouraging county residents to eat healthier. This is a great way for WIC clients to incorporate more fresh foods in their diet," said Dr. Karen Hacker, ACHD Director.

WIC also urges participants and seniors that have received FMNP checks to use them in August when the best selection of locally grown produce is available. The FMNP checks can be redeemed through November 30, 2017. Even so, health officials strongly suggest WIC families use them sooner as many farm markets and stands close for the season in October and November. Nearly all are closed before the week of Thanksgiving.

WIC is a federally funded program for pregnant or breastfeeding women, postpartum mothers and children under the age of five. Program eligibility is based on income and nutritional risk. The 2017-18 income limits for eligibility start with an annual gross income of \$22,311 for a household of one; \$30,044 for two; \$37,777 for three; \$45,510 for four; and \$53,243 for five. Unborn infants are counted when the woman is pregnant. Allegheny County residents with household sizes larger than five, should contact the Health Department directly for benefit information.

WIC families receive nutrition counseling, breastfeeding support and food vouchers redeemable at participating grocery stores for infant formula; infant cereal; milk; eggs; cheese; juice; cereal; peanut butter; whole grains, including bread, tortillas, oatmeal and rice; soy beverage; tofu; jarred baby foods; dry or canned beans; canned tuna/sardines/pink salmon; and fresh/frozen/canned fruits and vegetables. Certain whole wheat pastas and yogurts have also been added to the WIC food list.

For information about WIC and how to apply for benefits, please call the Allegheny County Health Department WIC Program at **412-350-5801**. If this number is a toll call or you live outside Allegheny County, please call the statewide toll-free number, **1-800-WIC-WINS**, or visit [www.pawic.com](http://www.pawic.com). PA WIC is funded by the USDA. This institution is an equal opportunity provider.

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