



Coordinating SNAP and Nutrition Supports to Reduce Child Hunger



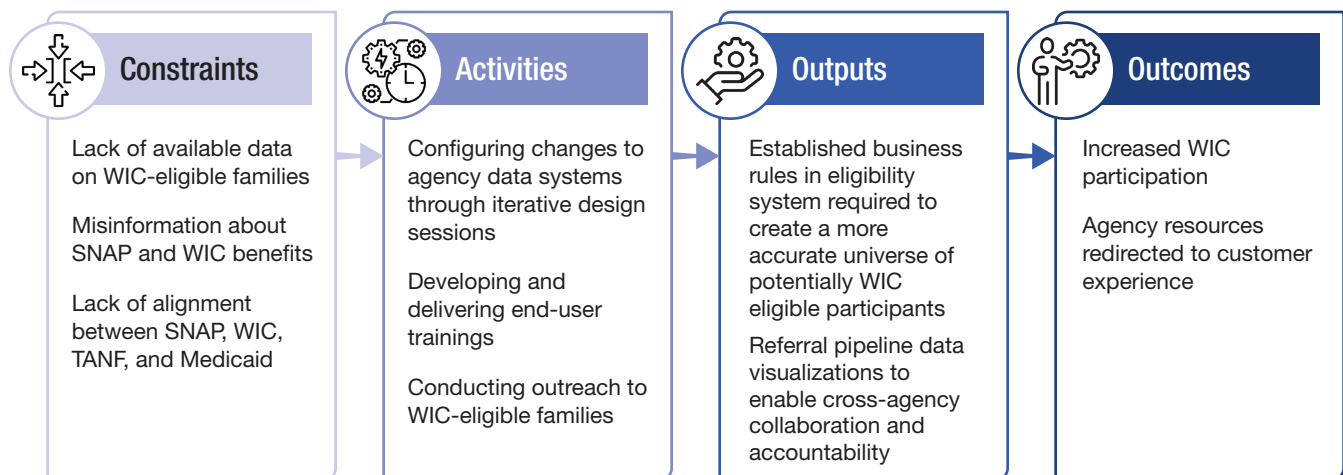
New Mexico Spotlight: *Improving Online Infrastructure to Expand WIC's Reach*

Together, the New Mexico Human Services Department (HSD) and Department of Health (NMDOH) are working to establish new online interfaces that will facilitate exchanges of participant data between the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) and the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) to maximize participation in WIC. This undertaking will create a referral process for households participating in programs including SNAP, TANF cash assistance, and Medicaid to be notified of their likely eligibility for WIC and provide them instructions for enrolling in the program. Over time, the project will enable HSD and DOH to:

Increase WIC Participation	Receiving more accurate and tailored referral data will help DOH conduct proactive and effective outreach to individuals and families who are currently eligible for, but not enrolled in WIC.
Improve Client Experience	Data shared between HSD and NMDOH will be used to reduce duplicate data collection and enable the agencies to prioritize person-centered interactions with WIC participants. Eligibility staff will also receive training about other nutrition supports so they can better support their clients.
Reduce Administrative Burden	Automating exchanges of participant information between SNAP and WIC will allow WIC staff to spend less time on data collection during limited WIC appointment time with clients, instead redirecting focus to client outcomes.

Logic Model

Purpose: To maximize participation in WIC and improve participant experience.



Background and Context: *Building Off New Mexico's Commitment to Collaboration*

New Mexico's project builds off an established culture of collaboration to coordinate family supports and services across state agencies. Recent efforts include:

Participating in New Mexico's Children's Cabinet

SNAP and WIC leaders in the state participate in Governor Michelle Lujan Grisham's Children's Cabinet, which focuses on directing programs to best assist children in New Mexico. This work has pushed HSD and NMDOH to evaluate how they use data to address food insecurity, form new partnerships, and administer new programs like Pandemic EBT to enhance the well-being of children.

Increasing WIC Engagement

After identifying potentially eligible SNAP and Medicaid participants who weren't enrolled in WIC in 2019, HSD and NMDOH employed TANF recipients to help conduct outreach, resulting in thousands of successful referrals.

Problem Identification: *Reimagining Data Sharing to Advance Anti-Hunger Work*

Despite the progress made through these and other efforts, current data sharing methods have limited the ability of HSD and NMDOH to scale anti-hunger strategies in New Mexico. Both agencies are committed to addressing the persistent challenges faced by SNAP and WIC participants and administrators, including:

Identifying WIC-Eligible Families

Because information systems at HSD and NMDOH are not integrated, the participant data housed in these systems cannot be easily leveraged to provide a picture of who is eligible for, but not enrolled in WIC.

Combating Misinformation About SNAP and WIC

Although HSD and NMDOH serve many of the same individuals and families, some clients still believe that they can use only SNAP or WIC, but not both. These misconceptions have also been influenced by lingering chilling effects resulting from the now-overturned public charge rule.






“ In New Mexico, one in five children are affected by hunger. New Mexico Human Services Department is excited to be collaborating with the Department of Health to combat child hunger and improve access to services that help put meals on family's tables. Through our new initiative supported by Share Our Strength's No Kid Hungry campaign and administered by APHSA, HSD will leverage data and technology to proactively connect families who are missing out on critical nutrition supports to the programs for which they qualify. ”

Karmela Martinez
Director, Income Support Division

Project Implementation Plan

HSD and NMDOH are supporting efforts to modernize New Mexico’s infrastructure to raise rates of WIC participation. This approach will gradually relieve both agencies of challenges disconnected information systems present.

 Plan	 Develop	 Implement
<p>Host discovery sessions to document user stories and map integration of agency networks</p> <p>Design formal WIC referral process</p> <p>Solidify technical elements of data exchanges</p>	<p>Configure changes to agency data systems</p> <p>Test cross-program data exchanges</p> <p>Trainings on new referral processes and navigating SNAP and WIC interfaces</p>	<p>Incorporate feedback and finalize online interfaces</p> <p>Generate actionable referral lists for outreach</p> <p>Conduct and track outreach to WIC-eligible families</p>

Long-Term Goals: *Expanding WIC’s Impact in New Mexico and Beyond*

Through their Coordinating SNAP and Nutrition Supports project, HSD and NMDOH will exchange SNAP and WIC case data—such as household demographics, residence, contact information, and income—to streamline WIC enrollment and improve referral conversion rates, cross-agency coordination, and levels of programmatic alignment.

As a minority-majority state, New Mexico will prioritize strategies that serve it’s Black, Latinx, and American Indian or Alaska Native residents who experience food insecurity at higher rates than white individuals in the state. HSD and NMDOH also intend to utilize human-centered design and incorporate the lived experience of people who have used nutrition supports into future service delivery models.



The success of New Mexico’s efforts will be measured by three primary factors: increasing WIC participation, reducing administrative burden on agency staff, and eventually building on the systems changes made under this project to connect eligible households with other health- and income-support programs, such as Medicaid, TANF, and LIHEAP. HSD and NMDOH also plan to share their results with the WIC Mosaic Consortium, a small group of states and Indian Tribal Organizations working together to improve WIC administration, to promote scalability of the progress made under this initiative across states and localities.