

MEMORANDUM
PLACER COUNTY HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES
Community Health & Clinics

TO: Honorable Board of Supervisors

FROM: Richard J. Burton, M.D., M.P.H.
Placer County Health Officer and Director of Health & Human Services
Mark Starr, D.V.M., M.P.V.M., Director of Community Health, Clinics, and Animal Services

DATE: October 11, 2011

SUBJECT: Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) Program FY 2011-12 Funding Application

ACTION REQUESTED:

Approve a funding application with the California Department of Public Health for operation of the Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) Program in Placer County from October 1, 2011 through September 30, 2012 in the maximum amount of \$1,247,000, sign all required application documents and the resulting contract, and authorize the Director of Health & Human Services to sign any subsequent amendments.

BACKGROUND:

The Placer County Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) provides participants with access to scientifically-selected nutrient-rich foods, information on healthy eating, and referrals to health care. The program serves pregnant women, new mothers, infants and young children up to age five who are low-income and determined to be at nutritional risk by a health care professional.

Each year, women and children in Placer County's WIC Program have access to over \$3 million worth of healthy foods from local grocers with program-issued vouchers. These foods are specifically targeted to supplement the diets of over 4,300 children, infants and breastfeeding women with needed nutrients each month, resulting in three balanced healthy meals each day. The vouchers provide supplemental fruits, vegetables, whole grains, cereals, milk, cheese, eggs, juice and other items for child participants and breastfeeding mothers. Those that do not breastfeed receive vouchers for infant formula that meets about two-thirds of their monthly needs. Vouchers for healthy baby foods begin at six months of age. For the 12-month period from July 2010 to June 2011, the program saw 51,844 participants, resulting in an estimated \$3,369,860 in revenue to local grocery stores.

Nutrition and health education are also provided to WIC clients, along with support and information about breastfeeding, help in finding health care and other community services in Placer County, and referrals for food stamps. Beginning in 2010, Placer County WIC also participated in a Farmers Market program that enabled WIC participants to utilize their vouchers to obtain healthy locally grown foods for their families, and the program helped support our local farmers.

Research has shown that every \$1.00 spent on WIC results in estimated savings of \$2.45 in infant health care costs. Children under age three who receive WIC are more likely to be in good health than children who are eligible but do not receive services. Because the brain doubles in size during the first 12 months of life if the nutritional building blocks are provided, WIC has its most protective effect on children in their first year of life. Also, WIC decreases the risk of developmental delays in young children and helps them to be ready to learn when they enter school.

FISCAL IMPACT:

The total award amount of \$1,247,000, a 6% reduction due to Federal cuts, includes 100 % Federal funds. These funds support the program's administrative and staffing costs. The value of the WIC vouchers is separate and, when added to the program funds, contributes over \$4.5 million to the Placer County community. No County General Fund match is required. This revenue is included in the Department's FY 2011-12 Final Budget.

This application is on file with the Clerk of the Board for review.

