DATE: June 5, 2019
TO: WIC Coordinators
FROM: State WIC Staff
SUBJECT: FNS-Sponsored Study --- “Third National Survey of WIC Participants Study”

We just became aware of a study sponsored by USDA/FNS. The State Agency and at least one of our Local Agencies (LAs) were contacted by email and asked to complete a survey. We had no prior knowledge of this study, and regret that we were not able to notify LAs about it prior to their being contacted. We want to share with you what we have learned.

The study is called 3rd National Survey of WIC Participants Study (NSWP-III). The research group (2M Research and Abt Associates) is contacting State Agencies and some Local Agencies by email [the sender is NSWP3 Shared Mailbox (nswp3study@2mresearch.com)].

The primary purposes of NSWP-III are to:
- Produce nationally representative rates of certification error and associated dollar errors from overpayments (to erroneously certified WIC participants) and underpayments (to improperly denied WIC applicants) in the WIC program;
- Understand current and former WIC participant experiences with the WIC program; and
- Systematically gather State and local agency policies, procedures, and characteristics related to certification, food instrument issuance, nutrition, and other services.

To accomplish these objectives, 2M Research will collect data from:
- State and local WIC agencies via an online survey – CURRENT PHASE of the study
- WIC Participants via a combination of in-person & phone interviews about: their eligibility and/or their experience and satisfaction with WIC services; and/or to explore barriers to retention - TO BE DONE LATER by the researchers
- Applicants who didn’t qualify for WIC benefits to determine rate of applicants not qualifying and incidence of erroneous “denials”- TO BE DONE LATER by the researchers

The study is not an audit of any State or local WIC agency, nor will the study change any individual WIC participant’s benefits, eligibility, or any applicant’s status. The findings will be released in a series of publicly available reports. No State or local agency, nor any individual person who participates in the study, will be identified in these reports.

The study results is intended to help FNS better support State and local WIC agencies’ implementation of certification procedures and inform policy guidance to sustain or improve WIC participant satisfaction with the program.

The study is legitimate and we encourage you to complete a survey if you are contacted.