COVID-19: Documenting Challenges Faced by California Families with Children 0-5 Years Old on WIC

INTERVIEW GUIDE (English)

Introduction

Hi, my name is [insert name] and I'm from the University of California calling on behalf of the WIC Program. Thank you for responding to our text and agreeing to participate in this interview today about WIC and COVID-19. We are calling to hear more about how the COVID-19 pandemic has affected your family and your ability to access WIC. We want to learn about your experiences to help improve access to the WIC program and other services that may help during this time. We are not trying to sell you anything. The interview should take about 35-45 minutes. In appreciation for your time, we will send you a \$25 gift card by mail, text or email when you complete the interview. We encourage you to provide your opinions. Please know that your participation is entirely voluntary. If there are any questions that you do not want to answer or have no opinion about, please let me know and we will go to the next question. If you choose to end the interview before it is done, or if you choose not to participate, there will be no penalties or any loss of WIC benefits you may already be receiving. If you have any questions, you may contact WIC at 1-888-942-2229 or Dr. Lorrene Ritchie, the co-principal investigator at (510) 642-3589. For study purposes, the conversation will be recorded. This will help us ensure that we do not miss any important information you share with us What you say will be confidential, meaning we will not be sharing any information about you with others. Do you have any questions before we get started? (Answer questions; if says now not a good time, ask for date and time to reschedule interview; if no longer interested or does not want to be recorded, thank for time and do not continue with the interview.)

Q0	Do you agree to participate in this	No (Record if reason given why not; End call)
	interview today?	Yes, (continue)
		Did not pick up (add how many times you have tried to
		contact,(ie second attempt)

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- As we go, I will move through different topics so I don't keep you for too long.
- There are **no right or wrong answers**. We're just interested in your **thoughts**.

First, I'm going to ask you a series of questions and response options for each question. I will ask you to choose one response or to select all that apply.

Q00	CONTROL Question: Mark yes if WIC is	No
	offering additional money for Fruits and	yes
	Vegetables during Pandemic.	

COVID Impacts

Q1.	How concerned do you feel about COVID? [Stanford Q1 modified]. Would you say (read responses):	Not at all concerned A little concerned Moderately concerned Very concerned DK/Ref
Q2.	Have you or anyone in your household been diagnosed with COVID? (Positive test, or told by medical provider they probably are positive) By household, we mean anyone living with you.	No

	a. [show if yes to Q2] How were you/your household member/s tested for COVID?	No1, but told I have Yes2 tested, Please describe DK/Ref
	b. [show if yes to Q2] Are you/were your household member/s able to get medical help for COVID? (Describe)	No
Q3.	Have you or anyone in your household been concerned about having COVID but have not been able to get tested?	No1(skip to Q4) Yes2 DK/Ref
	a. [show if yes to Q3] Please describe your experience trying to get tested.	Describe DK/Ref
Q4.	Due to the COVID pandemic, have you or other members of your household experienced difficulties with any of the following things? I am going to list off several items, please tell me yes or no for each item. (read items in random order) [Stanford Q44; Select all that apply]	Reduced wages, work hours or lost job
Q5	[Show if reduced wages/hours or lost job] Have you applied for paid sick leave or wage replacement, or unemployment benefits?	No
	a. [show if yes to Q5] How did you learn about this? (probe with paid sick leave or wage replacement or unemployment benefits if needed)	Describe DK/Ref
Q6	[Show if experienced difficulty with housing] Has COVID affected your family's ability pay rent or mortgage payments?	No2 Yes2 How have you dealt with this? DK/Ref
	a. [Show if yes to Q6] Did you need to stop making payments at any time?	No2 Please describe DK /Ref

	b. [Show if yes to Q6a] Housing protections	No1 Please describe	
	have been put in place that prevent families from being evicted during the pandemic if they cannot make their rent or mortgage payments. Have these helped keep you and your family from being evicted?	Yes2 Please describe DK/Ref	
Q7	[Show if experienced difficulty accessing transportation] How has COVID affected your family's ability to access transportation when needed?	DescribeHow this?	have you dealt with
Q8	[Show if experienced difficulty paying for medical expenses /getting medications/ accessing healthcare] How has COVID affected your family's ability to get medications?	DescribeHow this? DK/Ref	have you dealt with
Q9	[Show if experienced difficulty getting physical activity] How has COVID affected your family's ability to get physical activity?	DescribeHow this?	have you dealt with
Q10	Schools and many childcare facilities have been closed due to COVID. Has this impacted your family?	No1 Yes2 DK/Ref	
	a. [Show if yes to Q10] Have you had difficulty taking care of children at home?	No1 Yes2 DK/Ref	
	b. [show if yes to Q10] How have you dealt with care for your children during this time?	Describe DK/Ref	
Q11	Do you have any children that were receiving meals from school right before the COVID pandemic began?	No1 Yes2 DK/Ref	
	a. Have you received school meals and/or Pandemic EBT during the COVID pandemic?	No1 Yes, Both Yes, Meals Yes, Pandemic EBT DK/Ref	
	b.[Show if Yes, Pandemic EBT or both] Has receiving pandemic EBT helped your family?	No1 Why not? Yes2 How so? DK/Ref	

	c. [Show if yes to Q11a meals/both] How satisfied are you with the school meal program during the COVID pandemic? Would you say (read responses):	Very satisfied Somewhat satisfied Somewhat unsatisfied Very unsatisfied DK/Ref
	d. [Show if yes to Q11a meals/both] What would make the school meals work better for you during the COVID pandemic?	Describe DK/Ref
Q12	Do you have any children that were receiving free meals from childcare right before the COVID pandemic began?	No1 Yes2 DK/Ref
	a. [Show if yes to Q12] Have you continued to receive childcare meals during the COVID pandemic?	No1 Yes2 Please describe DK /Ref
	b. [show if yes to Q12a] How satisfied are you with the childcare meal program during the COVID pandemic? Would you say (read responses):	Very satisfied Somewhat satisfied Somewhat unsatisfied Very unsatisfied DK/Ref
	c. [Show if yes to Q12] What would make the childcare meals work better for you during the COVID pandemic?	Describe DK/Ref

WIC participation and enrollment

Q13	Who in your household is currently receiving WIC? (<i>Read off options</i>) I am going to list off several categories, please tell me yes or no and if yes how many for each category.	Pregnant woman
Q14	We are trying to understand people's patterns of participation in WIC before, and since the COVID pandemic started in March. Did you join WIC for the first time during the pandemic? (If yes, PROBE: Just to confirm, you have never participated in WIC before March of 2020.)	No1 Yes, new2 DK/Ref
	a. [Show if Q14 no) Did you receive WIC in the past but stopped receiving WIC and then returned to WIC since the start of pandemic in March, 2020?	No1 Yes, returned2 DK/Ref

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	b. [Show if Q14a no] Have you been receiving WIC benefits without any gaps over the last year? (If yes, PROBE: Just to confirm, you were on WIC before the pandemic started in February of 2020 and have continued to participate since the pandemic started.)	No1 Yes, continuous2 (Skip to Q23) DK/Ref
	c. [Show if Q14 or Q14a yes and Q13 includes Pregnant Woman or Newborn] Did you rejoin WIC because of a new pregnancy?	No1 Yes2 DK/Ref
Q15	[Show if Q14a, yes, returned] When is the last time your family participated in WIC?	(enter month/year, or just year if that's all she can remember) DK/Ref
Q16	[show if Q14 or Q14a yes] How hard or easy was it to enroll in WIC? Please describe your experience enrolling/reenrolling in WIC, including how it compared to enrolling in other programs, if you applied to others. (probe for general experience)	Describe DK/Ref
Q17	[show if Q14 or Q14a yes] How did you find out you were eligible for WIC? (Mark all that apply)	Friend or family member Another program. What program? By calling WIC Online eligibility calculator Other: DK/Ref
Q18	[show if Q14 or Q14a yes] This is the first time the WIC Program has enrolled new/returning participants over the phone instead of face to face. How did you provide proof of income, proof of address, (and proof of pregnancy if needed)? (Mark all that apply)	Text Email Other DK/Ref
Q19	[show if Q14 or Q14a yes] How comfortable were you sharing information this way? (Read responses)	Comfortable Somewhat comfortable Somewhat uncomfortable Uncomfortable DK/Ref
Q20	[show if Q14 or Q14a yes] Did you experience any other challenges enrolling in WIC remotely during the COVID pandemic?	No1 Yes2 What things could be improved? DK/Ref

Q21	[show if Q14 or Q14a yes]Why did you enroll in WIC?	Describe DK/Ref
Q22	[show if Q14 or Q14a yes] How did you learn how to use the WIC card? (Mark all that apply)	Watched video Taught by phone Neither/haven't done this yet Other DK/Ref
Q23	Were you able to download the California WIC App on your smart phone?	No1. Why not? Yes2 DK/Ref

WIC services (asked of all – new, returning and existing participants)

Q24	Have you talked with a WIC staff person by phone since the start of the COVID pandemic, when WIC clinics were closed to participants? (not counting when you enrolled in WIC over the phone. for anyone newly enrolled)	No1 (e.g. my benefits are loaded on my WIC Card and I know how to use them) Yes2 DK/Ref
Q25	Have you received information from WIC during the COVID pandemic by?: (Select all that apply)(Read responses).	Text
Q26	[Show If yes to any in Q24-25] What have been the most helpful ways for you to get information from WIC during this pandemic?	Describe DK/Ref
Q27	What suggestions do you have for WIC to improve communication with you during this pandemic?	Describe DK/Ref

The next questions are about shopping for your WIC foods

Q28	During the COVID pandemic, where do	Large store with lots of check out registers
	you most often shop for WIC-approved	Small store with 1 to 2 registers
	foods? Would you say (read responses):	WIC store
		Have not been shopping for WIC foods (skip to Q36)
		DK/Ref

Q29	Have you had any challenges finding or purchasing any of the WIC foods since the COVID pandemic started? (I can list the WIC foods if that would be helpful (may be needed for brand new ppts.)	No1 Yes2 Please describe (NPI staff will have a list to prevent conversation on foods that aren't WIC items) DK/Ref
	a. [Show if yes to Q29] Don't read off the list below unless asked. Just mark off which items Fruits Vegetables Milk Cheese Yogurt Eggs Breakfast Cereal Whole grain bread, whole wheat or corn tortillas, or brown rice (this is one category of whole grain foods) Peanut Butter Beans/peas/lentils 100% Juice Tofu/Soy milk Infants < 12m: Infant formula (captured later) Jarred fruits and vegetables Jarred meats	(Listed in alphabetical order to mark off) Beans/peas/lentils: Describe Breakfast cereals: Describe Canned/ Jarred meats (ex:fish): Describe Canned/Jarred Fruits and Vegetables: Describe Cheese: Describe Eggs: Describe Fruit: Describe Juice 100%: Describe Milk(cow): Describe Milk(Soy): Describe Peanut butter: Describe Vegetables: Describe Vegetables: Describe Vegetables: Describe Yogurt: Describe DK/Ref

Q30	Some food stores are trying to make it easier to access WIC food items during the COVID pandemic. Are food stores in your area offering any of the following? (Read options) (Mark all that apply)	A special section in the store for WIC foods No/ Yes/ DK-Ref Preordering WIC foods by phone or online for pick up at the store or curbside No/ Yes/ DK-Ref Paying online for WIC foods with delivery to your home No/ Yes/ DK-Ref Other, Describe No/ Yes/ DK-Ref
Q31	Are you aware that because of the COVID pandemic, WIC has temporarily expanded brands and package sizes that can be purchased if the WIC food is not available at the store?	No1 (skip to Q33) Yes2 How did you find out about this? (go to Q32) DK/Ref (skip to Q33)

Q32	Have you used your WIC Card to purchase any food items from this temporarily expanded WIC food list?	No1 Yes2 Which items? DK/Ref
Q33	Has the California WIC App helped you understand which foods you can buy with your WIC card?	No3 Haven't used WIC App (skip to Q36) No1 Other reason. Please describe Yes2 Please describe DK/Ref
Q34	How satisfied are you with the WIC App? Would you say (read responses):	Very satisfied Somewhat satisfied Somewhat unsatisfied Very unsatisfied DK/Ref
Q35	How would you improve the WIC App?	Describe DK/Ref
Q36	[Show if Q13 infant <12 months on the program] Have you run into challenges getting WIC-approved infant formula during the COVID pandemic? (If no, probe if using formula)	No1 Using formula No3 Breastfeeding/not using formula Yes2 What have you done to deal with this? (Probes to include if not shared: Have you had to water down formula, feed infant less, introduce other foods you weren't planning to introduce yet, faced store item-limits and had to come to the store more) DK/Ref

The next few questions are about general food purchasing, not only your WIC foods

Q37	Many people have been purchasing more food during the COVID pandemic to stock up. Have you stocked up on additional food because of COVID?	No1 Yes2 DK/Ref
	a. [Show if yes to Q37] Would you say you stocked up enough for up to 1 week, 2 weeks, or more than 2 weeks?	Enough for up to 1 week Enough for up to 2 weeks Enough for more than 2 weeks DK/Ref
Q38	Compared to what you usually buy, have you bought more, less or about the same amount of shelf-stable foods (such as rice, dried or canned beans, or other canned or frozen goods) during the COVID pandemic?	Bought about the same Bought more. Why? Bought less. Why? DK/Ref
Q39	Due to COVID, WIC is temporarily providing more money to WIC families for fruits and vegetables. In the past	Not enough. Please describe Just right. Describe how you used this additional money

	month, was the increased amount:(read responses)	Too much. What made it hard for your to spend more? Describe Didn't buy. DK/Ref
Q40	Compared to what you usually buy have you bought more, less or about the same amount of fresh fruits and vegetables during the COVID pandemic? (If bought more, probe if they think this is different from the amount they ate before)	Bought about the same Bought more. Why? Bought less. Why? DK/Ref
Q41	Compared to what you usually buy, have you changed the beverages you purchase during the COVID pandemic? (If yes, probe if drinking habits have changed or if they are just stocking up more than before but drinking the same amount)	No1 Yes2 What were the changes and why? DK/Ref
Q42	Households often throw away some of the food that they buy. Compared to the amount of food you usually throw away. have you thrown away more, less, or about the same amount of food during the COVID pandemic?	Throw away about the same which is very little (Mark if volunteered) Thrown away about the same Thrown away more. Why? Thrown away less. Why? DK/Ref
Q43	I'm going to read you several statements that people have made about their food situation. For these statements, please tell me whether the statement was often true, sometimes true, or not true for your household in the last month—that is, the last 30 days. [USDA 6-item plus item on worry]	
	a. "We worried whether our food would run out before we got money to buy more." Was that often, sometimes, or never true for your household in the last 30 days?"	Often true Sometimes true Never true DK / Ref
	b. "The food that we bought just didn't last, and we didn't have money to get more." Was that often, sometimes, or never true for your household in the last 30 days?	Often true Sometimes true Never true DK/Ref
	c. In the last 30 days, did you or other adults in your household ever cut the size of your meals or skip meals because there wasn't enough money for food?	No1 Yes2 DK/Ref

Q44	Since the COVID pandemic have you or anyone in your household gotten free groceries from a food pantry, food bank, church, or other place that helps with free food?	No1 (Skip to Q45) Yes2 DK/Ref
	a. Compared to before the COVID pandemic, would you say that you get more, less, or about the same amount of food from a church, food bank or pantry? Or is this the first time you have gotten food from one of these places?	More free food. Why? Less free food. Why? About the same amount First time receiving DK/Ref
Q45	Earlier this year, before the COVID pandemic, did you or your family participate in any of the following programs (read items)? (For each program the respondent reported, ask a as applicable	CalFresh (also called SNAP/EBT/food stamps): yes/no/DK Ref CalWorks (also called TANF, pronounced tan-if): yes/no/DK Ref Medicaid or Medi-cal: yes/no/DK Ref
	a. [Show if yes to Q45] Are you still participating in this program?	No1 Yes2 DK/Ref
Q46	Since the start of the COVID pandemic, have you tried to apply for any additional assistance program besides WIC, like CalFresh (also known as EBT or food stamps) or Pandemic-EBT?	No1 (Skip to Q47) Yes2 DK/Ref
	a. Which programs? [READ OUT EACH ONE] (For each program the respondent reported becoming newly eligible for, ask b-c as applicable)	CalFresh
	b. How did you learn about this program?	Describe DK/Ref
	c. Are you now participating in this program?	No1 Yes2 DK/Ref

Q47	Before COVID, did you ever not enroll in	No1
	WIC or stop getting WIC because of	Yes2 Please describe
	immigration concerns?	DK/Ref

<u>I have a few multiple-choice questions about how you are feeling, as COVID has been hard for most families.</u> (source Patient Health Questionnaire-2 (PHQ-2)

Q48	Over the past two weeks, how often have	you been bothered by any of the following problems?
	a having <u>little</u> interest or pleasure in	Not at all
	doing things (Read responses)	Several days
		More than half the days
		Nearly every day
		DK/Ref
	b feeling down, depressed or hopeless	Not at all
	(Read responses)	Several days
		More than half the days
		Nearly every day
		DK/Ref

Would you like a number for someone at the LA County Department of Mental Health you can speak with: (800) 854-7771 OR TEXT "LA" TO 741741

Thank you for sharing this information with us. I just want to ask you some final questions about you and your family. You are allowed to skip any of the questions.

Q49	What is the highest level of education	No formal schooling1
	you have completed or the highest	8th grade or less2
	degree you have received? (IF HIGH	Grades 9-12 but not a high school grad3
	SCHOOL, ASK: Did you graduate or get a	High school graduate/GED4
	GED?)	Some college/trade school/ associate degree5
		(4-year) college graduate6
		Post graduate/ professional degree7
		Don't know98
		Refused99
Q50	For classification purposes, we'd like to	White1
	know what your racial background is. Are	Black/African American2
	you White, Black or African American,	Asian3
	Hispanic or Latino, Asian, Pacific Islander,	Pacific Islander4
	American Indian or an Alaskan native, or	American Indian/Alaskan Native5
	a member of another race or a	Hispanic/Latino6
	combination of these? (Mark all that	Other (specify)7
	apply)	Don't know 98
		Refused99
Q51	How many people living in your	0-4 years
,	household are between the ages of:	5-17 years
	(Read off options) (if pregnant count	18-65 years
	once child is born)	65 and older
	,	DK/Ref

Q52	What is your ZIP code?	Describe DK/Ref

Closing

0.008		
Q53	At the end of our study, we will share overall findings with the WIC program. Do you have any suggestions for how we might share the findings with WIC participants?	Describe DK/Ref
Q54	Is there anything else you would like to add or any questions you have?	Describe DK/Ref

Separate Document

Q55	[IF QUESTIONS ASKED DURING SURVEY]:	WIC Card
	It sounded like you had questions about	WIC App
	[LIST ITEMS]. Would you like WIC to	Protection for renters or employment
	contact you and answer your questions?	Expanded WIC food list
	[IF YES, MARK THE ITEMS THEY HAVE	Other
	QUESTIONS ABOUT]	Participant did not have questions
Q55a	Phone number	

Thanks so much for sharing your thoughts today. You will be receiving \$25 for your time. I can either mail you a gift card or email or text you an electronic gift card. Which would you prefer?

IF mail selected: *I am stopping the recording now and noting your address in a separate document so your none of your personal information will be connected to your survey responses.* Could you tell me *the name and address to send this gift card to?*

First name, Last name_	
Street Address	
City	

IF email selected: I am stopping the recording now and noting your email address in a separate document so your none of your personal information will be connected to your survey responses. Can you please tell me the email address to send this gift card to?
Email Address
IF text selected: I am stopping the recording now and noting your phone number in a separate document so your none of your personal information will be connected to your survey responses. Can you please tell me the mobile phone to send this gift card to?
Mobile Phone
Thanks again for your participation in our survey!
Notes (If needed)