



**Department of  
Health**

Women, Infants, and  
Children Program (WIC)



# Ohio WIC Annual Breastfeeding Report **FY22**

**WIC is the Special  
Supplemental Nutrition  
Program for Women,  
Infants, and Children.**

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# Department of Health

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## Women, Infants, and Children Program (WIC)

WIC helps eligible pregnant and breastfeeding women, women who recently had a baby, infants, and children up to 5 years of age.

The program improves pregnancy outcomes by providing or referring eligible women to support services necessary for full-term pregnancies, reduces infant mortality by reducing the incidence of low birth weight, and supports a healthy start to life by improving nutrition.

Along with nutrition education, supplemental foods, and referral to maternal and child health and human service programs, WIC provides breastfeeding education and support through its Breastfeeding Peer Program, Certified Lactation Consultants and Specialists, and International Board Certified Lactation Consultants.

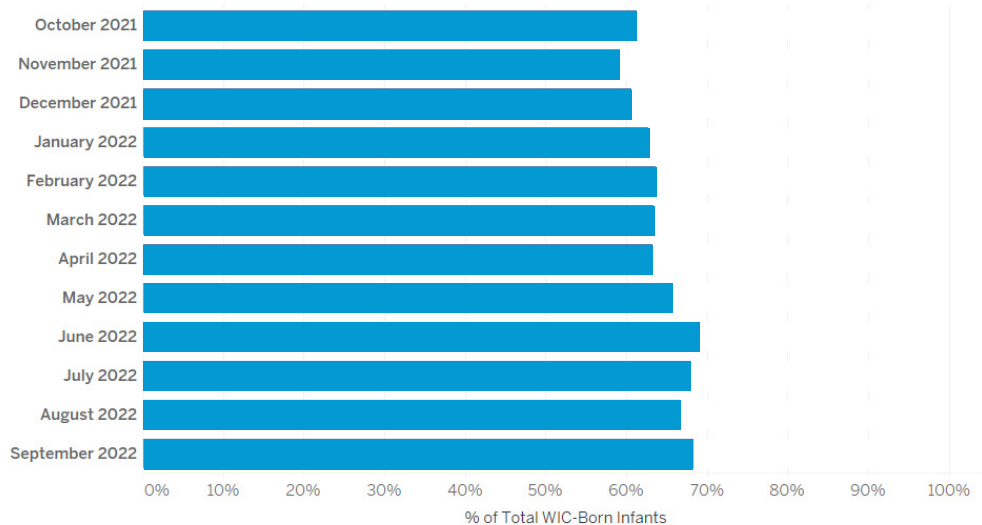






# Breastfeeding Initiation at Hospital

## WIC Breastfeeding Rate at Discharge by Birth Month (FY22)



*This graph displays the monthly breastfeeding rate at discharge from the hospital among WIC mothers in FY22, by birth month. There was an increase in breastfeeding rates (~7%) by the end of the fiscal year, with the monthly average breastfeeding discharge rate being 64.3%.*

*\*Note: Sourced from Vital Statistics Birth Files*

## Breastfeeding Recommendations and Benefits

The Ohio Department of Health, in alignment with the American Academy of Pediatrics, recommends exclusive breastfeeding for the first six months of life, followed by continued breastfeeding as complementary foods are introduced, with continuation of breastfeeding for two years or longer as mutually desired by mother and child.

Breastfeeding can reduce the risk for some short- and long-term health conditions for both infants and mothers.

Infants who are breastfed have reduced risks of:

- Asthma.
- Obesity (during childhood).
- Type 2 diabetes.
- Ear infections.
- Diarrhea and vomiting.
- Lower respiratory infections.
- Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS).
- Necrotizing enterocolitis (NEC) for preterm infants.

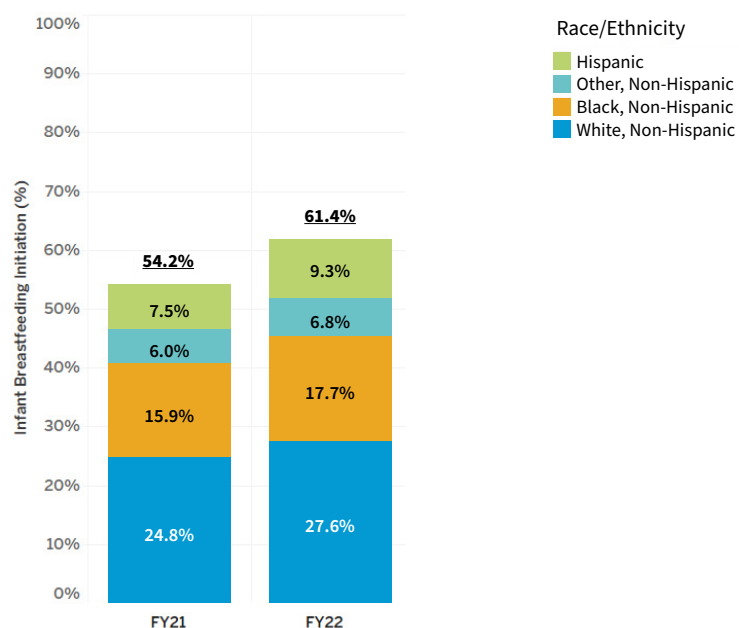
Breastfeeding can help lower a mother's risk of:

- Type 2 diabetes.
- Ovarian cancer.
- Breast cancer.

Breastfeeding also keeps mother and baby close. Physical contact is important to newborns, and it helps them feel secure, warm, and comforted.

## Breastfeeding Initiation and Duration

### Breastfeeding Initiation Rate by Race/Ethnicity (FY21, FY22)



*This graph displays the breastfeeding initiation rate among infants overall and by race/ethnicity for FY21 and FY22. There was a 7.2% increase in breastfeeding initiation in FY22, compared to FY21.*

*\*Note: Sourced from WICOmneity SQL Database*



### Did You Know?

There are more than 100 breastfeeding peers employed by WIC with a wide variety of years of experience. Peers are moms who have experience with breastfeeding and participation in the WIC Program. This evidenced-based model ensures that families have relevant and culturally considerate support from their peers.

## WIC Breastfeeding Duration among Infants Who Initiated Breastfeeding, FY22



*This graph displays the rate of how long WIC infants were breastfed, among those who initiated any breastfeeding and were WIC-certified within 8 weeks of birth, among those infants born in FY22. Participant IDs are not distinctly counted, so participants are represented more than once if they continued to breastfeed past certain intervals. This graph, as a result, describes the “breastfeeding drop-off” of participants of different races/ethnicities, throughout FY22.*

*\*Note: Sourced from WIComneity, breastfeeding duration in months calculated as the difference between the infants’ date of birth and ‘DateCeasedBreastfeeding’ field. Those who marked ‘CurrentlyBreastfeeding=Y’ are also included to pick up those who didn’t have a ‘DateCeasedBreastfeeding’ field marked, but are still breastfeeding.*



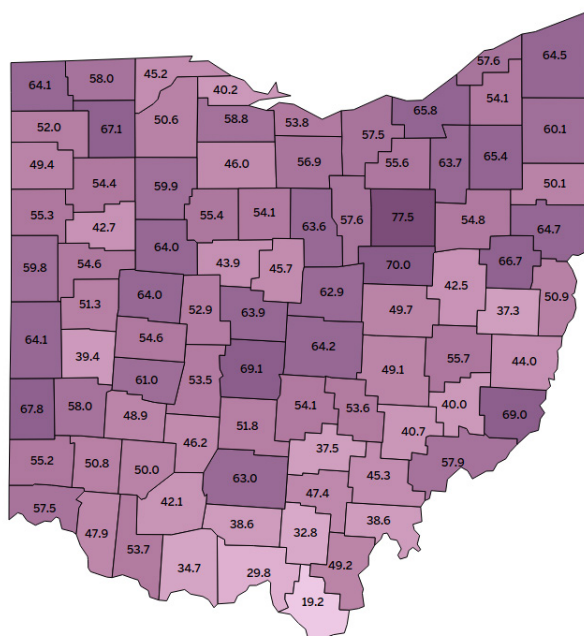


### **Did You Know?**

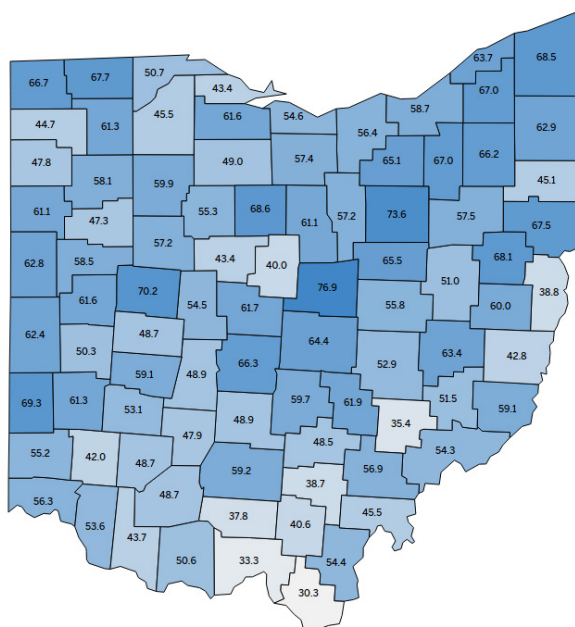
Ohio WIC and its agencies house 11 milk drop sites, a safe, convenient way to offer donated breast milk to families in need. 60,875 ounces of milk were donated in FY22!



### WIC Breastfeeding Initiation Rate by County (FY21)



### WIC Breastfeeding Initiation Rate by County (FY22)



**Breastfeeding Initiation Rate FY22- 58.1%,  
vs 51.5% in FY21, a 6.6% increase**

### Top 5 Ohio counties with highest initiation %:

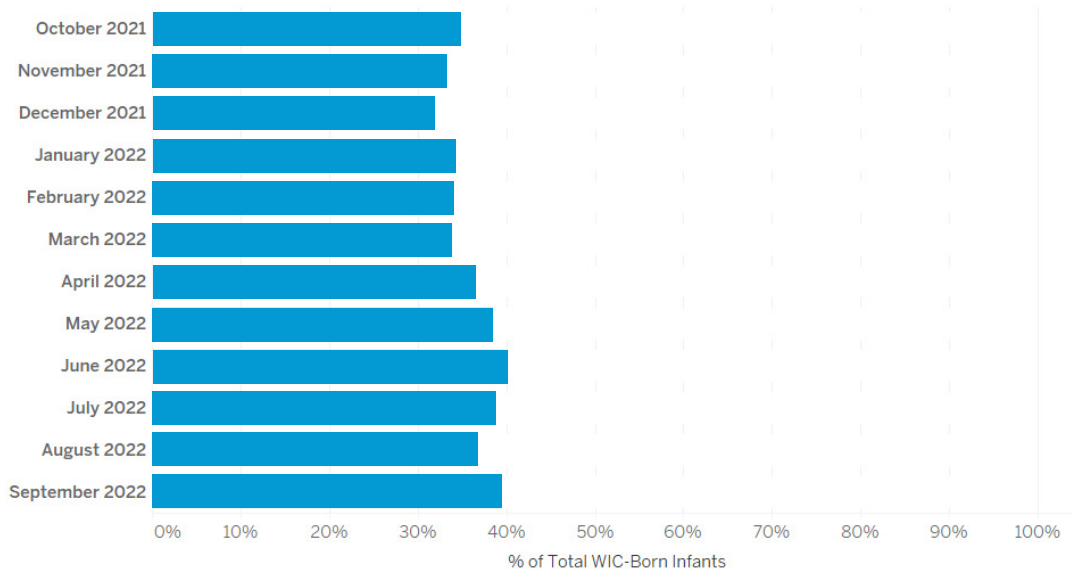
- Knox (76.9%)
- Wayne (73.6%)
- Logan (70.2%)
- Preble (69.3%)
- Crawford (68.6%)

*The above heat maps display the breastfeeding initiation rate among infants in FY21 and FY22. These rates are raw percentages of infants who initiated breastfeeding, among all WIC infants born within the fiscal year, stratified by county.*

*\*Note: Sourced from WICOmneity SQL Database.*

## Breastfeeding Exclusivity

### WIC Breastfeeding Exclusivity Rates by Birth Month (FY22)



*This graph displays the rate at which WIC mothers were reported to be breastfeeding exclusively after birth, by birth month in FY22. There was a slight increase in breastfeeding **exclusivity** by the end of the fiscal year (~5%), with an average breastfeeding exclusivity rate of **36%**.*

*\*Note: Sourced from Vital Statistics Birth Files*

## Ohio WIC Lactation Supports

### Ohio WIC sites offer some or all these supports:

- Prenatal breastfeeding classes (live or recorded virtual or in-person).
- Telephone and text support from peer.
- One-on-one counseling and consultations.
- Breastfeeding help line.
- Follow-up for breastfeeding problems.
- Assistance with obtaining breast pumps.
- Referrals for additional help.
- Unique mom-to-mom WIC Peer Program.



### Did You Know?

WIC mothers were contacted 69,715 times to assist with breastfeeding questions or concerns, to follow up on pump use, or to offer other lactation support. That's 191 contacts made each day in FY22!



## Ohio WIC Staff Lactation Trainings

The majority of Ohio WIC staff completed lactation training in 2022 through the mandated U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Breastfeeding Curriculum Training. The curriculum allows support staff, peers, health professionals, and breastfeeding experts to obtain necessary training for their job description. Additionally, over 600 Ohio WIC staff attended other lactation trainings that spanned multiple topics including diversity, equity, and inclusion; motivational interviewing; ethics for the lactation professional; and Ohio WIC's Annual Nutrition and Breastfeeding Conference.



### 2022 USDA WIC Breastfeeding Award of Excellence

The Food and Nutrition Service awards USDA Breastfeeding Awards of Excellence to local WIC agencies who provide exemplary breastfeeding programs. The 2022 awards were:

- Franklin County WIC Program Gold Award.
- Lorain County Public Health Gold Award.

## Lactation Work in Hospitals, Worksites, and Early Childcare Centers

### Hospitals

The Ohio First Steps for Healthy Babies is a voluntary breastfeeding initiative led by the Ohio Department of Health and the Ohio Hospital Association. The program recognizes maternity hospitals in Ohio that have taken steps to promote, protect, and support breastfeeding in their organizations. Based off of the Ten Steps to Successful Breastfeeding, as defined by the World Health Organization and Baby-Friendly USA, First Steps is a five-star program awarding a star for every two steps achieved.

- 82 out of 90 Ohio birthing hospitals were First Steps designated. In FY22 forty-five were Father/Partner Engagement designated.

### Worksites

In partnership with Ohio Breastfeeding Alliance, Ohio Department of Health launched the Ohio Breastfeeding Friendly Workplace Award Program in 2019. This program recognizes Ohio businesses that offer lactation support to their employees. This includes having a breastfeeding policy established, offering break time to employees to pump in the workplace, and having a space that is private, accessible, comfortable that is not a bathroom for nursing employees' use.

- Twelve total Ohio workplaces have received the Breastfeeding Friendly Workplace Award!  
<https://odh.ohio.gov/know-our-programs/Breastfeeding/Worksites>.

### Early Childcare Centers

The Ohio Department of Health, Ohio Breastfeeding Alliance, and Ohio Child Care Resource and Referral Association offer a Breastfeeding Friendly Child Care Designation. Created in 2020, the purpose of this designation is to provide Early Childhood Education (ECE) professionals with the knowledge and tools to support breastfeeding children, families, and employees in their setting.

- Early Childcare Education (ECE) professionals with Breastfeeding Friendly designation: 27 designated ECEs, 11 family providers and 16 childcare centers!





### **Did You Know?**

Ohio WIC loaned or distributed over 2,300 breast pumps to families in need! Pumps help provide breast milk when mothers and their infants are temporarily separated or when challenges to direct breastfeeding arise.





## Department of Health

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Breastfeeding Program  
**Ohio Statewide Breastfeeding  
Hotline: 888-588-3423**



## 24/7 Statewide Breastfeeding Hotline

In partnership with the Ohio Department of Health, The Appalachian Breastfeeding Network operates Ohio's 24/7 Breastfeeding Support Hotline.

The hotline is:

- Available 24/7 including weekends and holidays.
- Operated by trained lactation professionals.
- Provided free of charge to all callers, including mothers, their families and partners, expectant parents, and healthcare providers.
- Interpretation services provided.

The hotline received 4,772 calls and 4,056 texts in FY22 and surpassed 30,000 total contacts since its inception in March 2020.

More than 60% of contacts occur after regular business hours, highlighting the ongoing need for 24/7 support.

Do you or would someone you know benefit from WIC program services or need breastfeeding support? Find the WIC clinic nearest to you <https://signupwic.com/> or contact the 24/7 Breastfeeding Hotline at 888-588-3423 or text BFHOTLINE to 839863.

This institution is an equal opportunity provider.



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