



News Release

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Salt Lake County Gains Emergency Funding To Continue Some Aspects Of Supplemental Nutrition Program In Face Of Government Shutdown

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(Salt Lake County)— In an emergency move today, the Salt Lake County Council agreed to appropriate funds to keep the county's Women, Infants and Children (WIC) offices open for another week. Due to the shutdown of the federal government, the program had been threatened with closure at 5 p.m. today, since all of its money is supplied to the county by the State of Utah, through a federal grant.

Salt Lake County Health Department Director Gary Edwards said, "Normally the WIC clinics determine eligibility of residents who seek help and then, if they qualify, issue a food voucher. While the shutdown is in effect, staff will continue to accept emergency-need applications and will direct those who qualify for emergency assistance to a food pantry, where food supplies purchased with the county's help will be provided to the eligible recipient."

Edwards said priority will be given to infants and children with specific health conditions. He said that emergency funds will be limited to Salt Lake County residents. Individuals who do not qualify for emergency help may apply to the program once the federal government resumes operation.

Edwards said that normally, eligibility is determined on the basis of income and that it is reserved for pregnant, postpartum, and breastfeeding women, infants and children up to age 5. Recipients must be Utah residents and be individually determined to be at "nutrition risk" by a health professional or a locally-trained staff member.

The Salt Lake County Health Department employs 64 WIC staffers. The locations of the county's WIC clinics are

available at <http://www.slcohealth.org>.

Please check the website for further information about WIC program operation in the near term, or call the SLCoHealth Information Line at 385-468-INFO (4636).

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