

Homelessness**Definition/
cut-off value**

A woman, infant or child who lacks a fixed and regular nighttime residence; or whose primary nighttime residence is:

- C a supervised publicly or privately operated shelter (including a welfare hotel, a congregate shelter, or a shelter for victims of domestic violence) designed to provide temporary living accommodations;
- C an institution that provides a temporary residence for individuals intended to be institutionalized;
- C a temporary accommodation of not more than 365 days in the residence of another individual; or
- C a public or private place not designed for, or ordinarily used as, a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings.

**Participant
category and
priority level**

Category	Priority
Pregnant Women	IV
Breastfeeding Women	IV
Non-Breastfeeding Women	VI
Infants	IV
Children	V

Justification

Homeless individuals comprise a very vulnerable population with many special needs. WIC Program regulations specify homelessness as a predisposing nutrition risk condition. Today's homeless population contains a sizeable number of women and children – over one-third of the total homeless population in the U.S. Studies show forty-three percent of today's homeless are families, and an increasing number of the "new homeless" include economically-displaced individuals who have lost their jobs, exhausted their resources, and recently entered into the ranks of the homeless and consider their condition to be temporary.

**Clarifications/
Guidelines**

When an applicant reports a temporary accommodation of another individual not exceeding 365 days, it must be a nighttime residence ONLY. The homeless person may be transient (spend a few nights in one location, then move to another location) or may ONLY sleep at a specific location while spending daylight hours and eating meals elsewhere. Regardless of time period, an individual is not homeless if he/she receives room and board in the home of another person (e.g., showers or receives meals).

References

WIC Program Regulations; Section 246.7(e)(2)(iv).