

The Delaware Division of Public Health (DPH) is issuing this health alert to provide the health care community with information from the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) about the infant formula shortage caused by supply chain issues.

## **Summary**

The U.S. Health Resources and Services Administration's Maternal and Child Health Bureau (MCHB) issued a [letter](#) informing providers that they can submit an urgent request for specialized formula to Abbott, a primary formula manufacturer. Abbott is releasing some specialty and metabolic formulas on a case-by-case basis.

Health care providers who provide care for children in critical need of a particular specialty formula should contact Abbott directly to request the product by calling 1-800-881-0876 or visiting <https://abbottnutrition.com/metabolics>

## **Background**

Considering current reports of infant formula shortages across the country we want to highlight ways that you can help. This letter includes important information and resources about things that you can do to support concerned families.

Families rely on you as a reliable source of information. It is vital to share messages and tips on how to manage formula shortages safely. Here are some key messages:

- **Never dilute formula.** Diluting infant formula with water or other liquids can be dangerous and even life-threatening for babies, leading to a serious nutritional deficit and health issues.
- **Avoid homemade formula:** Homemade formulas often lack or have inadequate amounts of critical nutrients. For example, babies fed homemade infant formula have been hospitalized due to hypocalcemia (low calcium).
- **Use of substitute formulas is OK:** For most babies, if their regular brand of formula is not currently available, it is OK to substitute with a similar version. If families have questions about which formula is acceptable, or if they are still having difficulty finding formula, they should contact their child's pediatric provider or WIC clinic.
- **Talk to your doctor:** Families should consult their pediatrician if their babies or children require a specialized formula and need a recommendation for a comparable formula to use. Providers can also submit an urgent request for specialized formula to Abbott, a primary formula manufacturer. Abbott is releasing some specialty and metabolic formulas on a case-by-case basis.
- **Providers can contact Abbott:** Health care providers who provide care for children in critical need of a particular specialty formula should contact Abbott directly to request the product by calling 1-800-881-0876 or visiting their formula information and product request form.

The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has been meeting regularly with major infant formula manufacturers that have been working to maximize their production to meet new demands.

The U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) has granted WIC agencies across the country waivers of certain WIC regulations so that they can take immediate action to ensure that WIC participants can exchange their recalled baby formula and use WIC benefits to purchase products that have not been recalled.

### **Additional Information**

USDA: <https://www.fns.usda.gov/news-item/usda-0050.22>

Abbott Form: <https://abbottnutrition.com/metabolics>