

# Program Integrity Unit Updates

Bill Dokianos – Program Integrity Unit Manager



# Program Integrity Unit

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- Responsible for:
  - Audits
  - Compliance Buys
  - Complaints
  - Assisting with Client Compliance



# Inventory Audits

- 78 Audits Completed in 2025
  - 29 On-Site Audits
    - Allow for training Vendors on compliance issues and record retention
    - Stores know they're being audited after initial count
  - 49 Desk Audits
    - Vendors do not know they're being audited
  - 61 Successful Audits (no discrepancies found)
- \$23,210 in monetary claims that have been/will be paid back to the Program

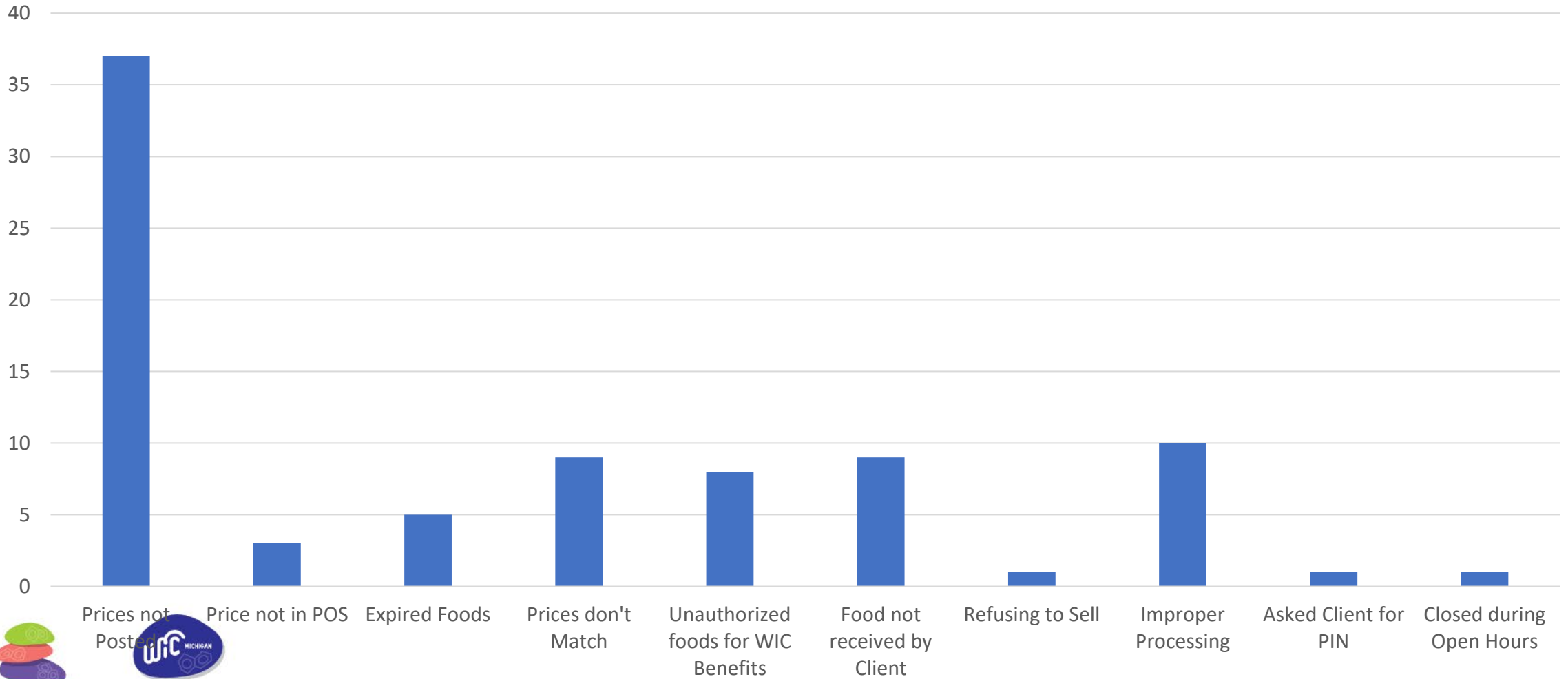


# Compliance Buys

- 218 compliance buys conducted at 84 stores
  - 146 conducted with no violations
  - 64 with violations
  - 8 where no buys were able to be conducted



# Compliance Buy Violations

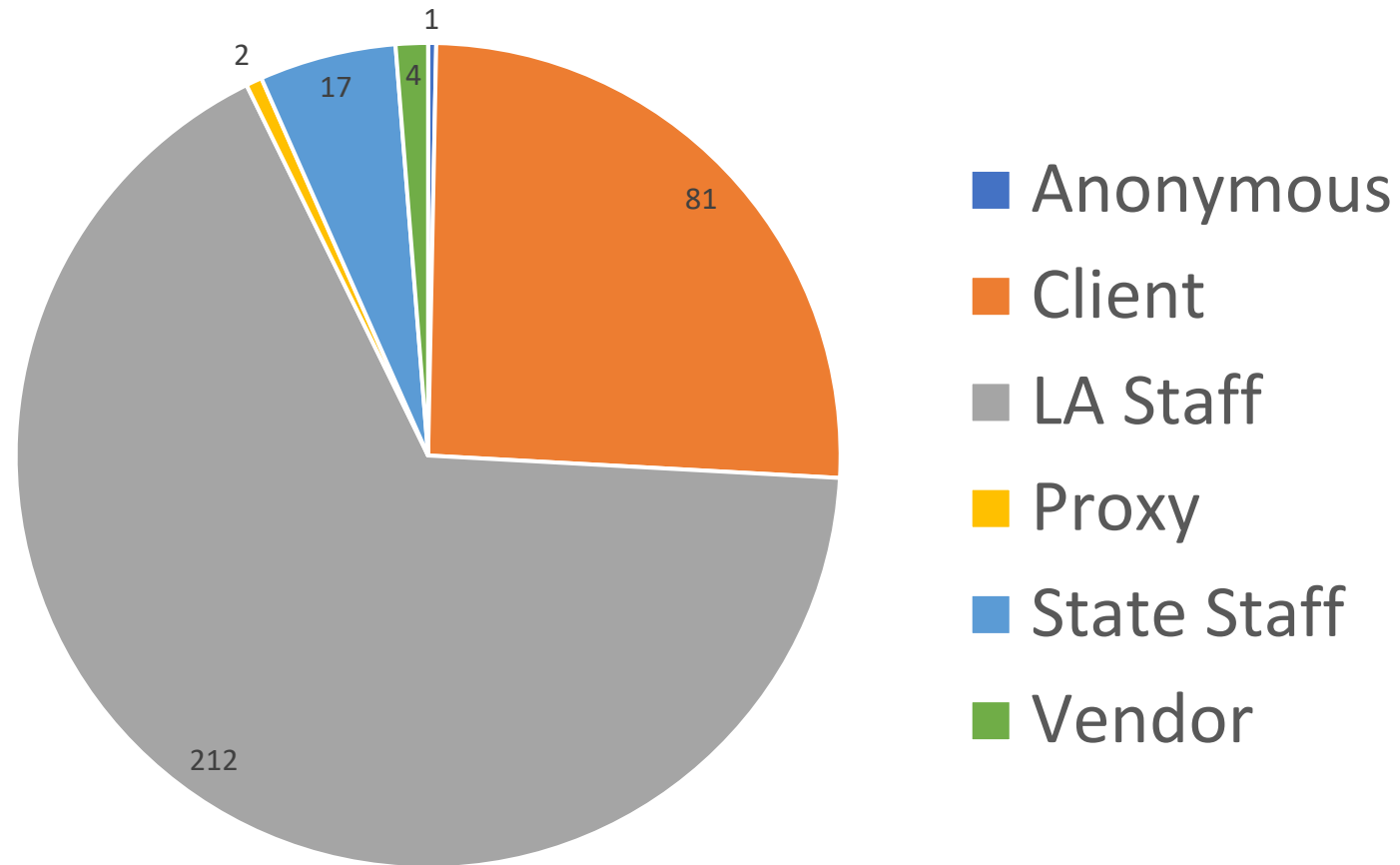


# Vendor Complaints

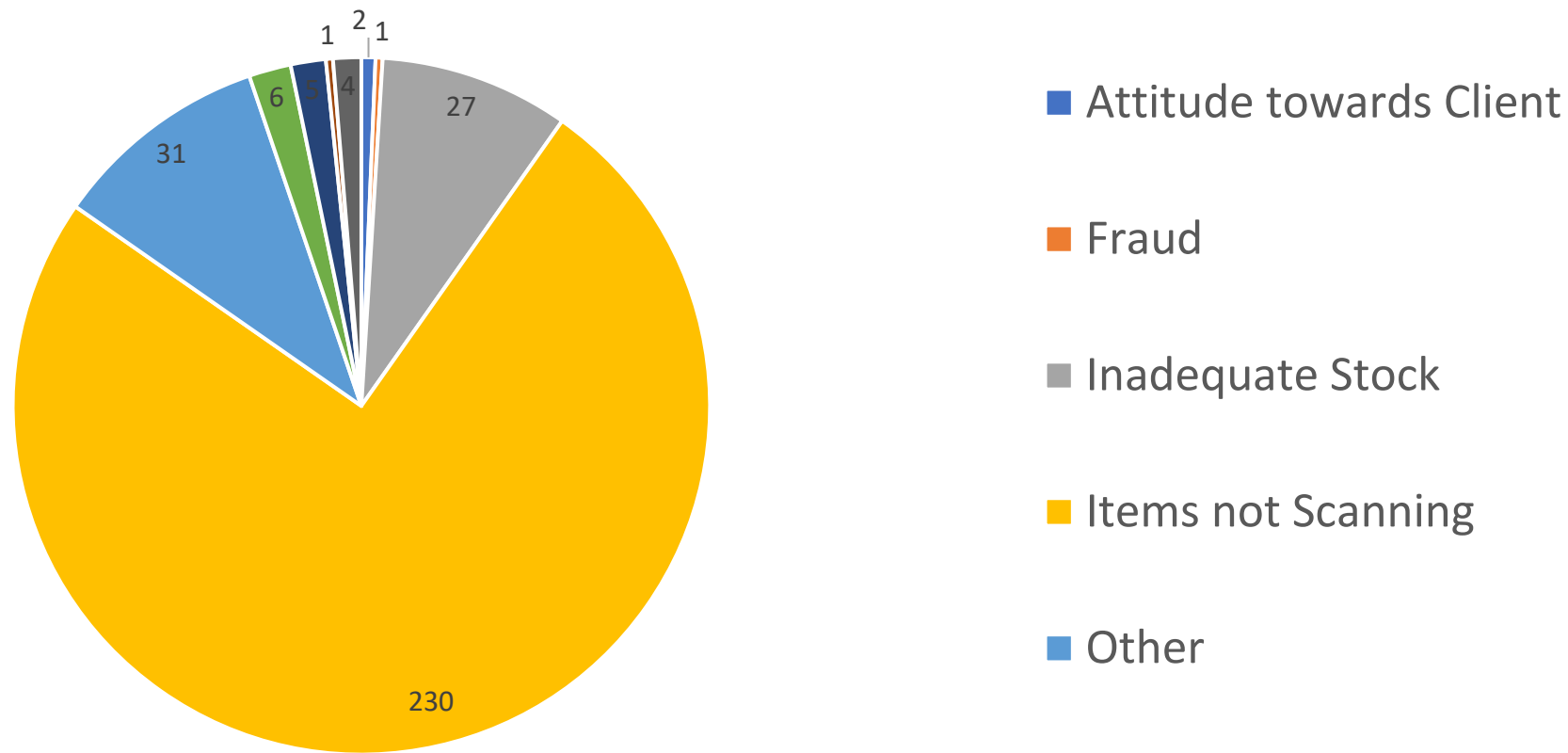
- Online complaint form was rolled out in early 2024
- 97 complaints addressed in FY 2024
- 318 complaints addressed in FY 2025
- Complaints addressed through teamwork between Nutrition Program and Evaluation Section, Vendor Relations and Program Integrity Section, and the Data Systems Management section along with partners at the local agencies



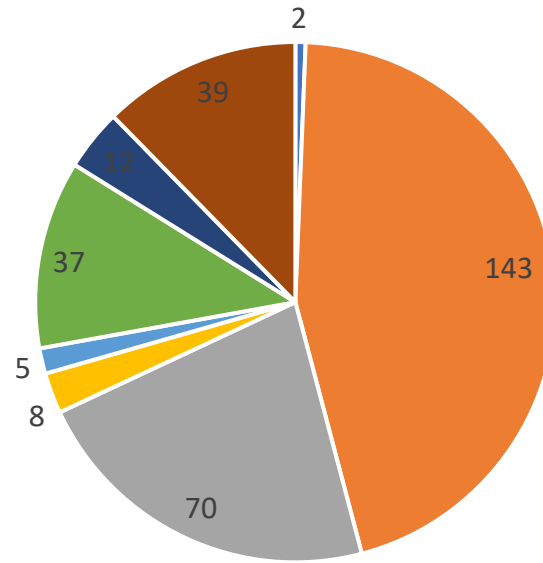
# Who did submit complaints?



# Types of Complaints in FY2024



# Origin of Complaints



■ Client Compliance

■ Vendor Attitude

■ Vendor Training Issue

■ Client Education

■ Vendor Compliance

■ WIC System Issue

■ Unknown - No response from Client

■ Vendor System Error

# Client Education Issues

- Clients unsure of WIC-approved foods
- Clients unaware of WIC Connect App
- Paying out of pocket and expecting reimbursement
- Knowing difference between Food Guide and clients' actual food packages



# Online Complaint Form – [www.Michigan.gov/wic](http://www.Michigan.gov/wic)

## WIC Connect Mobile App



Apple



Google Play



About WIC



Am I Eligible



Start My Application



Find My Clinic



WIC Client Connect



Find Other Resources



Submit a Complaint



WIC Fraud

# Local Agency Visits

**In 2025, the Program Integrity Unit staff visited 13 local agencies**

- Oakland County
- DHD 10 in Mecosta County
- Rogers City
- Presque Isle County
- Houghton
- Marquette
- Iron Mountain
- Escanaba
- Kent County
- Plainwell
- Hillsdale
- Detroit Urban League
- Mid-Michigan



# Local Agency Visits

- Client education
  - Followed the intake process of new clients (with consent)
  - Observed return visits
  - Talked about resources and talking points around client education
    - Varied from agency to agency
  - WIC Direct
    - Knowledge varied from agency to agency
    - Most have a “guru” or “go-to person” but gaps in knowledge still existed
  - Client compliance
  - Physical safety concerns and precautions



# Local Agency Visits

- De-escalation training was conducted at one LA in 2025
  - Same presentation as the one given at 2024 Coordinator Summit
  - Helps staff be aware of their response to frustrated clients and staff
  - Real-life examples
  - Safe place to discuss past situations
- Please contact us if you'd like us to visit your clinics/agencies!



# Reducing Complaints and Improving Shopping Experience

- Partnering with other sections to help improve client education
- Vendor staff training
- Improving local agency knowledge of systems for quicker resolution
- Impose sanctions on vendors for violations identified from complaints



# Client Compliance

- Verbal/Physical Abuse Policy submitted to FNS for approval
  - Proposed changes to policy including tiered responses to different actions taken by clients
- Updated Letters in MI-WIC
- PI Team will continue to support Client Compliance Investigations per current policy
- Please do not email individual analysts regarding compliance issues
  - Email compliance issues to [mdhhs-wicprogramintegrity@michigan.gov](mailto:mdhhs-wicprogramintegrity@michigan.gov) for any assistance/questions



# WIC Program Integrity 2026 Priorities

- Update Client Compliance Policy
- Use complaint data to help reduce complaints
- Reduce waste, fraud, and abuse by:
  - Increasing number of Desk Audits, In-store audits, and compliance buys
  - Develop new strategies to use available data to investigate fraud
- Continue visiting local agencies and being a resource to help improve the shopping experience for clients



# Questions??



# Thank you!

- Let's talk about setting up visits!
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