

WIC's WORLD

Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment WIC Program

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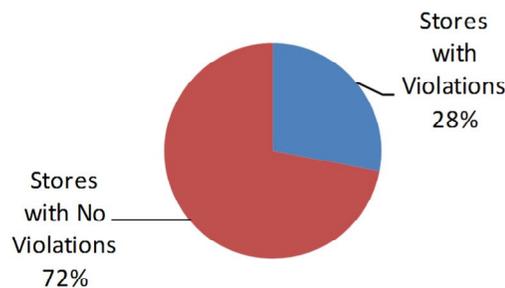
What's a compliance investigation?

It is a secret shopping trip. An investigator poses as a WIC shopper to check up on how things are going at the store. The investigator reports any issues and/or violations to Colorado WIC.

Compliance Investigations: 2017 Results

During 2017, compliance investigations were conducted at 25 WIC-authorized stores in Colorado. Most stores did a great job!

Below are the most common issues we did find. Page 2 offers steps to prevent these kinds of issues and make WIC purchases easier for cashiers and WIC shoppers in 2018.



Most stores had no issues. (*Thanks!!*)

Issues were found at seven stores (28%).

Most Common Issues/Violations

- **Receipt:** Five stores did not provide a receipt (or provided an incorrect receipt).
- **Training:** Three stores had cashiers that were not trained on how to complete a WIC purchase.
- **Cash Register:** Three stores had cash register systems that were not using the most recent list of approved foods provided by WIC.
- **Limiting Food:** One store limited the WIC approved foods that could be purchased by the WIC secret shopper.
- **Giving Free Food:** Surprisingly, this was the most common issue found during the 2017 investigations.

Four Steps to Make WIC Easier

While WIC appreciates the intention to assist WIC families, providing items at no charge is not a substitution for cashier training. Instead, assist the shopper in finding out **why** an item is not ringing up as WIC allowed.

- **Approved?** Is the item approved based on the Allowable Foods List?
- **Available?** Does the shopper's food balance (listed at the bottom of their receipt) show that the item is available?

Once a shopper knows **why** the item is not being paid for by WIC, they can be given options.

- Pay for the item with another form of payment.
- Void the item.
- Void the item and get an allowed item (e.g., a gallon of 1% milk instead of 2% milk).

Provide the eWIC cardholder with **a receipt**, which, at a minimum, shows:



- Store name and address.
- Date of the transaction.
- Items purchased.
- Price charged for each item.
- Shopper's remaining WIC food balance.



IT and/or POS Techs:

Ensure that the most current Approved Product List (**APL**) is downloaded to the cash register/point-of-sale (POS).

Cashiers are some of the best in the business at providing customer service—when they have the right information. Ensure that all cashiers are prepared and **trained** in ringing up eWIC transactions and watch the new WIC film called *WIC: Simplified*.



Information for retailers about the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children (WIC). Submit suggestions to: WIC Retailer Unit— fax (303) 756-9926, phone (303) 692-2448, or email melanie.jacobs@state.co.us. Post copies of this newsletter in areas where employees involved with WIC transactions have access to this information. Maintain copies of WIC's WORLD in Section 4 of the Colorado WIC Retailer Manual for a minimum of two years.