



WIC'S WORLD

Colorado Department of Public Health & Environment

2015 Issue #3: July to September

This issue:

A short reference guide published annually to compliment the details in the Retailer Handbook.

WIC
Retailer
Handbook



*eWIC is on
the way to
Colorado!*

See page 4.

*For more information
please visit:*

*ColoradoWIC.com
and
fns.usda.gov/wic*

Purpose of the Program

WIC stands for the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children. WIC was established by Congress in 1972 in recognition of the need for better nutrition during pregnancy and early childhood development.

WIC provides Federal grants to States for supplemental foods, breastfeeding support, health care referrals, and nutrition education for low-income pregnant, breastfeeding, and postpartum women, and to infants and children up to age five who are found to be at nutritional risk.

Supplemental Foods Authorized by Colorado WIC

Supplemental foods are prescribed for WIC clients based on the nutrient content. Food items must meet strict federal nutrient requirements (as outlined in 7 CFR Part 246) in order to be considered for the Program. Checks are issued to WIC clients and list the type of foods and quantities they are authorized to purchase.

- The specific foods offered by the Program are listed in the *Colorado WIC Allowable Foods List (Allowable Foods List)*.
- Only approved WIC foods in the quantities and sizes prescribed on the check may be purchased. Both the WIC customer and retail cashiers should refer to the *Allowable Foods List* during a WIC transaction.
- Your store is responsible for ensuring that each register has the most current *Allowable Foods List*. Additional copies (in English and Spanish) of the list can be obtained by calling the State Office (303.692.2400) or your Local Agency WIC office.
- Your WIC customers may only purchase the specific approved foods listed on their check and in the foods list in the amounts indicated. Your WIC customers may purchase less than what is prescribed on their checks. The *Allowable Foods List* shows the specific brand, size and amounts of the items allowed.
- Please refer to your *WIC Retailer Handbook* for more information on allowable foods.



Vendor Sanction System

The Program has designed systems to detect Retailers who abuse or defraud the Program. These systems also identify Retailers who, through misinformation or lack of training, may intentionally or unintentionally violate Federal regulations, Program policies and procedures, or the terms of the Retailer Agreement. Violations that trigger sanctions do not require the Program to distinguish between fraudulent (intentional) and abusive (unintentional) violations because both types of violations result in loss of Program funds.

The Program determines the type and level of sanctions to be applied against Retailers based upon the severity, nature, and pattern of the Program violations observed, and such other factors as appropriate (for example: whether the offenses represented Retailer policy or whether they represent the actions of an individual employee who did not understand the Program rules). The objectives of the Program can best be met through education, training, and the voluntary cooperation of Retailers, your WIC customers, and the state and local WIC Programs.

To ensure the integrity of the Program it is necessary to impose corrective actions consistently against Retailers who are in violation of Program policies and procedures. There are five types of actions:

1. Nonpayment of WIC checks,
2. Corrective action plans,
3. Mandatory training,
4. Civil Money Penalty (may be imposed if the Program determines that disqualification would result in inadequate WIC client access), and
5. Disqualification.

Vendor Complaint Process

If you have questions, comments or concerns, contact your Local Agency Retailer Coordinator (LARC). If you are calling about a WIC customer, please try to have their name, check and ID number. This information assists WIC to identify the correct individual. This information is listed on the WIC check, along with the clinic number.

Colorado WIC Program
Colorado Department of Public Health & Environment
4300 Cherry Creek Drive South
Denver, Colorado 80246-1530
(303) 692-2400

Act #: 805116

98765432
Check Number
Last Date to Use: 1/31/2011

Name
Name: Jane Doe

Family ID: 1234
Family ID Number

Clinic ID: 01 - 0011

Up To \$10.00 Fruits and Vegetables

ONLY THE AUTHORIZED WIC FOODS LISTED MAY BE PURCHASED

Vendor Must Deposit Within 60 Days From First Date To Use

Authorized Signature (Must Be Signed & Properly Imprinted)

Signature (Must Be Signed & Properly Imprinted)

98765432 805116

Claims Procedure

Checks are reviewed before payment to determine if Program policies and procedures have been met. Checks that meet Program policies and procedures are approved and paid. Checks that do not meet Program policies and procedures are rejected and are not paid.

A retailer that has a high percentage of rejected WIC checks is considered a high-risk retailer. Compliance investigations may be conducted on high-risk retailers, as well as randomly, to document compliance with Program policies and procedures.

Checks will not be paid by the Program's bank if they are:

- Accepted outside the valid dates,
- Submitted for payment later than sixty (60) days after the "First Date to Use",
- Over-the-maximum dollar amount,
- Unsigned/missing WIC customer signature,
- Altered, or
- Stamped incorrectly (missing or unreadable WIC vendor ID stamp imprint).

WIC checks accepted outside the valid dates or submitted for payment later than sixty (60) days after the "First Date to Use" will not be paid. However, in the other four cases listed above, WIC may be able to assist your store with the check. Please refer to Section V of the Retailer Handbook for more detailed information.

Use of Incentive Items

Incentive items are not to be offered solely to WIC customers by any WIC-authorized vendor. Stores must offer WIC customers the same courtesies as offered to other customers, e.g., no separate lines or hours. Any practice that singles out your WIC customers from other customers is prohibited. Such practices include keeping lists of your WIC customers, having them sign cash register receipts, having specific register lines WIC customers must use, keeping folders for each WIC customer, keeping WIC customer receipts, or the offering or denial of incentives solely to WIC customers. In accordance with Federal law and U.S. Department of Agriculture policy, all authorized Retailers are prohibited from discriminating on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age, or disability.

Changes – eWIC is on the Way

Nationally, WIC spends approximately \$4.8 billion annually at authorized retailer locations on approved foods. Federal rules require WIC programs across the country to move from a paper check to an electronic payment process by the year 2020. This means that your WIC customers will do their WIC shopping using an eWIC card instead of checks. Colorado WIC plans to make the move to eWIC cards in 2016.

"Colorado WIC moving to eWIC cards in 2016."

eWIC holds many improvements for cashiers as well as for WIC shoppers:

- Faster payments for WIC sales
- Faster time in-lane
- No more "policing" of WIC purchases
- WIC shoppers can purchase their WIC items using their eWIC card throughout the month (instead of having to purchase all the items on a check at once)

To stay informed, please stay tuned to: *ColoradoWIC.com*.

Thank you!!!

Because of you

- Women participating in WIC have improved diets and give birth to healthier babies.
- Children in WIC are more likely to have regular medical care and immunizations.
- Medicaid and other health care costs are reduced due to the decrease in the number of low birth weight babies.
- WIC combats poor nutrition at an early stage, rather than treating effects once they become more serious.
- Up to \$3 is saved in medical costs per every dollar spent on WIC foods.

