

Vendor Questions & Answers

Below are some commonly asked questions the Arizona WIC Program receives from Vendors and participants.

Q: Can WIC customers buy 59 ounce containers of refrigerated orange or grapefruit juice?

A: No; the WIC Program only allows the purchase of 64 ounce containers of refrigerated orange and grapefruit juice.

Q: Can WIC customers purchase canned beans with a cash value food instrument?

A: No; only fruits and vegetables can be purchased with cash value food instruments. Canned beans are considered legumes and are **NOT** vegetables.

Q: Can WIC customers use initials as their signature if it is on the WIC ID folder?

A: No; initials are not acceptable as signatures, even if it is on the WIC ID folder. If this occur please refer the WIC customer back to the clinic for assistance.

Q: What should I do if our store runs out of our declared food item (milk, eggs, or cheese) that is specified on the WIC customers' food instrument?

A: You must allow the WIC customer to buy another brand of the item and charge the WIC Program the same price as the declared store or house brand. Substitution for cheese will only be made when the Vendor is completely out of **all** authorized cheese (customers' needs may be taken into consideration based upon your store's policy).

Q: How will the WIC customer know what our store or house brands are?

A: As a WIC Vendor, your store is required to place shelf tags on the allowed store or house brand for refrigerated milk, eggs and cheese. This allows the WIC customer to know which store or house brand of milk, eggs and cheese they are allowed to purchase.

Record Retention Information

In accordance with state statutes, Vendors shall retain records including purchase invoices, inventory records, federal and state tax returns, and other records relating to the performance of this contract for a period of five (5) years from the date of:

- Expiration of the contract; or
- Termination of the contract; or
- Final payment under this contract



Thank you for your interest in the Arizona WIC Program. If you have any questions regarding this year's Annual Vendor Training Alert or you need technical assistance, please call the Technical Assistance hotline number below.

Contact Information

Arizona Department of Health Services
Bureau of Nutrition and Physical Activity
Arizona WIC Program
150 North 18th Avenue, Suite 310
Phoenix, Arizona 85007

Technical Assistance Hotline: 1(866) 737-3935

Fax Number: 602-542-1890

Complaint Hotline: 1(866) 229-6561

Complaint E-mail: azwiccomplaints@azdhs.gov

Arizona WIC Website: www.azwic.gov



Health and Wellness for all Arizonans

ARIZONA DEPARTMENT
OF HEALTH SERVICES

BUREAU OF NUTRITION
AND PHYSICAL
ACTIVITY

Arizona
Department of
Health Services

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WIC
BRINGING MORE
TO THE TABLE

Arizona WIC Alert

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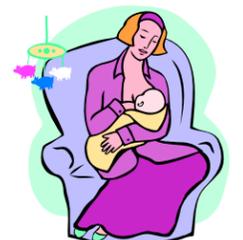
As an authorized Arizona WIC Vendor you are required by federal regulations to accept annual Vendor training. This Alert will serve as your training for Federal Fiscal Year (FFY) 2013. It is our hope that the information provided will assist you and your staff in handling and understanding WIC transactions and the benefits of the WIC Program for you and the participants.

The information provided in this Alert contains upcoming changes to the Vendor Manual. Please read in its entirety.

Topics covered in this issue are:

- What is WIC?
- Changes for FFY 2014
- Authorized Foods
- Minimum Stock Requirements
- Infant Formula Purchases
- Cashing WIC Food Instruments
- Violations and Sanctions
- Complaint Process
- Incentive Item Restrictions
- Vendor Claims

Remember, it is the responsibility of the owner, store director or manager to ensure that the information contained in this Training Alert is made available to all employees who handle WIC transactions.



What Is WIC?

WIC is a supplemental nutrition program that is federally funded by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA). WIC is designed to improve the nutritional health of income eligible pregnant, breastfeeding and post-partum women, infants, and children up to five years old. WIC provides participants with nutrition and breastfeeding education, referrals to healthcare, social service programs and nutritious foods.



USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

CHANGES FOR FEDERAL FISCAL YEAR 2014

IMPORTANT UPDATES

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Revisions for Vendor Contract and Manual

The Arizona WIC Program makes revisions to the Vendor Manual and/or the Vendor Contract to meet changing demands. The changes made in the Arizona WIC Program Vendor Manual and Contract will become effective on October 2013 and will supersede any previous versions.

Each Vendor will receive a copy of the revised Vendor Manual that is effective on **October 1, 2013**. The Vendor Manual is available in a CD format viewable via computer; it is also available online at: <http://www.azwic.gov/vendors.htm>.

The following are revisions to the Arizona WIC Program Vendor Contract and Vendor Manual effective October 1, 2013:

Vendor Contract Revisions include:

Two items were added to "**VENDOR RESPONSIBILITIES**" "THE VENDOR AGREES TO:"

Item #11: "Not deliver supplemental foods to WIC customers' homes."

Item #31: "Ensure that the store must have a store-front sign. The store-front sign must be a permanent fixed sign. The name on the sign must match the Owner Name or DBA (Doing Business As) Name on the store's Vendor Application."

One Item was added to "**TERMINATION AND EXPIRATION OF THE CONTRACT**"

Item i. Termination and/or disqualification from SNAP or another WIC Program.

Specific Manual revisions include:

- **Section 5 - Cashing Food Instruments** - Provides clarification for recalled food items; it allows Vendors to exchange the recalled food item for an identical authorized food item.
- **Section 9 - Violations and Sanctions** - Revisions were made to the number of months violations remain on a Vendors' record for Department Sanctions. In addition Violation #8 and #16 were added to the Department Sanctions - Administrative and Procedural Violations.
- **Section 11 - Appendix 1 Training Aids** - This section provides clarification on re-signing WIC food instruments: Added "NOTE: Only the person who originally signed the food instrument can re-sign; the re-signed signature must be the same name as the first."

Please ensure all staff who handle WIC transactions are aware of the upcoming changes and discard any previous versions of the Arizona WIC Program Vendor Manual.

ALL changes go into effect on October 1, 2013



X Signature Process

If a person cannot sign their name, they can use an 'X' as their mark to sign their WIC Identification and food instruments. At the clinic, the staff will witness their mark on the WIC ID folder or proxy certification form by writing "For (person's name) by (employee signature)." At the store, the cashier will follow the same procedures when obtaining the signature at the store. The cashier will witness the person write their 'X' on the food instrument, then write:

"For (person's name) by (cashier signature)"

ARIZONA DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH SERVICES WIC PROGRAM 1100 WEST WASHINGTON, PHOENIX, ARIZONA 85007 TEL: 602.964.3333 FAX: 602.964.3333		ISSUANCE OF DRAFTS SUBJECT TO STATE OR FEDERAL PROSECUTION. FOOD IS ALTERED		DEPT # 36621834	79-1240 FEDERAL PROGRAM (WIC) WIC WIC IDENTIFICATION CARD (WIC ID) WIC ID #
34 09 900009393	PARTICIPANT NAME GARCIA, CONNIE		DEPT USE 003229AE	EXPIRE DATE 08/17/2009	WIC ID #
2 02 (UP TO 34 OZ) WIC APPROVED CEREAL (NOT INFANT)	VENDOR MUST DEPOSIT WITHIN 60 CALENDAR DAYS FROM FIRST DATE TO USE.		DATE OF USE 09/03/2009	LAST DATE TO USE 09/15/2009	WIC ID #
2 GAL. SKIM/WHIFAT OR LOWFAT (1%) MILK (GALGON CONTAINERS ONLY)	TOTAL DOLLAR AMOUNT \$ 29.85		PARTICIPANT: DO NOT SIGN UNTIL TIME OF PURCHASE COMPLETED AT STORE.		
2 CONTAINER (64 OZ) WIC APPROVED 100% JUICE OR	AUTHORIZED REPRESENTATIVE'S "X" →		← CASHIER'S SIGNATURE		
3 CONTAINER (11.5 - 12 OZ FROZEN) WIC APPROVED 300% JUICE					
18 OZ (UP TO 18 OZ) PEANUT BUTTER					

See the "X Signature Process" handout (enclosed)

Incentive Item Restrictions for WIC Vendors

The Arizona WIC Program in accordance with Federal Regulations, prohibits WIC Vendors from offering incentive items* **solely** to WIC customers in an effort to encourage participants to redeem their WIC food instruments at their store. In addition, the Program does not allow Above 50% Vendors to provide incentive items to WIC program participants. What this means is:

- Above 50% Vendors **cannot** provide any incentive items to WIC customers.
- Regular Vendors can provide incentive items to WIC customers, as long as the same incentive items are being provided to **all** customers.

*Incentive items or other free merchandise are defined as: Free or reduced price food or other items; cash; lottery tickets; buy one, get one free; buy one, get one at a reduced price; free amounts added to an item by a manufacturer; manufacturer coupons; store loyalty cards; sales and specials for supplemental food; and free or reduced price services except for the minimal customary courtesies of the retail food trade, such as bagging supplemental food for the participant and assisting the participant with loading the supplemental food into his/her vehicle.

Vendor Claims

When monitoring activities are conducted and an overcharge violation is found, the Arizona WIC Program may establish a claim in the amount of the full purchase price of each food instrument that contained the overcharge or other errors. The Vendor must pay any claim that is assessed by the Arizona Department of Health Services. In collecting a claim, the WIC Program may offset the claim against current and subsequent amounts to be paid to the Vendor. The Vendor may also be sanctioned for overcharges or other errors in accordance with the WIC Program's sanction schedule.

Monitoring Activities



Authorized WIC Vendors are monitored to make sure they understand the Program's rules, regulations and policies. Monitoring activities include, but are not limited to:

- Vendor Site Reviews - onsite reviews to verify minimum stock requirements and document prices.
- Compliance Investigations - undercover visits to check for unauthorized food sales, overcharging, treatment of WIC customers, etc.
- Inventory Audits - verify that invoice records correspond with actual WIC redemptions.
- Rejected Food Instrument Report - identifies Vendors who may have issues redeeming WIC food instruments.
- Criminal/Civil Background Checks - verifies business integrity for the owners, officers and managers of authorized Vendors.

Violations and Sanctions

Any violations uncovered during monitoring activities are subject to sanctions. It is important that Authorized WIC Vendors become familiar with the Arizona WIC Program's Sanction Schedule (enclosed). Sanctions can range from a warning letter to termination and disqualification from the Arizona WIC Program. Department Sanctions will stay on the Vendor's record for 24 months from the date of the violation; Mandatory Sanctions remain on the Vendor's record indefinitely.

Any Vendor who is disqualified from the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) will also be disqualified from the WIC Program. The disqualification would be for the same length of time as the SNAP disqualification and may begin at a later date than the SNAP disqualification.

Complaint Process - Arizona WIC



The Arizona WIC Program values our relationship with the Vendor Community and strives to ensure the shopping experience is pleasant for both the cashier and the WIC customer. We welcome any input you can offer that could assist us in improving our program.

Remember, concerns you report will assist the Arizona WIC Program in identifying WIC customers, WIC Vendors, or WIC clinic staff who are in need of additional training. Your reports will assist us in detecting and reducing fraud and abuse in the Arizona WIC Program.

The Arizona WIC Program has several convenient ways to report a complaint, fraud or abuse. WIC Vendors, WIC customers, and WIC clinic staff can report any issue by:

- Visiting <http://www.azwic.gov> and following the link to report a complaint, fraud, or abuse;
- Calling toll-free: 1-866-229-6561; or
- Emailing: azwiccomplaints@azdhs.gov.



Vendor Manual Revisions - FFY 2104 (Continued)

- Section 12 - Appendix 2 - Forms - Updated the following forms WIC Price/Stock worksheet, Vendor Order Form, and Training Acknowledgement form.
- Section 13 - Appendix 3 - Selection and Authorization - This section revised dates and expanded the language under the SNAP Status to include: "Applicants who are currently disqualified or have been involuntarily withdrawn from the SNAP shall not be considered as WIC Vendors."
- Section 15 - Appendix 5 - Definitions - Revisions were made to this section to clarify definitions for Business Integrity, Civil Money Penalty, and First Date to Use. Definitions were added for House Brand, Last Date to Use, One Opportunity and Store Brand.



Authorized WIC Foods



WIC foods are carefully selected to meet nutritional requirements that provide vitamins, minerals and protein for participants. Specific nutrients provided include: iron, calcium, protein, vitamins A, B and C, carbohydrates, antioxidants and fiber.

The Arizona WIC Programs Food List provides a list of food items that are authorized and provides examples of foods that cannot be purchased. The WIC Food List has been updated to include a wider variety of food items for WIC participants to meet their nutritional goals.

Please refer to the Arizona WIC Programs Food List that was sent to your store in June, 2013 (effective date July 1, 2013).

Minimum Stock Requirements - Infant Formula Purchases

All Authorized WIC Vendors must meet and maintain minimum stock and variety requirements for WIC approved foods. The stock must be either on the shelf or stored onsite at the store's location. Minimum Stock requirements ensure that WIC approved foods are available at the store when WIC customers shop. It is the Vendor's responsibility to ensure their store has the minimum required amounts at all times. If the Vendor is having problems with their supplier, it is their responsibility to find another supplier to meet the needs of their store. The Arizona WIC Program minimum stock requirements for FFY 2014 are enclosed for your convenience.

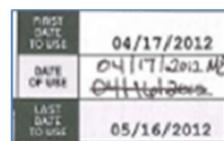
In addition, Vendors are required to purchase their infant formula **only** from a supplier that is listed on the Arizona WIC Program's Infant Formula Suppliers' list (enclosed).

Cashing WIC Food Instruments

When cashing the WIC food instrument, cashiers must: be aware of the Program’s redemption procedures for regular and cash value food instruments, handle each food instrument separately, and know what foods are authorized to be purchased. Below are the correct procedures cashiers must follow when redeeming WIC food instruments:



1. Identify the customer - Ask to see the WIC ID folder or Proxy Certification form. No other form of identification is necessary (see enclosed samples of WIC identification).
2. Check the dates - Do not accept the food instrument before the “First Date to Use” or after the “Last Date to Use.”
3. Check to ensure the food instrument has not been reported lost or stolen.
4. Verify the selected items, quantities and units being purchased are specified on the food instrument. Remember, all infant formula must be purchased.
5. Write the date in the “Date of Use” box. Cashiers may correct* the date one time only in the presence of the WIC customer by:



- Drawing a single line through the incorrect date;
- Writing the correct date above or below the incorrect date; and
- Initialing the correction next to the correct date.

6. Allow the WIC customer to take advantage of coupons, store specials and other promotional specials.** Coupons are not allowed for infant formula.
7. Enter the amount in the “Actual \$ Amount” box. Do not include sales tax. Cashiers may correct* any mistakes, one time only, by following the procedures below:



- Draw a single line through the incorrect dollar amount;
- Write the correct dollar amount in the “\$ Correction Only” box; and
- Initial the correction in the “Cashier Initial” box.

8. Witness the customer’s signature and verify that the signature on the food instrument matches one of the signatures on the WIC Identification. **Remember:** Initials are not allowed as signatures. Allow the customer to re-sign the food instrument if the signatures do not match or the food instrument is pre-signed (see the enclosed handout regarding signatures).

9. Give the WIC customer a legible cash register receipt for their WIC purchases.

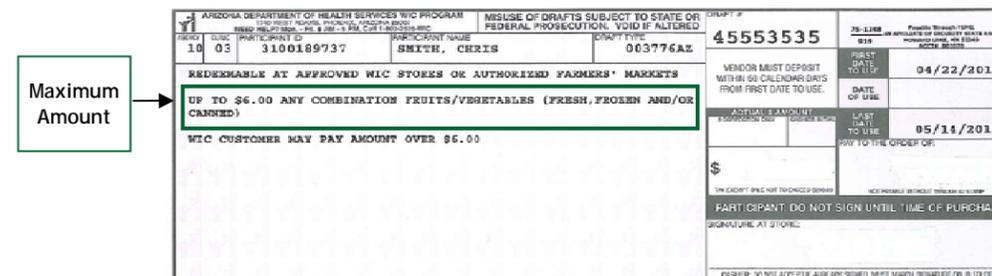
*See enclosed handouts for additional information on correcting food instruments (date of use, dollar amount & signatures).

**Excludes Above 50 Percent Vendors (see page 7—Incentive Item Restrictions for WIC Vendors)

NOTE: If for any reason the cashier refuses to accept the food instrument, it must be returned to the WIC customer.

Cashing WIC Cash Value Food Instruments

WIC customers can purchase fruits and vegetables using a Cash Value Food Instrument (CVFI). The CVFI can be used to purchase a combination of fresh, frozen and/or canned fruits and/or vegetables. The customer may redeem one or more Cash Value Food Instruments in one transaction. Please do not write more than the maximum amount that is printed on the CVFI.



Cashing One Cash Value Food Instrument

1. Follow the same procedures for cashing a regular food instrument (page 4: steps 1- 6).
2. Weigh, scan and calculate the amount of fruits and vegetables that are being purchased.
3. Enter the amount up to the maximum amount printed on the food instrument in the “Actual \$ Amount” box.
4. Witness and verify the WIC customer’s signature.

If the amount exceeds the maximum and the WIC customer chooses to, they can pay the difference using another form of payment (i.e. SNAP benefits, cash, etc.).

Example: If the cost of the fruit and vegetables are \$6.75, the cashier will need to ask the customer if they wish to pay the difference of \$.75. If the customer agrees, the cashier will write in \$6.00 in the “Actual \$ Amount” box and the customer will pay \$.75 using another form of payment.

If the customer does not agree to pay the difference, the cashier will need to remove enough fruit and vegetables until the amount is at or below the maximum amount of the CVFI.

Remember: Cashiers must enter the actual purchase amount (excluding sales tax), but not more than the maximum amount printed on the on the CVFI.

Cashing More Than One Cash Value Food Instrument in One Transaction

When cashing more than one CVFI, the same rules above apply, including the following: use the highest value CVFI first, make sure each one is within the valid dates, then tender and process each one separately. For example:

The WIC customer hands you three CVFIs. Two have a maximum amount of \$5.00 and the third has the maximum amount of \$6.00; total CVFI amount equals \$16.00 for all three.

The WIC customer purchases a total amount of \$20.20 of fruit and vegetables. The amount over is \$4.20 (\$20.20 – \$16.00).

The cashier will use the highest CVFI first (\$6.00), write the date, and \$6.00 on it, witness the signature, then tender the first CVFI.

Next, the cashier will use one of the \$5.00 CVFIs, write the date and the amount (\$5.00) on it, witness the signature and then tender it.

Before writing on the last \$5.00 CVFI, ask the customer if they wish to pay the difference of \$4.20.

If they agree, write the date and the amount (\$5.00) on the CVFI, witness the signature, tender it, and collect the remaining amount.

If the customer does not agree, the cashier will need to remove enough fruit and vegetables until the amount is at or below the maximum amount of the last \$5.00 CVFI.

So, if the amount the cashier deducted is \$4.80, the Cashier will write the date, the new amount (\$4.40), witness the signature and tender the CVFI (see enclosed handout regarding the Cash Value Food Instrument).

Rose's Market	
Fresh Fruits/Vegetables	\$ 8.45
Canned Vegetables	\$ 5.75
Frozen Fruits	\$ 6.00
Total	\$20.20
WIC Tender	-\$ 6.00
Sub-total	\$14.20
WIC Tender	-\$ 5.00
Sub-total	\$ 9.20
Returned Items	-\$ 4.80
Sub-total	\$ 4.40
WIC Tender	-\$ 4.40
Balance	0