

ANNUAL WIC VENDOR TRAINING DOCUMENT

FEDERAL FISCAL YEAR 2023

Intro

The Connecticut state agency is required to train WIC authorized stores on an annual basis. Authorized vendors are required to inform and train cashiers and other staff on program requirements.

You **MUST** review this training information and then share the information with store staff, especially cashiers or those handling WIC transactions and WIC foods. The purpose of this training is to improve your understanding of program rules and requirements to enhance compliance and prevent errors.

Purpose of our program

To serve nutritionally at-risk women, infants, and children up to age 5.

To show participants that good nutrition leads to better health.

To provide nutrition education and specific supplemental foods for good health and nutrition during critical times of growth and development.

To provide referrals for health care and other services

Program requirement changes in the last 3 years

- Added new plastic packaging of fruits and multipacks of yogurt
- Added medium, extra large and jumbo eggs in dozen cartons to APL
- Added shredded and string cheese to Approved Product List
- Began sending all written communication only via email. All Vendor Bulletins are available on our website, <https://portal.ct.gov/DPH/WIC/Retailers>
- Revisions to WIC Vendor Agreement in October 2020, October 2021 and October 2022
- Added new foods and removed ineligible foods to the Approved Food Guide and the Approved Product List (APL)

Approved Supplemental Foods

The Connecticut WIC Program provides authorized foods to participants via a retail food delivery system using grocery stores and pharmacies. Authorized supplemental foods mean those foods authorized by the State for issuance to a particular participant. All WIC approved foods are in our Approved Product Listing (APL) that is made available for download to your cash register system or Point of Sale (POS) stand beside device every night. Vendors must always have the latest version of the APL.

WIC food benefits are very specific to what participants may buy.

The following items are brand specific:

Formulas and Medical Nutritionals

Breakfast cereal

Juice

Whole Grain/Whole Wheat Bread, Brown Rice, Whole Wheat Pasta, Whole Wheat/Soft Corn Tortillas

Soy Milk

Yogurt

The following items are non-brand specific and any brand may be purchased:

Milk

Eggs

Cheese

Peanut butter

Fruits & Vegetables

Beans

Canned Fish

Tofu

Baby Foods

Infant Cereal

See our WIC Approved Food Guide or the WIC Shopper app for specific product types and brand names allowed.

Incentive Items Policy

A vendor must not offer, or intend to offer, incentive items solely to WIC customers. You must offer WIC customers the same courtesies that are offered to non-WIC customers.

Minimum Inventory Requirement

*For food stores: all food items below are required to be carried in all currently authorized food stores.
For pharmacies: only the infant formula below is required to be carried in all currently authorized pharmacies.*

At all times, authorized vendors must maintain each of the following WIC approved foods in the quantities stated with future expiration dates on the shelves or store premises. Use the Approved Food Vendor Card and WIC shopper app for specific products and brand names allowed for Connecticut WIC approved foods.

To ensure constant availability of WIC approved foods to WIC customers, a vendor may have to stock these food items in larger quantities than is required.

FOOD ITEM	CONTAINER SIZE	MINIMUM QUANTITIES AND REQUIRED NUMBER OF KIND/TYPE/VARIETIES
Milk-1%/Low-fat/Light, or Skim/ Fat Free/Nonfat	Gallons and/or Half gallons	6 Gallons-Any combination of gallons and/or half gallons (12 half gallons=6 gallons)
Milk-Whole	Gallons and/or Half gallons	3 Gallons-Any combination of gallons and/or half gallons (6 half gallons = 3 gallons)
Evaporated Milk	12 oz. cans	12 cans
Cheese	8 or 16 oz., packages	4 pounds-2 varieties and 2 pounds of each
Eggs White or Brown	1 dozen carton	4 dozen, Medium, Large, Extra Large, Jumbo
Fluid Juice-Plastic Bottles	64 oz. plastic bottles	3 varieties 12 bottles
Fruits-Fresh, Frozen, Canned	Pounds, pieces, cans, bags, boxes	\$25 worth fresh, frozen or canned 2 different kinds must be fresh fruits
Vegetables Fresh, Frozen, Canned	Pounds, pieces, cans, bags, boxes	\$25 worth fresh, frozen or canned 2 different kinds must be fresh vegetables
Bread-Whole Wheat/Whole Grain Tortillas-Whole Wheat/Soft Corn Brown Rice/Whole Wheat Pasta	1 pound (lb.) loaves or packages 14-16 oz./1 lb. packages of rice only	6 packages
Legumes–Dry/Beans, Peas, Lentils	1 pound (lb.) bags	2 varieties 4 bags of dry beans, peas or lentils
Legumes–Canned Beans/Peas	15-16 oz. cans	8 cans of beans or peas (black eye, chick, pigeon)
Canned Fish-Chunk Light Tuna, Salmon or Sardines	5 oz. tuna, 6-15 oz. salmon 3.75 oz. sardines	6 cans
Cold Cereal	12 oz. or larger bags, boxes	3 varieties of cold cereal and 3 boxes of each variety 1 variety must be whole grain
Peanut Butter	16-18 oz. jars	3 jars
Baby Food–Fruits	4 or 8 oz. jars or packages Any Brand	2 varieties 36 jars or packages
Baby Food–Vegetables	4 or 8 oz. jars or packages Any Brand	2 varieties 36 jars or packages
Infant Cereal (Plain)	8 oz. containers or boxes Any Brand	2 varieties 3 containers or boxes of each variety
Infant Formula	13 oz. metal cans of concentrate <u>AND/OR</u> 12.4 oz. cans of powder	24 units of Similac Advance, in any combination of 13 oz. concentrate or 12.4 oz. cans of powder

Transacting and Redeeming WIC Benefits

POS Stand-Beside Equipment

WIC customers must separate their WIC purchase from non-WIC purchases. The purchase of non-WIC items are a separate transaction on the vendor's register.

Process:

- WIC customer swipes their card and enters their PIN (After 3 failed attempts to enter the PIN, the account will automatically lock until midnight. The cardholder can call the number on the back of the card to reset the PIN).
- Cashier scans UPC number on the exact item being purchased*
- Cashier enters the price of each item in stand-beside machine if needed
- Cashier presses "Total" after the last WIC item is scanned
- The WIC foods will be deducted from the family's benefit balance
- Cashier will collect additional payment separately for the cost of any fruit and vegetables that are more than the benefit balance allows
- A receipt will print the transaction including the remaining balance
- The cashier MUST give the receipt to the participant
- Vendor is paid for purchases within 48 hours of a sale

*Note: ONLY fresh fruits and vegetables must be entered into the machine with the code, "4469" and the price of the item, because they do not have a UPC.

Integrated Cash Register System

Customers do not have to separate their WIC food items from non-WIC purchases. This is a mixed basket transaction. WIC foods are automatically identified when they are scanned.

Process:

- Cashier scans all items. The order in which items are scanned is the order in which they are deducted from the participant's benefits.
- The participant swipes the WIC card before any other form of payment
- Participant enters their PIN
- Cashier asks participant to review and confirm the mid-point verification of WIC items that will be deducted from the WIC card
- Cashier will collect additional payment for the purchase (if any) Example: fruit and vegetable overage and/or to pay for non-WIC items
- Receipt will print the participant's remaining balance
- Cashier MUST give the receipt to the participant
- Vendor is paid for purchases within 48 hours of a sale

Note: All in-store product lookup (PLU) codes for fresh fruits and vegetables must be mapped by the corporate office to "4469".

There is a limit of 50 WIC approved items per transaction. Larger purchases may need to be split into multiple transactions.

If vendors need technical assistance with transactions, please contact the WIC Program. If help is need with your register or stand beside device, please contact your device provider.

Vendor Sanction System

When your store became an authorized WIC vendor, the owner accepted and signed a WIC Vendor Agreement which defines the responsibilities of WIC vendors and the WIC Program. Occasionally, through monitoring or compliance investigations, violations are found that may place your store in conflict with state or federal policy and regulations.

The intent to commit a violation versus inadvertent human error is not a distinction that the WIC Program must establish to impose sanctions.

Sanctions are imposed in order to protect the integrity and the nutritional goals of the WIC Program.

See Appendix E in your WIC Vendor Agreement for a listing of the Federal Mandatory and State Agency Established Violations and Sanctions. The Agreement is also available on the WIC website.

WIC and SNAP share information, and more information on reciprocal sanctions may be found in the WIC Vendor Agreement.

Monetary Claims

The Connecticut WIC Program may make monetary claims against vendors that have committed certain types of redemption abuse, in addition to any other sanctions applied against such vendors. Those include but are not limited to:

- Inventory audits when a vendor's records cannot support all its redemptions
- Any overcharges or errors made on a WIC transaction discovered during undercover compliance buys
- Transaction audits when a review of a vendor's redemptions is performed to determine if the vendor has overcharged the WIC Program.

WIC authorization will be terminated for failure to pay a monetary claim by the due date.

Complaint process

Vendors may file a complaint against WIC customers who abuse Program rules. Contact the State WIC Office with the last four digits of the card # with the date and time of the transaction.

Example: Trying to exchange or purchase non-WIC items, is rude or has disruptive behavior.

Notify the State WIC Office if the customer does not know what food to buy and/or indicates that they do not know how to use the WIC card. WIC Program participants may need additional training.

Vendors may file a complaint against other vendors who suspect that WIC Program rules are not being followed. Example: Vendor is giving non-food items or unapproved food items.

Contact the State WIC Food Resource and Vendor Management (FRVM) unit by email, phone or mail:

ctwic@ct.gov-General information/Submitting APL items

WICFraud.DPH@ct.gov-Reporting Fraud

DPH.ptwic@ct.gov-Applications and authorization

Phone: 860-509-8084 or 800-741-2142 (in Connecticut only)

Mail: Department of Public Health, WIC Program, 410 Capitol Avenue, MS #11WIC, Hartford, CT 06106

Recordkeeping

Retain all original inventory records used for tax reporting purposes including purchase invoices, purchase slips and receipts of delivery for WIC food items for the most recent three-year period. All such documents must indicate the quantity, unit price, description and container size of WIC food items purchased and must be provided when requested and available for inspection by federal and/or state agents. Cash register receipts without specific identification of the quantity, unit price, description, and container size of WIC food items purchased shall not be accepted as evidence of WIC food item purchases.

**After review with your staff, initial below and keep with your Connecticut WIC materials.
Do not send back to WIC.**

Owner/Manager _____ Assistant Manager _____ Cashier/Store Employee _____

USDA Non-Discrimination Statement

In accordance with federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, this institution is prohibited from discriminating on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex (including gender identity and sexual orientation), disability, age, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity.

Program information may be made available in languages other than English. Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication to obtain program information (e.g., Braille, large print, audiotape, American Sign Language), should contact the responsible state or local agency that administers the program or USDA's TARGET Center at [\(202\) 720-2600](tel:202-720-2600) (voice and TTY) or contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at [\(800\) 877-8339](tel:800-877-8339).

To file a program discrimination complaint, a Complainant should complete a Form AD-3027, USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form which can be obtained online <https://www.usda.gov/sites/default/files/documents/USDA-OASCR%20P-Complaint-Form-0508-0002-508-11-28-17Fax2Mail.pdf>, from any USDA office, by calling [\(866\) 632-9992](tel:866-632-9992), or by writing a letter addressed to USDA. The letter must contain the complainant's name, address, telephone number, and a written description of the alleged discriminatory action in sufficient detail to inform the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights (ASCR) about the nature and date of an alleged civil rights violation. The completed AD-3027 form or letter must be submitted to USDA by:

- 1. Mail:** U.S. Department of Agriculture Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights 1400 Independence Avenue, SW Washington, D.C. 20250-9410; or
- 2. Fax:** (833) 256-1665 or (202) 690-7442; or
- 3. Email:** program.intake@usda.gov

This institution is an equal opportunity provider.