

WIC Certification Forms and Policies: Clarification and information for WIC Program Assistants and Nutrition Staff to Share with WIC families

When does the WIC Participant Rights and Responsibilities Form need to be completed?

Nothing has changed about the completion of this form. It is required as always at Certification and Recertification. It is not required at Mid-Certification unless you determine that it will be beneficial to review with the participant. As we have discussed previously, it is important for our participants to be aware and understand the WIC Program Rights and Responsibilities. It is in the best interest of the local agencies to review this form as often as necessary to ensure participants are comfortable with the WIC Participant Rights and Responsibilities. Question from 6-12-15 meeting: “What if the mom was certified today and she returns a week later to recertify her child, do we have to re-read the entire document to them?” The WIC Participant Rights and Responsibilities has to be reviewed with participants at Certification and Recertification, therefore the important points must be highlighted/reviewed with the participant again.

What is the best way to review the WIC Participant Rights and Responsibilities Form with participants?

It is best to review the form with participants in a way that the staff is comfortable and the participant understands the information. In order for the participant to understand the information, the staff must be comfortable with the information. Again, for the most part, these are not new concepts. The order has changed based on local agency input and feedback, the non-discrimination statement is more expansive, per USDA requirements, and we have added the section about keeping receipts to protect against WIC fraud and abuse. If staff are struggling with how to convey these basic WIC Rights and Responsibilities, we'd suggest role playing or discussing at local agency staff meetings until the entire staff is comfortable with explaining these points to participants. In monitoring, it will be a finding if a staff person directs someone to sign the form without reviewing it with the participant.

How long should we tell participants to maintain their WIC Receipts?

To aid in explanation of use of WIC food benefits we've developed the handout, *Questions You May have About Your WIC Food Benefits*. As a guide, you can tell participants to keep receipts until the expiration date of the food product.

How best to explain the Applicant/Participant Authorization?

This form is letting participants know that the information they provide to us from their doctor (on the front of the certification form) is going to be used to determine WIC program eligibility for themselves or their children. It is also letting them know that we will contact the health care provider (HCP) if we have questions about the information the doctor provided on the certification form. The forms also provides additional spaces in case the participant is participating in additional programs or services that WIC nutritionists would find helpful to coordinate with i.e. Head Start, Early Intervention. Staff should be clear in informing that the participant that they will only be contacting the HCP or other organizations regarding information necessary for participating in the WIC Program or coordination, it is not to obtain all of their health or related medical/behavioral information.

How often does Medical Provider information need to be updated on Applicant/Participant Authorization?

Does the participant need to complete the form when transferring from another State or local agency?

It needs to be updated, as needed (i.e. a change in providers), at certification and recertification. It should be completed only if a participant has a provider. If there is no provider, follow-up should be done at the next appointment to determine if it needs to be completed at that time.

How to process participants who have applied for Medicaid/ HUSKY A but do not have a card or eligibility cannot be verified by the Automated Eligibility Verification System.

In many cases the participant has a letter of eligibility from Access Health CT. To clarify, Mom's HUSKY A card cannot be used to add the baby on (she is no longer pregnant) – therefore **22** –Family member participates in HUSKY A/Medicaid cannot be used to document income. First month – if the participant has a letter – use 02 and enter 9s for the number. If the participant returns the 2nd month and still doesn't have the card – remove 02 and enter 88, use Self-Declaration form indicating that applied but still hasn't received the card. Can use the Self-Declaration form for up to **30 days due to backlog with HUSKY A** – noting unreasonable barrier and documenting the delay at DSS. **At the 6-12-15 statewide meeting we initially advised using Self-Declaration for up to 60 days. Upon further consultation with our funders (USDA) this is not allowable. The Self-Declaration form can only be used for 30 days.** After 30 days, WIC staff would need to document another source of income if the HUSKY number or eligibility was unable to be confirmed. If you are having difficulty obtaining the Medicaid card number/information beyond this period, contact your State liaison so that we can try to pinpoint the areas of State are having the backlog problem. For participants turning 1 year old, staff should remind participants to complete the DSS requirements so that the child does not become ineligible for HUSKY A when he/she turns 1 year old.

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For income verification, who is considered a reliable third party? Can a third party form (Verification Form) be signed by a family member or person that is letting them stay temporarily in their home?

Refer to WIC 200-07 Income eligibility documentation it states, “staff of social service agency, church, legal aid society, and employer.” No, a third party Verification Form cannot be signed by a family member that is letting an applicant or participant temporarily stay in their home.

Should a Self-declaration form be maintained after the income is present and should that income be recorded on the form?

Yes, the form should be maintained in the paper file after it is resolved. (In CT-WIC it will be scanned into the record) However, the income doesn't have to be recorded on the form, as it should be entered into SWIS screen 102.

New Income information – Effective immediately, for non-adjunctively eligible applicants – 1 month of paystubs required. Question from 6-12-15 meeting: “Why do we need four (4) weekly paystubs or two (2) bi-weekly paystubs when we don't document it on paper, only in SWIS?” This is a requirement of USDA. We need a month's worth of paystubs in order to determine if the income information presented is a true representation of the family's actual earnings.