



Working With WIC Retailer Bulletin

Special Edition

This special edition of the **Working with WIC** Retailer bulletin is designed to provide you with information about the many changes being implemented in the WIC Program starting October 1, 2009.

It is important that all managers, certified trainers, and other parties responsible for WIC Program management read this bulletin as well as the other training resources mentioned in this bulletin. This bulletin, along with the other resources that have been updated, will serve as a

good starting point to ensure your cashiers are prepared for the changes being implemented. Specific information pertaining to the handling of food instruments and cash value vouchers are covered elsewhere, i.e. WIC Approved Food List, Cashier Training Guide, and Cashier Training DVD/Video.

If you have questions pertaining to any of the available resources and training materials, please contact your assigned Vendor Liaison or the State WIC Office.

Transition to New Food Choices as of October 1, 2009

There will be new food items that participants may choose from as of October 1, 2009. From October 1, 2009 to December 31, 2009, any violation that involves selling an ineligible food item documented from a compliance buy may result in a warning letter only being sent. Provided the ineligible item purchased was due to a change made between the new and old food list, i.e., selling pineapple juice which is no longer allowed under the new food list. If the compliance shopper is allowed to purchase food items which were previously allowed under the 2007 food list, but not allowed on the new 2009 food list, the store will be notified in writing. No sanction points will be issued with this type of violation during the transition period.



However, after January 1, 2010, if this same violation occurs, then the WIC Program will issue sanction points. Please note if your store allows the compliance shopper to purchase an ineligible item (non-compliant)

with either food lists, i.e., selling a sweetened cereal, the WIC Program will issue sanction points accordingly, regardless of when the violation was documented.

Please note that after August 1, 2009, WIC participants will have both the old and new food instruments (FIs), as well as the new cash value voucher (CVV) in their possession. The new food instrument will have "spend dates" printed on them that occur after October 1, 2009. These new FIs and CVVs can only be used after October 1, 2009.

Participants are issued three months of benefits at a time. This means that some participants may unintentionally try to use these new types of FIs and CVVs before October 1, 2009. Cashiers must be knowledgeable about this situation and be diligent in checking the dates on all food instruments. Cashiers should be reminded the importance of accepting food instruments only within the "spend dates" printed on each instrument.



This institution is an equal opportunity provider.

Measuring Up to Meet the Minimum Stocking Requirement ►

Retailers that participate in the Virginia WIC Program must ensure they meet the minimum stocking requirement, in accordance with state regulations (12VAC5-195-580 Performance and administrative monitoring). Retailers must have on their shelves at all times the minimum stocking requirement. Retailers that do not meet the minimum stocking requirement for any of the required items will be subject to further administrative actions. Please refer to the Virginia WIC Program's 2009 Approved Food List for additional information pertaining to specific brands, other restrictions, as well as allowable items.

In order to effectively meet customer demands stores are encouraged to increase their stock above this minimum level. On site stocking visits are completed by an Agency Representative to confirm that this requirement is met by authorized stores.

A single stocking requirement exists for all types of authorized stores. Requests for a waiver to this minimum stocking requirement can be submitted to the State Agency, please refer to your Vendor Manual (section entitled Minimum Stocking Requirement) for additional information on using this exception process.



Virginia WIC Contract Products

Infant Cereals

Gerber® will remain the infant cereal brand printed on food instruments issued to eligible participants.

Please Note: Barley variety cereal will no longer be an approved selection after October 1st. There are no plans by the Virginia WIC Program to add whole wheat cereal as an eligible type of baby cereal.

Infant Foods

Participants must purchase baby food in the brand name*, number of containers and size (including ounces) as printed on the food instrument, beginning October 1, 2009.

*The manufacturer information and brand name will be sent later this summer once the contract is awarded.

Infant Formula

The primary infant formula contract will remain Ross Product Division that manufacturers Similac Advance® and Isomil Advance®. Similac Advance Early Shield® is a product replacement for Similac Advance. Because this

is a product replacement, both products (Similac Advance® and Similac Advance EarlyShield®) will be on store's shelves at the same time. The Virginia WIC Program will issue food instruments with a description that reads as follows:

Similac Advance® OR
Similac Advance EarlyShield®,
Powder- 12.9 OZ.

Similac Advance® OR Similac Advance EarlyShield®,
Concentrate- 13 FL. OZ.

Similac Advance® OR Similac Advance EarlyShield®,
RTF- 32 FL. OZ.

No change is anticipated in the labeling or issuing of the Isomil Advance® products prescribed by the WIC Program.

After October 1, 2009 Similac Sensitive® (concentrate, powder and ready to feed) will be a prescribed formula.



Designated Brands - For Certain Foods

Effective October 1, 2009 "Store Designated Brands" must be purchased for frozen juice, liquid juice, milk, peanut butter, reduced fat cheese, regular cheese and hot and cold cereals.

Each store must declare in the Retail Store Management System (RSMS) which brand will be designated their store brand. Selling store brand products allows the WIC Program to provide the same nutritional benefits at a significant cost savings. This administrative decision

helps the WIC Program maximize the number of eligible women, infants and children that can receive benefits. WIC customers also benefit by learning that store brands are a way to save on groceries when they are no longer receiving Program benefits. Stores will be required to use shelf labels to identify their "WIC Designated Brands" for selective categories of allowable foods. Special shelf labels will be available that can be ordered from the WIC Program using the Retailer Supply Request Form.

**Virginia Minimum Stocking Requirement (MSR)
Effective October 1, 2009**

Food Item	Type of Inventory	Size	Quantity - MSR
Baby Food	Infant Vegetables (specific brand)	4 oz.	32 containers/jars; must stock 2 types.
	Infant Fruits (specific brand)	4 oz.	32 containers/jars; must stock 2 types.
Infant Formula	Similac Advance with Iron/Similac Advance Early Shield™ 70074-56974 (UPC)	13 oz. conc.	21 cans
	Similac Advance with Iron/Similac Advance Early Shield™ 70074-55958 (UPC)	12.9 oz. powder	6 cans
	Isomil Advance Soy W/Iron™ 70074-56976	13 oz. conc.	9 cans
	Isomil Advance Soy W/Iron™ 70074-55964	12.9 oz. powder	3 cans
Infant Cereal	Rice – Gerber only	8 oz.	3 boxes
Dry Beans, peas, lentils	Any brands	16 oz.	2 pounds
Eggs	Any brand: White Eggs, Grade “A” Large	dozen	2 cartons
Milk	Store designated brand - Reduced Fat, 2%, 1% or Skim Fluid Milk	gallons (quarts)	5 containers (3 containers)
	Store designated brand - Whole Fluid Milk	gallons (quarts)	2 containers (1 container)
Cheese	1. Store designated brand - American (Sliced)	16 oz.	2 lbs Must stock both types of cheese
	2. Store designated brand - Cheddar (block)	16 oz.	
Breakfast Cereals	Required Types (store designated brands):		72 ounces (combined) Must stock three (3) different types. At least one whole grain* cereal from this list must be stocked
	1. Corn Flakes	12 – 15 oz.	
	2. Crisp Rice or Crispy Rice	12 – 15 oz.	
	3. Frosted Shredded Wheat (whole grain)*	12 – 15 oz.	
	4. Tasteos or Toasted Oats (whole grain)*	12 – 15 oz.	
5. Hot Cereal – Instant Oatmeal (whole grain)*	11.8 - 12 oz.		
Frozen Juice	Store designated brand - single flavored juice, including: grape, grapefruit, or orange.	12 oz.	3 containers Must stock 2 types
Liquid Juice	Store designated brand - single flavor juice including: cranberry, grape, grapefruit, orange or tomato	64 oz.	2 containers Must stock 2 types
Other items	Canned and fresh vegetables and fruits (for canned products – any brands) Must have at least 2 types of fresh vegetables; 2 types of fresh fruits; 2 types of canned fruits; and 2 types of canned vegetables.	\$14.00 Total value of these products	8 varieties
Peanut butter	Store designated brand – type: smooth, crunchy.	18 oz.	2 jars
Whole Grain Products	Whole Wheat Bread (see Food List for selective brands) <u>or</u> Corn Tortillas (see Food List for selective brands) <u>or</u> Brown Rice (any brand)	16 oz.	3 packages (must stock at least (1) one type)

Important Changes: Items No Longer Approved for Purchase After October 1, 2009

Participants may no longer purchase:

- 100% unsweetened frozen pineapple juice (all brands)
- 100% unsweetened 46 oz. can/plastic bottle pineapple juice (all brands)
- 100% unsweetened 12 oz. can frozen apple juice – Lucky Leaf, Old Orchard, Seneca, and Whitehouse
- All 46 oz. containers of juice (all types)
- Evaporated milk (any size)
- Dry Milk (any size)
- 1/2 % milk (gallon)
- Tuna packed in oil (any size)
- Quaker Instant Grits (any size)
- Nabisco Cream of Wheat (any size)
- Barley – infant cereal (8 ounces)



Please update your electronic scan systems to reflect these changes, after October 1, 2009.

Updated Training Resources

Cashier Training Guide (revised as of October 1, 2009)

You will receive a copy of the updated version of the Cashier Training Guide when you attend one of the mandatory training classes which will be held later this summer.

After October 1st 2009, discard the old Cashier Training Guide (dated 1/07 – teal colored). The updated Guide must be used to train your cashiers and store personnel. You can order additional copies of this Guide by submitting a Retailer Supply Request form to the State WIC office.

Cashier Training Video

An updated version of the Cashier Training DVD/Video will be available for distribution to all authorized stores by September, 2009. A new module has been added to the Cashier Training Video that covers “*How to handle cash value vouchers*”.

Participant Education and New Food Choices... How Will That Work?



In preparation for the significant changes to the October 1, 2009 food list, the Virginia WIC Program is working with participants to educate them on the benefits of these new food choices. Efforts are being implemented to teach participants how to purchase nutritious foods using cash value vouchers.

For example, five new nutrition education classes were developed to address the following topics:

- 1) Using the New Food List / New Foods;
- 2) Whole Grains;
- 3) Portion Sizes;
- 4) Purchasing Fruits and Vegetables (using a price chart and scale); and
- 5) Stretching Your Food Dollar.

These classes will teach participants not only what foods are available but also how to select and prepare those foods purchased.

The new food choices are also covered during individual nutrition counseling sessions held with participants. WIC Nutritionists will discuss and answer specific questions that participants may have about using the new cash value vouchers and changes to their new food prescriptions.

The Virginia WIC Program will use a variety of media to reinforce the training provided, such as the “Virginia Gets Oriented” video. The updates will include information on how to shop using the cash value voucher for fresh and/or canned fruits and vegetables. It also addresses other allowable food changes and will be shown to participants this summer.

The training and resources provided to participants relating to important food choice changes should help them to feel confident and comfortable while shopping.

IMPORTANT WEBSITE Addresses:

<http://www.vahealth.org/wic/>

<http://www.vahealth.org/wic/newwic.htm>

https://wic-vweb.vdh.virginia.gov/pls/net_open/login

<http://leg1.state.va.us/>

<http://www.fns.usda.gov/wic/WhatsNew.HTM>

WIC Approved Food List

(effective October 1, 2009)

Beginning mid- August (2009), the WIC Program will begin distributing the new WIC Approved Food List. Additional copies of the list may be ordered by submitting a Retailer Supply Request form to the State WIC Office. A blank request form can be found in your Vendor Manual Section (R-3). Remember, a current food list must be stored at each register, at all times.

Don't Forget... as of October 1st – destroy all Virginia WIC Program Approved Food Lists (effective January 1, 2007) and replace with a new food list at each register. Also, replace any outdated food lists stored in your Vendor Manual.

TRAINING REMINDER:

It is important to remind your cashiers to pay special attention when entering the dollar amounts on food instruments and cash value vouchers.

If a cashier mistakenly writes the incorrect amount for other food items such as milk, juice, cereal or formula on a CVV, your store may not be reimbursed for the item(s) purchased.

Management Considerations Working With Cash Value Vouchers

Detailed instructions for handling cash value vouchers (CVVs) are outlined in the Cashier's Training Guide. This section provides an overview of administrative issues that affect store management and cashiers. Most of the processing requirements that exist in handling food instruments (FIs) also apply to CVVs. For instance in order for a store to be reimbursed the CVV must:

- Be signed by the participant/proxy/parent;
- Be used between the "spend dates" printed on the CVVs;
- Be used to purchase WIC approved fruits and vegetables only;
- Have a total amount written (in ink) that does not exceed the maximum value printed on the CVV (i.e., \$5.00, \$6.00 or \$8.00);
- Be prepared for deposit and have a valid WIC ID number stamped on it; and
- Be deposited within 14 days of the last date printed on the CVVs.

Cash value vouchers, once deposited, will be screened by our banking contractor to ensure they are eligible for payment. CVVs deposited that exceed the maximum dollar value amount printed on the front; will be rejected, returned unpaid and subject to automated clearinghouse (ACH) payment, if applicable.

Since the minimum value of a printed CVV may be as low as \$5.00 and your bank may charge a returned check fee, this type of error can become costly for your store. Please refer to your Vendor Manual Reimbursement section for a complete listing of prepayment edits that will be done on CVVs.

Important information to share with your cashiers before October 1, 2009...

The number of food instruments and cash value vouchers issued to a family **will increase**. It is even more critical for cashiers to pay special attention to the description in handling each food instrument and CVV. Remember a mother with multiple children may have a set of food instruments and CVVs for herself and each eligible child.

If your store uses **PLU (Price Look Up) codes** on fresh fruits and vegetables please make sure your system has the ability to allow "overrides" so that cashiers may complete the sale without charging a sales tax to the WIC Program.

Prior to October 1, 2009 please take time to identify how your cashiers will ring up the purchase of fresh and/or canned fruits and vegetables. Will your cashiers be required to call for management assistance when accepting a CVV?

Participants have the option to use food instruments along with their CVVs at the same store. Some participants may choose to shop at different stores for their fresh and/or canned fruits and vegetables.

Participants are given a chart and other resources to help them spend their CVVs within the maximum. However, some participants may need assistance at the store in weighing fresh produce and calculating the total sales price. Stores that have scales located in their produce section will aid participants in maximizing the amount of foods they can purchase.

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Authorized stores are encouraged to allow participants to spend over the maximum value on an individual CVV. If this option is permitted by your store then the participant is able to pay the excess amount via cash, credit/debit card, personal check or food stamps.

Cashiers should inform participants as soon as possible if your store's cash register system does not allow split payments between the WIC Program and other payment options.



Store Brand Designations:

In April, the Retail Store Management System (RSMS) was updated and now requires all retailers to designate their store brands for selected food categories, including:

- Cold and Hot Cereals
- Milk (quart and gallon)
- Single Flavored 100% Frozen Juice (12 ounces)
- Peanut Butter (18 ounces)
- Single Flavored 100% Liquid Juice (64 ounces)
- Reduced Fat Cheese (16 ounces)
- Regular Cheese (16 ounces)



For additional information pertaining to store designated brand reporting requirements, please refer to the new guidelines which addresses this topic. A copy of this new section of the Vendor Manual can be downloaded from the agency's website <http://www.vahealth.org/wic/>.

Reciprocal WIC and SNAP (formerly Food Stamp)

The Food Stamp Program is now called the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP). According to the WIC Program's Retailer Agreement, if a store is disqualified from SNAP, the store will be disqualified from the Virginia WIC Program. It is a program requirement for all authorized stores to be active and in good standing with SNAP. Please note that if a store is disqualified from the WIC Program, due to documented violations or if the Retailer Agreement is terminated for cause, SNAP will be notified of the administrative actions taken by the Virginia WIC Program. This reciprocal relationship might result in your store being disqualified from SNAP.

REPORTING

QUESTIONS/PROBLEMS/COMPLAINTS

Authorized retailers should report any incidents/problems (related to food instrument handling, participants and/or reimbursement issue) using the Retailer Incident/Complaint form WIC #387.

This form can be found in your Virginia WIC *Vendor Manual Section Q, Retailer Complaints and Incidents* or it can be downloaded from our website. The Virginia WIC Program suggests for incidents of a more serious or urgent nature, please call your assigned Vendor Liaison or the State WIC Office at (804) 864-7800.

A toll-free line is available to participants to contact the WIC Program and get answers and/or assistance to many of their WIC related questions. **This toll free line is intended for use by WIC participants only.**

1-877-TELL-WIC
(1-877-835-5942)
(Participant Use Only)

Program Changes and Compliance Investigations

There has been a change with federal regulations concerning compliance investigations. The Virginia WIC Program is required to notify stores of any federal or state violations before a subsequent compliance visit is conducted. Before this change, only federal violations required notice before subsequent visits were conducted. As of April (2009) the WIC Program began sending written notices to all stores if additional buys would be conducted for both federal and state violations documented. The only exception to this notification requirement is if providing notice would compromise the integrity of the investigation. This exception will be identified and decided upon on a case by case basis. A copy of the updated Sanction Violation Schedule may be downloaded from the Virginia WIC Program's web page under the "What's New" section.

2009 Addendum to Existing Retailer Agreement

An addendum to the existing Retailer Agreement will be distributed this summer. All authorized stores will be required to sign and return a new Retailer Agreement by September 30, 2009. The updated Retailer Agreement will incorporate the new procedural requirements associated with handling cash value vouchers, new requirements for identifying store's designated brands, and other federal changes (see Public Law 108-265: Discretionary WIC Vendor Provisions in the Child Nutrition and WIC Reauthorization act of 2004).

Once you receive a copy of the addendum, if you have any questions about any of the new provisions stated in this document, please contact Alex Acharya at (804) 864-7811 or alex.acharya@vdh.virginia.gov.

The Appeal Process

If your store is disqualified from the Virginia WIC Program, or your application for authorization is denied or any adverse action is taken, you can appeal this administrative decision. You can request a review in writing within 15 calendar days of receipt of this administrative decision. Please refer to state regulations 12VAC5-195-660 Informal Settlement Meeting or 12VAC5-195-670 full administrative review for additional information pertaining to either of these administrative options.

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ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF TRAINING FORM

IMPORTANT: You must bring this form to your Training Session. Complete form and return signed by September 25, 2009.

I have received and read this Special Edition of the Working With WIC Retailer Bulletin. I understand each authorized WIC Store should bring this newsletter with them when attending their mandatory annual training. Sessions will be scheduled and facilitated by your corporate trainer and /or WIC Vendor Liaison.

WIC ID #	Store Name/Number	Date:
Your Name	Title /Position	Phone #
Signature	Comments:	

Please share this newsletter with all relevant employees to insure that all changes and information contained within are communicated accurately and in a timely fashion. If you have questions after reading this newsletter and/or submission dates, contact your Corporate Trainer or Vendor Liaison.

ATTENTION:

If your store is part of a corporation you may not be required to return this acknowledgment form. Check with your corporate WIC trainer before submitting.

Please mail and/or fax this form to:

Virginia Department of Health
Division of WIC and Community Nutrition Services
109 Governor St, 9th Floor
Richmond, Virginia 23218-2448
Phone: (804) 864-7800 Fax: (804) 864-7854

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Division of WIC and Community Nutrition Services
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Summer 2009



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See page 7 for pull out form.

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