

**Virginia WIC Program**  
Retailer Advisory Meeting  
July 22, 2009  
10:00 AM- 12:30 PM

MINUTES

Agenda Review and Rules of the Road, Introductions/Expectations - Ephraim Ewing

Review of Next Steps from May Retailer Advisory meeting - Sheila Brewer

**EWIC Update and Timeline-** *Sylvia Henshaw, EWIC Project Coordinator*

- Will utilize electronic food prescriptions (benefits issued at family level versus individual participants);
- UPCs and PLUs will be used to validate purchases;
- UPC will make it easier to separate allowable vs. no-allowable foods;
- The automation of (the) process will benefit all stakeholders;
- Will allow participants greater security and dignity;
- Participants can make more than one trip to the store;
- Reduced transaction errors for the authorized stores;
- Reduces training time;
- Automated back-end processing and settlement;
- Will be implemented online;
- Spring 2012 for pilot (caused some discussion among stores who were earlier informed that 2011 was the projected due date);
- Will have 800 # for balance inquiries available to participants;
- Plan to involve retailers in the EWIC planning process (advisory council);
- Should have more definitive details by next meeting;
- A separate conference call has been scheduled so that interested retailers can find out more specifics about why an on-line EWIC solution was selected. Donna Seward, State WIC Director will participate in this meeting and is the best person to answer many of the questions posed to Sylvia. Contact Sheila Brewer, Vendor Manager if you have any questions about when this conference call will be held.

**WIC Approved Food List - availability, distribution, update and general Q/A-**

*Meghan Garrett, Nutrition Liaison*

- The Food List is now final and in the hands of the printers;
- The Food List will be ready for distribution next week (as of this writing there has been a brief delay);
- Once the printed Food Lists are available, Sheila will notify stores and she will ensure that the Food List are distributed to stores in a timely manner;
- Information is already available online in the “What’s New” section (web address is: <http://www.vahealth.org/WIC/General%20Info/newwic.htm>);
- Beginning October 1<sup>st</sup> printed FIs for Lactose-reduced milk FI’s will undergo a change and will look more like regular milk/reduced fat FIs. Lactose reduced/lactose free milk FIs will specify fat content, i.e., skim milk, 2% fat, 1% fat milk and whole milk;
- Meghan attended a National WIC meeting where discussion was held regarding the use of CVVs and participants in other state WIC Programs. It was found that participants spent CVV very well and with ease. Participants welcomed the

**Virginia WIC Program**  
Retailer Advisory Meeting  
July 22, 2009

change and very few problems were encountered by stores and participants with this transition.

- Participants tended to purchase fruits and veggies that were on sale;
- White potatoes were an issue. Participants tried to purchase white potatoes even though these items are not allowed;
- The key to success in the new program is the use of shelf labels/tags.

**RSMS- Price collection and Preparation Process** – *Sheila Brewer, Vendor Manager*

- New RSMS version will be available August 1, 2009;
- After this date, stores can begin to enter prices into RSMS for ALL items;
- Must enter prices between 8/1 and 9/27
- No peer group average will be displayed during this transition period.
- After October 1, 2009 peer group averages per food item will be computed and displayed.
- AUG 1 all documents in RSMS will be updated included Consolidated Retailer Agreement
- Addendum Retailer Agreement will go out to stores and corporate contacts - August 09
- Sheila will send out a reminder letter/email note to stores and corporate contact about the September price due date.
- Currently baby foods (fruits and vegetables) are combined so you will enter the highest price for fruits and vegetables.
- In RSMS, there will be a separate price entry for baby food – meats.
- Contact Ephraim or your facilitator (vendor liaison for RSMS questions)

**Minimum Stocking Requirement** – *Sheila Brewer, Vendor Manager*

- Sheila gave a brief review of the 2009 Minimum Stocking Requirements (MSR) which had been reviewed at the last Retailer Advisory meeting;
- No MSR for baby food meats;
- The number of jars (baby fruits and vegetables) that may be printed on the FI could be as many as 16;
- If 16 jars of baby food are listed on the FI, the participant will be required to buy all 16 jars;
- Updated Cashier Training Guide will be made available on the VA WIC website under "What's New" and will soon be available for distribution;
- Updated Cashier Training DVD with a new segment on CVV and new food choices will soon be available.

**Training Issues** - *Sheila Brewer*

- Reviewed the current training schedule for Certified Trainers (independent stores, and make-up sessions for corporate stores.
- Reviewed the current training schedule for independent stores.

**Virginia WIC Program**  
Retailer Advisory Meeting  
July 22, 2009

**Emergency Contact and Planning** – *Sheila Brewer*

- Discussed the role WIC staff may be providing as the H1N1 situation progresses this fall.
- WIC staff may be manning the VDH phone lines, if needed;
- Division needs to be in position to handle such emergencies
- 2009 Addendum to 2008 Retailer Agreement?) has a provision for retailers to notify WIC within 72 hours if normal hours of operations are affected;
- In September, WIC will be collecting info such as the store hours of operation as part of the Addendum Retailer Agreement process;
- Stores not authorized may receive temporary authorization during emergencies;

**Planning for the Future-Peer Group Development** – *Sheila Brewer, Vendor Manager*

- Future planning (see insert for current BEA breakdown and distribution of authorized stores);
- How will we re-shape in the future? What are some other options? (Forward any ideas you have to Sheila)
- A WIC Program state plan objective for 2010 is to re-evaluate the peer group structure;
- VRMA will submit suggestions to WIC regarding peer groups;
- WIC would like to give retailers reasonable time to submit ideas
- Need to consider reimbursement and established maximums
- We can raise issue at next RAM
- Sheila will have offline conversation with VRMA
- Corporate stores with knowledge of other states are encouraged to provide feedback to Sheila
- Sheila conducted a review of shelf labels and Store Designated Brands (see handouts)
- Do not request VA WIC labels if you plan to use your own; but remember that all labels must be pre-approved before putting into use

**Benefits:**

- Celebrated birthday of our site facilitator Freda Bolling with cake and balloons (Norfolk);
- Training resources;
- New food list review;
- Availability of the designated labels;
- Program Comparison Chart – Shelf Labels (very helpful)
- Good information on updates of e-WIC.

**Concerns:**

- EWIC online vs. offline requirements for POS systems;
- Not knowing what brand of baby food will be approved;
- I wish I knew more about what changes, if any will be made to the peer group structure.
- Supplies ordered from State WIC Office - can a corporate trainer order all supplies and distribute to each store instead of having the store manager place the order?

**Virginia WIC Program**  
Retailer Advisory Meeting  
July 22, 2009

- The acknowledgement form for the training. Can the corporate trainer send a list of each manager who attended instead of sending in the acknowledgement form for each person that attends?
- Shelf labels and the adjustment period for compliance.
- Check website often especially the "What's New section
- WIC is exploring "how to be more green" (reduce amount of paperwork)

**Next Steps:**

1. Sheila will attach handout to minutes (page 3 of handout);
2. Email Sheila if you want the baby foods fruits and vegetables prices to be further separated (by September 30<sup>th</sup>)
3. Further discussion is needed on how to effectively communicate with stores during state or local declared emergencies;
4. Sheila will setup a separate meeting to discuss retailers' questions pertaining to off-line versus on-line E-WIC. Identify conference call meeting date/time and send to interested parties.
5. Attend mandatory training sessions – independent stores;
6. Hold mandatory training sessions – stores with certified trainers.
7. Attend the next Retailer Advisory meeting (date to be determined – September).

All Locations: Fredericksburg, Norfolk, Richmond and Roanoke

Burkville Market, DECA Oceana Commissary, Farm Fresh, Foodway, Fort Belvoir Commissary, Fort. Eustis Commissary, Fresh Pride, Genes Supermarket  
Giant Foods of Maryland, Giant Foods of PA (Martins), Grants Supermarket, Kmart Stores, Kroger Corporation, Little Creek Commissary, Lowe's Food Stores, Inc., Millers Market, N.O.B. Commissary, Portsmouth Commissary, Prentis Park Market, Safeway Food Stores, Sunnyside Market, Super K-Mart #4997, Super Kmart 4988, Triplett's Grocery, T&M Grocery and Deli, Wal-Mart Corporation and Wilbuns Supermarket.

Audio (Dial-in)

Alliance Associates, Farmers Foods, Food Lion Corporation, Food Star, Fork Union Town & Country, K-VA-T Corporation, Lowes Foods Corporation, Marion's Bi-Rite, Reids Supermarket, Safeway Corporation, Save-A-Lot Corporation, Shoppers Food Warehouse Corporation, Star Value, Wal-Mart Corporation, White's Fresh Food, Virginia Retail Merchants Association, Ukrop's Super Markets, Inc. Western Family Foods, Inc.

Site Facilitators and presenters: Alex Acharya, Freda Bolling, Sheila Brewer, Ephraim Ewing, Megan Garrett, Sylvia Henshaw and June Thompson (WIC Program).

**Virginia WIC Program**  
Retailer Advisory Meeting  
July 22, 2009

**Price Collection Process pertaining to the 2009 Food List Changes  
(handout from meeting)**

Overall objective: Build a pricing file for all WIC Approved Foods that will become eligible for purchase as of October 1<sup>st</sup>. Item prices will be collected in RSMS (between August 1 – September 27, 2009). Prices collected during this time period will be used by WICNET system for administrative purposes (including creating peer group maximum reimbursement levels).

A.	As of August 1, 2009 a new version of the Retail Store Management System will be available which will capture item level prices for foods that are eligible for purchase by participants (effective October 1, 2009). Minimum changes are being made to RSMS' system flow and functionality.
B.	A new data base will be used; stores will have to enter the prices for all mandatory items, as well as any items that will be sold to participants.
C.	Prices entered into RSMS between August 1 – September 27, 2009 will be used to build the per item price averages. No peer group item level price averages will be available in RSMS during the months of August and September. New peer group price averages (item level) will be available in RSMS after October 1 <sup>st</sup> .
D.	Food List, Minimum Stocking Requirement and Retailer Agreement (consolidated version) PDF (effective October 1, 2009) will be available via RSMS as of August 1, 2009.
E.	Prices entered into RSMS between July 1 – July 31, 2009 will be used to create August peer group reimbursement maximum file.
F.	For September's peer group/FI type reimbursement maximum file, the WIC Program will use August's pricing file and will increase the calculated maximum level by 5% for each food instrument type.
G.	For October's peer group/FI type reimbursement maximum file the WIC Program will use data entered into RSMS between August 1 – September 27, 2009.
H.	Prices entered into RSMS after September 28, 2009 will not be used in calculating the peer group/FI type reimbursement maximums used in November.
I.	<b><i>Applications submitted via RSMS as of August 1st– the WIC Program will send an acknowledgement letter to the store advising them that their application has been received. Will suspend enrollment procedures until after October 1<sup>st</sup>.</i></b>
J.	A reminder email note and letter will be sent to stores and corporate contacts alerting them that prices for all food items (effective with the October 1, 2009 Food List) must be entered into RSMS by September 27 <sup>th</sup> .
K.	The WIC Program will suspend taking any administrative action against stores that submit “non competitive prices” during this transition period. Will resume this type of administrative monitoring of submitted prices after October 1 <sup>st</sup> .

**Virginia WIC Program**  
Retailer Advisory Meeting  
July 22, 2009