# STATE OF IOWA DEPARTMENT OF Health and Human services

## Policies & Procedures Training

November 30, 2023

### Strengths

- Staff
  - Welcoming, friendly, genuinely interested in the families served
  - Worked well as a team
- Breastfeeding Support
- Participant Centered Services
- Nutrition Education
- Community partners

### Processing Standards and Notice of Eligibility

### POLICY

Certain actions must be followed in a designated time frame when not serving maximum caseload

- Processing timeline begins at initial visit
   Request made in-person, by telephone, or other electronic means to schedule appointment
   Schedule within 10 days
- - Pregnant
  - Breastfeeding
  - Infants
  - Migrant farm workers
- Schedule within 20 days All other applicants
- Document any exceptions made
  If Other selected, leave a comment in the notes section of the appointment details



### Household Size

### POLICY

- Pregnant women who are over income may become eligible if her household size in increased by the number of embryos or fetuses in utero
- The State Agency may allow applicants to waive this increase in family size

- Ask the mother whether or not to count her unborn baby in the household prior to delivery
  - May decline for cultural, personal, or religious beliefs
  - Only increase when parent has given approval to do so



### **Income Determination**

#### **PROCEDURE: REPORTS OF ZERO INCOME**

- Ask applicant to describe living circumstances and how they obtain basic needs
- Income source identified
  - Complete income panel leaving the proof field blank
  - Participant considered provisionally certified
    - Issue only one month of food benefits
- Income source still not identified
  - Signed Statement to be filled out and scanned into record
  - Complete income panel using Affidavit as the proof
  - Collect electronic signature
  - Participant considered income eligible
    - Issue 3 months of food benefits



### **Income Determination**

#### **PROCEDURE: IRREGULAR INCOME**

- Potential reasons for irregular income
  - Varying hours worked, changing wages, irregular overtime, strikes, unpaid leave
    - Unpaid maternity leave is included
- Income received monthly or twice a month
  - Total income during preceding 90 days ÷ 3 = monthly income to be recorded in Focus
- Income received every two weeks or weekly
  - Total income during preceding 12 weeks ÷ 12 = weekly income to be recorded in Focus



### Adjunctive Eligibility

### POLICY

- Adjunctively/automatically income eligible applicants are required to provide proof of their eligibility for the program that makes them income eligible
- Applicants shall be accepted as income-eligible if
  - He/she receives
    - SNAP benefits
    - FIP/TANF benefits
    - Medicaid
  - He/she is a member of a family in which
    - FIP/TANF benefits are received
    - A pregnant woman or an infant receives Medicaid
    - A child is certified as income eligible with the Iowa HS/EHS Programs.



### Adjunctive Eligibility



### HHS

## Proxies

### POLICY

Proxy means any person designated by a woman participant, or by a parent or caretaker of an infant or child participant, to obtain and transact food instruments or cash-value vouchers or to obtain supplemental foods on behalf of a participant.

- Proxy authorizations may be effective for a single appointment or ongoing until the Parent/Guardian requests that they be inactivated.
  - Handwritten are acceptable
  - Should specify length
- At subsequent certifications, WIC staff must review the list of family members with the parent/guardian to determine if any proxies should be inactivated.
  - If an inactivated proxy is reactivated, a new card must be filled out or a new note received.

	Proxy for lowa WIC Program Proxy for lowa WIC Program The individual(s) named below have my permission to pick up WIC benefits and complete WIC appointments for my family on my behalf. Authorized proxies will remain in effect until WIC staff is notified, otherwise, if at any point I decide to inactivate a proxy I understand I will need to complete a new authorization form to have them reinstated. Names of authorized proxies:	Proxy for Iowa WIC Program     Proxy for Iowa WIC Program     The individual(s) named below have my permission to pick up WIC benefits and complete WIC     appointments for my family on my behalf.     Authorized proxies will remain in effect until WIC staff is notified, otherwise, if at any point I     decide to inactivate a proxy I understand I will need to complete a new authorization form to have     them reinstated.     Names of authorized proxies:	
IOWA HHS	Signature of parent/guardian authorizing proxy: Date: Revised 10/19 For WIC Office Use: FID	Signature of parent/guardian authorizing proxy: Date: Revised 10/19 For WiC Office Use: FID	9

### Anthropometric Measurements

### POLICY

- At a minimum, height or length and weight measurements shall be performed and/or documented in the applicant's file at the time of certification.
- Weight and height or length. Weight and height or length shall be measured not more than 60 days prior to certification for program participation.

#### PROCEDURE

- Measurements from other credible sources such as a healthcare provider, child health program or Head Start agency can be used. Measurements must reflect the participant's categorical status
  - Verbally or written from the source
  - Recumbent length will be used for infants, children less than 2 years old and children 2 years or older who are less than 31 ½ inches tall.
- Key points
  - Remove excess or bulky clothing or hair ornaments
  - For recumbent measurements make sure the child or infant's head is against the headboard and extend their legs so both soles are positioned flat against the board
  - Read measurements to the nearest 1/8th inch
  - For standing make sure they are fully erect with feet parallel and heels together and head straight forward in addition to removal of excess clothes and hair ornaments
  - Scales are zero'd excess clothes removed and record to the nearest ounce

#### HHS HHS

### Evaluation & Maintenance of Scales/Selecting Medical Supplies and Equipment

Code: Iowa Administrative Code: 641-73.6(135) - 73.6(4)

### POLICY

- Medical equipment purchased by WIC agencies must meet standards established by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.
  - Scales
    - Adjustable to Zero, Accurate to within 10 grams, checked yearly to ensure accuracy
  - Stature Boards
    - Readable to nearest 1/8 inch, durable and easy to clean, no sharp edges
  - Length Boards
    - Readable to nearest 1/8 inch, durable and easy to clean, no sharp edges
  - Hemoglobinometers
    - HemoCue and Pronto
  - Cleaning
    - Manufacturers' instructions

### **Blood Tests**

#### POLICY

Hematological test for anemia. (1) For pregnant, breastfeeding, and postpartum women, and child applicants, the hematological test for anemia shall be performed or obtained from referral sources at the time of certification or within 90 days of the date of certification. The hematological test for anemia may be deferred for up to 90 days from the time of certification for applicants who have at least one qualifying nutritional risk factor present at the time of certification

Age/Category	Screening Schedule	Notes				
Birth - 12 months	Once between 9-12 months	This test result cannot also be used for the <u>12-24 month</u> test.				
		You can use a test result from between 6 and 9 months but this should not be the usual practice.				
12 - 24 months	Once between 12-24 months	This test is recommended to be done 6 months after the <u>9-12 month</u> test.				
24 - 60 months	Once between 24-36 months Once between 36-48 months Once between 48-60 months	There could be more than 12 months between tests yet the child is still up-to-date with the screening schedule.				
Pregnancy	During their current pregnancy	Bloodwork results will be analyzed based on the trimester the data was obtained.				
Breastfeeding/Not Breastfeeding	After the termination of their pregnancy.					

### Infection Control POLICY

Care must be taken to protect both healthcare workers and participants from a variety of infections can be transmitted whenever health care is performed, Basic infection control guidelines must be followed. This includes using universal precautions when finger-sticks, heel-sticks, immunizations and other procedures dealing with body fluids are performed, and also when cleaning surfaces and items that have come in contact with body fluids.

#### PROCEDURE

- Wearing disposable gloves does not eliminate the need for thorough hand washing. Health care workers must wash their hands thoroughly with soap and water after handling body fluids and after seeing each participant.
- If a water supply is not available, use germicidal wipes or non-water germicidal solution to clean hands. The primary choice is to use solutions with a base that is at least 60% alcohol
- Use disposable gloves when there is the potential to come in contact with blood, mucous membranes, and other body fluids, such as when:

  - Performing screening tests, Handling blood spills or blood-contaminated articles, or Removing cuvettes from a HemoCue.
- Change gloves after each participant. Wash hands or use waterless hand rub after removing gloves. Do not wash or disinfect gloves for reuse.
- Place used needles, stylets, capillary tubes and microcuvettes in a puncture-resistant container (metal or heavy plastic). Use containers with lids that shut, and shut lids when the containers are not in use.
- Ensure all equipment, medical supplies, and waste is kept out of reach of participants.

### IOWA

# Nutrition Education Contacts/Nutrition Education

### POLICY

- The nutrition education must:
  - Include breastfeeding promotion and support
  - Be made available through individual or group sessions which are appropriate to the individual participant's nutritional needs
  - Be made available at a quarterly rate
  - Be documented in the participant's record

- Initial nutrition education contact is completed at certification by any CPA
  - LDs certifying high-risk participants meet requirements for second education contact
  - Non-LDs certifying must schedule a second education contact with a licensed LD



# Nutrition Education Contacts/Nutrition Education

Required messages for nutrition education based on participant category:

Participant category	Required topic					
All participants	The risk criteria that determined eligibility.					
All participants at first certification	The nutritional value of the supplemental foods they will receive from WIC.					
Pregnant women	Encouragement to breastfeed unless contraindicated for health reasons.					
Pregnant, breastfeeding and postpartum women	Written information about the dangers of using tobacco, alcohol and street drugs and a list of local resources for drug/other harmful substance-abuse <u>counselling</u> and treatment if needed.					

Due to the limited number of nutrition education topics available in the data system, record the nutrition topic that is the most similar to the actual topic presented. If there is not a relevant topic, select "Other" and identify the specific topic in a nutrition care plan. Second nutrition education may be offered:

- In a group setting
- One-on-one contact
  - Face-to-face
  - Online modules through wichealth.org

Completed nutrition education contacts must be recorded on the nutrition education tab and the following information must be recorded:

- Date
- Nutrition education covered
- Pamphlets provided
- Name of the CPA providing education

### Breastfeeding Data Collection

### POLICY

 USDA Federal Regulations: Breastfeeding assessment and the mother's plans for breastfeeding serve as the basis for determining food package issuance for all breastfeeding women.

- Breastfeeding status must be updated in the data system at EVERY contact with the infant or the infant's mother until breastfeeding is terminated or the infant/child leaves the program.
  - Includes health updates, nutrition appointments, subsequent certifications and other contacts.



### Breastfeeding Data Collection

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Exclusively Breastfeeding No food package from WIC	Has been fed only human milk, vitamins, minerals, and/or medications.					
Primarily Exclusive/No Formula Package No food package from WIC	Has been fed something other than human milk, vitamins, minerals, and/or medications on rare occasions or has received a one-time feeding of infant formula, human milk fortifier, cow's milk, juice, sugar water, water, rehydration solution, baby food, or anything else. This description identifies an infant whose exclusive breastfeeding is interrupted because of special circumstances, such as acute illness, hospitalization or caregiver misinformation.					
Primarily Exclusive/Comp Age-appropriate food package with no WIC formula	Is fed any complementary foods in addition to only being fed human milk, vitamins, minerals, and/or medications. These complementary foods are provided on a routine or ongoing basis regardless of the amount.					
Partially Breastfeeding	The infant is breastfeeding and receiving formula. May also be fed complementary foods. The infant receives a WIC food package that includes formula and may include WIC foods. Human milk fortifier is considered a formula and infants routinely receiving it must be defined as Partially (Mostly) Breastfeeding. Once the human milk fortifier is discontinued, then the infant may be classified as Primarily Exclusive/No Formula Package, if the appropriate definition is met.					
No Longer Breastfeeding	Was breastfeeding at some point in time, but has now discontinued.					
Never Breastfed	Was never breastfed.					
Breastfeeding Child	Greater than or equal to 12 months of age and continuing to breastfeed.					

### Breastfeeding Promotion and Support

#### POLICY

- Breastfeeding promotion and support shall be designed to be easily understood by participants, and it shall bear a practical relationship to participant nutritional needs, household situations, and cultural preferences including information on how to select food for themselves and their families.
- Breastfeeding promotion and support should be made available to all participants.

### Breastfeeding Promotion and Support

- A conversation will be initiated about breastfeeding during the certification appointments with every pregnant participant and will be included in nutrition education appointments that follow.
- To ensure a mother's milk supply is fully established and to support exclusive breastfeeding, infant formula will not be routinely offered or provided to breastfed infants before they reach one month of age.
- When a mother requests formula for her breastfed infant, an assessment must be completed by a WIC health professional to determine the need for supplementation.
- If the mother insists that her infant receive formula, WIC stuff should issue a food package that provides the minimum amount of formula needed by the infant.
- When formula is issued to breastfeeding infants under one month of age, a nutrition care plan is required. This plan must, at a minimum, identify the reason for issuing formula.
- When the amount of formula issued increases for an infant of any age, a care plan is required and this plan must identify the reason for issuing the larger food package.
- Schedule a follow-up appointment to assess breastfeeding and adjust the mother's and infant's food packages as needed.

### Food Package Tailoring

#### **POLICY/REGULATIONS**

The full maximum monthly allowances of all supplemental foods in all food packages must be made available to participants if medically or nutritionally warranted.

The provision of less than the maximum monthly allowances of supplemental foods to an individual WIC participant in all food packages is appropriate only when: (1) Medically or nutritionally warranted (e.g., to eliminate a food due to a food allergy); (2) A participant refuses or cannot use the maximum monthly allowances; or (3) The quantities necessary to supplement another programs' contribution to fill a medical prescription would be less than the maximum monthly allowances.

#### PROCEDURE

The model food packages in the data system provide the regulatory maximum quantities.

The same full nutrition benefits apply but food types and forms in a food packages may be tailored to:

- Accommodate participant preferences and eating patterns (e.g. food allergies).
- Accommodate household and general living conditions (e.g. food storage, equipment for food preparation, unsafe water, homeless and transient status).

### Food Package Tailoring, continued

#### PROCEDURE

When the quantity of food has been reduced below the full nutrition benefit, the CPA must:

- Advise the participant that the food package provides less than the regulatory maximum, and
- Offer the participant the option to obtain the full food package benefit (i.e., increase the quantity of food or provide allowable food substitutions).

If a participant receives less than the full nutrition benefit, there are two ways to document this depending on whether the reduction was due to a medical/ nutritional requirement or participant preference.

- If the participant self-reports a medical and/or nutritional reason for tailoring or making changes to a food package below the full nutrition benefit, this must be documented by marking the "Self-Reported" checkbox on the Food Package panel and documenting additional information in the "Details" text box. If the text box does not provide enough space for documentation, add the additional information in the comments box on the Food Package panel.
- If the participant declines the full food package due to participant preference, then this reason must be documented in the comments box on the Food Package panel instead of using the "Self-Reported" checkbox.

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### **Rights and Responsibilities**

#### **POLICY/REGULATIONS**

Federal regulations list specific information that must be provided to applicants and participants or their caregivers during the certification procedure. This information is listed in the Rights and Responsibilities.

#### PROCEDURE

At certification, each applicant or parent/guardian must read and sign a statement that they have been advised of and understand the rights and responsibilities of program participation, attest to the fact that they are providing accurate information regarding eligibility for the WIC Program and agree to allow the WIC agency to share certain information with other specified agencies. If a participant has difficulty reading or cannot read it themselves, staff must read it to them in its entirety.

If the participant is unable to electronically sign the document, for example due to equipment malfunction, the participant must manually sign the document and the document must be scanned into the computer system.

### **Terminations**

#### **POLICY/REGULATIONS**

Each participant, parent or caretaker shall be notified not less than 15 days before the expiration of each certification period that certification for the Program is about to expire.

#### PROCEDURE

Categorical Ineligibility: A Notice of Termination is not required to be printed for categorical ineligibility (breastfeeding I year postpartum, not breastfeeding 6 months postpartum or a child's 5th birthday) but they must be told of this termination. This has to be done at least 15 days before the certification end date. There are two ways an agency may go about this.

- Provide notice when issuing the last set of benefits. At that time, place a comment/alert in the data system that the parent/guardian/participant was informed of this. Or,
- Use the Termination by System Pending report
  - At the beginning of each month, select Reports from the main panel in Focus.
  - In the Reports tree view, open the following: Clinic Services Reports, Administrative Reports and select Termination by System Pending.
  - Choose your agency and select the "Next Month" drop down choice under Time Frame and click View Report.
  - Bring up the report and export to a PDF, Word or Excel file and print.
  - Contact each individual on the report via phone, text, or written notice to inform them when their eligibility and benefits are ending. Document on the report attempted contacts and contacts made.
  - File the report.

HHS

### Terminations

#### PROCEDURE

An applicant would be considered ineligible (not terminated) if they are attempting to be certified, do not have an active WIC status, and are found to not qualify. A notice of ineligibility shall be given in this case. Information on this process can be found in the Processing Standards and Notice of Eligibility policy.

If a participant with a current active WIC status is no longer eligible for the program and will be terminated, they must be told, and in most cases, a termination notice must be used.

If a participant is found ineligible, with certification, the system will terminate the application and certification record. This will only happen if a participant has a status of active and is attempting to be recertified. A termination record will be created with a termination effective date 15 days after the date the action was completed.

If an applicant with an active status is found ineligible at certification -

- Obtain the signature of the applicant or parent/guardian when prompted.
- The system will automatically insert the reason for ineligibility and select 15 days from today's date as the effective date of termination.
- Print the Termination Notice, an example of which can be found under Certification, Eligibility and Coordination of Services Forms, and give it to the applicant.
- Place a comment/alert in the data system that the notice was printed and provided to the parent/guardian/participant.
- The participant is eligible to receive food benefits for the current month (and the following month if the 15 days before the termination is effective takes them into the following month and their certification is still active).

## HHS

### Referrals

#### **POLICY/REGULATIONS**

Program referral and access. State and local agencies shall provide WIC Program applicants and participants or their designated proxies with information on other health-related and public assistance programs, and when appropriate, shall refer applicants and participants to such programs.

#### PROCEDURE

Assurances must be in place that all referrals (formal and informal) are documented in the participant's record.

WIC staff will follow up with the participant for all referrals (formal and informal) documented in their record. The outcome of the follow up will be documented in the Follow-up drop down box on the Referrals- Participant or Referrals- Family panel.

### Complaints

- Civil Rights Complaint Folder
  WIC clinics should create and maintain a Civil Rights Complaint folder that contains instructions about how to file complaints, complaint forms, and a copy of the Complaints policy. This folder must be available at all times, at all clinics, and all staff must know how to access this folder.
  Information about complaints or copies of complaints should be filed in this folder or in the WIC data system.
- And Justice for All Posters
  - The "And Justice for All" poster must be displayed prominently in all WIC clinics to remind participants of the procedure of filling a complaint. Posters must be displayed at a minimum at entrances WIC participants may enter and in waiting areas.



### USDA Nondiscrimination Statement

### POLICY

FNS Instruction 113-1: All information, materials and sources, including websites, used by FNS, State agencies, local agencies, or other subrecipients to inform the public about FNS programs must contain the nondiscrimination statement.

- A nondiscrimination statement is required if the material
  - Lists the local or state WIC program as the source or author on print materials,
  - Describes the eligibility requirements of the WIC Program,
  - Identifies the benefits of WIC participation,
  - Describes participant requirements for WIC,
  - Provides notice of conditions to continue eligibility, or
  - Provides notice of ineligibility or disqualification

### USDA Nondiscrimination Statement

- A statement is not required:
  - If the material does not identify or describe the WIC Program
  - For items such as cups, buttons, magnets, and pens that identify the WIC Program, when the size or configuration make it impractical, or
  - For nutrition education and breastfeeding promotion and support materials that only provide a nutrition message with no mention of the WIC Program
- The abbreviated nondiscrimination statement may be used under special circumstances

### Limited English Proficiency/Participants with Disabilities

#### **PROCEDURES**

- Limited English Proficiency Participants
   Local and State agencies must provide notice to persons with limited English proficiency about the availability of language assistance services and how to request them. Notification may include, but is not limited to, the posting of notices, placement of notices in the recipients publications, radio announcements, and the use of other visual and aural media. Websites must also provide the notice of the availability of free language assistance services and how to request them.

 Participants with Disabilities
 Local and State agencies must provide notice to persons with disabilities about the availability of reasonable accommodations, auxiliary aids, and services and how to to request them. Notification may include, but is not limited to, the posting of notices, placement of notices in the maintenance publications, radio appouncements, and the use of other visual recipients publications, radio announcements, and the use of other visual and aural media. Websites must also provide the notice of the availability of free language assistance services and how to request them.



### Local Agency Personnel Training

#### PROCEDURE

 Local WIC agencies must maintain individual training and education records for each employee in the "Staff Training" panel in the data system.

### Nutrition Education Contacts

#### **Current wording:**

Every postpartum woman "graduating" from the WIC Program must be offered an exit nutrition education contact. This is a second nutrition education contact with specific health messages. The intent of this contact is to reinforce previous participant instruction. The following health messages must be discussed at the exit contact:

- •The importance of folic acid intake in reducing neural tube defects in future pregnancies,
- •Continued breastfeeding as the preferred method of infant feeding,
- •The importance of children's immunizations,
- •The health risks associated with using alcohol, tobacco, and other drugs, and
- •The need for a well-balanced diet.

A brochure or other print materials addressing all of the required health messages must be provided during exit contacts. The handout, "Make Healthy Choices for You and Your Family" addresses all of the required messages.

#### New wording:

Every woman whose eligibility or participation in the WIC Program is about to end must be offered an exit nutrition education contact in person or teleWIC, whichever they prefer. This is a second nutrition education contact with specific health messages. The intent of this contact is to reinforce previous participant instruction. The following health messages must be discussed at the exit contact:

- The importance of folic acid intake in reducing neural tube defects in future pregnancies,
- Continued breastfeeding as the preferred method of infant feeding,
- The importance of children's immunizations,
- The health risks associated with using alcohol, tobacco, and other drugs, and
- The need for a well-balanced diet.

A brochure or other print materials addressing all of the required health messages must be provided during exit contacts. If the appointment is occurring via teleWIC, the print materials may be provided electronically or mailed. The handout, "Make Healthy Choices for You and Your Family" addresses all of the required messages.

### Questions

