

## Proxies

### Policy

**USDA Federal Regulations:** 246.2 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. The proxy must be designated consistent with the State agency's procedures established pursuant to §246.12(r)(1). Parents or caretakers applying on behalf of child and infant participants are not proxies.

246.12(r) Issuance of food instruments, cash-value vouchers and authorized supplemental foods. The State agency must: (1) Parents/caretakers and proxies. Establish uniform procedures that allow parents and caretakers of infant and child participants and proxies to obtain and transact food instruments and cash-value vouchers or obtain authorized supplemental foods on behalf of a participant. In determining whether a particular participant or parent/caretaker should be allowed to designate a proxy or proxies, the State agency must require the local agency or clinic to consider whether adequate measures can be implemented to provide nutrition education and health care referrals to that participant or, in the case of an infant or child participant, to the participant's parent or caretaker

### Authority

7CFR Part 246.2  
7 CFR Part 246.12(r)(1)

### Procedures

Proxies are for in-person appointments only and are not allowed to do teleWIC.

Examples of proxies include grandparents, aunts, uncles, childcare providers, friends, and teenaged children living in the household with knowledge of the child's health and diet habits. In cases where biological parents do not live together, the parent not living in the household would be considered a proxy. Proxies will be provided with information on how to use the benefits (if needed) and nutrition education unless other arrangements were made to provide nutrition education to the parent/guardian.

- The second parent in a household is NOT a proxy; this individual does not need permission from the other parent in the household to bring children for appointments or pick up FIs. The Parent/Guardian should be asked about a second parent in a household. Second parents in a household should be listed as an additional parent/guardian in the data system.
- WIC staff is not allowed to serve as a proxy for a participant unless they meet the above requirements for a proxy. If a WIC staff person is a proxy, then another staff person must

- issue the benefits to avoid any opportunity for, or appearance of, program fraud or abuse.
- If the adult with legal responsibility for a child abandons that child (i.e., leaves that child in the care of relatives or friends), that relative or friend is considered to be a parent/guardian for certifications and picking up FIs.

Make proxy authorization cards available. An example of which can be found in the Nutrition Services Forms **section of the Iowa WIC web portal**. Participants/parents/guardians may substitute a handwritten note providing the same information.

- Proxy cards and handwritten notes must be electronically filed by scanning them into the participant's record in the WIC data system.

Proxy authorizations may be effective for a single appointment or ongoing until the Parent/Guardian requests that they be inactivated.

- If a handwritten note for a proxy authorization does not specify if it is for a certain day or time frame it will be considered ongoing until the parent/guardian requests it be inactivated.
- If the note indicates it is for a one-time occurrence, staff will add the proxy's name to the family, provide the needed education, issue benefits, have the proxy sign for the benefits, and then return to the family screen and inactivate the proxy.

At subsequent certifications, WIC staff must review the list of family members with the parent/guardian to determine if any proxies should be **added or** inactivated.

- If an inactivated proxy is reactivated, a new card must be filled out or a new note received.

When a proxy attends a certification appointment or picks up food instruments, the proxy must present the participant's eWIC card or proof of identity for themselves.

- If they are presenting as a new proxy, they must have both along with the permission note.

## Best Practices

WIC staff will discuss the proxy option and encourage the designation of a proxy at **all certification appointments and anytime a participant is requesting to reschedule or having a hard time finding an appointment time that works for them.**