

## Verification of Certification

### Policy

**USDA Federal Regulations:** 246.7(k) Transfer of certification. (1) Each State agency shall ensure issuance of a Verification of Certification card to every participant who is a member of a family in which there is a migrant farmworker or any other participant who is likely to be relocating during the certification period. Certifying local agencies shall ensure that Verification of Certification cards are fully completed. (2) The State agency shall require the receiving local agency to accept Verification of Certification cards from participants, including participants who are migrant farmworkers or members of their families, who have been participating in the Program in another local agency within or outside of the jurisdiction of the State agency. A person with a valid Verification of Certification card shall not be denied participation in the receiving State because the person does not meet that State's particular eligibility criteria. (3) The Verification of Certification card is valid until the certification period expires, and shall be accepted as proof of eligibility for Program benefits. If the receiving local agency has waiting lists for participation, the transferring participant shall be placed on the list ahead of all waiting applicants. (4) The Verification of Certification card shall include the name of the participant, the date the certification was performed, the date income eligibility was last determined, the nutritional risk condition of the participant, the date the certification period expires, the signature and printed or typed name of the certifying local agency official, the name and address of the certifying local agency and an identification number or some other means of accountability. The Verification of Certification card shall be uniform throughout the jurisdiction of the State agency.

246.7(d)(2)(ix) Are instream migrant farmworkers and their family members required to document income eligibility? Certain instream migrant farmworkers and their family members with expired Verification of Certification cards shall be declared to satisfy the State agency's income standard and income documentation requirements. Such cases include when income of that instream migrant farmworker is determined at least once every 12 months. Such families shall satisfy the income criteria in any State for any subsequent certification while the migrant is instream during the 12-month period following the determination. The determination can occur either in the migrant's home base area before the migrant has entered the stream for a particular agricultural season, or in an instream area during the agricultural season.

### Authority

7 CFR Part 246.7(k)(1-4)  
7 CFR Part 246.7(d)(2)(ix)  
WIC Policy Memo #2016-4

## Procedures

The primary intent of the Verification of Certification (VOC) requirements is to ensure seamless and continued participation of certified participants through the entirety of their certification period in the event of relocation by the participant.

Generate and issue a VOC, an example of which can be found in the Certification, Eligibility and Coordination of Services Forms [section of the WIC web portal](#), to the following groups of participants:

- Participants expecting to move out of state.
- Participants who are members of migrant farmworker families.
- Participants affiliated with the military who will be transferred overseas.
- Any other participant who is likely to relocate during a certification period.

State agencies shall not require a signed release form from a participant when requesting a VOC nor shall they require a signed release form from the transferring participant before providing participant information to the receiving agency.

It is important to take steps throughout the certification period to ensure that participants know and understand the availability, process and purpose of the VOC to include:

- Describing the VOC availability and process.
- Routinely asking participants if they plan to move during the certification period.

When issuing a VOC, thoroughly instruct the participant on its use. Direct the participant to the new local WIC agency and encourage continued participation in the WIC Program.

Processing an incoming VOC:

A VOC from another state agency or the WIC Overseas Program is valid if the certification has not expired and it contains the following information:

- Participant's name
- Date of certification, and
- Date the current certification expires.

Your agency must accept a participant who presents a valid VOC, even if the participant does not meet the nutritional risk or income criteria of the Iowa WIC Program. When this participant reapplies for benefits at the end of the certification period, follow the eligibility criteria of the Iowa WIC Program.

When a participant presents a valid VOC:

- Ask if they have ever been on WIC in Iowa for themselves or any of their family members and search the WIC data system for their family if they have or if there is a possibility that they have;
- If they have not, create a new family record in the WIC data system. If they have, open the family record that already exists.

- If the VOC document indicates they have received current month benefits, do your best to determine if any have been purchased (e.g. attempt to contact the WIC agency in the state they are coming from, use the previous state's Shopper App if the participant has it, etc.). The food package issued for the current month should be issued according to what they have left.
- Proceed as you normally would for getting a family on WIC, however on the Application panel, enter the Certification Start and End Date and the Last Benefits Start and End Date. Note: The Last Benefits Start and End Date should be the previous month if you are attempting to issue any benefits for the current month.
- Create a new Participant Category record.
- Collect and review proof of identity (the VOC would be a proof of ID ("WIC ID") if they have nothing else) and proof of current residency. Add/update their address on the Contact/Address panel. Note: They do not have to be physically present, if they are not, one of the reasons for selecting "No" is "VOC".
- Answer the questions about Voter Registration.
- Fill in any other information that may be needed by the WIC data system (pregnancy information, delivery information, breastfeeding information, etc.) or information that is listed on the VOC card and could be helpful to have on record for future appointments (anthropometric data, blood work values, health or medical conditions, etc.)
- Determine risk on the Risk panel.
- Certify the participant(s), ask the participant to read the Rights and Responsibilities of a Iowa WIC Participant and collect their signature.
- Issue an Iowa eWIC card and create a food package (tailoring as needed if they have already received and purchased some benefits during the current month in the previous state);
- Issue benefits; and
- Return the VOC document to the participant or shred it.

If the transferring participant has their eWIC card from the previous state with them, the receiving agency must destroy it.

Agency staff shall also provide the incoming participant with new participant education such as information about using the Iowa eWIC card, where to shop for WIC benefits, the WIC Shopper App, Iowa's authorized foods and nutrition education options as well as information and scheduling for their next appointment.

If your agency has a participant waiting list, place the transferring participant on the list ahead of all waiting applicants, regardless of the transferring participant's priority class.

If you want a copy of the participant's records from the previous state, generate a Request for Information form from the data system, obtain a signature, and send/fax it to the participant's previous service agency.

If required information is missing from the VOC:

- Call the previous service agency or the previous state agency's VOC point of contact: <http://www.fns.usda.gov/wic/wic-contacts> for the information
- Check the TRICARE website (<https://tricare.mil/wic/>) for a current list of overseas contacts and email addresses or
- schedule a certification appointment within the time limits stated in the Processing Standards and Notice of Eligibility policy because this contact is considered an initial visit.

An instream migrant farmworker with an expired VOC is deemed to automatically meet the income guidelines if the participant's income has been determined within the last 12 months.

## Best Practices

If a VOC is presented to a receiving agency and the certification will expire soon (within the next 30 days), the receiving agency may conduct recertification for the convenience of the participant.

For participants transferring overseas, provide the following information:

- There is no guarantee that the WIC Overseas Program will be operational at the site where they will be transferred,
- Only certain individuals are eligible for the WIC Overseas Program, and eligibility will be determined at the overseas WIC service site.

Consider adding information on your agency website about VOCs, what it is, what it does, how to get one, etc. in order to “advertise” how we can help participants who are leaving Iowa and that we accept VOCs from other states.