

Foster Care Procedure

A. PURPOSE OF PROCEDURE:

To outline the steps staff need to take within the WIC data system to assure successful transfer of children and food benefit issuance for children who are entering foster care, returning home from foster care, changing foster families or being adopted by their foster family.

B. SCOPE OF THE PROCEDURE:

This procedure documents the steps staff will take in the WIC data system when documenting foster care situations (transitioning to, between, and from) and issuing the child’s food benefits.

It does not define the details of the education and additional support and referrals a foster child/family may need when moving in and out of the foster care system.

C. GENERAL PROCEDURE:

Steps taken will depend on if the child is going from the biological family to a foster family, moving between foster families, being adopted by their foster family or leaving foster care and returning to their biological family.

Biological family to foster family

1	If the foster family is new to WIC, set the foster parent/s up with a new family ID.
2	Open the FID of the biological family the child is currently in.
3	Go to the Audit Trail to see if the child has benefits on the eWIC card for current and/or future months. (Make note of foods for that child that have been purchased. i.e., formula)
4	Go to the Food Benefits panel, click on Adjust Benefits and uncheck all of the boxes for that child and then click Issue Benefits in order to remove food benefits from the biological family’s eWIC card. (Note: If the biological family is in a different WIC agency, you will need to call that agency and have them do this step for you.)
5	Open the FID of the foster family, go to the Activity branch and click Retrieve Participant.
6	Use the biological family’s FID and click Search.
7	Put a check in the row with the child you want to move to the foster family and click Retrieve.
8	On the Family panel, click Edit in the row with the child’s name and go to the Enrollment link.

9	Click Make Foster Child and document the date they entered foster care (found on the paperwork presented to you). Click Close and Close again.
10	Scan foster care documents into the participant's record.
11	Go to Card Operations, select the child's name in the Economic Unit drop down and set up a card for the child.
12	Discuss, create and/or verify the food package wanted for the child and issue the benefits. (Staff should be asking about the current month's benefits and if purchases were made by the bio family, if any of the WIC foods were sent along with the child. If they were, then click Adjust Benefits to deduct those foods from the current month's food package accordingly in the Economic Unit balance-to-Issue Pop-up Window. If current month food benefits that were purchased by the bio family were not sent with the child, and likely unconsumed by the child, then you may issue the full food package.
13	Provide the Family Food Benefits list, explain WIC foods, use of the eWIC card and set up the next appointment.

Moving from one foster family to another

1	If the receiving foster family is new to WIC, set the new foster parent/s up with a new family ID.
2	Open the FID of the foster family the child is moving to, go to the Activity branch and click Retrieve Participant.
3	Use the foster family's FID that is losing the child and click Search.
4	Put a check in the row with the child/ren you want to move to the new foster family and click Retrieve.
5	On the Family panel, click Edit in the row with the child's name and go to the Enrollment link.
6	Enter the date the child Changed Foster Families (found on the paperwork presented to you). Click Close and Close again.
7	Scan foster care documents into the participant's record.
8	Ask if the previous foster family sent the eWIC card with the child. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - If yes, explain how to change the PIN. - If no, go to Card Operations, deactivate the current card for the child and assign a new card.
9	Discuss, create and verify the food package wanted for the child by the new foster family. Since a foster child has their own economic unit/eWIC card, any benefits already issued to that child are still there and accessible either by the card sent with the child or the new card assigned to that child. If the food package is changed, any previously issued current and future benefits will need to be reissued.

	(Staff should be asking about current month benefits and if purchases were made, if any of those WIC foods that have not yet been consumed were sent along with the child. If the unconsumed food benefits were not sent with the child, then we may reissue for them. This will have to be done via an account balance correction submitted to the Iowa WIC help desk.)
10	Provide the new foster family with the Family Food Benefits list, explain WIC foods, use of the eWIC card, etc. as needed and set up the next appointment.

Being adopted by foster family

1	Open the FID of the family
	Go to the Audit Trail and make note of what food benefits and in what quantities the child that is being adopted has left for the month.
	Navigate to the Food Benefits panel, select the Economic Unit with the foster child's name and click on Adjust Benefits. Uncheck all of the boxes for that child (current and future months) and then click Issue Benefits in order to remove food benefits from the child's eWIC card.
	Go to Card Operations, select the child's name from the Economic Unit drop down list and deactivate the current card. Use reason "Returned".
2	Navigate to the Family panel, click Edit in the row with the child's name and go to the Enrollment link.
3	Click No Longer Foster Child and then click Close, and Close again.
4	Scan adoption documents into the record.
	If the family adopting the child has their own eWIC card because their own children are on WIC, food benefits for the child will need to be reissued onto their eWIC card. (If not, they will need to be set up with a card.) Current month's benefits will need to be adjusted accordingly in the Economic Unit balance-to-Issue Pop-up Window based on previous purchases noted.

Leaving foster family and returning to their biological family

1	Open the FID of the biological family the child is returning to, go to the Activity branch and click Retrieve Participant.
2	Use the current foster family's FID and click Search.
3	Put a check in the row with the child you want to return and click Retrieve.
4	(Make note of foods for that child that have been purchased. i.e., formula) Navigate to the Food Benefits panel, select the EU with the child's name and click on Adjust Benefits. Uncheck all of the boxes for that child (current and future months) and then click Issue Benefits in order to remove food benefits from the child's eWIC card.
5	Go to Card Operations, select the child's name from the Economic Unit drop down list and deactivate the current card. Use reason "Returned".
6	On the family panel, click Edit in the row with the child's name and go to the Enrollment link.
7	Click No Longer Foster Child and then click Close and Close again.

8	Scan court documents into the participant's record.
9	<p>Verify the food package wanted for the child, issue benefits and provide the Family Food Benefits list.</p> <p>(Staff should be asking about the current month's benefits and if purchases were made by the foster family, if any of those WIC foods were sent along with the child. If they were, then click Adjust Benefits to deduct those foods from the current month's food package accordingly in the Economic Unit balance-to-Issue Pop-up Window.</p> <p>If current month food benefits that were purchased by the foster family were not sent with the child, then you may issue the full food package.</p>
10	Set up the next appointment for the family if needed or add the child to the existing upcoming appointment.