

Identification Requirements

Policy

USDA Federal Regulations: (2)(i) At certification, the State or local agency must require each applicant to present proof of residency (i.e., location or address where the applicant routinely lives or spends the night) and proof of identity. The State or local agency must also check the identity of participants, or in the case of infants or children, the identity of the parent or guardian, or proxies when issuing food, cash-value vouchers or food instruments. The State agency may authorize the certification of applicants when no proof of residency or identity exists (such as when an applicant or an applicant's parent is a victim of theft, loss, or disaster; a homeless individual; or a migrant farmworker). In these cases, the State or local agency must require the applicant to confirm in writing his/her residency or identity.

(i) All certification data for each person certified shall be recorded on a form (or forms) which are provided by the State agency. The information on the forms shall include (4) a description of the document(s) used to determine residency and identity or a copy of the document(s) used or the applicant's written statement when no documentation exists.

Authority

7 CFR Part 246.7 (c)(2)(i) *excerpt*
7 CFR Part 246.7 (i)(4)

Procedures

Reasonable proof and documentation of identity is required for applicants at initial and subsequent certification appointments and from participants and proxies to receive WIC benefits at the local agency. Acceptable proofs of identification are listed in the WIC data system. Note: When you issue a eWIC card, you are providing an applicant with an acceptable source of proof of identity for WIC purposes. Therefore, you must see another acceptable proof of identity before issuing this card or using it as proof of identification for new and subsequent family members.

Proof of identity must be implemented in a manner that does not constitute a barrier to participation, particularly to applicants who are mobile such as homeless persons, military personnel, or migrants. These applicants must sign a statement attesting to their identity.

For proofs submitted via electronic means, they must not be submitted more than 30 days prior. Use the following steps to document proof of identity in the data system. If the applicant

- Has proof but did not bring it (forgot it)

- Tell the applicant that proof of identity must be provided in order to receive services,
- Provide a list of acceptable forms of identity, and
- Issue a Notice of Ineligibility for failure to bring proof of identification.
- Has no proof due to theft, loss, disaster, or a recent move to this country
 - Select “Affidavit” as the proof provided,
 - Print and complete the Signed Statement from the WIC data system,
 - Tell the applicant to bring proof of identity when proof is available, and
 - Continue the certification appointment.

Issue an eWIC card to each economic unit. Follow these guidelines:

- Issue the card only after eligibility has been determined.
- Explain that the eWIC card is the only identification required when purchasing WIC benefits at the grocery store or a special purpose vendor.
- Explain that the eWIC card should be brought to every WIC appointment.
- Encourage each participant to treat the eWIC card like other forms of identification.

An eWIC card can be replaced if it becomes unusable, difficult to read, or a participant reports it lost or stolen but the participant must provide proof of identity before a lost or stolen card is replaced. Tell the participant to destroy the old card if it is later found.

Best Practices

Proofs submitted via electronic means, must be deleted immediately upon review.