

ISSUE DATE: October 8, 2009

TO: WIC Program Coordinators
Other WIC Policy and Procedure Manual owners

FROM: Holly Wilkalis
Oregon WIC Program – Nutrition & Health Screening
DHS Office of Family Health

SUBJECT: **WIC Policy Update 2009-06**



EXPLANATION:

◆ **655—Homeless Applicants**

- Removed exception that allowed for food benefits to residents of non-compliant facilities when no other facilities are within the WIC service area.
- Added to existing exception that infants residing in non-compliant facilities can receive both infant formula and infant foods.
- Provides guidelines for assigning alternate food package to clients with special living situations such as limited storage and/or refrigeration or homelessness.
- Modifies sample cover memo from local WIC Program to homeless facility and sample response form for homeless facility to reflect changes to policy relating to residents of non-compliant shelters.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR UPDATING HARD COPY MANUALS:

Remove page(s)	Insert page(s)	Implementation date	Issue date
655.0 – 655.6	655.0 – 655.6	October 8, 2009	October 8, 2009
900.0 – 900.1	None	October 8, 2009	October 8, 2009
903.0 – 903.1	None	October 8, 2009	October 8, 2009
965.0 – 965.4	None	October 8, 2009	October 8, 2009

NOTE:

- WIC policies can be viewed online at www.oregon.gov/DHS/ph/wic/wicpolicy.shtml.
- Make sure all hard copies of the WIC Policy and Procedure Manual are updated.
- See the next page for all WIC policy updates for the current year.
- Call the state WIC office at **971-673-0040** if you need additional hard copies of a policy update.

WIC Policy Updates Issued for 2009 (Year-To-Date)

Manual Update Number	Policy Number	Policy Title	Manual Page Number(s)	Issue Date
2009-01	100	Organization: How to Use the WIC Manual	100.0 – 100.3	January 9, 2009
2009-01	145	State Office: Address and Staff	145.0 – 145.6	January 9, 2009
2009-01	760	Medical Formulas	760.0 – 760.9	January 9, 2009
2009-01	835	Nutrition Education: Attendance or Refusal	835.0 – 835.1	January 9, 2009
2009-01	935	WIC Approved Food Tables	935.6 – 935.7	January 9, 2009
2009-02	155	WIC Voucher Flow Chart	155.0 – 155.1	March 27, 2009
2009-02	458	Appeals Process for Participants	458.0 – 458.2	March 27, 2009
2009-02	606	TWIST Minimum Scheduler Usage	606.0 – 606.1	March 27, 2009
2009-02	617	Income Eligibility: Determination of Income Eligibility	617.22 – 617.23	March 27, 2009
2009-02	626	Hemoglobin and Hematocrit Screening in WIC	626.0 – 626.2	March 27, 2009
2009-03	1100	Farm Direct Nutrition Program: Local Program Responsibilities	1100.0 – 1100.9	May 1, 2009
2009-04	145	State Office: Address and Staff	145.0 – 145.6	June 19, 2009
2009-04	325	Caseload Management	325.0 – 325.6	June 19, 2009
2009-04	713	Breastfeeding: Use of Supplemental Formula	713.0 – 713.5	June 19, 2009
2009-04	720	General Information on Formula Use	720.0 – 720.3	June 19, 2009
2009-04	760	Medical Formulas	760.0 – 760.9	June 19, 2009
2009-04	765	Medical Documentation	765.0 – 765.5	June 19, 2009
2009-04	769	WIC Food Packages	769.0 – 769.16	June 19, 2009
2009-04	770	Authorized Foods	770.0 – 770.18	June 19, 2009
2009-04	750	Infant Food Packages: Juice and Cereal (DELETED)	750.0 – 750.2	June 19, 2009
2009-04	751	Tailoring Food Packages (DELETED)	751.0 – 751.1	June 19, 2009
2009-04	761	Medical Formulas: 24-calorie Premature Infant Formula (DELETED)	761.0 – 761.1	June 19, 2009
2009-04	762	Medical Formulas: 24-calorie Standard Infant Formula (DELETED)	762.0 – 762.1	June 19, 2009
2009-04	764	Medical Formulas: Low Iron Formula (DELETED)	764.0	June 19, 2009
2009-04	775	Food Packages for Children (DELETED)	775.0 – 775.24	June 19, 2009
2009-04	780	Enhanced Food Package for Exclusively Breastfeeding Women (DELETED)	780.0 – 780.3	June 19, 2009
2009-04	783	Food Packages for Pregnant and Partially Breastfeeding Women (DELETED)	783.0 – 783.3	June 19, 2009
2009-04	786	Food Packages for Non-Breastfeeding Post Partum Women (DELETED)	786.0 – 786.2	June 19, 2009

WIC Policy Updates Issued for 2009 (Year-To-Date)

Manual Update Number	Policy Number	Policy Title	Manual Page Number(s)	Issue Date
2009-04	790	Special Food Packages for Women & Children (DELETED)	790.0 – 790.2	June 19, 2009
2009-04	795	Food Packages for Homeless and Migrant Participants (DELETED)	795.0 – 795.5	June 19, 2009
2009-05	500	Ordering and Securing FI Stock and MICR Toner	500.0 – 500.12	July 31, 2009
2009-05	505	Food Instrument Issuance and Printing	505.0 – 505.4	July 31, 2009
2009-05	506	Exceptions for Mailing Food Instruments	506.0 – 506.3	July 31, 2009
2009-05	530	Food Instrument	530.0 – 530.1	July 31, 2009
2009-05	540	Proxy System	540.0 – 540.3	July 31, 2009
2009-05	560	Program Integrity: Replacing Food Instruments	560.0 – 560.12	July 31, 2009
2009-05	587	Program Integrity: Dual Participation	587.0 – 587.3	July 31, 2009
2009-05	588	Program Integrity: Complaints	588.0 – 588.5	July 31, 2009
2009-05	590	Program Integrity: Participant Violations	590.0 – 590.12	July 31, 2009
2009-05	595	Program Integrity: Separation of Duties	595.0 – 595.1	July 31, 2009
2009-05	596	Program Integrity: Acknowledgement of Employee Responsibilities	596.0 – 596.4	July 31, 2009
2009-06	655	Homeless Applicants	655.0 – 655.6	October 8, 2009
2009-06	900	Introduction (DELETED)	900.0 – 900.1	October 8, 2009
2009-06	903	Unlocking Downloaded Satellite Clinics (DELETED)	903.0 – 903.1	October 8, 2009
2009-06	965	Food Over-Issuance Identification and Follow-Up (DELETED)	965.0 – 965.4	October 8, 2009



POLICY: Certify homeless applicants for the full certification period for which they are eligible according to current WIC risk criteria. Homelessness is a condition that predisposes a person to inadequate nutritional patterns, therefore, homeless persons are considered at nutritional risk. Ensure, where appropriate, that WIC services benefit the WIC participant and not the homeless facility, as required by federal regulation.

PURPOSE: To ensure WIC services reach a population in critical need. To implement federal regulations ensuring that WIC services and food benefits are used by the WIC participants.

RELEVANT REGULATIONS: 7 CFR §246.7 ¶(e)(2)(iv) Nutritional risk criteria
7 CFR §246.7 ¶(n) Certification of persons and food benefits are used by the WIC participant

OREGON WIC PPM REFERENCES: ♦769—WIC Food Packages

APPENDICES: 655.4 Appendix A: Sample Cover Memo from Local WIC Program to Homeless Facility
655.6 Appendix B: Sample Response Form for Homeless Facility to return to Local WIC Program

DEFINITIONS: *Homeless person* A person who lacks a fixed and regular nighttime residence, or whose primary nighttime residence is one of the following:

- a. A temporary accommodation of not more than 365 days in the residence of another individual.
- b. A public or private place not designed for, or ordinarily used as, a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings (such as cars, park benches, abandoned buildings, or campgrounds).
- c. A supervised publicly or privately operated shelter designed to provide temporary living accommodations (including a welfare hotel, a congregate shelter or a shelter for victims of domestic violence).
- d. An institution that provides a temporary residence for individuals intended to be institutionalized.

BACKGROUND: Federal regulations require local WIC programs to ensure that homeless facilities meet specified criteria in order for eligible residents to continue receiving WIC food benefits.

HOMELESS APPLICANTS, *cont.*

PROCEDURE:

- Certification procedure***
- 1.0 Homeless applicants living in conditions described in *a or b* of the definition above should be screened for certification using regular procedure.
 - 2.0 If a homeless applicant is living in a shelter or institution as described in *c or d* of the definition above, do the following:
 - 2.1 Screen and certify the applicant for the full certification period for which the individual is eligible.
 - 2.2 Call or write the homeless shelter or institution to find out if it meets all of the following requirements:
 - WIC program services will benefit the participant, not the facility (WIC participants will be able to store and prepare WIC foods for their own consumption.);
 - WIC foods will not be used in communal feeding; and
 - The facility will not restrict the participant's use of WIC services, for example, attending classes or shopping at WIC authorized vendors.
- Homeless facility requirements***
- 2.3 Keep a record of the contact with the facility.
 - 2.3.1 Document the conversation, including the date and the name of the person representing the facility if contact was by phone.
 - 2.3.2 Ask for a written response from the facility if contact was by letter. Refer to pages 655.4 and 655.6 for sample letters.
- Documentation***
- Facilities in compliance***
- 3.0 If a facility is in compliance with 2.2:
 - 3.1 Future eligible WIC applicants from that facility should be certified for the full period for which they are eligible.
 - 3.2 The facility does not need to be contacted for each new applicant from the facility.
 - 3.3 Contact the facility every five years to assure they are still in compliance with the agreed-upon conditions. The facility should also be contacted if the WIC program staff receives information that the facility is no longer compliant with the conditions, for example, from a new WIC applicant.
- Facilities not in compliance***
- 4.0 If a facility is determined **not** to comply with 2.2:
 - 4.1 Continue WIC benefits and services to any residents of that shelter who are **already** certified for WIC for that certification period.

HOMELESS APPLICANTS, cont.

(Facilities not in compliance)

4.2 Inform those participants that their WIC benefits will cease after their current certification period, and refer them to other homeless facilities where they could continue to receive WIC benefits.

Exceptions

4.3 Recertify residents of the non-compliant shelter only for nutrition education services but not WIC food benefits, with these exceptions:

4.3.1 Infants may continue to receive infant foods and infant formula.

4.4 Do not issue WIC food benefits to future eligible applicants who are residents of the non-compliant facility.

Example 1: Sarah Montgomery has been screened and found eligible for WIC services in Serene County. Ms. Montgomery is homeless and gives her address as the Right Path shelter. Serene County WIC staff has no record of whether Right Path complies with WIC guidelines. Ms. Montgomery is certified for the full period for which she is eligible.

The Serene County WIC coordinator calls and speaks to the manager of the Right Path shelter. She determines that Right Path does not meet WIC criteria, as residents eat meals prepared by church volunteers and there is no provision for residents to store or eat food individually. The Serene County coordinator documents the conversation, including the date and name of the manager. Ms. Montgomery may remain on the WIC program, receiving food and other services, for her full certification period.

WIC staff have documented that the Womenspace and Our Home shelters in Serene County allow residents to store and prepare food independently. Any future WIC applicants who are staying at the Right Path shelter must be told they are not eligible for WIC food benefits, but would be if they moved to the Womenspace or Our Home shelter.

Example 2: Mona Carstairs has been screened and found eligible for WIC services in Placid County. Mona is homeless and is staying at the Guiding Light shelter in Placid County.

WIC staff has determined that the Guiding Light Shelter does not allow residents to store and cook food independently, so this shelter is not in compliance with federal guidelines.

HOMELESS APPLICANTS, cont.

(Exceptions)

Ms. Carstairs can benefit from WIC nutrition education and referrals but cannot receive WIC foods. She would need to find a shelter/facility that meets the requirements of 2.2 to receive WIC foods. If she had an infant, that infant, however could receive infant foods and infant formula (the one exception).

Issuing FI – Limited storage, refrigeration or homelessness

- 5.0 Food packages are available in TWIST that address living situations such as, limited storage and/or refrigeration or homelessness. Provide the maximum food package that will be safe and sanitary as per guidance below.
 - 5.1 For limited storage, consider selecting food packages with:
 - a. milk on one or two additional vouchers;
 - b. evaporated milk or powdered milk.
 - 5.2 When no refrigeration or freezer is available:
 - a. issue powdered milk and no eggs or cheese;
 - b. offer women juice in 64 oz. plastic bottles instead of frozen juice.
 - 5.3 If safe water is not available:
 - a. ready-to-feed formula may be appropriate instead of powdered formula (document reason in participant's record);
 - b. suggest 64 oz. plastic bottles of juice instead of frozen juice. ★

**If you need this in large print or an alternate format,
please call 971-673-0040.
WIC is an equal opportunity program and employer.**

Sample Cover Memo from Local WIC Program to Homeless Facility

DATE: _____

To: _____
FACILITY NAME

FROM: _____
LOCAL WIC PROGRAM PHONE # WIC CONTACT

RE: WIC services for your residents

As you may know, the Women, Infants, & Children Program (WIC) provides nutrition education and supplemental foods to low-income mothers and children with health risks. WIC participants receive monthly vouchers for foods such as eggs, fruit, vegetables, milk, cereal and cheese, which are selected to meet special dietary needs. They also receive nutrition education through classes and other activities offered by our local WIC program.

Residents of your /facility shelter, who are pregnant women, or children up to five years of age, may be eligible for WIC services.

For us to serve them, federal regulations require us to determine that WIC services will benefit the WIC participant, not the facility that is housing them. This means:

- WIC program services will benefit the participant, not the facility. (WIC participants will be able to store and prepare WIC foods for their own consumption.)
- WIC foods will not be used in communal feeding.
- No restrictions will be placed on the WIC participant's use of WIC services. (WIC participants should be able to attend WIC nutrition education classes and shop at WIC-authorized stores.)

Please use the response form enclosed to indicate if residents of your shelter may receive WIC services. Call us if you have any questions or need more information.

We want WIC services to reach those who need it, and hope to work with you and your residents in the future. We have also enclosed general information about WIC with hopes that referrals of eligible residents could be made.

Thank you for your time and attention.

ENC.: WIC annual report
WIC outreach brochures

HOMELESS APPLICANTS, *cont.*

(Leave page blank.)

Sample Response Form for Homeless Facility to return to Local WIC Program

DATE: _____

To: _____
LOCAL WIC CLINIC

FROM: _____
FACILITY NAME

RE: WIC Services for the residents of our facility

For residents in homeless facilities to participate in WIC, federal regulations require that WIC program services will benefit the WIC participant, not the shelter. This means:

- WIC program services will benefit the participant, not the facility. (WIC participants will be able to store and prepare WIC foods for their own consumption.)
- WIC foods will not be used in communal feeding.
- No restrictions will be placed on the WIC participant's use of WIC services. (For example, WIC participants should be able to attend nutrition education classes and shop at WIC-authorized stores.)

Yes, the above conditions apply for residents of our facility.

No, the above conditions do not apply for residents of our facility. We understand that this means our residents will be able to attend nutrition education but not be able to receive WIC food benefits.

SIGNATURE OF HOMELESS FACILITY EMPLOYEE

JOB TITLE