

WIC Messenger

Spring 2013



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Maine WIC Nutrition Program
Department of Health & Human Services
Center for Disease Control & Prevention
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Augusta, ME 04330
287-3991 1-800-437-9300
TTY: Maine Relay 711
Website: www.wicforme.com

New Computer System



The Maine WIC Program finished converting to a new computer system last September. One of the biggest changes for stores since the conversion is how price survey information is tracked in the system and how the system calculates maximum check values. The transition to the new system did not go as smoothly as we would have hoped. Earlier this spring it caused many checks to reject. We greatly appreciate your patience and understanding while we worked out the kinks.

Quarterly Price Surveys

Starting January, 2013 price surveys will now be sent to stores on a quarterly basis. Please submit prices based upon the specific package sizes and items listed as approved in the WIC Approved Foods booklet. Prices should never be submitted for unauthorized products, brands or package sizes. If your store sells multiple varieties or brands of an authorized product, enter the price for the most expensive WIC authorized item.

We frequently see 64 ounce *bottled* Welch's grape juice or Apple & Eve apple juice listed on the survey. These juices are not approved items and should not be listed as the highest priced 64 ounce bottled juice. Please consult your WIC Approved Foods booklet.

We also frequently see B & M baked beans listed as the highest priced canned beans. Canned baked beans of any brand are not authorized items. Examples of authorized canned beans are kidney beans, black beans and fat-free refried beans.

The information we gather in the price surveys helps to reduce the number of WIC checks that are rejected by our bank for being over the maximum value of the check and helps us determine how much to pay a store if a check does reject.

The next price survey will be sent out in July. Please keep in mind that your store can be assessed 5 penalty points if we do not receive the survey by the due date indicated on the survey. If your store accumulates 15 penalty points in one year, your store could be disqualified from accepting WIC checks for a period of one year.

Rejected WIC Checks

WIC clients are **issued checks prescribing specific foods for health** reasons. You must sell **ONLY** the types of foods that are listed on their WIC check. If an item scans as approved, it does not mean that the WIC client is allowed to purchase that item with that particular check. It is up to your store to verify that the item is allowed to be purchased with the check being presented.

Many checks reject for the reason “exceeds the maximum \$ allowed” because the wrong items were sold. For example, the check allows 1 gallon and 1 quart of reduced fat or skim milk, but the customer purchases 1 gallon and 1 half-gallon of skim milk. Both items are allowed by WIC and scan. The check will reject because the wrong item was sold (over the maximum \$ allowed). Your store will not be paid the full amount of the sale. Additionally, bank fees could be charged by your bank for this check, and the WIC Program’s bank will charge WIC an additional fee too. The WIC Program will not reimburse your store the bank fees charged for this rejected check.

Another example we see is the customer purchases 5 cans of Enfamil Premium infant formula. That item is allowed and scans. However, the check presented was written for 16 jars of Beechnut Stage 2 Fruits and Vegetables. The check will reject for being over the maximum allowed for that check type, and your store will not be paid the difference. Stores lose a lot of money every year because wrong items were sold, so it is very important to make sure that the items being purchased **match** the items listed on the WIC check.

MAINE WIC NUTRITION PROGRAM					Department of Health and Human Services 11 SHS, Augusta, Maine 04333 - 1-800-457-9300 - www.WICforME.com		ACCT# 802054	
NAME OF PARTICIPANT					FIRST DAY TO USE	LAST DAY TO USE	CHECK NUMBER	
Loretta Lobster					5/9/2015	6/8/2015	00652265	
PARTICIPANT I.D.	AGENCY	CLINIC	FOOD PACKAGE	FI TYPE				
10000167								
FOR PURCHASE OF APPROVED WIC FOODS ONLY (NO SUBSTITUTIONS ALLOWED):					AMOUNT		STAMP BELOW	
\$6.00 FOR FRESH, FROZEN OR CANNED FRUITS AND/OR VEGETABLES XXX END OF ORDER XXX					\$ 6.00 6.39			
					DEPOSIT WITHIN 60 DAYS OF FIRST DAY TO USE PAY TO THE ORDER OF MAINE WIC VENDOR			
					X <i>Loretta Lobster</i>			
					SIGNATURE OF AUTHORIZED REPRESENTATIVE OR PROXY			

Fruit and Vegetable Voucher (Cash Value Voucher)

The WIC Program fruit and vegetable voucher, also called the cash value voucher, is one of the most frequently rejected types of WIC check. The main reason that this type of check rejects is for exceeding the cash value of the check.

An amount **up to the value of the check only** may be written in the amount box. If the total purchase amount is more than the cash value of the check, the WIC customer **must** pay the difference .

For example, if the cash value of the fruit and vegetable voucher is \$6.00, and the purchase is \$6.39, the WIC customer **must write \$6.00** in the amount box on the check and **pay .39** cents to your store. If any amount over the cash value of the check is written in the amount box and that check is deposited, the check will reject and your store will only be the cash value of the check. In addition, your store could be charged bank fees by your bank. The WIC Program will not reimburse your store for these bank fees.

If the WIC customer writes the entire amount of the purchase in the amount box, have the customer correct and initial the correction in the manner shown above.

EBT

All WIC Programs across the country have been mandated to convert from paper check benefits to electronic benefit transfer cards (EBT) by no later than October 1, 2020. Several states have already converted their WIC programs to EBT. The Maine WIC Program is in the process of publishing a request for proposals in order to select an implementation vendor.



Pacific Ultra Soy Milk



Recently, the wording on Pacific Ultra Soy Milk packages changed from “Plain” to “Original” flavor. We are in the process of making the wording change to WIC checks, and stores will be seeing the change soon. In the meantime, however, stores should allow the purchase of the Pacific Ultra Soy Milk “Original” flavor to Participants presenting checks for the “Plain” flavor.

Mandatory Trainings and Vendor Reauthorizations

This year, all stores located in the following counties (Training Cycle 2) will be required to attend mandatory training: Androscoggin, Franklin, Knox, Lincoln, Oxford, Sagadahoc, Penobscot, Piscataquis and Waldo counties. If your store is located in one of these counties, please register with WIC for the training as soon as possible. The training schedule is:

July 11	114 Corn Shop Lane, Farmington	2 p.m.
July 19	200 Main St., Lewiston	9 a.m. and 2 p.m.
July 21	91 Camden St., Rockland	9 a.m.
August 8	423 Main St., Suite 6, South Paris	9 a.m.
August 15	396 Griffin Road, Bangor	9 a.m. and 1 p.m.

The WIC vendor agreements for many of the stores required to attend mandatory training this year expire at the end of November, so these stores will also be receiving applications for reauthorization at the trainings. Stores located in this training cycle that do not attend the training will not be eligible for reauthorization and they will no longer be able to accept WIC checks at their stores after November 30th.



Help us Detect Fraud!

Nationally, fraud costs the WIC Program and stores millions of dollars every year. If you suspect a WIC customer or another WIC store of fraud, please contact us at 1-800-437-9300 or contact us on our website at www.wicforme.com. You can also report suspected fraud for both WIC and SNAP (Food Stamps) on the website of the Office of the Inspector General (OIG) at <http://www.oig.dot.gov/Hotline>.

Frequently Asked Questions

Q: Can a WIC customer substitute whole milk for reduced-fat milk?

ANSWER: No, substitutions are never allowed.

Q: Can our store accept manufacturer coupons from a WIC customer?

ANSWER: Yes. We encourage use of manufacturer coupons.

Q: Can a WIC customer return infant formula to our store for cash or credit?

ANSWER: No. Infant formula purchased with WIC checks must be returned to the WIC Program.

Q: Is a WIC customer required to buy everything listed on their WIC check?

ANSWER: No.

Q: Can my store provide a rain-check if we don't have enough of an item in stock?

ANSWER: No, rain-checks are never allowed.

Q: Many WIC customers purchase bottled fruit juice. How is the .5 cent deposit handled?

ANSWER: WIC customers must pay the .5 cent bottle deposit. It cannot be charged to WIC.

Q: Can a WIC customer purchase either Stage 2 or Stage 2 1/2 Beechnut baby food using the same check?

ANSWER: No. The check will identify which product is allowed to be purchased with the check.

Thank You

The WIC Program strives to provide healthy foods and supplemental nutrition and referral services for women, infants and children in Maine. Your store is vital in assisting our efforts. Thank you for all you do to help Maine WIC families.

DHHS Non-Discrimination Notice

The Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) does not discriminate on the basis of disability, race, color, creed, gender, sexual orientation, age, or national origin, in admission to, access to, or operations of its programs, services, or activities, or its hiring or employment practices. This notice is provided as required by Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 and in accordance with the Civil Rights Act of 1964 as amended, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended, the Age Discrimination Act of 1975, Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 and the Maine Human Rights Act and Executive Order Regarding State of Maine Contracts for Services. Questions, concerns, complaints or requests for additional information regarding the ADA may be forwarded to DHHS' ADA Compliance/EEO Coordinators, 11 State House Station – 221 State Street, Augusta, Maine 04333, 207-287-4289 (V), 207-287-3488 (V), TTY users call Maine relay 711. Individuals who need auxiliary aids for effective communication in program and services of DHHS are invited to make their needs and preferences known to the ADA Compliance/EEO Coordinators. This notice is available in alternate formats, upon request.

USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

Questions? Need supplies? Contact Us.
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Kayla Cole, Vendor & Data Manager
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