

July 2014 WIC Messenger



Department of Health
and Human Services
Maine People Living
Safe, Healthy and Productive Lives

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Signature Verification



The WIC folder is the customer's identification. It is the only identification you can use. Always have the WIC customer sign their check on the lower-right corner of the front of the check and always compare the signature of the WIC customer to the signatures on the WIC folder.

If the signature does not match one of the signatures on the folder or if the back of the customer's WIC folder is not filled out or if the customer does not have their WIC folder, you cannot allow the transaction. If the customer's signature does not match any of the signatures on their folder, call us immediately.

Failing to compare the signatures is a violation of your store's WIC Agreement and will result in the assessment of five (5) penalty points. Assessment of Fifteen (15) penalty points in one year will result in termination of your store from the WIC Program for a period of six (6) months.

Changes to Minimum Stocking Requirements

Your WIC Vendor Agreement requires your store to carry specific quantities of WIC authorized products in each food category. We are aware that several products are difficult for some of the smaller stores to obtain from their distributors. However, your store is required to maintain the minimum stocking that WIC sets.

Effective May 5, 2014, the minimum stocking requirement for whole grain products changed to require a minimum of four packages of WIC-approved whole grain products, **two of which must be WIC-approved 16 ounce 100% whole grain bread** and two packages can be another WIC-approved whole grain item. Another minimum stocking change is that at least two quart-sized containers of milk must be available at all times

The complete WIC Program minimum stocking requirements are listed on the next page.



WIC Minimum Stocking Requirements



Please refer to the Maine WIC Nutrition Program Approved Food list for types.

Stores are required to stock WIC Approved Foods and keep minimum inventory on their shelves and coolers at all times. These must be available at the time of application and must be maintained by WIC authorized stores.

WIC-Approved Items	Quantity	Container	
100% Juice	6 Bottles	64 oz. of WIC approved bottled juice	Any two varieties.
	6 Containers	11.5-12 oz. of Frozen Concentrate or 11.5 oz. of Liquid Concentrate	Any two varieties.
Cereal	6- 12 oz. box or larger	12 oz. box or larger One variety must be Whole Grain.	Any two varieties.
Milk	8 Gallons & 4 Half Gallons & 2 Quarts	Gallons, any combination of: whole, 2%, 1% or skim	
Cheese	4 – 8 oz. PKG Or 2- 16oz. PKG	8-16 oz. packages of American, Cheddar, Colby Jack, Monterey Jack, Mozzarella, Swiss	
Eggs	2 Dozen	Grade A- Any Size Brown or White Shells	
Beans/Peas/Lentils	8 Cans Or	15-16 oz cans of beans	
	2 Bags	16 oz bags	
Peanut Butter	2 Jars	16-18 ounce jars creamy or crunchy	Any brand.
Fish Canned (in water)	60 Ounces	5oz, 6oz Tuna / 5oz, 6oz, 14.75oz or 15oz Salmon./ 3.75 oz. Sardines	
Whole Grains	4 PKG	2- 16 oz. WIC Approved Bread Loaves 2-. Any other WIC approved <i>Whole Grain Item</i>	
Vegetables	64 Ounces	Fresh or Frozen or Canned <i>No potatoes except Yams or Sweet Potatoes</i>	Any two varieties.
Fruits	64 Ounces	Fresh or Frozen or Canned	Any two varieties.
*Enfamil Formula	24 Cans of Powder OR 24 Cans of Concentrate		
	12.5 oz. <i>Enfamil Premium® Infant</i> UPC 65421		13 oz. <i>Enfamil Premium Infant®</i> UPC 67418
	12.9 oz. <i>Enfamil® ProSobee®</i> UPC 14415		13 oz. <i>Enfamil® ProSobee®</i> UPC 95417
	12.4 oz. <i>Enfamil® Gentlease®</i> UPC 00691		32. oz. <i>Enfami®l Gentlease® RTU</i> UPC 65411
*Beech-Nut Infant Cereal, Baby Food Fruits and Vegetables, Baby Food Meats			
*Infant Cereal	2 – 8oz. box	8oz. box * Beech-Nut dry cereal without fruit. Multigrain or Oatmeal or Rice	Any two varieties.
*Infant Fruits	32 Containers	4 oz. jars of * Beech-Nut Stage 2 only.	Any two varieties.
*Infant Vegetables	32 Containers	4 oz. jars of * Beech-Nut Stage 2 only.	Any two varieties.
*Infant Meats	24 Containers	2.5 oz. jars of * Beech-Nut Stage 1only.	Any two varieties.
* = Contract Items		Failure to maintain inventory is a class III violation. <u>5 points</u>	

Switched WIC Checks And Wrong Items

WIC checks will reject at our bank if they are over the maximum dollar allowed for that check type. One of the most common mistakes causing this kind of rejection is switching checks when more than one check is presented.

Switching infant formula and infant cereal checks is a very common mistake. It's easy to mix up the orders and use the wrong check.

We also frequently see a check reject because it allowed, for example, one gallon and one quart of milk, but the customer mistakenly selected one gallon and *one half-gallon* of milk. The cashier is ultimately responsible for making sure the items being purchased are items listed on the check.

These kinds of mistakes cost stores a lot of money every year. In addition, your bank may also charge fees for rejecting these checks. The WIC Program will not reimburse your store for rejected check fees.

E-WIC Update

The State of Maine eWIC project is off and running. The project's first major task has been to create a Statewide UPC database for all approved WIC items. We would like to thank all the vendors that have sent us copies of their product UPC lists. By late July we should have a very complete database to work with. Also we will be creating a method for vendors to submit new products and UPC codes for approval in August. Stay tuned for detail in a later newsletter on the specifics of how to submit new UPC codes.

One of our priorities is to keep vendors informed of the eWIC project status and provide training. Maine WIC and our eWIC contractor, Custom Data Processing (CDP) will be setting up a series of mandatory vendor education sessions starting in early September. The agenda of these meetings will entail what will be required of the vendors, the changes eWic brings to the check process, and how training and support will take place, along with allowing you a forum to ask questions.

You will be receiving notification of the mandatory meetings soon with the dates, times and locations.

Transacting WIC Checks and Fruit and Vegetable Vouchers

- Request the WIC check. Verify that the items that the customer has selected are listed on the check being used.
- Confirm today is between the first and last days to use identified on the WIC check.
- Request the customer enter the total purchase amount on the WIC check.
For Fruit and Vegetable vouchers, have the customer enter an amount for the purchase which **does not exceed** the dollar value of the voucher. Any amount above the value of the voucher must be paid by the WIC customer.
- All bottle deposits and bag fees must be paid by the WIC Customer.
- Have the customer sign the check in the signature area on the lower-right hand corner on the front of the check.
- Compare the signature on the check with the signatures on the back of the customer's WIC folder.
- Offer the customer a receipt.

Do not accept the check if:

- The date of the transaction is outside of the first and last dates to use identified on the check;
- The check appears to have been altered in any way;
- The MICR line on the bottom of the check is missing or has strange symbols in it;
- The check has been previously signed;
- The check is from a state other than Maine.

Vendor Sanctions

The WIC Program can sanction a Vendor for various incidents or patterns of violations of Federal or State rules or policies. An incident is one isolated event or any single occurrence of a violation. A pattern is two or more incidences of a violation unless otherwise specifically stated.

Violations of Federal rules have mandatory federally-specified penalties. For example, one incident of violation of the Class I Violation of the sale of alcohol, alcoholic beverage or tobacco product in exchange for a WIC check or Cash Value Voucher (CVV) has a mandatory disqualification from the WIC Program of three (3) years. Class I Violations, which are all based on one incidence of violation, all require Vendor disqualification, either permanent or a specific time period depending on the violation. Class II Violations, which all require a pattern of violations, also mandate vendor disqualification. If a Vendor is disqualified from the WIC Program, the WIC Program must report this to the SNAP (Food Stamps) Program, and the Vendor may be disqualified from that Program, too.

State (Class III) violations are the most common and largely result in assessment of Sanction Points upon a vendor. Termination of the Vendor from WIC shall occur upon assessment of a total of 15 sanction points within one year. If the disqualification of the Vendor would result in inadequate participant access, however, the WIC Program can impose a civil money penalty in lieu of disqualification.



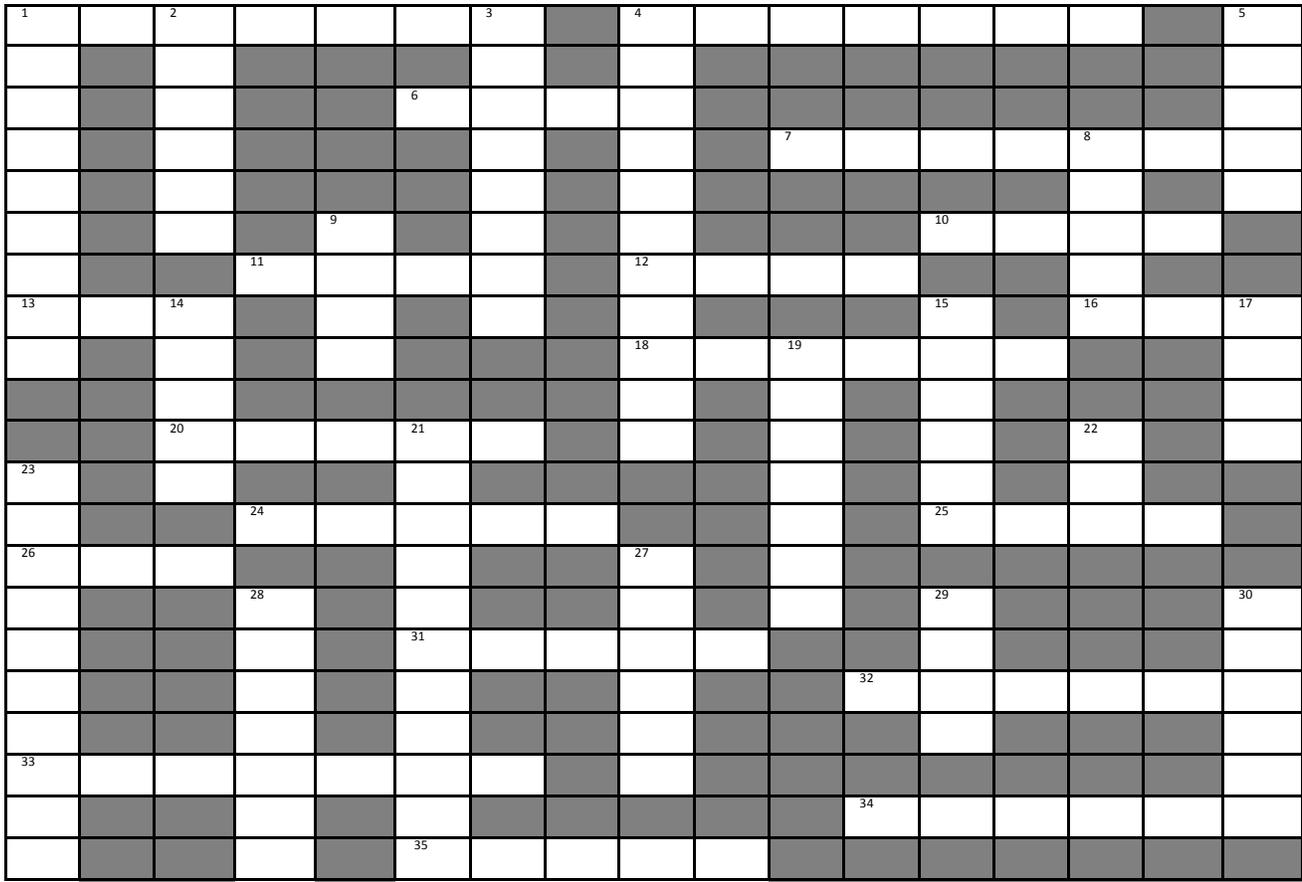
State (Class III) Violations

- Contacting a WIC customer in an attempt to recover funds for a WIC check (10 points);
- Improperly refusing a WIC check (10 points);
- Transacting WIC checks outside of the authorized store location (7 points);
- Altering a WIC check (7 points);
- Failure to submit information requested, in the format requested and in the time specified, including, but not limited to price surveys and food stocking information (5 points);
- Providing expired WIC-approved foods in a transaction (5 points);
- Failing to maintain WIC Program minimum stocking requirements (5 points);
- Accepting or requiring signature before the amount of sale is entered on the check by the customer (5 points);
- Failure to request the WIC Folder and to verify the participant's signature (5 points);
- Charging sales tax on a WIC purchase (5 points);
- Obtaining/using WIC vendor stamps from sources other than the State WIC Agency (3 points);
- Accepting WIC checks that appear to be altered (3 points);
- Failure to have a participant enter the purchase price on the WIC check at the time of the transaction (3 points);
- Requiring a WIC customer to purchase all foods listed on the WIC check (3 points);
- Failure to provide a WIC customer with an itemized receipt for foods purchased with a WIC check (3 points).

The WIC Program is mandated by federal regulation to disqualify a vendor that has been disqualified from the SNAP (Food Stamps) Program. This disqualification may begin at a later date than the SNAP disqualification and is not subject to appeal. A Vendor may appeal a disqualification for a Class III violation. The appeals process and forms and a complete listing of all the violations and penalties can be found on our website, www.wicforme.com or by contacting Ana Scovil by telephone at 287-5366 or by e-mail to Ana.Scovil@Maine.gov. The federal regulations can be found at <http://www.fns.usda.gov/sites/default/files/wic/WICRegulations-7CFR246.pdf>.

Test Your WIC Knowledge (solution next page)

Hint: Most of the answers are in the WIC Vendor Booklet.



Across	Down
1. Front End Staff	1. Fruit & Vegetable Voucher (2 words)
4. Nightly transaction with bank	2. Pink Fish
6. They come with white or brown shells	3. Point of Sale
7. Type of cheese	4. Wholesaler
10. Low-Fat milk	5. One-Fourth of a Gallon
11. Type of baby cereal	8. Department with coolers
12. Type of baby meat	9. Cents paid for bottle deposit
13. Bar code on a product	14. ---Jack Cheese
16. Allowed potato	15. ---Butter
18. Another baby meat	17. Sold primarily by the gallon
20. Popular whole grain product	19. Offered to customer at end of transaction
24. Fruity drink	21. This is added to Nutrish
25. Popular fish	22. Fish container
26. Bagged beans or peas	23. 2% milk is considered this (2 words)
31 One baby fruit allowed	27. Eaten for breakfast
32. Allowed type of tofu	28. Beans, peas or lentils
33. Some infants drink this	29. EBT project
34. WIC Customer's ID	30. Stores, to WIC
35. Approved cheese with holes	

WIC Vendor Stamps

Many WIC checks reject at our bank because the vendor stamp is unreadable or missing from the check. If the ink is too light, the bank's equipment may not be able to read it causing it to reject. Please try re-inking the stamp before calling us to replace it. If it is smudging, it may need to be cleaned. If your stamp is broken, please contact Ana Scovil at 287-5366 for a replacement stamp. We will order one for you at no cost. We require the return of the broken stamp to us as soon as you receive the new one. It will take 10 to 14 business days to obtain a new stamp from the manufacturer once it has been ordered.



Please remember that it is the store's responsibility to clean the stamp regularly and purchase ink for the stamp and that it is a violation of WIC rules to purchase a new stamp from any source other than WIC.

Solution to Test Your WIC Knowledge

C	A	S	H	I	E	R		D	E	P	O	S	I	T		Q	
A		A			E			I								U	
S		L			E	G	G	S								A	
H		M				I		T		C	H	E	D	D	A	R	
V		O				S		R						A		T	
A		N		F		T		I				S	K	I	M		
L			R	I	C	E		B	E	E	F				R		
U	P	C		V		R		U				P		Y	A	M	
E		O		E				T	U	R	K	E	Y			I	
		L						O		E		A				L	
		B	R	E	A	D		R		C	N		C			K	
R		Y			C					E		U		A			
E			J	U	I	C	E			I		T	U	N	A		
D	R	Y			F			C		P							
U			L		O			E		T		E				V	
C			E		P	E	A	R	S			W				E	
E			G		H			E				S	I	L	K	E	N
D			U		I			A				C					D
F	O	R	M	U	L	A		L									O
A			E		U							F	O	L	D	E	R
T			S		S	W	I	S	S								

Grocery Bag Fees

If your store charges a fee for paper or plastic grocery bags, that fee cannot be charged to the WIC Program. The customer is responsible for paying any fee charged for a bag.

WIC Folders

Reminder: The old WIC folders are valid until August 5, 2014. You must accept both the old and the new WIC folders until then. After August 5, 2014, you may no longer accept the old folders.

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.
Ana Scovil, Vendor & Data Specialist
Tina Bernier, Vendor & Data Manager

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