Maine Center for Disease Control and Prevention
WIC Nutrition Program

Effective: October 1, 2011 Policy No. VM-2
Revised: October 1, 2019

Vendor Training Authority

7 CFR §246.4(a)(14)(xi), and §246.12(i);
22 MRSA §255; and
10-144 CMR Chapter 286 § IV.E

Policy

1. The State Agency shall provide vendor training designed to assure the most effective, efficient and courteous delivery of service to WIC participants. To accomplish this goal, annual vendor training for all appropriate vendor personnel shall cover the following:

    1.1. Purpose of the WIC Program Supplemental foods authorized by the State Agency

    1.2. Minimum varieties and quantities of supplemental foods that must be stocked

    1.3. The requirement to obtain infant formula only from sources included in the State Agency's list of state licensed infant formula wholesalers, distributors, and retailers, and manufacturers registered with the U.S. Food and Drug Administration Procedures for transacting and redeeming FIs (food instruments)

    1.4. Vendor sanction system

    1.5. Vendor complaint process

    1.6. Claims procedures

    1.7. Procedures for obtaining prior State Agency approval to provide incentive items to WIC participants

    1.8. Changes in program requirements since the last training

    1.9. Terms of the Vendor Agreement

    1.10. Recordkeeping requirements

    1.11. Vendor requests for technical assistance

    1.12. Reauthorization

    1.13. Reporting changes of ownership, location, or cessation of operations

    1.14. Procedures for appeal/administrative review

    1.15. Training employees

    1.16. WIC/SNAP sanction reciprocity and information sharing

2. Each authorized WIC vendor is required to participate in, or to designate a representative such as the store manager and /or other authorized employee(s) of the store to participate in all required training programs or sessions at which WIC procedures and requirements are taught. This includes, but is not limited to, WIC interactive vendor training sessions scheduled every three (3) years by the Maine CDC WIC Nutrition Program. If the vendor fails to attend a mandatory interactive WIC vendor training session, the Vendor Agreement shall be terminated, and the vendor will be required to wait twelve (12) months before they are eligible to apply for authorization.
3. Vendor training will also be provided in the form of newsletters. Vendors are required to use the newsletter as a training tool for staff and relay the provided information to the appropriate staff.
4. The vendor shall accept training on WIC policies and procedures whenever deemed necessary by the State Agency.
5. The State Agency will provide interactive training at the request of the vendor.
6. Vendors are responsible for training all staff who transact food sales and WIC redemptions regarding correct WIC procedures and program requirements.
7. Following any form of training, including but not limited to interactive training, receipt of newsletters or other forms of notification, and receipt of revised food lists, the vendor representative who receives the training/ training materials must train all other personnel who transact food sales and WIC redemptions within 30 days. Vendors must document the training of these employees.
8. Vendors will be held liable for the actions of all owners, officers, managers, agents, employees and personnel, paid or unpaid, who may be involved in WIC transactions at the Vendor's store or pharmacy.

Procedures

1. Vendors shall receive training through one or more of the following:
    - 1.1. On-site (in-store) meetings/conferences
    - 1.2. Off-site meetings/conferences
    - 1.3. During routine monitoring visits (e.g., educational buys)
    - 1.4. Telephone calls, conference calls, and interactive webinars
    - 1.5. Specialized technical assistance upon request
    - 1.6. Written materials, including but not limited to, newsletters and letters
    - 1.7. The State Agency website
2. The State Agency shall provide mandatory face-to-face (interactive) training at authorization and at least once every three (3) years to at least one representative of each vendor. Training

sessions may be held at various locations statewide for all vendors, with one alternate training date offered for each location. Sign-in sheets will be used to verify attendance.

3. In the case of a vendor whose Vendor Agreement has been terminated for failure to attend a mandatory training, a new application for authorization may be submitted at the end of the termination period. The new application will be subject to the State Agency's vendor selection criteria in effect at that time.
4. The State Agency shall maintain all Vendor Management Policy and Procedures online at the ME CDC WIC Nutrition Program website www.maine.gov/WIC .
5. The State Agency will annually provide written copies of the WIC Minimum Stocking Requirements for WIC Approved Foods and the WIC List of Infant Formula Wholesalers, Distributors, and Retailers Licensed in the State, and Infant Formula Manufacturers Registered with the FDA.
6. The State Agency shall provide annual training, and document the contents of its training through media contacts such as, but not limited to, the following:
    - 6.1. Quarterly newsletters and other mailings
    - 6.2. Fax and/or email messages
    - 6.3. Online videos
    - 6.4. The on-line Vendor Management Policies and Training Manual available at the ME CDC WIC Nutrition Program website www.maine.gov/WIC.
7. Vendor education and training visits may be utilized to ensure vendor compliance with Program rules and regulations. Training may be conducted at the vendor's location or by any other method deemed appropriate by the State Agency.
8. Vendors or vendor representatives will be required to sign an acknowledgment of training when they have received monitoring visits.
9. Vendors must keep a training log on-site to document the training of all personnel responsible for food transactions in WIC Policies and Procedures. Appendix VM-2-A contains the form for documentation. It must be available to WIC Program Staff upon request.
10. The following methods will be used to evaluate the effectiveness of vendor training:
    - 10.1. Evaluation forms provided with training materials
    - 10.2. Educational buys
    - 10.3. Informal feedback from vendors and/or participants
    - 10.4. Vendor advisory councils