

Georgia WIC Program

VENDOR MAIL | *Annual Training 2015*



Office of Vendor Management

August 2015

Georgia WIC Program

WELCOME TO ANNUAL CORPORATE VENDOR TRAINING FOR 3 YEAR AGREEMENTS!



Greetings WIC Authorized Corporate Vendors,

The purpose of this newsletter is to ensure that you are knowledgeable of all current program requirements, schedule changes, and meet federal fiscal year training requirements as outlined by the USDA. Carefully review all information provided, as it will aid you in remaining in compliance with your Vendor Agreement and affording each WIC participant a meaningful shopping experience. It is the responsibility of the owner and store management to ensure that this training is reviewed by all store employees who handle WIC transactions in any way.

To meet the annual training requirement of the Georgia WIC Program:

- ⇒ Review and ensure adequate training of all store personnel engaged in WIC transactions, paid or unpaid.
- ⇒ Certify training completion by submitting a completed Annual Training Checklist no later than **September 25, 2015**.

Sincerely,
Office of Vendor Management

PURPOSE OF WIC PROGRAM

The Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) Supplemental Nutrition Program is a federally-funded health and nutrition program for infants and children age 1 to 5 years, pregnant women, breastfeeding mothers up to 1 year, and postpartum women up to 6 months. Georgia WIC provides information regarding nutrition and health, support and information about breast feeding, assistance with finding healthcare and community services, and vouchers to purchase healthy food items from WIC authorized vendors.



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WIC Approved Foods

The WIC Approved Foods List outlines foods that are available to the WIC customer. Only these food items may be purchased by the participant or proxy using the WIC food instrument. Effective April 2015, the WIC Approved Food List was updated.



-HIGHLIGHT OF APRIL 2015 CHANGES-

White potatoes are included! Any potato including red, yellow, white, fingerling, etc. can be redeemed as a WIC approved food. All potatoes **must** comply with the current standard of no added sugar, fats, oils, or seasonings.

- ⇒ Sara Lee has a new packaging and 'classic' is no longer allowed
- ⇒ Added IGA and Hytop 64 oz., apple, grape, white grape juice
- ⇒ Added Hytop 64 oz. tomato juice
- ⇒ Removed Scooby Doo, Special K Multigrain, and Dulce de Leche Cheerios
- ⇒ Cream of Wheat is now listed as Original
- ⇒ Gerber baby food jars will remain on the approved foods list. The 7 oz. twin packs will be available until October 2015

New CVV Voucher Wording:

\$X for fresh, frozen, or canned fruits and vegetables. No products with added sugar, seasonings, fat, or oils. No creamed or candied vegetables.

REMINDER:

No WIC approved food items can contain added sugars, fats, or oils.

Infant Formula Requirements

All authorized vendors are required to purchase infant formula, used for consumption by WIC participants, solely from suppliers approved by Georgia WIC. The Program does not allow vendors to purchase infant formula from other program vendors. Only purchases from the approved list of manufacturers, distributors and wholesalers will be permitted. **Records of infant formula purchases must be maintained for a minimum of three (3) previous years plus the current year (or until any pending investigations are closed).**

In the event of an investigation, only purchase invoices from those permitted suppliers will be considered legitimate. The list of authorized manufacturers, distributors, and wholesalers are posted on the Georgia WIC vendor website. The program may also require vendors to supply the program with written permission to confirm their infant formula purchase history with suppliers.

Minimum Inventory Requirements

Each vendor is required to maintain the minimum inventory of approved WIC foods as well as a substantial amount of non-WIC foods **daily**. This is an **imperative** measure to guarantee compliance

Georgia WIC Program Minimum Inventory Requirements Effective April 2015			
Food Item	Types/Brands	Size	Minimum Inventory
MILK Least Expensive Brand of type selected/allowed	Whole Milk	Gallon	8 Gallons
	Fat Free/Skim, Low-Fat (1%), Reduced Fat (2%) Milk	Gallon	12 Gallons (Can be Combined)
		Makes 3 Quarts	3 Boxes
	Dry Powdered Milk OR Evaporated Milk	12 oz	12 Cans
CHEESE			

with WIC Program guidance and policies. Remember, all inventory items must be in the store or in the stockroom and within expiration dates. Expired food does not count towards minimum inventory. For non-WIC inventory, authorized vendors must maintain 200 of the following in each category: **meats, poultry and/or seafood, bread and cereal products, dairy, shelf staples, cans, jars, bottles good, beverages, snack foods.**

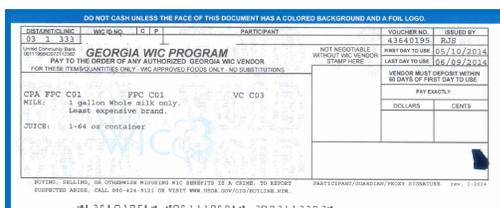
Failure to stock the required inventory of any WIC food items will result in a CATEGORY I VIOLATION (see Sanction System) which could lead to disqualification.

Transacting and Redeeming Food Instruments and Cash Value Vouchers (CVVs)

Knowing how to properly transact Food Instruments and CVVs can save time and money. Ensure all cashiers are effectively trained on all procedures to guarantee WIC participants are extended exceptional customer service. Observing the steps below will result in an accurate and efficient transaction:

PROCESSING WIC FOOD INSTRUMENT

1. Check the participant's WIC ID Card (folder)
2. Check the dates (First & Last Day to Use)
3. Check the food items
4. Ring up the purchase
5. Write the price (use black ink)
6. Obtain a signature
7. Give receipt
8. Every food instrument transaction must be handled separately. Complete one food instrument before ringing up the next.



PROCESSING WIC CVVs

1. Check the participant's WIC ID Card (folder)
2. Check the dates (First & Last Day to Use)
3. Check the food items
4. Check the value of the CVV
5. Ring up the purchase
6. Write the price *(cannot exceed dollar amount on face value of CVV- use black ink)
7. Obtain a signature
8. Give receipt
9. Include tax for the amount over the maximum on the face of the voucher, when applicable
10. If cash is used to complete the purchase, give change for any amount over the face value of the voucher
11. Every voucher transaction must be handled separately. Complete one voucher before ringing up the next.

*GA WIC will not pay any dollar amount over the face value of the CVV.

Vendor Sanction System



It is essential that all authorized retailers comply with WIC Program policies and procedures. Georgia WIC will monitor all vendors for adherence to their agreement. Violations will result in the imposition of sanctions. These sanctions may include termination of the agreement, disqualification from WIC and SNAP for a specified period of time, and/or a civil monetary penalty. Sanctions are based upon the Federal and State Sanction System. (see "[Sanctions and The Sanction System](#)" in the Vendor Handbook). WIC Staff are available to provide technical assistance.

State Sanction

- Category I, Disqualification for six (6) months on third violation.
- Category II, Disqualification for eight (8) months on third violation.
- Category III, Disqualification for ten (10) months on second violation.

Federal Sanction

- Category IV, Disqualification for one (1) year.
- Category V, Disqualification for three (3) years.
- Category VI, Disqualification for six (6) years.
- Category VII, Permanent disqualification.

How To File A Complaint

VENDOR FEEDBACK IS IMPORTANT TO US! Georgia WIC has a vendor customer service hotline available to assist Georgia WIC vendors with any aspect of the WIC Program. The hotline 1-866-814-5468 is available Monday through Friday with the exception of State holidays, from 8:00 AM—5:00 PM Eastern Standard Time.

Your feedback will help provide opportunities for improvement and allow the Vendor Management Team to appropriately address your concerns.



Remember to always remain courteous and respectful to our clients. If WIC participants are not complying with program guidance or demonstrating adversarial behavior, please obtain the name of the participant and notify the Vendor Relations Unit.

Prohibited Use of Incentive Items

Georgia WIC prohibits any vendor from using incentives to solicit the patronage of WIC participants. Vendors who use advertisements to solicit the business of WIC participants, or who offer incentives or delivery services to participants, will be subject to sanctions as explained in the Vendor Agreement and Handbook. Incentives are defined as any item, service, or gimmick used to solicit the patronage of a WIC participant. Incentives may include the following:



- * Free or complimentary gifts
- * Home delivery of foods
- * Store memberships
- * Other free or discounted services that are offered to WIC customers to entice them to transact food instruments.

Georgia WIC will not authorize or continue the authorization of a vendor that advertises, promises, provides, or indicates an intention to provide prohibited incentive items to customers.

CHANGE OF OWNERSHIP

All vendors must provide Georgia WIC with at **least twenty-one (21) days advance written notice** if the following changes occur: ownership, operation, corporate structure, store manager, closure of business, addition of new owners, corporate officers, partners, or affiliates.

Vendor Claims Procedures

ASSESSED AND COLLECTED CLAIMS

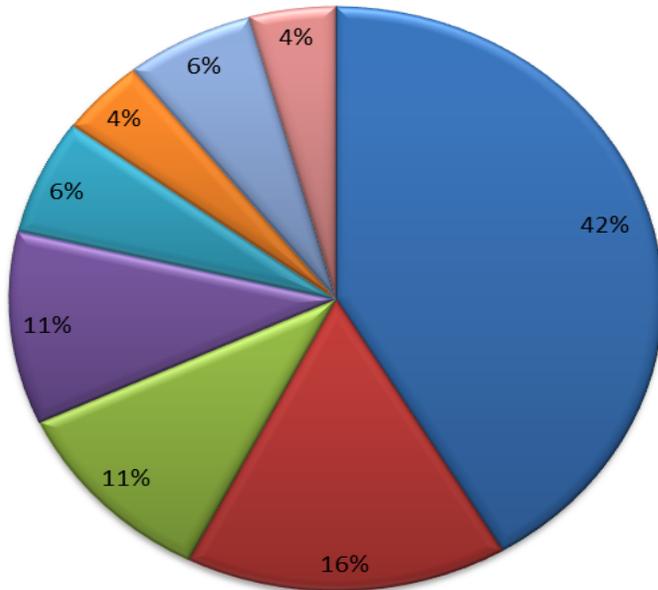
When it is determined that a vendor has committed a vendor violation that affects payment to the vendor, or the program identifies errors in a food instrument submitted and paid, Georgia WIC will establish a claim against a vendor to recoup funds. A vendor will be afforded an opportunity to justify or correct the claim amount. Should Georgia WIC not approve the justification or correction, a vendor will be responsible for repayment of the assessed claim in its entirety. Such claims are not subject to administrative review. Claims for repayment will be collected as follows by:



1. Submitting a written request for payment to a vendor specifying repayment within 30 days of the date of the request.
2. Pursuing collection efforts through the State Attorney General's Office if a claim is not paid within thirty (30) days of written request for repayment.

Vendor Complaints at a Glance

Complaints October 1, 2014 - April 30, 2015
Total 94



- Not allowing Participant to purchase WIC Approved Food
- Cashier unable to scan WIC Approved Food item
- Vendor Interpretation of voucher incorrect
- Not allowing In-store promotions
- Customer Service
- Non compliant observations
- WIC approved Foods not available in store
- WIC items not labeled properly

WIC BANKING

WIC Banking is a valuable tool that provides vendors with an efficient and accurate audit trail for tracking voucher payments. Vendors are strongly encouraged to consistently use this resource as a means of assuring competitive product pricing. If you are in need of your assigned login and password, please contact the Vendor Relations Unit.

SHELF PRICE SURVEY



Vendors are encouraged to submit updated prices for any food item as frequently as the price fluctuates. Encourage your suppliers and wholesalers to forward formal notices of price increases, including percentage mark ups to the Vendor Relations Unit, utilizing their formal letterhead.

KNOW YOUR PEER GROUP



Stores in Peer Groups A (small stores), B (medium stores), and G (WIC sales above 50% of total sales) are **not** permitted to redeem vouchers for Special Infant Formula and Medical Foods. If WIC participants inquire about special infant formula in your store, please refer them back to their clinic.

AUTOMATIC CLEARING HOUSE (ACH) FORM

Vendors who are authorized for participation in the Georgia WIC Program, will receive an ACH enrollment form. Vendors will have five (5) business days from the date of receipt of the form to enroll.



If your banking information changes, you are required to complete an ACH form and remit the document with a voided check to the Vendor Relations Unit immediately.

Georgia WIC
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 Atlanta, Georgia 30303-3142
 404-657-2900
 Customer service hotline: 1-866-814-5468
 (toll free within Georgia)
<http://dph.georgia.gov/vendor-information>



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