

**GEORGIA WIC PROGRAM
NOTICE OF CHANGE IN WIC REQUIREMENTS
Effective: June 06, 2022
Addendum No. 22-03**

The following are amendments to requirements for authorized Georgia WIC vendors. All of these amendments will become effective June 06, 2022. All corresponding documents, including the Georgia WIC Program Vendor Handbook, will be revised to correspond with these amendments. Please complete, sign, date and return the Addendum Verification Checklist included with this notice by June 02, 2022. Please return the checklist, using both a TRACEABLE delivery method, to: Georgia WIC Program, Office of Vendor Management, Attn: WIC Program Addendum 22-03, 2 Peachtree Street, N.W., 10th Floor, Atlanta, Georgia 30303, and an email correspondence with an attached signed and dated Addendum Verification Checklist to wic-vendor.relations@dph.ga.gov. Failure to submit a completed checklist will result in termination from the Georgia WIC Program. The chart below provides a detailed comparative analysis of content modifications made to the Georgia WIC Non-Corporate Vendor Agreement and the Program Vendor Handbook, effective June 06, 2022. Content changes are highlighted in **yellow & red** within the right column below.

Current Georgia Non-Corporate Vendor Agreement	Georgia Non-Corporate Vendor Agreement effective June 6, 2022
This Agreement is by and between the Georgia Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children (“Georgia WIC” or the “Program”) having a mailing address of Two Peachtree Street NW, Suite 10-476, Atlanta, Georgia, 30303-3142, and the above-named business entity (“the Vendor”). This agreement is effective for the period beginning October 1, 2021 and ending September 30, 2023 .	This Agreement is by and between the Georgia Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children (“Georgia WIC” or the “Program”) having a mailing address of Two Peachtree Street NW, Suite 10-476, Atlanta, Georgia, 30303-3142, and the above-named business entity (“the Vendor”). This agreement is effective for the period beginning June 6, 2022 and ending September 30, 2023 .

<p>III. RESPONSIBILITIES – VENDOR</p> <p>A. THE VENDOR AGREES AND COVENANTS:</p> <p>4. To only purchase infant formula, that will be redeemed for WIC vouchers, from the Approved Infant Formula Supplier list. Records of the infant formula purchase must be maintained according to Section III.J.4 of this Agreement.</p>	<p>III. RESPONSIBILITIES – VENDOR</p> <p>A. THE VENDOR AGREES AND COVENANTS:</p> <p>4. To only purchase infant formula, that will be redeemed with WIC food instruments, from the Approved Infant Formula Supplier list. Records of the infant formula purchases must be maintained according to Section III.J.4 of this Agreement.</p>
<p>B. VENDOR TRAINING</p> <p>Prior to accepting WIC vouchers, the vendor or his authorized representative must receive interactive authorized training. The vendor must also participate in annual training on changes and updates on the Georgia WIC Program policies and procedures. The Georgia WIC Program will provide the date, time and location of the training, and will provide vendors with at least one alternative date on which to attend interactive training. The vendor may submit a written request for the Georgia WIC Program to provide subsequent customized training to store personnel at any time after both parties have signed the agreement.</p> <p>The vendor agrees and covenants:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To participate in all required training, including annual training. 2. To provide training on the requirements of the WIC program to paid and unpaid employees, agents and all personnel involved in WIC transactions. 3. To not participate in the Georgia WIC Program until Authorized Training has been completed and a vendor stamp has been issued. 4. To not participate in the Georgia WIC Program until the vendor has received a passing score of eighty points or higher on the Post Vendor Training Evaluation. 	<p>B. VENDOR TRAINING</p> <p>Prior to accepting any WIC food instruments or cash-value benefits, the vendor or his</p> <p>Prior to accepting any WIC food instruments or cash-value benefits, the vendor or his authorized representative must receive interactive authorized training. The vendor must also participate in annual training on WIC Program requirements, and any other training sessions, as required. The Georgia WIC Program will provide the date, time and location of the training, and will provide vendors with at least one alternative date on which to attend interactive training. The vendor may submit a written request for the Georgia WIC Program to provide subsequent customized training to store personnel at any time after both parties have signed the agreement.</p> <p>The vendor agrees and covenants:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To participate in all required training, including annual training. 2. To provide training on the requirements of the WIC program to paid and unpaid employees, agents and all personnel involved in WIC transactions. 3. To not participate in the Georgia WIC Program until Authorized Training has been completed; and a vendor number has been issued; and the authorized store location has been certified to process eWIC transactions, or, where applicable, a vendor stamp has been issued to the authorized store location. 4. To not participate in the Georgia WIC Program until the vendor has received a passing score of eighty (80) points or higher on the Post Vendor Training Evaluation.

C. NO SUBSTITUTIONS, CASH, REFUNDS, OR EXCHANGES

The vendor agrees and covenants:

1. To only charge for authorized supplemental foods selected by the WIC customer as listed on the food instrument or cash value/fruit and vegetable voucher, and not charge for WIC approved items that are not received by the WIC customer.
2. To not provide unauthorized food items, non-food items, cash or credit (including rain checks) in exchange for food instruments or cash value/fruit and vegetable vouchers.
3. To not provide refunds or permit exchanges for authorized supplemental foods obtained with food instruments or cash-value vouchers, except for exchanges of the same brand and size when the original authorized supplemental food item is defective, spoiled, recalled or has exceeded its “sell by” or “best if used by” or other date limiting the sale or use of the food item.
4. To provide only the authorized infant formula which the vendor has obtained pursuant to paragraph (4) of Section III.A of this agreement, to participants in exchange for food instruments for infant formula.

C. NO SUBSTITUTIONS, CASH, REFUNDS, OR EXCHANGES

The vendor agrees and covenants:

1. To only charge for authorized supplemental foods selected by the WIC customer as contained on the **food instrument or cash-value benefit**, and not charge for WIC approved items that are not received by the WIC customer.
2. To not provide unauthorized food items, non-food items, cash or credit (including rain checks) in exchange for food instruments or cash-value **benefits**.
3. To not provide refunds or permit exchanges for authorized supplemental foods obtained with food instruments or cash-value **benefits**, except for exchanges of the same brand and size when the original authorized supplemental food item is defective, spoiled, recalled or has exceeded its “sell by” or “best if used by” or other date limiting the sale or use of the food item.
4. To provide only the authorized infant formula which the vendor has obtained pursuant to paragraph (4) of Section III.A of this agreement, to participants in exchange for food instruments for infant formula.

D. FOOD INSTRUMENT TRANSACTIONS

The vendor agrees and covenants:

1. To accept food instruments and cash-value vouchers only from WIC participants, parents or caretakers of infants and child participants, or proxies (the "WIC customer").
2. To ensure that WIC food instrument transactions are processed in accordance with the procedures set forth in the most recent publication of the Georgia WIC Program Vendor Handbook and all addendums.
3. To not demand that a WIC customer purchase every eligible WIC food item listed on the voucher.
4. To allow WIC customers the right to purchase the eligible foods of their choice as listed on the WIC food instrument, cash value voucher and the approved food list.
5. To ensure that the purchase price is entered on food instruments and cash-value vouchers in accordance with the procedures governing the processing of WIC food instruments in the most recent publication of the Vendor Handbook. The purchase price must include only the authorized supplemental food items actually provided and must be entered on the food instrument or cash-value voucher in plain sight of the WIC customer during the WIC transaction.
6. To ensure that the WIC customer signs the food instrument or cash-value voucher in the presence of the cashier.
7. To only allow the purchase of supplemental foods listed on the food instrument and cash value/fruit and vegetable voucher.
8. To offer the WIC customer the same courtesies offered to all other customers.
9. To ensure that all information including the identity of the WIC customer is kept confidential, in accordance with federal and state law and regulation.
10. To ensure that the Georgia WIC Program is not being charged for foods not received by the participant.
11. To not charge the WIC customer for authorized supplemental foods obtained with food instruments or cash-value vouchers.
12. To not contact or seek restitution from the WIC customer for WIC food vouchers not paid or partially paid by the Georgia WIC Program.
13. To not request cash from the WIC customer for any WIC transaction except for transactions involving the cash value/fruit and vegetable vouchers, for which the total amount of the transaction exceeds the amount on the voucher.

D. FOOD INSTRUMENT TRANSACTIONS

The vendor agrees and covenants:

1. To accept food instruments and cash-value **benefits** only from WIC participants, parents or caretakers of infants and child participants, or proxies (the "WIC customer").
2. To ensure that WIC food instrument transactions are processed in accordance with the procedures set forth in the most recent publication of the Georgia WIC Program Vendor Handbook and all addendums.
3. To not demand that a WIC customer purchase every eligible WIC **supplemental** food items, **fruits, and vegetables contained on any printed WIC voucher or eWIC card benefit balance.**
4. To allow WIC customers the right to purchase the eligible supplemental foods, fruits, or vegetables of their choice as contained on **any printed WIC voucher, eWIC card benefit balance, and the approved foods list.**
5. **When transacting printed WIC vouchers, including cash-value vouchers, to ensure that the purchase price is entered on the printed voucher in accordance with the procedures governing the processing of WIC transactions in the most recent publication of the Vendor Handbook. The purchase price must include only the authorized supplemental food items, fruits, or vegetables actually provided and must be entered on the food instrument or cash-value voucher in plain sight of the WIC customer during the WIC transaction.**
6. **When transacting printed WIC vouchers, including cash-value vouchers, to ensure that the WIC customer signs the printed voucher in the presence of the cashier.**
7. **When transacting printed WIC vouchers, including cash-value vouchers, to only allow the purchase of supplemental foods, fruits, and vegetables contained on the printed voucher and approved foods list.**
8. **When conducting eWIC transactions at an eWIC-certified store location, to only allow the purchase of approved supplemental foods, fruits, and vegetables contained in the approved food list, provided that the WIC customer has an available food and/or cash-value benefit balance on the eWIC card on the date of the transaction.**
9. **When conducting eWIC transactions at an eWIC-certified store location, to ensure that (i) a personal identification number (PIN) is used by the WIC**

14. To not provide the WIC customer with unauthorized food or non-credit food items, rain checks/IOUs, credit slips, due bills or other similar receipts for WIC foods not obtained at the time of the purchase.
15. To allow the WIC customer to participate in in-store and/or manufacturer promotions that include WIC approved food items. This includes 'buy one, get one or more free' promotions.
16. To not collect sales tax on authorized WIC food purchases, except on the purchase amount that is in excess of the amount on a cash value/ fruit and vegetable voucher, if applicable.
17. To not charge the WIC customer or the Georgia WIC Program for bank fees or other fees related to food instrument redemption.
18. To allow the WIC customer to use their own funds in excess of the monetary limits for their cash value/fruit and vegetable voucher.
19. To not issue cash change to a WIC customer for purchases less than the total value of the cash value/fruit and vegetable voucher.
20. To only use the cash value/fruit and vegetable voucher for fruit and vegetable purchases.
21. To enroll in the Automatic Clearing House upon authorization for the payment of WIC vouchers that exceeds the maximum allowable price.
22. To provide a single account number to which all WIC vouchers will be deposited.

participant to complete an eWIC transaction in lieu of a signature; (ii) the WIC participant enters the PIN to initiate the eWIC transaction; and (iii) the individual processing the transaction does not enter the PIN for the WIC participant.

10. To offer the WIC customer the same courtesies offered to all other customers.
11. To ensure that all information, including the identity of the WIC customer, is kept confidential, in accordance with federal and state law and regulation.
12. To ensure that the Georgia WIC Program is not being charged for foods not received by the participant.
13. To not charge the WIC customer for authorized supplemental foods obtained with food instruments or cash-value vouchers.
14. To not contact or seek restitution from the WIC customer for WIC food instruments or cash-value benefits not paid or partially paid by the Georgia WIC Program.
15. To not request cash or other forms of payment from the WIC customer for any WIC transaction except for transactions where the total amount of the transaction exceeds the amount of the cash value voucher or cash-value benefit.
16. To not provide the WIC customer with unauthorized food or non-credit food items, rain checks/IOUs, credit slips, due bills or other similar receipts for WIC foods not obtained at the time of the purchase.
17. To allow the WIC customer to participate in in-store and/or manufacturer promotions that include WIC approved food items. This includes 'buy one, get one or more free' promotions.
18. To not collect sales tax on authorized purchases utilizing WIC benefits, **except** on any purchase amount that exceeds the amount contained on the cash value voucher or cash-value benefit, if applicable.
19. To not charge the WIC customer or the Georgia WIC Program for bank fees or other fees related to food instrument or cash-value benefit redemption.
20. To allow the WIC customer to use their own funds in excess of the monetary limits of their food instrument or cash-value benefit.
21. To not issue cash change to a WIC customer for purchases less than the monetary limits for their food instrument or cash-value benefit.

22. To only use the cash-value voucher or cash-value benefit for fruit and vegetable purchases.

23. To enroll in the Automatic Clearing House upon authorization for the payment of WIC food instruments that exceed the maximum allowable reimbursement level.

24. To provide a single account number to which all WIC food instruments and cash-value benefits will be deposited.

25. Comply with the following eWIC provisions:

a. Sign the WIC Vendor eWIC Agreement of the eWIC Processor selected by the Georgia WIC Program ("eWIC Processor") or a third-party processor that has been certified by the eWIC Processor. Failure by a vendor to sign and retain a WIC Vendor eWIC Agreement with the eWIC Processor or a third-party processor that has been certified by the eWIC Processor will result in termination of the WIC Vendor Agreement. For any period of time during which a vendor becomes aware that or anticipates that it will not maintain the required WIC Vendor eWIC Agreement with the eWIC Processor or a third-party processor certified by the eWIC Processor, vendors must provide written notice to the Georgia WIC Program immediately, and no later than 24 hours from the time the vendor becomes aware of or anticipates such period of time during which they will not maintain a WIC Vendor eWIC Agreement with the eWIC Processor or a third-party processor that has been certified by the eWIC Processor.

b. Process eWIC transactions accurately, in a timely manner, and in accordance with the terms of the Georgia WIC Program Vendor Agreement, the WIC Vendor eWIC Agreement, the FNS WIC eWIC Operating Rules, standards and technical requirements, Georgia WIC Program policies and procedures, and state and federal laws and regulations.

c. Maintain Point of Sale (POS) terminals used to support the WIC Program in accordance with the minimum lane provisions of 7 C.F.R. 246.12(z)(2).

Minimum lane coverage. The Point-of-Sale (POS) terminals, whether single-function equipment or multi-function equipment, shall be deployed as follows:

Superstores and supermarkets. There will be one POS terminal for every \$11,000 in monthly WIC redemption up to a total of four POS terminals, or the number of lanes in the location, whichever is less. At a minimum, terminals shall be installed for monthly WIC redemption threshold increments as follows: one terminal for \$0 to \$11,000; two terminals for \$11,001 to \$22,000; three terminals for \$22,001 to \$33,000; and four terminals for \$33,001 and above.

The monthly redemption levels used for the installation formula shall be the average redemptions based on a period of up to 12 months of prior redemption;

All other vendors. One POS terminal for every \$8,000 in monthly redemption up to a total of four POS terminals, or the number of lanes in the location; whichever is less. At a minimum, terminals shall be installed for monthly WIC redemption thresholds as follows: one terminal for \$0 to \$8,000; two terminals for \$8,001 to \$16,000; three terminals for \$16,001 to \$24,000; and four terminals for \$24,001 and above.

The monthly redemption levels used for the installation formula shall be the average redemptions based on a period of up to 12 months of prior redemption;

For newly authorized WIC vendors deemed necessary for participant access, the vendor shall be provided one POS terminal unless Georgia DPH WIC determines other factors in this location warrant additional terminals;

Any authorized vendor, who has been equipped with a POS terminal by Georgia DPH WIC, may submit evidence additional terminals are necessary after the initial POS terminals are installed;

Georgia DPH WIC may provide authorized vendors with additional POS terminals above the minimum number required by this paragraph in order to permit WIC participants to obtain a shopping list or benefit balance, as long as the number of terminals provided does not exceed the number of lanes in the vendor location;

Georgia DPH WIC may remove excess POS terminals if actual redemption activity warrants a reduction consistent with the redemption levels outlined in paragraphs (z)(2)(i) through (ii) of 7 C.F.R. 246.12(z)(2).

- d. Maintain availability, during all hours an authorized store location is open, of an in-store eWIC system that is certified by the eWIC Processor for WIC transaction processing.
- e. Request the Georgia WIC Program eWIC Processor re-certify its in-store eWIC system if the vendor alters or revises the system in any manner that impacts eWIC transaction processing, redemption, or claims processing after initial certification is completed. During such re-certification of an in-store eWIC system, the vendor agrees to the following:
 - i) If the initially certified in-store eWIC system is reconfigured and/or modified by the vendor and/or other parties in such a way that the in-store eWIC system no longer meets required system accuracy, integrity, or performance requirements under which the initial in-store eWIC system was certified, the Georgia WIC Program will not accept redemptions submitted utilizing the reconfigured and/or modified in-store eWIC system.
 - ii) The vendor is liable for the costs of all recertification events needed to ensure the in-store eWIC system meets all Georgia WIC Program system requirements for in-store eWIC systems. Vendor assumes all liabilities arising from any failure to seek recertification when the vendor's in-store eWIC system is reconfigured and/or modified.

E. PRICING

The vendor agrees and covenants:

1. To clearly mark the price of WIC foods on the item, container, shelf or sign near the WIC food item.
2. To provide each WIC food item at or below the current shelf price.
3. To not accept WIC food instruments or cash value/fruit and vegetable vouchers before the "First Date to Use" or after the "Last Date to Use" as printed on the food instrument.
4. To submit vouchers to the bank for payment within sixty days from the "First Date to Use" as indicated on each food instrument.
5. To submit food instruments and cash-value vouchers for redemption in accordance with the redemption and voucher payment procedures outlined in the most recent version of the Vendor Handbook.
6. To accept an adjustment in the amount written in the "pay exactly" box of the WIC food instrument submitted for redemption if the amount exceeds the statewide and/ or peer group Maximum Allowable Prices or Maximum Allowable Reimbursement Level.
7. To remain price-competitive throughout the agreement period. If the vendor is identified as non-competitive for three additional assessments for a total of four (4) failed assessments within a twelve-month period or less, the vendor agreement will be terminated.

E. PRICING

The vendor agrees and covenants:

1. To clearly mark the price of WIC foods on the item, container, shelf or sign near the WIC food item.
2. To provide each WIC food item at or below the current shelf price.
3. To not accept WIC food instruments (printed vouchers) before the "First Date to Use" or after the "Last Date to Use" as printed on the food instrument.
4. To submit food instruments and cash-value benefits to the bank for payment within sixty days from the "First Date to Use" as indicated on each food instrument or cash-value benefit.
5. To submit food instruments and cash-value benefits for redemption in accordance with the redemption and payment procedures outlined in the most recent version of the Vendor Handbook.
6. When transacting printed WIC vouchers, including cash-value vouchers, to accept an adjustment in the amount written in the "pay exactly" box of the printed voucher submitted for redemption if the amount exceeds the statewide and/ or peer group Maximum Allowable Prices or Maximum Allowable Reimbursement Level.
7. When conducting eWIC transactions at an eWIC-certified store location, to submit for redemption the current shelf price of all WIC-approved supplemental foods purchased in the correct sizes, quantities, and the total dollar amount of all WIC-approved supplemental foods purchased utilizing an eWIC card.
8. To remain price-competitive throughout the agreement period. If the vendor is identified as non-competitive after its initial assessment for three additional assessments, for a total of four (4) failed assessments within a twelve-month period or less, the vendor agreement will be terminated.

H. NON-DISCRIMINATION

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) prohibits discrimination against its customers, employees, and applicants for employment on the bases of race, color, national origin, age, disability, sex, gender identity, religion, reprisal and, where applicable, political beliefs, marital status, familial or parental status, sexual orientation, or all or part of an individual's income is derived from any public assistance program, or protected genetic information in employment or in any program or activity conducted or funded by the Department. (Not all prohibited bases will apply to all programs and/or employment activities.)

If you wish to file a Civil Rights program complaint of discrimination, complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form, found online at http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint_filing_cust.html, or at any USDA office, or call (866) 632-9992 to request the form. You may also write a letter containing all of the information requested in the form. Send your completed complaint form or letter to us by mail at U.S. Department of Agriculture, Director, Office of Adjudication, 1400 Independence Avenue, S.W., Washington, D.C. 20250-9410, by fax (202) 690-7442 or email at program.intake@usda.gov.

Individuals who are deaf, hard of hearing, or have speech disabilities and wish to file either an EEO or program complaint please contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339 or (800) 845-6136 (in Spanish).

Persons with disabilities, who wish to file a program complaint, please see information above on how to contact us by mail directly or by email. If you require alternative means of communication for program information (e.g., Braille, large print, audiotape, etc.) please contact USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TDD).

USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

H. NON-DISCRIMINATION

In accordance with federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, this institution is prohibited from discriminating on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex (including gender identity and sexual orientation), disability, age, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity.

Program information may be made available in languages other than English. Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication to obtain program information (e.g., Braille, large print, audiotape, American Sign Language), should contact the responsible state or local agency that administers the program or USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TTY) or contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339.

To file a program discrimination complaint, a Complainant should complete a Form AD-3027, USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form which can be obtained online at: <https://www.usda.gov/sites/default/files/documents/USDA-OASCR%20P-Complaint-Form-0508-0002-508-11-28-17Fax2Mail.pdf>, from any USDA office, by calling (866) 632-9992, or by writing a letter addressed to USDA. The letter must contain the complainant's name, address, telephone number, and a written description of the alleged discriminatory action in sufficient detail to inform the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights (ASCR) about the nature and date of an alleged civil rights violation. The completed AD-3027 form or letter must be submitted to USDA by:

- 1. mail:**
U.S. Department of Agriculture
Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights
1400 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C. 20250-9410; or
- 2. fax:**
(833) 256-1665 or (202) 690-7442; or

3. **email:**
program.intake@usda.gov

This institution is an equal opportunity provider.

<p>J. PERFORMANCE COMPLIANCE AND CONFLICT OF INTEREST</p> <p>3. To provide access to Georgia WIC food instruments and cash value/fruit and vegetable vouchers on hand, inventory records (invoices) and any other business records during a monitoring visit or inventory audit by any authorized federal or state agency representative.</p>	<p>J. PERFORMANCE COMPLIANCE AND CONFLICT OF INTEREST</p> <p>3. To provide access to Georgia WIC food instruments and cash value/fruit and vegetable benefits information on hand, inventory records, invoices, and any other business records during a monitoring visit or inventory audit by any authorized federal or state agency representative.</p>
<p>L. STATE PROPERTY</p> <p>The vendor agrees and covenants:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To return the vendor stamp(s) to the Georgia WIC Program upon termination, change of ownership or disqualification. 2. To immediately report lost, stolen or damaged vendor stamps to the Georgia WIC Program . 3. To not reproduce the vendor stamp. 	<p>L. STATE PROPERTY</p> <p>The vendor agrees and covenants:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To return the vendor stamp(s) to the Georgia WIC Program when damaged, upon termination of this agreement, upon a change of ownership, upon disqualification, or upon a store location becoming eWIC-certified and the Georgia WIC Program has notified the vendor to no longer accept and redeem printed vouchers. 2. To immediately report lost, stolen or damaged vendor stamps to the Georgia WIC Program. 3. To not reproduce the vendor stamp.
<p>IV RESPONSIBILITIES – GEORGIA WIC PROGRAM</p> <p>B. To ensure that Georgia WIC customers are informed of the proper food instrument redemption procedures and the correct use of Georgia WIC food instruments.</p> <p>M. To notify vendor of stolen vouchers. Stolen vouchers may not be redeemed.</p>	<p>IV RESPONSIBILITIES – GEORGIA WIC PROGRAM</p> <p>B. To ensure that Georgia WIC customers are informed of the proper food instrument redemption procedures and the correct use of Georgia WIC food instruments or cash-value benefits.</p> <p>M. To notify vendor of stolen food instruments or cash-value vouchers. Stolen food instruments and cash-value vouchers may not be accepted or redeemed.</p>

V. TERMINATION OF THE VENDOR AGREEMENT

1. Voluntary withdrawal from the WIC program.
2. The decision to sell the store.
3. Expiration of the agreement without a new application being submitted.
4. Civil Money Penalty imposed by SNAP in lieu of disqualification.
5. Use of the WIC acronym, WIC logo, or close facsimiles thereof, in total or in part, in a manner that violates the provisions of this agreement and the vendor handbook.
6. Accepting food instruments through the mail or mailing any approved formula/medical foods directly to the WIC customer.
7. Failure to complete and submit documentation for annual training by the deadline specified by the Georgia WIC Program.
8. Failure to provide the Georgia WIC Program with written notice of a change in the vendor's business within at least twenty-one days in advance of the change (including but is not limited to a change in ownership, name, location, corporate structure, sale or transfer of the business, or cessation of operation.)
9. Two failed attempts by the Georgia WIC Program to contact the vendor during business hours at the vendor's reported address and telephone number.
10. Determination that the vendor's SNAP license is invalid or not current.
11. Providing false information or vendor records, other than information or records provided in connection with a vendor application for authorization or re-authorization.
12. Failure to provide food instruments, inventory records, food sales or tax information upon request.
13. Failure to allow monitoring by WIC representatives, or harassing or threatening any WIC representative.
14. Forging a participant's signature on a WIC food instrument.
15. Reproducing the WIC vendor stamp.
16. Identification by the Georgia WIC Program of a conflict of interest as defined by applicable state laws, regulations, and policies, between the vendor and the Georgia WIC Program or its local agencies.
17. Failure to enroll in ACH within the time specified.
18. Four failed assessments for non-competitive prices within a 12-month period or less.
19. Providing prohibited incentive items as part of a WIC transaction, in a manner that violates the provisions of this agreement and the vendor handbook.
20. Failure to meet the selection criteria in effect at the time of assessment at any time throughout the agreement period.

V. TERMINATION OF THE VENDOR AGREEMENT

1. Voluntary withdrawal from the WIC program (termination period of 3 months).
2. The decision to sell the store (termination period of 3 months).
3. Expiration of the agreement without a new application being submitted (termination period of 3 months).
4. Civil Money Penalty imposed by SNAP in lieu of disqualification for the initially issued SNAP disqualification period.
5. Use of the WIC acronym, WIC logo, or close facsimiles thereof, in total or in part, in a manner that violates the provisions of this agreement and the vendor handbook (termination period of 12 months).
6. Accepting food instruments through the mail or mailing any approved formula/medical foods directly to the WIC customer (termination period of 12 months).
7. Failure to complete and submit documentation for annual training by the deadline specified by the Georgia WIC Program (termination period of 6 months).
8. Failure to provide the Georgia WIC Program with written notice of a change in the vendor's business within at least twenty-one (21) days in advance of the change, including but is not limited to a change in ownership, name, location, corporate structure, sale or transfer of the business, or cessation of operation (termination period of 6 months).
9. Two failed attempts by the Georgia WIC Program to contact the vendor during business hours at the vendor's reported address and telephone number (termination period of 3 months).
10. Determination that the vendor's SNAP license is invalid or not current (termination period of 6 months).
11. Intentionally providing false information or vendor records, other than information or records provided in connection with a vendor application for authorization or re-authorization (termination period of 12 months).
12. Failure to provide information on WIC benefit transactions, inventory records, food sales or tax information upon request (termination period of 9 months).
13. Failure to allow monitoring by WIC representatives, including the eWIC Processor or any third-party processor certified by the eWIC Processor (termination period of 12 months).

21. Less than \$2,000.00 in annual WIC redemptions or failure to redeem any WIC food instruments in sixty (60) days.
22. Violation of any federal or state law or regulation, or terms of the WIC Vendor Agreement or Vendor Handbook not otherwise covered by the sanction system.

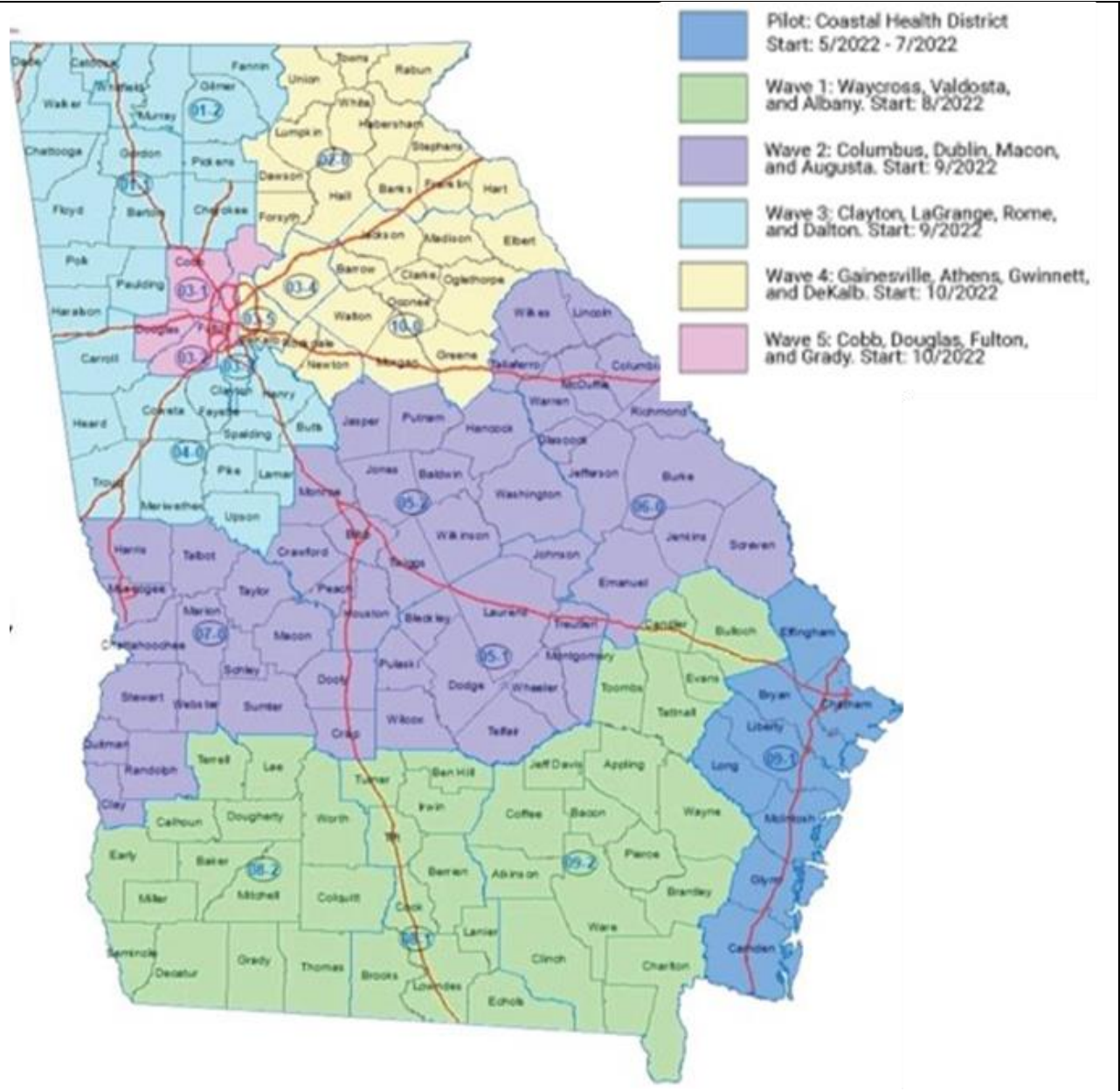
After being terminated from the Georgia WIC Program, the vendor will not be automatically reinstated as an authorized Georgia WIC vendor. The vendor may re-apply no sooner than one (1) year after being terminated from the Georgia WIC Program. To re-apply, the vendor must complete the application process in its entirety.

If a termination is overturned on appeal, the Georgia WIC Program shall not be liable for consequential damages, including but not limited to lost profits and attorney's fees.

14. Harassing or threatening any WIC representative, including the eWIC Processor or any third-party processor certified by the eWIC Processor (termination period of 12 months).
15. Forging a participant's signature on a printed WIC voucher (termination period of 12 months).
16. Reproducing the WIC vendor stamp or the use of a stamping device to redeem vouchers that was not issued by the Georgia WIC Program (termination period of 12 months).
17. Using an eWIC Card unlawfully or without authorization or causing an eWIC card to be utilized unlawfully or without authorization (termination period of 12 months).
18. Identification by the Georgia WIC Program of a conflict of interest as defined by applicable state laws, regulations, and policies, between the vendor and the Georgia WIC Program or its local agencies (termination period of 6 months).
19. Failure to enroll in ACH within the time specified (termination period of 3 months).
20. Four failed assessments for non-competitive prices within a 12-month period or less (termination period of 12 months).
21. Providing prohibited incentive items as part of a WIC transaction, in a manner that violates the provisions of this agreement and the vendor handbook (termination period of 12 months).
22. Failure to meet the selection criteria in effect at the time of assessment at any time throughout the agreement period (termination period of 6 months).
23. Less than \$2,000.00 in annual WIC redemptions or failure to redeem any WIC food instruments in sixty (60) days (termination period of 6 months).
24. Violation of any federal or state law or regulation, or terms of the WIC Vendor Agreement or Vendor Handbook not otherwise covered by the sanction system (termination period of 12 months).

After being terminated from the Georgia WIC Program, the vendor will not be automatically reinstated as an authorized Georgia WIC vendor. To become authorized after being terminated from the Georgia WIC Program, the vendor may re-apply, as a new applicant, no sooner than the completion of the specified termination period outlined by Georgia WIC. To re-apply, the vendor must complete the application process in its entirety.

Georgia WIC Program Vendor Handbook Effective November 5, 2021	Georgia WIC Program Vendor Handbook Effective June 6, 2021
	<p data-bbox="1330 397 2567 438">Page 6 – 15: Implementation of an Electronic Benefits Transfer System or (eWIC)</p> <p data-bbox="1317 511 2459 609">The Healthy, Hunger Free Kids Act requires all WIC agencies to issue food benefits via Electronic Benefit Transfer (EBT) by October 2020. Georgia WIC has been granted an exemption that extends the full implementation date to October 2022.</p> <p data-bbox="1317 609 2580 747">As a result, Georgia WIC is moving from a paper-based method of WIC benefit issuance to an electronic benefit transfer system known as eWIC. eWIC will be piloted in early June 2022, in the Coastal Health District. The pilot area includes the following counties: Bryan, Camden, Chatham, Effingham, Glynn, Liberty, Long, and McIntosh.</p> <p data-bbox="1317 747 2580 852">After the pilot period, there are five (5) waves of rollouts, throughout the remaining Health Districts (HD) across Georgia, according to the schedule below (please note that these dates are subject to change due to weather or other unforeseen circumstances):</p> <ul data-bbox="1357 868 2459 1153" style="list-style-type: none"> • Wave 1: Waycross, Valdosta, & Albany HDs - Go Live Date: 8/22/22 • Wave 2: Columbus, Dublin, Macon, & Augusta HDs - Go Live Date: 9/06/22 • Wave 3: Clayton, LaGrange, Rome, & Dalton HDs - Go Live Date: 9/19/22 • Wave 4: Gainesville, Athens, Gwinnett, & DeKalb HDs - Go Live Date: 10/03/22 • Wave 5: Cobb-Douglas, Fulton HDs - Go Live Date: 10/17/22 <p data-bbox="1317 1153 2580 1218">The following map reflects the HDs and associated counties included in the pilot and each of the projected waves.</p>



The implementation of eWIC will result in the use of new terms, acronyms and the establishment of new program requirements and procedures. This section of the manual details policies, procedures and other important information regarding eWIC that WIC authorized vendors must know to properly perform all vendor related activities, as Georgia WIC transitions to eWIC.

During and after eWIC implementation, vendors must still comply with all other vendor management policies and procedures listed in the subsequent sections of this handbook.

New Definitions

The following definitions have been added or amended due to eWIC implementation:

Authorized Product List (APL) – The list of universal product codes (UPCs) and product look-up (PLU) codes for WIC supplemental foods, fruits and vegetables that are authorized for purchase by WIC customers. The APL must be uploaded into the vendor's point of sale (POS) system on a daily basis (this should be an automated process).

Benefit Balance: The unspent food benefits which are available for purchase by a WIC cardholder.

Cash-Value Voucher (CVV) – amended definition: a fixed-dollar amount check, voucher or electronic benefit transfer (eWIC) card used by a WIC participant to obtain authorized fruits and vegetables. Also referred to as Cash-Value Benefit (CVB) in eWIC.

Electronic Benefit Transfer (EBT) – a method that permits electronic access to WIC food benefits using a plastic card. **EBT for the Georgia WIC Program is referred to as eWIC.**

eWIC Capable – when the WIC vendor demonstrates their cash register system or payment device can accurately and securely obtain WIC food balances associated with an eWIC card, maintain the necessary files such as the authorized product list and successfully complete eWIC purchases.

eWIC Cardholder - the WIC Participant or the person authorized to use the eWIC card on their behalf.

eWIC Processor – the entity contracted with the Georgia WIC Program for the implementation, maintenance, and operation of the Program's eWIC system that acts as the agent of the Program to process and settle eWIC transactions.

Electronic Signature – an electronic sound, symbol, or process, attached to or associated with an application or other record and executed and or adopted by a person with the intent to sign the record.

Food Benefit - The individual WIC approved foods a participant receives for a selected month.

Food Category – a numbering sequence of 2 digits used to identify broad WIC food groups.

Food Sub-Category – a numbering sequence of three digits following the Food Category that identifies the foods, brands, and size of food item identified within each food group.

Food Instrument (FI) – amended definition: a voucher, check or eWIC card used by a WIC participant to obtain supplemental foods.

Integrated Vendor: The WIC software is part of the store's cash register system. Integrating WIC into the Point-of-Sale (POS) system and normal business processes is the preferred solution as it allows grocers to manage inventory, payment, and settlement for WIC items within the same system that manages transactions for cash and other payment tenders.

International Federation of Produce Standards (IFPS): The federation maintains and manages an international database for Price Look-Up (PLU) numbers. The long-term objective of the federation is to improve the supply chain efficiency of the fresh produce industry through developing, implementing, and managing harmonized international standards.

Minimum Lane Coverage – the number of POS terminals necessary for a vendor to operate an eWIC system.

Multi-function Equipment – POS equipment obtained by a WIC vendor through commercial suppliers, which can support eWIC and other payment tender types. This is also known as an integrated system.

Not to exceed (NTE) – FNS-approved Cost Containment methodology whereby WIC Vendors are subject to price limitations.

Personal Identification Number (PIN) – a numeric password used by a WIC participant to authenticate the participant to the eWIC system.

Point-of-sale (POS) Terminal – an electronic device used to process eWIC card payments at authorized vendor locations.

Primary Account Number (PAN) – The 16-digit number on the front of an eWIC card.

Product Look-Up (PLU) code – an identification number placed on produce sold at authorized vendor locations. A 4- or 5-digit code in the 3000 to 4999 range as defined by the International Federation for Produce Standards (IFPS). PLUs are used by a WIC Vendor to identify products that typically are of variable measure, e.g., meat, deli, seafood, fruits and vegetables or produce. Five-digit PLUs with leading digit of 8 indicate a genetically modified product and a leading digit of 9 indicates organic products. The trailing four digits of genetically modified and organic products represent the standard PLU for a food item. A zero is the leading digit for standard non-genetically modified or organic PLUs but it is omitted in practice.

Sign or Signature – a handwritten signature on paper or an electronic signature.

Single-function Equipment – POS equipment such as barcode scanners, card readers, PIN pads and printers, provided to an authorized WIC vendor solely for use with the WIC Program.

Stand-Beside Vendor: The eWIC software is on a WIC only stand-beside POS device and is capable of supporting only WIC payments.

Statewide eWIC – when the State agency has converted all WIC clinics to eWIC, and all authorized WIC vendors are capable of transacting eWIC purchases.

Third Party Processor (TPP) - A contracted company that routes transactions and makes consolidated settlement and payments to the WIC vendor.

Universal Product Code (UPC) - A specific type of barcode used to identify products sold by the WIC vendor. The numbers shown in the barcode are entered on the APL file to identify authorized WIC food items.

WIC EBT (eWIC) Card - A food instrument (electronic benefits transfer (EBT)) card used by a WIC Participant to obtain supplemental foods.

Value Added Reseller (VAR) - An entity which adds features or services to an existing product, then resells it as an integrated product or complete turn-key solution. A VAR which sells or leases CADs to a WIC Vendor provides software, installation, telecommunication connectivity and/or other technical support required to process eWIC transactions.

Vendor eWIC Enablement and Certification

In order to process eWIC transactions, vendors must obtain and be certified to use the appropriate Point-of-sale (POS) terminal(s) and/or software. Georgia has selected Conduent as the eWIC processor to facilitate all vendor enablement and certification processes. Conduent will contact vendors to discuss any follow up needed from the results of the vendor survey completed, obtain additional information and documents required for certification of the vendor's integrated POS system, and arrange for the setup of the single function equipment and any associated software required to process eWIC transactions in Georgia, as applicable.

To maintain authorization as a Georgia WIC vendor, all vendors must have their POS system certified to accept eWIC by Conduent or a third- party processor certified by Conduent. Failure to obtain certification or acquire a single function device provided by Conduent during the time specified by the Georgia WIC Program (statewide eWIC implementation) will result in termination of the vendor's WIC Vendor Agreement unless the vendor is needed for participant access. If the vendor location is needed for participant access, the location will be provided single function stand-beside equipment, following the guidelines for minimum lane coverage.

Vendors in need of assistance with the certification process, including completion of contract documentation and set up of single function devices, may contact Conduent using the information listed below.

Retailer Helpdesk (available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week): 1-844-309-5652

Email Address: austinebt@conduent.com

Vendors should also contact Conduent for:

- Assistance with updating contract documentation (only applicable to vendors with stand beside devices provided by Conduent),
- Transaction history, settlement information, disputes, and reconciliation procedures,
- Support on system adjustments and resolution of out-of-balance conditions,
- POS terminal and scanner training, troubleshooting and replacement (only applicable to vendors with stand beside devices provided by Conduent).

Vendors with integrated systems should contact their third party-processor (TPP), if they need assistance with the areas listed above.

Please send eWIC program-related questions to the Georgia WIC Vendor Relations Unit at 404-657-2900 or via email at wic-vendor.relations@dph.ga.gov. Program vendor staff will answer your questions promptly.

The Authorized Product List (APL)

To appropriately configure an eWIC system to approve WIC supplemental foods for purchase, vendors must be provided the authorized product list also known as the APL. The APL file is a list of authorized food items established by Georgia WIC.

The first production level APL will be provided to vendors with integrated systems in early May 2022. Updates will be made to the APL, as necessary, prior to the go-live date for eWIC in the pilot region and provided to vendors accordingly.

The APL file must be downloaded daily to the vendor's cash register system to ensure accurate WIC eligible food items are available for purchase.

- Integrated vendors will obtain the file from Conduent's FTP site.
- Stand beside devices are configured to automatically receive the APL file if they are left on and have connectivity (via analog phone line or wired internet connection).

Regardless of the type of eWIC system used, vendors must ensure that the APL is downloaded to each eWIC device/outlet in their store at least once every 24 hours.

Produce Mapping

1. Georgia WIC is requiring integrated vendors to map produce to a Georgia WIC approved Price Look-Up (PLU) code.
2. Any WIC approved fresh fruit or vegetable without an International Federation of Produce Standards (IFPS) approved PLU must be mapped to an IFPS-approved PLU. This includes produce items with a UPC bar code.
3. It is the store's responsibility to map all required fresh fruits and vegetables. If produce mapping is not completed, the WIC transaction will decline.
4. Stores should reach out to their Electronic Cash Register (ECR) provider for instructions on how to map produce items.

Guidelines for Processing eWIC Transactions

Vendors must process eWIC transactions, accurately, in a timely manner and in accordance with the terms of the Georgia WIC Vendor Agreement, the eWIC Processor Vendor Agreement, the FNS EBT operating rules, standards and technical requirements, WIC Program Rules, and state and federal regulations, and statutes.

Transaction processing with the eWIC card is a more streamlined process because there are no printed FIs/CVV's to complete. It is important that a vendor owner, manager or other authorized store representative complete training on eWIC procedures prior to using the system. Furthermore, the vendor must ensure that all cashiers and staff are fully trained on eWIC requirements, including training in the acceptance and processing of eWIC transactions. The procedures used for eWIC processing are determined by the type of POS system used by the vendor.

Integrated Retailers

Retailers use eWIC software to submit transactions through a certified Third-Party Processor (TPP) such as, Fiserv Solutions, Inc. (First Data Corporation) or Worldpay US, Inc. A TPP is a full-service provider for transaction processing, reconciliation and settlement for all payment types supported by the retailer (including eWIC). TPPs charge retailer fees based on the type of service selected (i.e. per transaction fee). Questions regarding settlement or transaction processing should be directed to your TPP or corporate office.

Integrated eWIC Purchase Flow

1. An APL is downloaded nightly to the retailer's ECR system.
2. Items are scanned (no need to separate WIC items).
3. The universal product codes (UPCs) and price look-up codes (PLUs) are verified against the APL file.
4. Items are checked against the WIC family's benefit balance.
5. Items scanned are transmitted to Conduent's WIC Connect system for approval.
6. WIC Connect responds with approval and remaining benefit balance.
7. Once completed, if there are any non-WIC items remaining, the WIC family will be given the opportunity to pay the remaining balance with another form of tender.

Note: Depending on the retailer's ECR system, the card swipe and PIN entry could occur at the beginning, middle or end of initiating the WIC purchase transaction.

The transaction guidelines for integrated systems may vary slightly based on the POS system used. Vendors with integrated systems should refer to the guidance provided for their POS system for more comprehensive instructions on how to transact eWIC using their system.

Single Function Stand Beside POS Retailers (GA WIC provided equipment)

Single Function Stand Beside devices are often utilized by small chains or single store merchants.

The full cost of WIC single-function equipment will be borne by Georgia WIC prior to statewide implementation. There is no equipment cost to the retailer for an initial single function point-of-sale (POS) terminal lane or lane(s) if minimum lane coverage analysis reveals additional lanes must be equipped, for a maximum of 4 lanes. Each stand beside in the lane requires dedicated power and an analog phone line or wired internet connection. Equipment maintenance and

retailer support is provided at no cost. There is no fee to the merchant for transaction processing.

There is a need to scan items twice at the POS and in the retailer's ECR system. The eWIC stand beside device can only process Georgia WIC transactions. All items purchased with WIC benefits will be a separate transaction from non-WIC items purchased by the WIC customer.

All retailers authorized after statewide implementation must demonstrate they are eWIC capable.

Stand Beside POS Terminal - eWIC Purchase Flow

1. Cardholder swipes their eWIC card.
2. Cardholder will then enter his/her PIN.
3. Cashier scans the UPCs or enters the PLUs into the stand beside POS terminal and scans each item on the register as well.
4. Cashier enters or confirms the food item price on the stand beside.
5. Cashier completes the transaction on the stand beside POS terminal.
6. The stand beside POS terminal prints a receipt that has the remaining benefit balance details for the cardholder.

Receipt of Purchase Requirements

The printed receipt provided to the WIC customer is a record of what was purchased at the vendor's store. Vendors must provide WIC customers with printed receipts in accordance with receipt requirements listed in the *USDA, FNS, WIC EBT Operating Rules* which can be accessed using the link below:

<https://www.fns.usda.gov/sites/default/files/wic/WIC-EBT-Operating-Rules-September-2014.pdf>

Additional eWIC Transaction Requirements

When performing eWIC transactions the vendor must:

1. Provide to the WIC customer only the approved Georgia supplemental foods, fruits, and vegetables contained in the APL, after it has been determined that the WIC customer has an available balance on the date of the transaction.
2. Refrain from scanning codes from UPC codebooks or reference sheets.

3. Transmit the current shelf price of all WIC-approved supplemental foods purchased in the correct sizes, quantities and the total dollar amount of all WIC-approved supplemental foods purchased.
4. Ensure that the checkout process for eWIC allows a reasonable degree of security for protecting the PIN used by the WIC customer.
5. Perform eWIC transactions using cashiers in standard checkout lanes. **GA WIC has opted to not utilize/implement self-checkout at this time. eWIC transactions will not be operable in self-checkout lanes.**

Payments to Vendors for eWIC Transactions

Vendors will receive payment for all eWIC transactions processed in their store through an Automated Clearinghouse (ACH) system in which payments are directly deposited into their bank account. Currently vendors only receive payments via ACH for printed Food Instruments (FIs) and Cash Value Vouchers (CVVs) that go over the maximum allowable reimbursement level (MARL) for the FI or maximum value for the CVV.


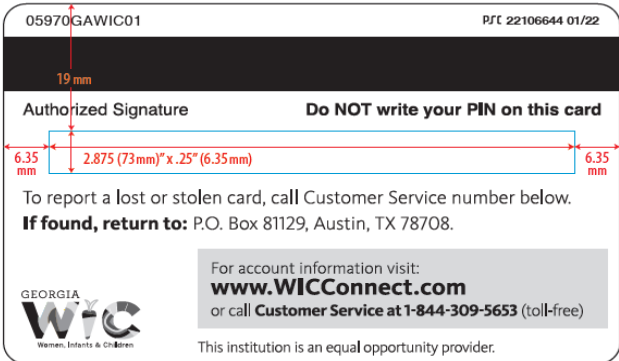
With eWIC, each food item will have a maximum allowable reimbursement level. The maximum allowable reimbursement level is also known as the Not to Exceed (NTE) amount. If a vendor submits an item price that is above the NTE, their payment will be decreased to the NTE amount for the item. Vendors are required to provide their bank account information to the eWIC processor to ensure payment for eWIC transactions.

Transacting Printed FIs and CVVs During and After eWIC Implementation

Until eWIC implementation is completed statewide, vendors may service WIC customers with eWIC cards or with printed FIs and CVVs. Once implementation takes place in the vendor's county, they are expected to allow WIC customers to use their eWIC cards to purchase WIC-approved items **and** continue to accept printed FIs and CVVs until they are no longer issued and redeemed in the state. The last paper benefits will be issued for the 3-month cycle of October through December 2022. Participants will receive eWIC cards in a phased approach. eWIC transaction activity will build gradually as participants receive their eWIC cards.

Vendors must deposit printed FIs and CVVs into the bank for payment within 60 days of the "First Day to Use" listed on the printed voucher.

A sample of the Georgia eWIC card is shown below.

	<p style="text-align: center;">FRONT</p>  <p style="text-align: center;">BACK</p> 
<p>Page 10: <u>Exception to WIC Limiting and Selection Criteria</u></p> <p>The Georgia WIC Program reserves the right to make exceptions to (waive) the limiting and/or vendor selection criteria to address inadequate participant access to supplemental foods. However, competitive pricing and meeting the minimum WIC approved food stocking requirements are not waivable, per federal regulations.</p>	<p>Page 19: <u>Exception to WIC Limiting and Selection Criteria</u></p> <p>The Georgia WIC Program reserves the right to make exceptions to (waive) the limiting and/or vendor selection criteria to address inadequate participant access to supplemental foods. However, competitive pricing and meeting the minimum WIC approved food stocking requirements are not waivable, per federal regulations 7 CFR § 246.4(a)(14)(ii).</p>

<p>6. Length of Time as a SNAP Retailer and Previous Grocery Industry Experience. All applicants, except pharmacies and military commissaries, must demonstrate a minimum of twelve (12) months experience as a retail grocer. All applicants must also have a minimum of twelve (12) consecutive months of retail sales history as a vendor under the SNAP Program. Experience can be shown by documentation such as a SNAP vendor permit, Federal/State tax records, or other documentation as the program may request. For those applicants who do not have the required history under the SNAP program, Georgia WIC will consider a waiver upon a written request showing the required SNAP history at another location under common ownership. Corporate or Chain Grocers with existing WIC approved locations satisfy this requirement when opening new locations through build-out or acquisition.</p>	<p>6. Authorized SNAP Vendor. Be an authorized Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) retailer (pharmacy vendors and military commissaries are exempt from this requirement). A vendor applicant shall not become authorized as a WIC vendor if the store is currently disqualified from SNAP or the store has been assessed a SNAP civil money penalty for hardship and the disqualification period that otherwise would have been imposed has not expired.</p>
	<p>26. Sign a WIC Vendor eWIC Agreement with the eWIC processor or a third-party processor (TPP) certified by the eWIC processor.</p>
	<p>Page 27: Peer Groups</p> <p>Not To Exceed</p> <p>The Not to Exceed (NTE) or Maximum allowable Reimbursement Level amounts will be calculated using shelf price list/market basket data throughout eWIC implementation, at the food item and voucher code level for each peer group. The NTE amount will be calculated using actual WIC redemptions for each supplemental food item post eWIC, statewide implementation.</p> <p>Information regarding this transition will be provided to vendors via an addendum prior to its execution.</p>

Page 30 Payment Posters

A WIC vendor must accept at least two other forms of payment other than WIC and EBT (Electronic Benefit Transfer.) If a payment poster is displayed, all forms of payment accepted by a vendor must be listed so as not to solicit the WIC customer. Payment posters cannot imply that the vendor only takes WIC or EBT. EBT or WIC cannot be more pronounced on the poster than other forms of payment (e.g. EBT and WIC should not be in a larger or different font, or in boldface.)

Page 30 Payment Posters

A WIC vendor must accept at least two other forms of payment other than WIC and SNAP EBT (Electronic Benefit Transfer.) If a payment poster is displayed, all forms of payment accepted by a vendor must be listed so as not to solicit the WIC customer. Payment posters cannot imply that the vendor only takes WIC or SNAP EBT. SNAP EBT or WIC cannot be more pronounced on the poster than other forms of payment (e.g., SNAP EBT and WIC should not be in a larger or different font, or in boldface.)

Pg. 32 THE WIC FOOD INSTRUMENT

The WIC food instrument is similar to a check. A vendor must accept all valid food instruments, with the exception of a pharmacy vendor, who may only redeem food instruments for exempt and special infant formula, including medical foods. The vendor shall not accept counterfeit or altered food instruments.

When food instruments are properly redeemed, the vendor will receive credit for the amount of the purchase by depositing the food instrument into the specific account number provided to Georgia WIC by the vendor for deposit of all WIC food instruments at the vendor's bank.

Food Instrument Types and Descriptions

There are (5) five types of WIC food instruments: laser-printed, blank manual, standard manual, computer generated and cash value vouchers. Descriptions and pictures of the food instruments are below.

Laser Printed Food Instruments. The laser-printed food instrument is printed at the clinic site at the time of the participant, parent's, caretaker's and/or proxy's visit.

Page 35 Blank Manual/Handwritten Food Instruments. All information on the food instrument is either handwritten or typed. Redeem only for the amount of food indicated. Only one (1) number should appear in each box. X's are placed in all boxes where there are no numbers. This helps to eliminate any possible unauthorized alterations on the food instrument. There are two (2) types of Blank Manual/Handwritten Food Instruments, which are shown below.

PG. 46 THE WIC PRINTED VOUCHER

The WIC voucher is similar to a check. A vendor must accept all valid food instruments (vouchers, cash value vouchers, cash value benefits and eWIC cards) with the exception of a pharmacy vendor, who may only redeem food instruments for exempt and special infant formula, including medical foods. The vendor shall not accept counterfeit or altered food instruments.

When vouchers are properly redeemed, the vendor will receive credit for the amount of the purchase by depositing the voucher into the specific account number provided to Georgia WIC by the vendor for deposit of all WIC food instruments at the vendor's bank.

Printed Voucher Types and Descriptions

There are (5) five types of WIC printed vouchers: laser-printed, blank manual, standard manual, computer generated and cash value vouchers. Descriptions and pictures of the printed vouchers are below.

Laser Printed Vouchers. The laser-printed voucher is printed at the clinic site at the time of the participant, parent's, caretaker's and/or proxy's visit.

Page 47 Blank Manual/Handwritten Vouchers. All information on the printed voucher is either handwritten or typed. Redeem only for the amount of food indicated. Only one (1) number should appear in each box. X's are placed in all boxes where there are no numbers. This helps to eliminate any possible unauthorized alterations on the printed voucher. There are two (2) types of Blank Manual/Handwritten Vouchers, which are shown below.

Page 36 **Blank Standard Manual Food Instruments.** Blank standard manual food instruments have the WIC approved foods preprinted on the food instruments. The top portion of the food instrument is completed (handwritten) by the clinic staff. These food instruments have two (2) signature boxes.

Emergency Computer Generated Food Instruments. These food instruments are used in case of emergencies. All information on the food instrument is computer printed.

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Cash Value/Fruit and Vegetable Vouchers (CVV). A CVV is issued for fruits and vegetables.

- CVVs are used to purchase approved fresh, frozen, and canned fruits and vegetables.
- CVVs have a maximum amount listed.
- The WIC participant will be allowed to pay the difference when the cost of their produce exceeds the price stated on the CVV. The amount over the CVV maximum is to be subject to tax, when applicable. The WIC participant is responsible for paying the difference plus the applicable sales tax.
- The vendor may need to adjust its current procedures to allow for WIC clients to use payment methods such as Food Stamps EBT cards, cash, credit cards, or debit cards to complete the CVV transaction.

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Processing WIC Food Instruments Including Cash Value Vouchers

The vendor's bank should be informed that WIC food instruments are negotiable instruments that must be processed through the Federal Reserve Bank. Georgia WIC will provide each vendor location a Program issued stamp that is embossed with a unique WIC identification number. All food instruments accepted by the vendor location must **only** be stamped with the Georgia WIC Program provided stamp in preparation for a bank deposit. **Only** food instruments stamped with an authorized vendor stamp that is issued by Georgia WIC will be paid. The stamp should be fully depressed onto the WIC food instrument so that it is clearly recognizable on the food instrument.

REPRODUCTION OF THE VENDOR STAMP AND USE OF A STAMP NOT ISSUED BY THE GEORGIA WIC PROGRAM IS STRICTLY PROHIBITED. Authorized vendors *may*

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Page 50 – 56:

Processing WIC Printed Vouchers Including Cash Value Vouchers

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REPRODUCTION OF THE VENDOR STAMP AND USE OF A STAMP NOT ISSUED BY THE GEORGIA WIC PROGRAM IS STRICTLY PROHIBITED. Authorized vendors *may not* use

not use any other means of placing a vendor number on a food instrument other than with the vendor stamp issued by the Georgia WIC Program.

Food Instruments stamped or imprinted with an unauthorized stamp, number, stamping device or process will **not** be paid (see section entitled 'Important Notes about the Vendor Stamp' for further instructions on the vendor stamp). Payment on any food instrument rejected by the WIC banking system is at the sole discretion of Georgia WIC.

Vendors who submit food instruments for payment by stamping or imprinting the food instrument (1st or subsequent attempts) with a device or action other than with the Georgia WIC Program issued stamp are subject to termination of the vendor agreement and may be subject to investigation for fraud as well as a claim for restitution.

Lost, stolen or damaged stamps must be reported to Georgia WIC immediately. Return damaged stamps to the Georgia WIC Office of Vendor Management.

Minimum Requirements for Payment

- Food instruments must be issued by Georgia WIC or its authorized local agencies, printed on official Georgia WIC paper, and unaltered.
- Food instruments are accepted on the "First Day to Use" date through the "Last Day to Use" date.
- An authorized WIC vendor stamp appears on the food instrument, is legible, and the food instrument is deposited to the single account provided to Georgia WIC by the vendor.
- Deposited within sixty days of the "First Day to Use" date.
- The amount of purchase is entered in the "PAY EXACTLY SPACE" in ink.
- When stamping, use black ink ONLY with your WIC vendor stamp. DO NOT use any other color of ink.
- A signature is obtained from the participant, in black ink, provided by the vendor, at the time of purchase.
- For cash value vouchers, the vendor must not issue change to a WIC customer for purchases that are less than the total value of the cash value voucher.
- For cash value vouchers, the WIC customer may use his/ her own funds for purchase amounts in excess of the monetary limit for his/her cash value voucher.
-

any other means of placing a vendor number on a voucher other than with the vendor stamp issued by the Georgia WIC Program.

Vouchers stamped or imprinted with an unauthorized stamp, number, stamping device or process will **not** be paid (see section entitled 'Important Notes about the Vendor Stamp' for further instructions on the vendor stamp). Payment on any printed voucher rejected by the WIC banking system is at the sole discretion of Georgia WIC.

Vendors who submit vouchers for payment by stamping or imprinting the voucher (1st or subsequent attempts) with a device or action other than with the Georgia WIC Program issued stamp are subject to termination of the vendor agreement and may be subject to investigation for fraud as well as a claim for restitution.

Lost, stolen or damaged stamps must be reported to Georgia WIC immediately. Return damaged stamps to the Georgia WIC Office of Vendor Management.

Minimum Requirements for Payment

- Vouchers must be issued by Georgia WIC or its authorized local agencies, printed on official Georgia WIC paper, and unaltered.
- Vouchers are accepted on the "First Day to Use" date through the "Last Day to Use" date.
- An authorized WIC vendor stamp appears on the voucher, is legible, and the voucher is deposited to the single account provided to Georgia WIC by the vendor.
- Deposited within sixty days of the "First Day to Use" date.
- The amount of purchase is entered in the "PAY EXACTLY SPACE" in ink.
- When stamping, use black ink ONLY with your WIC vendor stamp. DO NOT use any other color of ink.
- A signature is obtained from the participant, in black ink, provided by the vendor, at the time of purchase.
- For cash value vouchers, the vendor must not issue change to a WIC customer for purchases that are less than the total value of the cash value voucher.
- For cash value vouchers, the WIC customer may use his/ her own funds for purchase amounts in excess of the monetary limit for his/her cash value voucher.

WIC Customer Transactions at the Store

WIC food instruments may be presented at authorized vendor locations by WIC participants, parents, caretakers or proxies (WIC customer). WIC customers are required to take their WIC ID folder to each visit to the store. Vendors must request the WIC customer to present the WIC ID folder at the time of the transaction. WIC vendors shall **not** request any other form of identification from WIC customers in order to transact a WIC food instrument.

WIC foods must be separated from other food purchases prior to the WIC transaction. When approved supplemental food is being purchased with a WIC food instrument, the cashier must complete each food instrument separately and do the following:

Steps to Follow When Accepting WIC Food Instruments

1. Check the participant's WIC ID card/folder. The WIC customer's name must be listed on the ID card/folder. If the WIC customer does not present a WIC ID card, then the food instruments cannot be redeemed.
2. For manual food instruments that contain two signature boxes, make sure that the "Sign here at WIC office" signature box contains a signature.
3. Check the dates on the food instrument. Food Instruments cannot be used before the "First Day to Use" or after the "Last Day to Use" dates.
4. Ring up the current shelf price of the food for each food instrument. Make sure that the exact types and amounts of approved WIC foods are being purchased.
5. Print in black ink the amount of the WIC purchase in the "Pay Exactly" space on the food instrument in the presence of the WIC customer. Complete this step for one food instrument prior to moving on to the next food instrument.
6. Obtain a signature from the WIC customer, which must match the signature on the WIC ID card.
7. WIC customers must not be given credit or cash in exchange for WIC food instruments.

WIC Customer Transactions at the Store

WIC food instruments may be presented at authorized vendor locations by WIC participants, parents, caretakers or proxies (WIC customer). WIC customers are required to take their WIC ID folder to each visit to the store when transacting with printed vouchers. Vendors must request the WIC customer to present the WIC ID folder at the time of the printed voucher transaction. WIC vendors shall **not** request any other form of identification from WIC customers in order to transact a printed WIC voucher.

WIC foods must be separated from other food purchases prior to the WIC transaction. When approved supplemental food is being purchased with a WIC voucher, the cashier must complete each voucher separately and do the following:

Steps to Follow When Accepting WIC Food Instruments

1. Check the participant's WIC ID card/folder when transacting with printed vouchers. The WIC customer's name must be listed on the ID card/folder. If the WIC customer does not present a WIC ID card, then the printed vouchers cannot be redeemed.
2. For printed manual vouchers that contain two signature boxes, make sure that the "Sign here at WIC office" signature box contains a signature.
3. Check the dates on the voucher. Vouchers cannot be used before the "First Day to Use" or after the "Last Day to Use" dates.
4. Ring up the current shelf price of the food for each voucher. Make sure that the exact types and amounts of approved WIC foods are being purchased.
5. Print in black ink the amount of the WIC purchase in the "Pay Exactly" space, on the printed voucher, in the presence of the WIC customer. Complete this step for one printed voucher prior to moving on to the next printed voucher.
6. When transacting with printed vouchers, obtain a signature from the WIC customer, which must match the signature on the WIC ID card.
7. WIC customers must not be given credit or cash in exchange for WIC food instruments.

8. If the cashier makes a mistake entering the price on the food instrument, the incorrect price should be marked through, and the correct price written above the error. The cashier must initial the correction as verification.

9. If the cash registers do not automatically imprint "WIC" on the receipt, cashiers must write "WIC" vertically on all receipts for food purchased with WIC food instruments.

10. The cashier must provide the WIC customer with a receipt and keep a copy of the receipt for the vendor's records.

Steps to Follow When Accepting Cash Value Vouchers (CVV)

1. Check the participant's WIC ID card/folder. The WIC customer's name must be listed on the ID card/ folder. If the WIC customer does not present a WIC ID card, then the food instruments cannot be redeemed.

2. For manual vouchers that contain two signature boxes, make sure that the "Sign here at WIC office" signature box contains a signature.

3. Check the date on the face of the food instrument. CVVs cannot be used before the "First Day to Use" date or after the "Last day to Use" date.

4. Check the food items. They must be fruits and vegetables that cannot be purchased with the regular WIC food instrument.

5. Weigh the fruits or vegetables and/or ring up the current shelf price of the food for each item chosen. Make sure that the exact types of approved WIC foods (fruits and vegetables) are being purchased.

6. CVVs will be issued in specified, maximum dollar amounts.

7. Ring up price of the purchase.

8. Write the price of the purchase in the "Pay Exactly" space in black ink in the presence of the WIC Customer. Complete this step for one CVV before moving on to the next CVV.

8. If the cashier makes a mistake entering the price on the printed voucher, the incorrect price should be marked through, and the correct price written above the error. The cashier must initial the correction as verification.

9. If the cash registers do not automatically imprint "WIC" on the receipt, cashiers must write "WIC" vertically on all receipts for food purchased with WIC vouchers.

10. The cashier must provide the WIC customer with a receipt and keep a copy of the receipt for the vendor's records.

Steps to Follow When Accepting Printed Cash Value Vouchers (CVV)

1. Check the participant's WIC ID card/folder when transacting with printed vouchers. The WIC customer's name must be listed on the ID card/ folder. If the WIC customer does not present a WIC ID card, then the cash value voucher cannot be redeemed.

2. For manual vouchers that contain two signature boxes, make sure that the "Sign here at WIC office" signature box contains a signature.

3. Check the date on the face of the printed voucher. CVVs cannot be used before the "First Day to Use" date or after the "Last day to Use" date.

4. Check the food items. They must be fruits and vegetables that cannot be purchased with the regular printed WIC voucher.

5. Weigh the fruits or vegetables and/or ring up the current shelf price of the food for each item chosen. Make sure that the exact types of approved WIC foods (fruits and vegetables) are being purchased.

6. CVVs will be issued in specified, maximum dollar amounts.

7. Ring up price of the purchase.

9. Obtain a signature from the WIC customer, which must match the signature on the WIC ID card.

10. If the purchase amount is over the max price listed on the face of the CVV, the participant may pay cash or check, credit or EBT for the amount over the max price on the CVV.

11. Include tax for the amount over the maximum on the face of the CVV, if applicable. This amount is not a part of the WIC transaction. Give change for any amount over the face of the CVV. This is not a part of the WIC transaction. Change is not permitted for purchases that are less than the max price listed on the CVV.

12. WIC customers must not be given credit or cash in exchange for CVVs.

13. If the cashier makes a mistake entering the price on the CVV, the incorrect price should be marked through, and the correct price written above the error. The cashier must initial the correction.

14. If the cash register does not automatically print "WIC" on the receipt, cashiers must write "WIC" vertically on all receipts for WIC food purchases.

15. The cashier must provide the WIC customer with a receipt and keep a copy for the vendor's records.

If the amount of the CVV is less than the maximum amount on the face of the food instrument, do not give change and do not charge sales tax. If the price of the purchase is over the amount on the face of the CVV, charge the maximum amount of the purchase to the CVV. Your store will be

responsible for collecting any difference over the maximum amount of the CVV. Tax can be charged for the amount over the maximum on the face of the food instrument. The WIC customer can pay the amount over the maximum in cash, credit, debit, EBT, or check. Change can be given for cash payment for any difference over the amount of the maximum for the CVV. That amount is not a part of the WIC transaction. 42

8. Write the price of the purchase in the "Pay Exactly" space in black ink in the presence of the WIC Customer. Complete this step for one CVV before moving on to the next CVV.

9. Obtain a signature from the WIC customer, which must match the signature on the WIC ID card.

10. If the purchase amount is over the max price listed on the face of the CVV, the participant may pay cash or check, credit or SNAP EBT for the amount over the max price on the CVV.

11. Include tax for the amount over the maximum on the face of the CVV, if applicable. This amount is not a part of the WIC transaction. Give change for any amount over the face of the CVV. This is not a part of the WIC transaction. Change is not permitted for purchases that are less than the max price listed on the CVV.

12. WIC customers must not be given credit or cash in exchange for CVVs.

13. If the cashier makes a mistake entering the price on the CVV, the incorrect price should be marked through, and the correct price written above the error. The cashier must initial the correction.

14. If the cash register does not automatically print "WIC" on the receipt, cashiers must write "WIC" vertically on all receipts for WIC food purchases.

15. The cashier must provide the WIC customer with a receipt and keep a copy for the vendor's records.

If the amount of the CVV is less than the maximum amount on the face of the CVV, do not give change and do not charge sales tax. If the price of the purchase is over the amount on the face of the CVV, charge the maximum amount of the purchase to the CVV. Your store will be responsible for collecting any difference over the maximum amount of the CVV. Tax can be charged for the amount over the maximum on the face of the food instrument. The WIC customer can pay the amount over the maximum in cash, credit, debit, SNAP EBT, or check. Change can be given for cash payment for any difference over the amount of the maximum for the CVV. That amount is not a part of the WIC transaction.

Important Notes about the WIC Customer for Cashiers and Store Managers

The WIC customer:

1. Must present a WIC ID card to redeem food instruments.
2. Must sign the food instrument, at the time of purchase, in black ink, provided by the vendor.
3. May not use a WIC food instrument to purchase items not listed on the food instrument.
4. Must never be required to pay cash for items purchased except for items purchased with the cash value/ fruit and vegetable food instrument, in excess of the amount on the food instrument.
5. Must be allowed to purchase all foods listed on the food instrument or CVV, regardless of price.
6. Must be afforded the same courtesies given to other store customers.
7. Must be permitted to purchase eligible food items without making other purchases.
8. Must be charged the same shelf prices as other non-WIC customers.
9. Must not be charged sales tax, except on the purchase amount that is in excess of the amount on the cash value/ fruit and vegetable voucher, if applicable.
10. Must be reported to Georgia WIC immediately if they attempt to purchase foods that are not approved or create other problems in the store.
11. Must not be required to purchase every item on the food instrument.
12. Must not be contacted regarding restitution, payment or to obtain a missing signature.

Important Notes about the WIC Customer for Cashiers and Store Managers

The WIC customer:

1. Must present a WIC ID card to redeem printed vouchers.
2. Must sign the printed vouchers, at the time of purchase, in black ink, provided by the vendor.
3. May not use a WIC food instrument to purchase items not listed (on the voucher or eWIC card benefit balance).
4. Must never be required to pay cash for items purchased except for items purchased with the cash value/ fruit and vegetable food instrument, in excess of the amount on the food instrument.
5. Must be allowed to purchase all foods listed on the food instrument or CVV, regardless of price.
6. Must be afforded the same courtesies given to other store customers.
7. Must be permitted to purchase eligible food items without making other purchases.
8. Must be charged the same shelf prices as other non-WIC customers.
9. Must not be charged sales tax, except on the purchase amount that is in excess of the amount on the cash value/ fruit and vegetable voucher or cash value/ fruit and vegetable benefit, if applicable.
10. Must be reported to Georgia WIC immediately if they attempt to purchase foods that are not approved or create other problems in the store.
11. Must not be required to purchase every item on the printed voucher.
12. Must not be contacted regarding restitution, payment or to obtain a missing signature.

More Important Notes.

1. WIC approved foods purchased with a WIC food instrument cannot be returned for a cash refund.
2. WIC food instruments from other states must not be accepted.
3. If a manager is called to approve a WIC food instruments transaction, it is imperative that the customer is not identified as a WIC participant, parent, caretaker and/or proxy. Every effort must be made to protect confidentiality and discussion of the transaction should be kept at a conversational level.
4. Separate checkout lines for the WIC customer are prohibited. Signs such as “WIC food instruments not allowed in this line” or “No Checks-No WIC” cannot be displayed. However, vendors who wish to ensure that the WIC customer does not enter certain lines, such as express lines, may post “Cash Only” signs in those lines.
5. Every store must check the customer’s WIC identification card for the proper WIC ID number and authorized signature(s). WIC customers have been instructed about the importance of carrying the WIC ID card to the grocery store when using WIC food instruments. Food Instruments cannot be redeemed without the WIC ID card which shows the name of the person redeeming the food instruments.
6. Whenever food instruments are lost or stolen from a WIC health facility, Georgia WIC will notify area vendors that a stop payment has been placed on the food instruments. Vendors will be provided the food instrument numbers and informed not to accept the food instruments for redemption. These food instruments will not be paid.
7. The vendor must not provide refunds or permit exchanges for authorized supplemental foods obtained with food instruments except for exchanges of the same brand and size of authorized supplemental food item when the original authorized supplemental food item is defective, recalled, spoiled, or has exceeded its “sell by” or “best if used by,” or other date limiting the sale or use of the food item.

More Important Notes.

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4. Separate checkout lines for the WIC customer are prohibited. Signs such as “WIC food instruments not allowed in this line” or “No Checks-No WIC” cannot be displayed. However, vendors who wish to ensure that the WIC customer does not enter certain lines, such as express lines, may post “Cash Only” signs in those lines.
5. Every store must check the customer’s WIC identification card for the proper WIC ID number and authorized signature(s) when transacting printed vouchers. WIC customers have been instructed about the importance of carrying the WIC ID card to the grocery store when using WIC printed vouchers. Printed vouchers cannot be redeemed without the WIC ID card which shows the name of the person redeeming the vouchers.
6. Whenever vouchers are lost or stolen from a WIC health facility, Georgia WIC will notify area vendors that a stop payment has been placed on the voucher. Vendors will be provided the voucher numbers and informed not to accept the vouchers for redemption. These vouchers will not be paid. Lost or stolen eWIC cards will be disabled.
7. The vendor must not provide refunds or permit exchanges for authorized supplemental foods obtained with food instruments except for exchanges of the same brand and size of authorized supplemental food items when the original authorized supplemental food item is defective, recalled, spoiled, or has exceeded its “sell by” or “best if used by,” or other date limiting the sale or use of the food item.

8. The WIC customer must be allowed to participate in in-store or manufacturer promotions that are available to all other customers, and that includes WIC approved food items. This includes 'buy one get one or more free' promotions.

9. The WIC authorized vendor, its paid or unpaid owners, officers, managers, agents and employees shall not engage in any activity with the WIC participant, proxy, or caretaker that would create a conflict of interest, as determined by Georgia WIC. Authorized WIC vendors are not permitted to act as a proxy for a WIC participant.

10. The vendor is not permitted to provide transportation for the WIC customer to or from the vendor's premises.

11. The vendor is not permitted to deliver WIC approved foods to the WIC customer's residence.

12. The vendor shall not take back items purchased by the participant, nor shall a vendor ask about obtaining food items that the participant chooses not to buy with the WIC food instrument.

13. The vendor must not provide unauthorized food or non-food items, cash, credit (including "rain checks") in exchange for food instruments.

14. Georgia WIC will review food instruments submitted for redemption to ensure compliance with price limitations and to detect suspected vendor overcharges and other errors.

15. Georgia WIC may require reimbursement for the full price of the food instrument that contains a vendor overcharge or other error detected as a result of compliance investigations, food instrument reviews, or other reviews or investigations of a vendor's operations.

Food Instrument Payment Procedures

All authorized vendors are required to enroll in the Automated Clearing House (ACH) for payment of WIC food instruments that exceed the maximum allowable price. At the time of authorization and re-authorization, vendors are also required to provide a single

8. The WIC customer must be allowed to participate in in-store or manufacturer promotions that are available to all other customers, and that includes WIC approved food items. This includes 'buy one get one or more free' promotions.

9. The WIC authorized vendor, its paid or unpaid owners, officers, managers, agents and employees shall not engage in any activity with the WIC participant, proxy, or caretaker that would create a conflict of interest, as determined by Georgia WIC. Authorized WIC vendors are not permitted to act as a proxy for a WIC participant.

10. The vendor is not permitted to provide transportation for the WIC customer to or from the vendor's premises.

11. The vendor is not permitted to deliver WIC approved foods to the WIC customer's residence.

12. The vendor shall not take back items purchased by the participant, nor shall a vendor ask about obtaining food items that the participant chooses not to buy with the WIC printed voucher.

13. The vendor must not provide unauthorized food or non-food items, cash, credit (including "rain checks") in exchange for food instruments.

14. Georgia WIC will review printed vouchers submitted for redemption to ensure compliance with price limitations and to detect suspected vendor overcharges and other errors.

15. Georgia WIC may require reimbursement for the full price of the printed voucher that contains a vendor overcharge or other error detected because of compliance investigations, printed voucher reviews, or other reviews or investigations of a vendor's operations.

Voucher Payment Procedures

All authorized vendors are required to enroll in the Automated Clearing House (ACH) for payment of WIC printed vouchers that exceed the maximum allowable price. At the time of authorization and re-authorization, vendors are also required to provide a single account number to which the vendor will deposit all WIC printed vouchers. If this account number changes, the vendor must

account number to which the vendor will deposit all WIC food instruments. If this account number changes, the vendor must notify Georgia WIC in writing within two (2) business days. Upon authorization, the ACH Enrollment Form is sent with the Vendor Stamp. **The form must be completed and submitted immediately to the address indicated on the form.** Vendors will have five (5) business days from the date of receipt of the ACH Enrollment Form to enroll. Failure to enroll within the allotted timeframe will result in termination of the vendor agreement.

Approved payments will be posted to the vendor's bank account immediately. Vendors will be able to view their ACH statements on-line at any time on the WIC Banking website at www.wicbanking.com by entering their personal User ID and Password.

User ID and Passwords will be provided by Georgia WIC once the ACH enrollment form has been completed and forwarded to the WIC data processing contractor indicated on the form. Users are urged to change their password when entering the system for the first time. Assistance with changing passwords may be obtained from Georgia WIC at 404-657-2900 or toll free at 1-866-814-5468.

Return Food Instrument Payment Procedures

- If the purchase price on a food instrument exceeds the maximum allowable price for the food instrument, it will be returned from the bank and stamped "Amount Exceeds Limit – Paid via ACH – Do Not Resubmit". The food instrument will be paid at a rate equal to the **average redeemed price for that food instrument code for the vendor's peer group.**

- Food instruments returned by the vendor's bank stamped "invalid vendor stamp," "unreadable vendor stamp," "missing vendor stamp," or "encoding error" should be corrected and resubmitted for payment through the vendor's bank of deposit. When in doubt, contact the Vendor Relations Unit for technical assistance when the food instrument has been returned for "unreadable vendor stamp" or "missing vendor stamp". Once a submitted food instrument has been rejected for any of the above reasons, the vendor has 45 days to resubmit the food instrument before it will be considered stale and unredeemable.

- If the redeposit is unsuccessful, or for food instruments returned by the vendor's bank for reasons other than those listed above, send an email communication requesting technical assistance to the Office of Vendor Management. Provide an explanation outlining why the food instruments were returned and require a review for payment

notify Georgia WIC in writing within two (2) business days. Upon authorization, the ACH Enrollment Form is sent with the Vendor Stamp. **The form must be completed and submitted immediately to the address indicated on the form.** Vendors will have five (5) business days from the date of receipt of the ACH Enrollment Form to enroll. Failure to enroll within the allotted timeframe will result in termination of the vendor agreement.

Approved payments will be posted to the vendor's bank account immediately. Vendors will be able to view their ACH statements on-line at any time on the WIC Banking website at www.wicbanking.com by entering their personal User ID and Password.

User ID and Passwords will be provided by Georgia WIC once the ACH enrollment form has been completed and forwarded to the WIC data processing contractor indicated on the form. Users are urged to change their password when entering the system for the first time. Assistance with changing passwords may be obtained from Georgia WIC at 404-657-2900 or toll free at 1-866-814-5468.

For information regarding redemption of eWIC benefits by vendors, see the section entitled *Payments to WIC Vendors for eWIC Transactions* on page 14.

Return Voucher Payment Procedures

- If the purchase price on a printed voucher exceeds the maximum allowable price for the voucher, it will be returned from the bank and stamped "Amount Exceeds Limit – Paid via ACH – Do Not Resubmit". The voucher will be paid at a rate equal to the **average redeemed price for that voucher code for the vendor's peer group.**

- Vouchers returned by the vendor's bank stamped "invalid vendor stamp," "unreadable vendor stamp," "missing vendor stamp," or "encoding error" should be corrected and resubmitted for payment through the vendor's bank of deposit. When in doubt, contact the Vendor Relations Unit for technical assistance when the voucher has been returned for "unreadable vendor stamp" or "missing vendor stamp". Once a submitted voucher has been rejected for any of the above reasons, the vendor has 45 days to resubmit the voucher before it will be considered stale and unredeemable.

consideration. Do not send actual food instruments to the Georgia WIC Program. They will be returned to the vendor.

- Food Instrument returned by the vendor's bank stamped "stale date," "post date", "altered" or "signature missing" **will not be paid**.

Page 45 Vendor Cost Containment

The dollar amount that a store will be paid for each WIC food instrument will be calculated pursuant to the terms and conditions prescribed and approved by USDA. (See USDA website at <http://www.fns.usda.gov/wic/regspublished/vendorccinterim.pdf>). Food Instruments that are deposited in the vendor's bank, and that contain a dollar amount in the "pay exactly box" that exceeds the statewide and/or peer group Maximum Allowable Reimbursement Level (MARL) will be returned by the bank.

Page 46 Important Notes about the Vendor Stamp

- Food Instruments stamped with an unauthorized vendor stamp or stamping device **will not** be paid.

Page 57 WIC Vendor Agreement

The vendor agreement may be amended, at any time, at the sole discretion of the Georgia WIC Program. Vendors, who do not accept, sign and return amendments to the agreement, as outlined are subject to expiration of their current vendor agreement after fifteen (15) days' notice.

- If the redeposit is unsuccessful, or for vouchers returned by the vendor's bank for reasons other than those listed above, send an email communication requesting technical assistance to the Office of Vendor Management. Provide an explanation outlining why the vouchers were returned and require a review for payment consideration. Do not send actual vouchers to the Georgia WIC Program. They will be returned to the vendor.

- Vouchers returned by the vendor's bank stamped "stale date," "post date", "altered" or "signature missing" **will not be paid**.

Page 57 Vendor Cost Containment

Printed vouchers that are deposited in the vendor's bank, and that contain a dollar amount in the "pay exactly box" that exceeds the statewide and/or peer group Maximum Allowable Reimbursement Level (MARL) will be returned by the bank.

Page 58 Important Notes about the Vendor Stamp

- Vouchers stamped with an unauthorized vendor stamp or stamping device **will not** be paid.

Page 70: WIC Vendor Agreement

The vendor agreement may be amended, at any time, at the sole discretion of the Georgia WIC Program. Vendors, who do not accept, sign and return amendments to the agreement, as outlined are subject to expiration of their current vendor agreement after **seven (7)** days' notice.

To fully complete the authorization process, a vendor applicant must also sign a Vendor eWIC Agreement with the eWIC processor, or a third-party processor certified by the eWIC processor prior to authorization. Vendor applicants cannot be fully authorized without completing this requirement.

Page 58 - 59: Termination upon Notice

Georgia WIC may terminate the vendor agreement for cause after providing at least fifteen (15) days advance written notice. Use of the vendor stamp shall be discontinued fifteen (15) days after the date of the termination notice. Any food instruments submitted for payment after fifteen (15) days of the date of the termination notice will not be paid. All terminations shall remain in effect during the administrative review process. Reasons for termination **may include, but are not limited to, the following:**

1. Voluntary withdrawal from the WIC program (termination period of 3 months).
2. The decision to sell the store (termination period of 3 months).
3. Use of the WIC acronym, WIC logo, or close facsimiles thereof, in total or in part, in a manner that violates the provisions of this vendor handbook (termination period of 12 months).
4. Accepting food instruments through the mail or mailing any approved formula/medical food directly to the WIC customer (termination period of 12 months).
5. Failure to complete and submit documentation for annual training by the deadline specified by Georgia WIC (termination period of 6 months).
6. Failure to provide Georgia WIC with written notice of a change in the vendor's business within at least twenty-one (21) days in advance of the change (including but is not limited

Page 71 - 72: Termination upon Notice

Georgia WIC may terminate the vendor agreement for cause after providing at least fifteen (15) days advance written notice. Use of the vendor stamp shall be discontinued fifteen (15) days after the date of the termination notice. Any food instruments submitted for payment after fifteen (15) days of the date of the termination notice will not be paid. All terminations shall remain in effect during the administrative review process. Reasons for termination **may include, but are not limited to, the following:**

1. Voluntary withdrawal from the WIC program (termination period of 3 months).
2. The decision to sell the store (termination period of 3 months).
3. Use of the WIC acronym, WIC logo, or close facsimiles thereof, in total or in part, in a manner that violates the provisions of this vendor handbook (termination period of 12 months).
4. Accepting WIC benefits of any form through the mail or mailing any approved formula/medical food directly to the WIC customer (termination period of 12 months).
5. Failure to complete and submit documentation for annual training by the deadline specified by Georgia WIC (termination period of 6 months).

- to a change in ownership, name, location, corporate structure, sale or transfer of the business, or cessation of operation (termination period of 6 months).
7. Two (2) failed attempts by Georgia WIC to contact the vendor during business hours at the vendor's reported address and telephone number (termination period of 3 months).
 8. Determination that the vendor's SNAP license is invalid or not current (termination period of 6 months).
 9. Intentionally providing false information or vendor records, other than information or records provided in connection with a vendor application for authorization or re-authorization (termination period of 12 months).
 10. Failure to provide food instruments, inventory records, food sales, gross sales or tax information upon request (termination period of 9 months).
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11. Failure to allow monitoring by WIC representatives or harassing or threatening any WIC representative (termination period of 12 months).
 12. Forging a participant's signature on a WIC food instrument (termination period of 12 months).
 13. Reproducing the WIC vendor stamp or the use of a stamping device to redeem vouchers that was not issued by the Georgia WIC Program (termination period of 9 months).
 14. Identification by Georgia WIC of a conflict of interest as defined by applicable state laws, regulations, and policies, between the vendor and Georgia WIC or its local agencies (termination period of 6 months).
 15. Failure to enroll in ACH within the time specified (termination period of 3 months).
 16. Four (4) failed assessments for non-competitive prices within a 12-month period or less (termination period of 12 months).

6. Failure to provide Georgia WIC with written notice of a change in the vendor's business within at least twenty-one (21) days in advance of the change (including but is not limited to a change in ownership, name, location, corporate structure, sale or transfer of the business, or cessation of operation (termination period of 6 months).
7. Two (2) failed attempts by Georgia WIC to contact the vendor during business hours at the vendor's reported address and telephone number (termination period of 3 months).
8. Determination that the vendor's SNAP license is invalid or not current (termination period of 6 months).
9. Intentionally providing false information or vendor records, other than information or records provided in connection with a vendor application for authorization or re-authorization (termination period of 12 months).
10. Failure to provide information on WIC benefit transactions, inventory records, food sales or tax information upon request (termination period of 9 months).
11. Harassing or threatening any WIC representative, including the eWIC Processor or any third-party processor certified by the eWIC Processor (termination period of 12 months).
12. Using an eWIC Card unlawfully or without authorization or causing an eWIC card to be utilized unlawfully or without authorization (termination period of 12 months).
13. Forging a participant's signature on any printed WIC voucher (termination period of 12 months).
14. Reproducing the WIC vendor stamp or the use of a stamping device to redeem printed WIC vouchers that was not issued by the Georgia WIC Program (termination period of 9 months).
15. Identification by Georgia WIC of a conflict of interest as defined by applicable state laws, regulations, and policies, between the vendor and Georgia WIC or its local agencies (termination period of 6 months).
16. Failure to enroll in ACH within the time specified (termination period of 3 months).

17. Providing prohibited incentive items as part of a WIC transaction, in a manner that violates the provisions of this handbook (termination period of 12 months).

18. Failure to meet the selection criteria in effect at the time of assessment at any time throughout the agreement period (termination period of 6 months).

19. Less than \$2,000.00 in annual (12 consecutive months) WIC redemptions or not redeeming any WIC food instruments within a sixty (60) day period, except pharmacies and military commissaries (termination period of 6 months).

20. Vendors that are determined to be an A-50 vendor will be terminated from the program, unless it is determined that termination would result in inadequate participant access (termination period of 6 months).

21. Violation of any federal or state law or regulation, or terms of the WIC Vendor Agreement or Vendor Handbook not otherwise covered by the sanction system (termination period of 12 months).

After being terminated from the Georgia WIC Program, the vendor will not be automatically reinstated as an authorized WIC vendor. The vendor may re-apply, as a new applicant, no sooner than the completion of the specified termination period outlined by Georgia WIC. To re-apply, the vendor must complete the application process in its entirety.

17. Four (4) failed assessments for non-competitive prices within a 12-month period or less (termination period of 12 months).

18. Providing prohibited incentive items as part of a WIC transaction, in a manner that violates the provisions of this handbook (termination period of 12 months).

19. Failure to meet the selection criteria in effect at the time of assessment at any time throughout the agreement period (termination period of 6 months).

20. Less than \$2,000.00 in annual (12 consecutive months) WIC redemptions or not redeeming any WIC food instruments within a sixty (60) day period, except pharmacies and military commissaries (termination period of 6 months).

21. Vendors that are determined to be an A-50 vendor will be terminated from the program, unless it is determined that termination would result in inadequate participant access (termination period of 6 months).

22. Violation of any federal or state law or regulation, or terms of the WIC Vendor Agreement or Vendor Handbook not otherwise covered by the sanction system (termination period of 12 months).

23. Expiration of the agreement without a new application being submitted (termination period of 3 months).

24. Civil Money Penalty imposed by SNAP in lieu of disqualification for the initially issued SNAP disqualification period.

After being terminated from the Georgia WIC Program, the vendor will not be automatically reinstated as an authorized WIC vendor. The vendor may re-apply, as a new applicant, no sooner than the completion of the specified termination period outlined by Georgia WIC. To re-apply, the vendor must complete the application process in its entirety.

For information on requirements for maintaining vendor authorization due to eWIC, see the section entitled *Implementation of an Electronic Benefits Transfer System or (eWIC)*.

	<p>For information on requirements for maintaining vendor authorization due to eWIC, see the section entitled <i>Implementation of an Electronic Benefits Transfer System or (eWIC)</i>.</p>
<p>Page 63 - 65: State Agency Sanctions Category II - Disqualification for eight months on third violation</p> <p>2. Requiring WIC participants to show any identification other than the WIC identification card.</p> <p>State Agency Sanctions Category III - Disqualification for ten months on second violation</p> <p>1. Failure to ring up a sale of WIC purchases.</p> <p>4. Allowing the substitution of one WIC approved food item listed on the food instrument for another WIC approved food item not listed on the food instrument.</p> <p>6. Contacting WIC participants for any reason regarding a WIC transaction.</p> <p>8. Allowing the purchase of any formula other than the one specified on the front of the food instrument.</p> <p>16. Failure to check a WIC customer's WIC ID card/folder.</p> <p>Federal Mandatory Sanctions Category IV - Disqualification for one year</p>	<p>Page 76 – 78: State Agency Sanctions Category II - Disqualification for eight months on third violation</p> <p>2. Requiring WIC participants to show any identification other than the WIC identification card when transacting with vouchers.</p> <p>State Agency Sanctions Category III - Disqualification for ten months on second violation</p> <p>1. Failure to transact the sale of WIC or eWIC purchases.</p> <p>4. Allowing the substitution of one WIC approved food item for another WIC approved food item not listed on the food instrument or cash-value benefit.</p> <p>6. Breach of confidentiality (i.e. contacting a WIC participant for any reason regarding a WIC transaction, requiring signature on a separate document, disclosing a WIC participant in a public setting).</p> <p>8. Allowing the purchase of any formula other than the one specified on the food instrument.</p> <p>16. Failure to check a WIC customer's WIC ID card/folder when transacting with vouchers.</p> <p>18. Giving change back on an eWIC transaction or accepting the return of foods purchased with eWIC cards for cash, credit or non-food items.</p>

1. A pattern of providing unauthorized food items in exchange for food instruments or cash value vouchers, including charging for supplemental foods provided in excess of those listed on the food instrument.

Federal Mandatory Sanctions Category V - Disqualification for three years

1. A pattern of receiving, transacting, or redeeming food instruments or cash-value vouchers outside of authorized channels, such as at locations different from the authorized location listed on the Vendor Agreement, or the use of an unauthorized vendor or an unauthorized person. This includes but is not limited to delivering WIC food items to WIC participants, collecting WIC food instruments prior to completing the WIC transaction or collecting the WIC food instruments prior to the “first date of use” on the food instrument.

2. A pattern of providing credit or non-food items (other than alcohol, alcoholic beverages, tobacco products, cash, firearms, ammunition, explosives or controlled substances) in exchange for WIC food instruments or cash-value vouchers.

6. One incidence of providing alcohol or alcoholic beverages or tobacco products in exchange for WIC food instruments or cash-value vouchers.

Federal Mandatory Sanctions Category VI - Disqualification for six years

1. One incidence of buying or selling WIC food instruments or cash value vouchers for cash (trafficking).

2. One incidence of selling firearms, ammunition, explosives, or controlled substances, in exchange for food instruments or cash-value vouchers.

Federal Mandatory Sanctions Category VII - Permanent disqualification

1. Conviction for trafficking in food instruments or cash-value vouchers

Federal Mandatory Sanctions Category IV - Disqualification for one year

1. A pattern of providing unauthorized food items in exchange for food instruments or cash value **benefits**, including charging for supplemental foods provided in excess of those listed on the food instrument **or** contained in the participants eWIC balance.

Federal Mandatory Sanctions Category V - Disqualification for three years

1. A pattern of receiving, transacting, or redeeming food instruments, **eWIC cards** or cash-value **benefits** outside of authorized channels, such as at locations different from the authorized location listed on the Vendor Agreement, or the use of an unauthorized vendor or an unauthorized person. This includes but is not limited to delivering WIC food items to WIC participants, collecting WIC food instruments **or eWIC cards** prior to completing the WIC transaction or collecting the WIC food instruments prior to the “first date of use” on the food instrument.

2. A pattern of providing credit or non-food items (other than alcohol, alcoholic beverages, tobacco products, cash, firearms, ammunition, explosives or controlled substances) in exchange for WIC food instruments or cash-value **benefits** or **eWIC cards**.

6. One incidence of providing alcohol or alcoholic beverages or tobacco products in exchange for WIC food instruments or cash-value **benefits or eWIC cards**.

Federal Mandatory Sanctions Category VI - Disqualification for six years

1. One incidence of buying or selling WIC food instruments or cash value **benefits or eWIC cards** for cash (trafficking).

2. Conviction for selling firearms, ammunition, explosives, or controlled substances in exchange for food instruments or cash value vouchers.

2. One incidence of selling firearms, ammunition, explosives, or controlled substances, in exchange for food instruments or cash-value **benefits or eWIC cards**.

Federal Mandatory Sanctions Category VII - Permanent disqualification

1. Conviction for trafficking in food instruments or cash-value **benefits or eWIC cards**.

2. Conviction for selling firearms, ammunition, explosives, or controlled substances in exchange for food instruments or cash value **benefits or eWIC cards**.

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Civil Money Penalties for Federal Sanctions (Categories IV – VII)		
Category	Amount For Each Violation	Maximum Amount for Violations Occurring During a Single Investigation
Category IV	\$15,041 for each violation	Maximum penalty for violations occurring during a single investigation is \$60,161
Category V	\$15,041 for each violation	Maximum penalty for violations occurring during a single investigation is \$60,161
Category VI	\$15,041 for each violation	Maximum penalty for violations occurring during a single investigation is \$60,161
Category VII Civil penalty for a vendor	\$15,692 for each violation	Maximum penalty for violations occurring during a single investigation is \$62,767

Civil Money Penalties for Federal Sanctions (Categories IV – VII)		
Category	Amount For Each Violation	Maximum Amount for Violations Occurring During a Single Investigation
Category IV	\$15,041 for each violation	Maximum penalty for violations occurring during a single investigation is \$60,161
Category V	\$15,041 for each violation	Maximum penalty for violations occurring during a single investigation is \$60,161
Category VI	\$15,041 for each violation	Maximum penalty for violations occurring during a single investigation is \$60,161
Category VII Civil penalty for a vendor	\$16,865 for each violation	Maximum penalty for violations occurring during a single investigation is \$67,461

convicted of trafficking in food instruments			convicted of trafficking in food instruments		
Category VII Civil penalty for a vendor convicted of selling firearms, ammunition, explosive, or controlled substances in exchange for food instruments	\$15,305 for each violation	Maximum penalty for violations occurring during a single investigation is \$62,767	Category VII Civil penalty for a vendor convicted of selling firearms, ammunition, explosive, or controlled substances in exchange for food instruments	\$16,451 for each violation	Maximum penalty for violations occurring during a single investigation is \$67,461

Page 74 Non-discrimination

In accordance with Federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, the USDA, its Agencies, offices, and employees, and institutions participating in or administering USDA programs are prohibited from discriminating based on race, color, national origin, sex, disability, age, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity in any program or activity conducted or funded by USDA.

Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication for program information (e.g., Braille, large print, audiotope, American Sign Language, etc.), should contact the Agency (State or local) where they applied for benefits. Individuals who are deaf, hard of hearing or have speech disabilities may contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339. Additionally, program information may be made available in languages other than English.

To file a program complaint of discrimination, complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form, (AD-3027) found online at: <https://www.usda.gov/oascr/filing-program-discrimination-complaint-usda-customer> and at any USDA office, or write a letter addressed to USDA and provide in the letter all of the information requested in the form. To request a copy of the complaint form, call (866) 632-9992. Submit your completed form or letter to USDA by:

- (1) mail: U.S. Department of Agriculture
Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights
1400 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C. 20250-9410;
- (2) fax: (202) 690-7442; or
- (3) email: program.intake@usda.gov.

This institution is an equal opportunity provider.

Page 88 – 89 Non-discrimination

This institution is an equal opportunity provider. In accordance with federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, this institution is prohibited from discriminating on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex (including gender identity and sexual orientation), disability, age, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity.

Program information may be made available in languages other than English. Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication to obtain program information (e.g., Braille, large print, audiotope, American Sign Language), should contact the responsible state or local agency that administers the program or USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TTY) or contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339.

To file a program discrimination complaint, a Complainant should complete a Form AD-3027, USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form which can be obtained online at: <https://www.usda.gov/sites/default/files/documents/USDA-OASCR%20P-Complaint-Form-0508-0002-508-11-28-17Fax2Mail.pdf>, from any USDA office, by calling (866) 632-9992, or by writing a letter addressed to USDA. The letter must contain the complainant's name, address, telephone number, and a written description of the alleged discriminatory action in sufficient detail to inform the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights (ASCR) about the nature and date of an alleged civil rights violation. The completed AD-3027 form or letter must be submitted to USDA by:

- 1. mail:
U.S. Department of Agriculture
Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights
1400 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C. 20250-9410; or
- 2. fax:
(833) 256-1665 or (202) 690-7442; or

	<p>3. email: program.intake@usda.gov</p> <p>This institution is an equal opportunity provider</p>
	<p>Page 91 Glossary</p> <p>Cash-Value/Fruit and Vegetable Voucher or Benefit (CVV/CVB) - A fixed-dollar amount check, voucher, eWIC card or other document which is used by a participant to obtain authorized fruits and vegetables.</p> <p>eWIC - WIC electronic benefit transfer. Refers to the issuance of WIC benefits on a plastic card.</p> <p>Maximum Allowable Reimbursement Level (MARL) - the maximum price point the state shall reimburse the vendor for food items sold to participants.</p>

Please ensure that all of the information you receive pertaining to Georgia WIC is official documentation. We consider official documentation to be any document you receive from Georgia WIC with the program logo, and/or the signature of the Director of the Georgia WIC program or Deputy Director of Vendor Management. If you have any questions pertaining to Georgia WIC or its processes, please contact Georgia WIC at 1-866-814-5468, or visit our website at <http://dph.georgia.gov/vendor-information>.