

Coordination and Integration of Services**Policy No. CM- 740.05**

Effective date: October 1, 2017

No. of pages: 4

Policy

To administer outreach activities, the Georgia WIC Program coordinates with several programs statewide annually.

Purpose

To describe the continued efforts of the Georgia WIC Program to coordinate with other programs such as Medicaid and TANF.

I. WIC/Medicaid Coordination

To date, several measures have been implemented statewide to address the coordination of the Georgia WIC Program and Medicaid Program. As results of these efforts:

- A. The WIC Certification process now uses the WEB portal for adjunctive eligibility. The toll free number for the Georgia WIC Program is 1-800-228-9173.
- B. The State of Georgia “Right from the Start Medicaid” (RSM) program provides medical assistance to pregnant women, infant and children up to 18 years of age. The toll free number for Georgia Medicaid Program is 1-800-809-7276.

II. WIC Coordination Strategies**Coordination Strategies Handbook – A Guide for WIC and Primary Care Professionals**

Development of this handbook was funded through a grant from the Food and Nutrition Service (FNS), U.S. Department of Agriculture, for the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC). This project was one of a number of activities undertaken in response to the 1994 legislative mandate for enhanced coordination between WIC and health-related services. The legislation, the Healthy Meals for Healthy Americans Act of 1994 (P. L. 103-448), stipulated that the Secretaries of the U.S. Departments of Agriculture and Health and Human Services jointly establish and carry out initiatives to provide WIC services at substantially more Community and Migrant Health Centers (C/MHCS) (see **Georgia Farm Worker Health Program Migrant Clinic Sites**) and improve coordination of WIC services with Indian Health

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Services (IHS) facilities. This publication can be found online at:
fns.usda.gov/wic/resources/strategies.htm

III. WIC Works Resources Center

The WIC Works Resources Center is a USDA-sponsored site in which states share state-developed materials and best practices. This information can be accessed online at: <https://wicworks.fns.usda.gov/>

The site consists of:

- **WIC Learning Online** - a series of 18 on-line learning modules designed for all levels of staff working in the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC)

- **WIC Database**
- **WIC Sharing Center**
- **WIC Learning Center**
- **WIC Topics A-Z**
- **WIC Talk**

IV. Georgia WIC Program Fact Sheet

Why is WIC Important?

Georgia has one of the highest infant mortality rates in the nation. Good nutrition and regular prenatal care during pregnancy and preventive healthcare for infants is key to preventing babies from dying or becoming ill.

- Low-income women in Georgia who receive both WIC and Medicaid have a significantly lower infant mortality rate than other low-income women in the State. They are more likely to get prenatal care early in their pregnancy and to seek preventive care, such as immunizations, for their children.
- Every dollar spent on WIC saves up to three dollars in healthcare costs, according to a national study.

Who Gets WIC?

To be certified as eligible for WIC, infants, children, and pregnant, postpartum, and breastfeeding women must meet all of the following eligibility requirements:

- Categorical
- Residential
- Income

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- Nutrition Risk

Categorical Requirement

The following individuals are considered categorically eligible for WIC: prenatal women; breastfeeding women for up to one year's time; post-partum women for up to 6 months' time; children ages 1-5 years, and infants ages 0-12 months.

Residential Requirement

Applicants must live in Georgia (**see [District Map](#)**). Applicants served in areas where WIC is administered by an Indian Tribal Organization (ITO) must meet residency requirements established by the ITO. Applicants are not required to live in the state or local service area for a certain amount of time in order to meet the WIC residency requirement.

Income Requirement

To be eligible for WIC, applicants and re-certifying participants must have income at or below an income level or standard set by the federal agency or be determined automatically income-eligible based on participation in other designated programs, (e.g., Medicaid, SNAP or TANF). See **Income Eligibility Policy**.

Nutrition Risk Requirement

Applicants must be seen by a health professional, such as a physician, nurse, or nutritionist, who must determine the individual's nutritional risk. This is done in the WIC clinic at no cost to the applicant. In addition, health referral information can be obtained from another health professional, such as the applicant's physician.

"Nutrition risk" means that an individual has medical-based or dietary-based conditions. Examples of medical-based conditions include, but are not limited to, anemia (low blood levels), underweight, or history of poor pregnancy outcomes. A dietary-based condition includes, but is not limited to, inappropriate nutritional practices.

At a minimum, the applicant's height and weight must be measured and blood may be taken to check for anemia as part of the eligibility determination. An applicant must have at least one of the medical or nutritional conditions on the State's list of WIC nutrition risk criteria. When no nutritional risks are evident, applicants who are otherwise eligible based on income, residency, identification, and category may be presumed to be at nutritional risk and assigned Risk Code 401 (Other Dietary Risk) *except* for infants who are less than four (4) months of age. Infants less than four (4) months of age cannot use Risk Code 401 to establish their nutritional risk.

Georgia residents wishing to apply for WIC benefits for themselves or their children should contact their local health departments. In Atlanta, WIC applicants may also apply at the Grady Health System.

Length of Participation

WIC is a supplemental food program that provides nutrition education, and referrals to enhance the nutritional and health status of women, infants, and children. A certification period is the length of time for which a WIC participant is determined to be eligible to receive benefits. An eligible individual usually receives WIC benefits from 6 months to a year, at which time she/he must reapply.

Moving

WIC participants who move can continue to receive WIC benefits until their certification period expires, as long as there is proof that the individual received WIC benefits in another area or state. Before a participant moves, they should notify the Georgia WIC Program. In most cases, WIC staff will give the participant an Electronic Verification of Certification or Verification of Certification (VOC) Card, which enables the participant to continue receiving benefits at a new location. When the individual moves, they can call the WIC office in their new area or location for an appointment and take the EVOC or VOC card to the WIC appointment for benefits.

Waiting List / Priority System

Sometimes WIC agencies do not have enough money to serve everyone who needs WIC or wishes to apply. When this happens, WIC agencies must keep a list, called a waiting list, of individuals who want to apply and are likely to be served. WIC agencies then use a special system, called a Priority System, to determine who will first get WIC benefits when more participants can be served. The purpose of the Priority System is to make sure that WIC services and benefits are provided first to participants with the most serious health conditions, such as low hemoglobin/hematocrit, underweight, breastfeeding women, or women with problems during pregnancy. WIC participants who move from one area of the state to another are placed at the top of a waiting list when they move and are served first when the WIC agency can serve more individuals. For additional information on procedures see **Outreach During A Waiting List.**

Authority

Subpart A-State Plan-Outreach

- 7 CFR 246.4(a)(5)(i-ii), (6)(7)(19)&(20)

Agreements with Local Agency

- 7 CFR 246.6