

**Processing Standards****Policy No. CT- 830.01**

Effective Date: October 1, 2016

No. of Pages: 2

**Policy**

When the local agency is not serving its maximum caseload, the local agency shall accept applications, make eligibility determinations, notify the applicants of the decisions made and, if the applicants are to be enrolled, issue food, cash-value vouchers or food instruments. Special nutritional risk applicants; to include, pregnant or breastfeeding women, infants, migrant farm workers or family members of a migrant farm worker shall be notified of their eligibility or ineligibility within ten (10) calendar days of the date of application. All other eligible applicants must be certified within twenty (20) calendar days. Individuals requesting a transfer into the LA must be given an appointment within twenty (20) calendar days or earlier so program benefits are not interrupted.

The processing timeframes shall begin when the applicant visits the clinic during clinic office hours to make an oral or written request for program benefits. The initial contact date and the processing time frame restarts based on the date the applicant reapplies (appointment is rescheduled).

To ensure that accurate records are kept of the date of such requests, the local agency shall, at the time of each request, record the applicant's name, address and the date.

Local agencies (LA) must make special provisions when scheduling employed, rural and migrant participants. Appointments for applicants/participants must be provided even when processing standards cannot be met due to a lack of available appointments.

Each local agency shall attempt at least three total contacts for a pregnant woman who misses her first appointment to apply for WIC services (CFR 246.7 C.(a) (5). The contact must be made after each missed appointment.

If LA is open less than five days a week and a request for services is received while the clinic is closed, the LA must contact the applicant on the first day the clinic is open after the initial request was made (e.g. MWF clinics: If a participant requested services Monday, due to Tuesday's closing, the LA first attempt to reach the participant should occur on Wednesday).

**Purpose**

To ensure eligible participants receive WIC benefits in a timely manner.

**Procedures**

- I. During an applicant's initial contact:
  - A. Determine the applicant's category: e.g. pregnant, postpartum, or breastfeeding woman, infant, or child.

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- B. Offer an appointment for eligibility determination within the required time frame.
  - C. Record the applicant's name, address, telephone number, date of request and date of appointment on the [Request for WIC Services Log](#) or an approved Initial Contact log.
  - D. Document requests and appointments that are outside of the standard time frame.
  - E. Document the requested appointment date as the initial contact date (ICD) for appointments made over the telephone and walk-in services at the clinic
  - F. Document the date the application was registered by the Clearinghouse as the ICD.
- II. Document the following on the Request for WIC Services Log when an appointment is rescheduled:
- A. Appointment date
  - B. Reason for the change
  - C. Type of contact (phone or mail)
  - D. Initials of the person making the appointment
  - E. New ICD
- III. Maintain a [Request for WIC Services Log](#) or a state approved method for tracking initial contact dates, appointments scheduled, and missed appointments.

**Authority**

7 CFR § 246.7 (f)

7 CFR 246.7 C.(a) (5)

**Definitions/Supporting Information**

**Initial Contact Date (ICD)** - is defined as the date the individual first requests WIC benefits face-to-face, through online registration, or by telephone.

**Break in Service** - the period or lapse of time between a valid certification period and the subsequent certification.

**Date of Application** - The date when an applicant visits a local program during clinic office hours to request program benefits. For applicants requesting an eligibility appointment by phone, the date of the first contact, regardless of its method, is the start of the 10/20-day processing time frame.

**Processing Standards** - The time frame during which an applicant is required to be scheduled for an appointment and receive WIC benefits to determine eligibility.