

**Lost, Stolen or Damaged Vouchers****Policy No. FD- 920.01**

Effective Date: October 1, 2016

No. of Pages: 4

**Policy**

Food instruments (FI) that are lost, stolen, damaged or security destroyed prior to or following issuance must be documented. Any suspected instances of fraud associated with the lost, stolen, or damaged vouchers must be reported to the Office of Inspector General's WIC Investigations Unit. Stolen or damaged food instruments may be replaced in accordance with the procedures outlined below. Local agencies are prohibited from replacing lost food instruments, unless a state of emergency has been declared for the area where the reporting participant resides. Replacement vouchers must only be issued for food instruments that have NOT BEEN REDEEMED.

Local Agencies are required to securely destroy vouchers due to food package changes, voucher wording updates, or vouchers expirations.

**Purpose**

To replace vouchers that are stolen or damaged appropriately and assure accountability of vouchers that have been security destroyed.

**Procedures**

- I. Local agencies must not replace lost food instruments, unless a state of emergency has been declared for the area where the reporting participant resides (See Section III).
- II. Local agencies must take the following steps when replacing issued vouchers that are reported damaged or stolen:
  - A. When handling **damaged FIs**, replacement FIs may be issued if the participant returns damaged FIs that are (1) identifiable and (2) have valid dates. Staff shall:
    1. Void the FIs as "Damaged" in the computer and replace FIs;
    2. Shred and discard of damaged FIs;
    3. Record the damaged vouchers on the Lost/Stolen/Destroyed Voucher Report (See Section III).
    4. Flag all previously issued vouchers that were replaced (vouchers that have NOT BEEN REDEEMED) in the computer system (Section III).
  - B. Damaged FIs due to property fire may be replaced upon receipt of a copy of the fire report, or at the discretion of the staff when no report is available and staff strongly feels issuance is valid. Staff shall:

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1. Verify in GWISnet that the damaged FIs have not been redeemed. (Do not replace FIs if they have already been redeemed)
  2. Void the FIs as “Lost-FIs replaced” in the computer and replace FIs.
  3. Complete the required documentation on the Lost/Stolen/Destroyed Voucher Report (See Section III).
  4. Document the date of the fire and the fire report number in the “WIC Notes” field on the “Intake” screen and the voucher receipt.
  5. Flag all previously issued vouchers that were replaced (vouchers that have NOT BEEN REDEEMED) in the computer system.
- C. Stolen Vouchers. Stolen vouchers may be replaced upon receipt of a police report from the participant or, if stolen as a result of domestic violence, a police report or letter of placement from a family violence shelter. Staff shall:
1. Verify in GWISnet that the stolen FIs have not been redeemed:
    - a. If any of the FIs have been redeemed and the participant states she/he did not redeem them, call the state WIC office to obtain an image of the FI.
    - b. Check if the signature on the FI matches the signature on the WIC ID card. If it does not match, then replace the FIs. If it does match, do not replace the FIs and review the “Rights and Responsibilities” form with the participant, parent or caretaker.
  2. Flag the FIs as “Stolen-FIs replaced” in the computer and on the receipt and replace FIs.
  3. Complete the required documentation on the Lost/Stolen/Destroyed Voucher Report (See Section III).
  4. Document the date of the theft and the police report number in the “WIC Notes” field on the “Intake” screen.
  5. Flag all previously issued vouchers that were replaced (vouchers that have NOT BEEN REDEEMED) in the computer system.
  6. Notify the Office of Inspector General’s WIC Investigations Unit that current FIs are in the possession of a person who is not eligible to redeem them.
- D. Vouchers Lost, Stolen, or Destroyed Prior to Issuance. Local agencies must complete a Lost/Stolen/Destroyed Voided Voucher Report (See Section III).
- E. Replacement of Vouchers Due to an Emergency. Prior to replacing lost vouchers for those participants who live in a declared emergency area, staff must:

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1. Confirm participant resides in an area that has been declared an emergency;
  2. Determine which vouchers were lost;
  3. Verify in GWISnet, or call the CSC Help Desk to verify, that the stolen FIs have not been redeemed. The CSC Help Desk may be contacted at 1(800)796-1850, Monday-Friday, 7:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.;
  4. Document those vouchers that have not been redeemed on the Lost/Stolen/Destroyed Voucher Report (See Section III).
  5. Only issue replacement food instruments for those vouchers that were not redeemed by the participant and document all voucher receipts, "Replacement Vouchers – Declared Emergency".
  6. Flag all previously issued vouchers that were replaced (vouchers that have NOT BEEN CASHED) in the computer system.
- F. Security Destroyed Vouchers. When vouchers are security destroyed the Lost/Stolen/Destroyed Voided Voucher Report must be completed (See Section III).
- III. Lost/Stolen/Destroyed Voided Voucher Report. Lost, stolen, damaged, or security destroyed vouchers must be documented on the [Lost/Stolen/Destroyed Voided Voucher Report](#).
- A. The original report must be placed in the participant's file and copies of the same distributed within five (5) days of completion as follows:
1. One date-stamped copy must be placed in the Lost/Stolen/Destroyed Voided Voucher file.
  2. One date-stamped copy must be sent to the local agency's district office for placement in its Lost/Stolen/Destroyed file.
  3. One date-stamped copy must be sent to the State WIC Office's Systems Information Unit.
  4. One date-stamped copy to the clinic that originally issued the vouchers if the participant picked up replacement vouchers at a different clinic.
- B. If a participant reports that part of a voucher package was lost/stolen/destroyed and the other portion was cashed, but cannot determine which voucher serial numbers were lost/stolen/destroyed, include all of the voucher serial numbers on the form. Note in the comment section of the Lost/Stolen Destroyed Voided Voucher Report that between 1-4 vouchers may have been cashed. Only replace the number of vouchers the participant states were not cashed.

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**Authority**

7 CFR § 246.12 (q)

**Definitions/Supporting Information**

**“Food instrument” or “FI”**- means a negotiable financial instrument by which WIC benefits are provided to participants. Food instruments can provide either specific amounts of WIC authorized foods or formulas or a fixed-dollar amount for participants to obtain WIC authorized fruits and vegetables (referred to as a “Cash Value Voucher” or “CVV”). Food instruments are also referred to as “checks” or “vouchers.” Cash Value Vouchers are also referred to as “Fruit and Vegetable Vouchers.”

**Original Food Instruments** - The first set of food instruments issued to a participant.

**Replacement Food Instruments**- Food instruments that are used to replace original food instruments.