

Special Populations**Policy No. CM-730.01**

Effective Date: October 1, 2016

No. of Pages: 4

Policy

The local agency must accommodate all special population groups such as migrants, loggers, individuals residing in institutions, homeless people, Limited English Proficiency people, refugees, Native Americans, and persons with disabilities.

Purpose

To provide equal access to WIC benefits and WIC-related services and minimize hardships for segments of the population that require non-traditional services. The process for certifying special populations must comply with standard certification procedures.

Procedures

- I. Migrants, Loggers, and Seasonal Farm Workers
 - A. The local agency must issue an Electronic Verification of Certification (EVOC) or Verification of Certification (VOC) card to every migrant at the time of certification.
 - B. Vouchers must be issued on the same day the migrant participant is certified.
 - C. In lieu of a VOC and or EVOC card, the receiving clinic must verify the current certification information. Vouchers must only be issued for thirty (30) days if WIC clinic staff cannot verify certification information with the certifying clinic.
 - D. When a migrant presents WIC vouchers from another state, the certifying clinic must void the vouchers and issue Georgia WIC Program vouchers as a replacement. The certifying clinic must send the voided vouchers back to the appropriate State Agency where vouchers originated.

- II. Non-Traditional Housing
 - A. Non-traditional housing representatives who provide accommodations for WIC participants must sign an [Assurance Statement](#). The signed copy must stay on file at the local agency before participants may be served.
 - B. Employees of non-traditional housing facilities may not serve as proxies for the residents.
 - C. Do not include other residents of the institution or the temporary housing facility in determining income eligibility and family size. The applicant's income is also separate from the general revenue of the institution of facility.

Special Populations**Policy No. CM-730.01**

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No. of Pages: 4

- D. If a participant no longer resides in the WIC clinic service area where vouchers were last received, the vouchers should be issued and the participant transferred to the nearest WIC clinic.
- III. Limited English Proficiency (LEP)
- A. WIC applicants or participants will not be denied WIC services or benefits because they did not bring an interpreter to their appointment. It is the responsibility of the Georgia WIC Program to provide interpreters by hiring multilingual employees, or accessing interpreter services through the Georgia Department of Public Health State-wide contract for [Translation Interpretive Services](#), or through the Department of Public Health's State Refugee Health Program. The cost associated with the provision of interpretive services and translation services for outreach and educational materials is an allowable nutrition services and administration (NSA) cost for local agencies. Local agencies may contract with translators or interpreters not listed in the State-wide contract, as needed.
- B. The local agency staff must inform a WIC applicant or participant of the availability of a qualified or certified interpreter at no cost, so that he or she may make an informed decision to access interpretative services. If an applicant or participant decides not to access the free interpretive services, opting to use another service provider (the expense for which is the participant's responsibility), or decides to use a family member or friend in lieu of an interpreter, the applicant or participant and the interpreter who accompanies them must sign a [Waiver of Rights to Free Interpreter Services](#). A copy of the signed Waiver must be placed in the participant's file.
- C. The local agency must post the [Notice of Free Interpretation Services](#) in the waiting room, front office, or voucher issuance area for WIC applicants and participants. The purpose of the sign is to indicate that WIC services are available in other languages at no charge upon request. The display of the Notice of Free Interpretation Services sign will be monitored during Program Review and self-reviews.
- D. Nutrition education materials, breastfeeding materials, and other outreach materials and resources that are needed must be approved by the Nutrition Operations/Education Manager for the populations served. When determining what languages, other than English, materials need to be translated into, the State Agency and local agencies must consider the "significant number or proportion of the [WIC-eligible] population that needs the information in a language other than English, considering the size and concentration of such population and, where possible, the reading level of participants." The Refugee Health Program has access to a library of translated health education materials as well, and these materials can be distributed to organizations and individuals upon request.

Special Populations**Policy No. CM-730.01**

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No. of Pages: 4

IV. Refugees

A. The Department of Public Health's Refugee Health Program assists refugees with accessing health care by making appointments, arranging transportation, and providing interpretive services at appointments.

B. The Refugee Health Program can provide interpretive and translation services in the following languages: Arabic, Maay-Maay, Somali, Swahili, Bhutanese, and Nepali. For more information on the Department's Refugee Health Program, you can visit the website for details and updates at <https://dph.georgia.gov/refugee-health-program>.

V. Native Americans

Every effort should be made to locate and enroll all eligible Native Americans residing within a local agency service area, including the provision of on-site WIC services at Indian Health Services facilities.

VI. Persons with Disabilities

Local agencies are responsible for ensuring that services will be made accessible to individuals covered by the Americans with Disabilities Act. This also applies to vision and hearing impaired participants and applicants. Interpreters for the hearing impaired are available through the State Rehabilitation Program [Translation Interpretive Services](#).

Authority

7 CFR § 246.7 (m)

7 CFR § 246.8(c)

7 CFR § 246.11(c)(3)

7 CFR § 246.14(c)(5)

FNS Instruction 113-1, Section VII

Definitions/Supporting Information

Limited English Proficient (LEP) Population- Individuals whose primary language is not English, and/or who do not read or speak English well enough to have access to WIC services and benefits provided in local clinics, may be considered members of the Limited English Proficient (LEP) population.

Loggers: Individuals whose principal employment has been seasonal harvesting of trees within the last twenty-four (24) months and for which temporary residence was established.

Migrant Farm Workers: Individuals (and family members) employed seasonally in agriculture occupations within the last twenty-four (24) months, who establish temporary residence for the

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purpose of such employment. Seasonal farm workers who do not establish temporary residence for the purpose of work are NOT migrant farm workers as defined by the Georgia WIC Program.

Non-Traditional Housing: Accommodations that include, but are not limited to, private and public institutions which provide meals and sleeping accommodations to a special group of people (other than private residences and homeless facilities), homeless shelters which provide temporary living accommodations and meal services for individuals who lack a fixed and regular night time residence, temporary housing (including the residence of another person), and special drug rehabilitation homes for pregnant women in a group home.

Refugee – refers to someone who flees his or her country to another country to seek protection or relief from persecution because of race, religion, nationality, their political opinion, or membership in a social group.