

**MEMORANDUM**

**ACTION MEMO #17-01**

**TO:** District Nutrition Services Directors

**FROM:** Debra L. Keyes, MA, RD   
Director  
Georgia WIC Program

**DATE:** October 7, 2016

**RE:** Georgia WIC District Emergency Disaster Response Guidance

Although Georgia WIC is not designed to be a disaster assistance program and is not considered a first line of defense, it is designed to support continuation of benefits to participants during times of natural or other disasters. In the event a natural or other disaster occurs, the following procedures shall be followed:

**A. Facilities & Equipment**

1. During an emergency, it may be necessary to move to another location. In the event of a move, an immediate survey should be taken of all State buildings and offices in the affected area(s) to identify damage or the nature of the incident.
2. The records and invoices of any damage to facilities, equipment, supplies, repair or replacement should identify the site location address and identification numbers of the item(s) to assist in filing insurance claims. This information must be reported to the Georgia WIC Deputy Director of Program Administration, Hugh P. Warren, Jr. at 404-232-1096 or via email at [hugh.warren@dph.ga.gov](mailto:hugh.warren@dph.ga.gov), within seventy-two (72) hours after the emergency area returns to normal, using the Surplus/Destruction Form # AM01001C.
3. Plan to procure, borrow or reassign certification equipment, computers, voucher issuance printers and corresponding supplies for an alternative location, if needed. For movement of any equipment, the Surplus/Destruction Form # AM01001C must be completed and emailed to the Inventory Coordinator.

**B. Issuance of Food Instruments**

1. During periods of an emergency, every effort will be made to continue issuance of vouchers to participants. When adverse circumstances persist, such as the lack of available facilities, records, or food instrument supplies, the Georgia WIC Program's Deputy Director of Program Administration will coordinate efforts with the local agency to ensure that a minimum supply of vouchers are available for participants if such action is necessary.



2. The Georgia WIC Deputy Director of Vendor Relations & Administration, Yvonne Rodgers at 404-657-4655 or via email at [yvonne.rodgers@dph.ga.gov](mailto:yvonne.rodgers@dph.ga.gov), in conjunction with local agencies, will share information, establish and maintain a list of retail grocery stores that remain in operation during the emergency.
3. Red Cross will be the first responder for all shelter services.
4. All contracts for formula procurement by the Georgia WIC Program will contain a clause addressing alternative measures for acquisition and distribution of infant formula by District WIC programs to WIC participants in the case of an emergency.
5. Staff must maintain and update the number of infants on special formula, at all time. Securing formula for WIC infants affected by the emergency is the top priority of the Georgia WIC Program's emergency plan.
6. Ready-to-feed formula may be necessary if area's water supply is contaminated and/or electrical power is disrupted. In the event that ready-to-feed infant formula is required, efforts will be made to order appropriate amounts and to include disposable nipples and bottles. State government and local agencies will collaborate daily to determine the most appropriate food distribution method.

### **C. Certification**

1. To minimize the disruption of certification services at the local agency, special provisions for expedited certifications may be authorized with approval from the Georgia WIC Program.
2. At any alternate location, plan to provide an electronic or hard copy of all procedures, forms and documents that may be needed in order to provide services either electronically or manually.
3. Local agencies may certify applicants when no proof of residency, identity or income exists (in the case of theft, loss, emergency, homelessness, of migrant workers). In these cases, the applicant must confirm in writing his/her residency, identity and income.
4. Please ensure to document that this participant is displaced due to an emergency on the No Proof form. The No Proof form must be completed in its entirety. The participant must be allowed to self-declare residency, identity, and income if no proof exist due to evacuation or homelessness. If zero income is stated, please ask the question of how food, medical, and shelter is provided and document the answer on the No Proof form.
5. Local agencies are expected to perform a complete nutrition assessment for each refugee applicant who may be suffering from other medical or dietary nutrition risk factors that require prompt attention and or referral to a health care provider.
6. Districts may allow nutritionist and other competent professional authorities to adapt the WIC food package to accommodate the unique needs and circumstances of homeless participants and refugees. However, no exemptions are allowed from the requirement for medical documentation to support the issuance of certain supplemental foods including exempt infant formulas.

7. Districts/clinics should contact the Program Review and Delivery Manager, Sonia Jackson at 404-657-2908 or via email at [sonia.jackson@dph.ga.gov](mailto:sonia.jackson@dph.ga.gov), to receive approval for an extension of the processing standards, to implement the thirty (30) day extension period for clients or to consider mailing one (1) month of vouchers to participants.

#### **D. Out of State Vouchers**

- Should WIC participants inquire about using their out of state vouchers;
  - transfer the participant into the local clinic, secure the vouchers from the transferring state and re-issue one (1) month of vouchers.
- If the participant has a VOC card, follow normal processes.
- If no VOC information is available, use the expedite method to transfer the participant in the clinic.

#### **E. In State Vouchers**

If the participant is transferring from a clinic within the state, check GWISnet for current certification and voucher issuance data. Depending on the status of the participant, handle according to normal in-state transfer procedure, as needed.

For additional information, reference <http://origin.drupal.fns.usda.gov/wic/wic-disaster-response>. In regards to additional questions or concerns, please contact Shameyrae Miller at 404-656-2917, or via email at [shameyrae.miller@dph.ga.gov](mailto:shameyrae.miller@dph.ga.gov).

c: District Health Directors  
District Administrators  
District Program Managers  
WIC Deputy Directors  
WIC Managers