

**Physical Presence****Policy No. CT- 800.13**

Effective Date: October 1, 2016

No. of Pages: 3

**Policy**

Individuals seeking certification to receive WIC benefits must be physically present at the initial WIC certification and at all recertification.

A child or an infant participant must accompany the parent/guardian/caregiver/spouse/alternate-proxy to the WIC clinic, even with a physician's referral, if an exception does not apply.

The local agency may grant a physical presence exception, if needed, for newborns, persons with disabilities, infant or child receiving ongoing health care and working parents and caretakers.

Prenatal women must be present for the initial certification. Prenatal and postpartum women using an exception may designate an alternate-proxy to complete subsequent certifications and nutrition education and/ or a proxy for nutrition education and voucher pick-up (See [Designation of an Alternate-Proxy](#) and [Designation of a Proxy and Proxies](#) Policies).

**Purpose**

To establish requirements and exceptions for physical presence of a participant at the certification visit. The physical presence of an individual at certification is basic to WIC Program effectiveness, program accountability and integrity, and also facilitates the referral process to other needed health and social services.

**Procedures**

- I. Document in the participant's record the reason why the participant is not physically present at the WIC certification.
- II. Reschedule the certification appointment when the participant cannot be present and none of the allowed exceptions apply.
- III. Offer and provide, when appropriate, a physical presence exception for:
  1. Infants under the age of eight (8) weeks who are born to a mother who was on WIC during her pregnancy or was eligible to participate but was not certified. A medical or high-risk condition is not required.
  2. Applicants who are qualified individuals with a disability(ies) and are unable to be physically present at the WIC clinic because of their disability(ies); or, to an infant or

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child whose parent(s), guardian(s), or caregiver(s) are the individuals who meet this standard.

Examples of such situations include:

- a. A medical condition that necessitates the use of medical equipment that cannot be easily transported
  - b. A medical condition that requires confinement to bed rest
  - c. A serious illness that may be exacerbated by coming into the WIC clinic
  - d. A hospitalized breastfed infant
3. An infant or child who was present at his/her initial WIC certification and has documentation of ongoing health care from a health care provider (other than the local WIC agency).
  4. An infant or child with all three of the following criteria met:
    1. The infant/child was present for his/her initial WIC certification; and,
    2. The infant/child was present at a WIC certification within the last year and was determined to be eligible; and,
    3. The infant/child is under the care of a working parent(s) or guardian(s) whose working status presents a barrier to bringing the infant/child into the WIC clinic.

**Authority**

7 CFR § 246.7(i)(3)

7 CFR § 246.7(o)

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**Definitions/Supporting Information**

**Caretaker** - Any non-parent adult who provides support and care of a child or infant that resides in their abode. Caretaker includes but is not limited to a guardian, stepparent, foster parent, relative, significant other or trusted friend, who acts as substitute parent in the absence of or cohabitation with a natural or adoptive parent.

**Disability** – A physically incapacitating or disabling condition that prevents or restricts normal accessibility or activity (e.g., visual and hearing-impaired individuals).