

Site Hours of Operation**Policy No. OM- 420.04**

Effective Date: April 1, 2017

No. of Pages: 4

Policy

Georgia Local WIC clinics must ensure that all the full time sites are open to provide WIC Services to reduce barriers to participation in the WIC Program in accordance with Federal guidelines. (See definition section).

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to ensure the District clinics offer core and alternative/extended hours (see definition) of operation that reflect the best method to serve participants, accommodating the needs of working and student applicants/participants in the community. Districts shall provide WIC services to participants in accordance with the following definitions and guidelines, based on one of the three standards (minimum, recommended, and best practice), described below. Reasonable effort shall be made to ensure that alternative hours are distributed among clinics to ensure coverage of the entire service area.

Procedures

- I. Establish Core Hours of Operation
 - A. The **minimum standard** hours of operation (required) for each fixed and full time site shall be 40 hours per week based on the district core hours of operation. Within the established core hours of operation, the clinic must include at least 10 **alternate** hours of operation per month, at the districts discretion. These hours may include a combination of the lunch hour, weekend, evening, and early morning hours, as needed, by the community.
 - B. The **recommended standard** hours of operation shall include at least 20 **extended** hours per month outside of core and alternative hours. Scheduling of the 20 extended hours of operation is at the districts discretion. These hours may include a combination of the lunch hour, weekend, evening, and early morning hours, as needed, by the community.
 - C. The **best practice standard** hours of operation shall be at least 40 extended hours per month outside of core hours. The scheduling of the 40 extended hours of operation is at the districts discretion. These hours may include a combination of the lunch hour, weekend, evening, and early morning hours, as needed, by the community.

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II. Publicizing Site Hours

- A. Districts shall publicize the availability of alternate and extended hours to participants and applicants in outreach materials, on websites, in call centers and voice-mail messages, via social media, etc. Core hours and alternate/extended hours should be listed on or near the front entrance of the WIC office. Participants must be made aware of hours of operation during the orientation of the WIC program, or given information which states the service hours of operation and closure hours.
- B. Working individuals or students shall be given priority consideration for appointments during alternate/extended hours of operation. Other WIC participants or applicants shall be allowed to fill appointments that are not taken by working individuals or students.

III. Full WIC Services

- A. During alternate/extended hours of operation, clinics shall offer the same services provided during traditional clinic hours including certification, nutrition education and counseling, breastfeeding education and support, and food instrument issuance. Certain blocks of time, including extended hours, may be set aside exclusively for one or more of these activities as long as all of the services are offered during extended hours at times that meet the needs of working participants and students. In no case shall traveling, answering of telephone lines, or other administrative activity, by itself, be counted as extended clinic hours.

IV. Extended Hours Requirements for Increased Caseload

- A. The SWO may at any time require implementation higher than the minimum hours of operation, based on reduction in participation levels to less than 90% of assigned caseload, over a three-month average.

V. Annual Operation Plan

Each district shall provide the State WIC Office (SWO) an Annual Plan of Operation that includes site hours for each site, which includes the required alternative hour plan. Justification will be required explaining why they will not have alternative hours available at a particular clinic site. In extraordinary circumstances where a WIC district cannot provide alternative hours, the district may request a

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temporary waiver. Waivers shall be approved only for the period of time necessary to resolve the extraordinary circumstances that preclude compliance with this policy. In no case shall the total period of time covered by a waiver(s) exceed one year.

VI. Staffing

- A. Overtime pay may be used to cover extended hours upon request of the districts and approval of the SWO.

Authority

7 CFR § 246.7(b)(4)

As stated in the CFR.246.7 (b) (4). Each local agency that does not routinely schedule appointments shall schedule appointments for employed adult individuals seeking to apply or reapply for participation in the WIC Program for themselves or on behalf of others so as to minimize the time such individuals are absent from the workplace due to such application.

Definitions/Supporting Information

Alternative Hours - These are service hours of operation **within the required 40 hours** per week. The hours before 8:00 a.m. or after 5:00 p.m. during the business week, or on Saturday or Sunday; including the traditional lunch hour (12:00 p.m. to 1:00 p.m.). Hours will not take the clinic over 40 per week.

Core Hours - Traditional business hours of 8:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. and 1:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. Monday through Friday.

Extended Hours - Hours in addition to the 40 service hours per week. The hours before 8:00 a.m. or after 5:00 p.m. during the business week, or on Saturday or Sunday. The traditional lunch hour (12:00 p.m. to 1:00 p.m.) is also an extended hour.

Fixed (permanent) Site - A site that is solely designated for WIC services e.g. a room or suite of rooms in a health center or business mall.

Full time Site - A site that is open 32 - 40 hours per week or more.

Mobile Site - A satellite site that is inside a mobile van or other vehicle.

Part time Site - A site that is open less than 32 hours per week.

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Satellite Site - A site that is not designated solely for WIC services, such as, a community center. Staff must set up and take down equipment (e.g. laptops, informers, and printers).