
IX. PRE-APPROVALS

Revised 10.31.2014

A. Preliminary Preparations

1. Upon receipt of the pre-approval the Investigator will have 5 business days to conduct and complete the investigation.
2. Upon receipt of the pre-approval the Investigator will call the store contact and arrange an appropriate date and time to conduct the pre-approval visit. The Investigator will follow up with an email confirmation stating the reason for the visit. The Supervisor and Team Leader will be copied on all email correspondence.
3. The Investigator will research the OIG Case Tracking System for an existing case. Should no case exist in the system, the Investigator will enter the pre-approval vendor as a new case.
4. The Investigator will complete a background investigation on the owner, store manager and any affiliates. Document all findings in the Research Form.
5. Vendor Review Form (VRF) – Complete basic site information on the store prior to the visit. The form must be completed in its entirety. The Investigator should avoid “scratched out” items and excessive writing. The Investigator should always take extra VRF’s on a site visit.
 - a. (Vendor Number) – Leave this blank (pre-approval)
 - b. (District Unit) – Enter the District/Unit Number provided in the application packet
 - c. (Date of Review) – Enter the date of the visit
 - d. (Time of Visit) – Enter the time the Investigator arrives at the site.
 - e. (Visit Type) – Check the appropriate visit type
 - f. (Vendor Name) – Enter the name of the store
 - g. (Peer Group) – Indicate the vendor’s peer group based on GWIS research
 - h. (Store Owner) – Indicate the first and last name of the applying owner. If owned by a corporation, indicate the name of the company.
 - i. (Store Manager) – Upon arrival ask for the current store manager’s name and indicate in the space. Should the store manager be the same as the owner, re-enter the name.
 - j. (Street Address) – Indicate the full street location of the store, including street address, city, state, county and zip.
6. Investigator will have an adequate supply of items needed to conduct the visit. Checklist of items needed for the visit:
 - a. Note pad
 - b. Review form(s) - Keep at least a pack of each page with you at all times

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- c. Approved Foods List
 - d. Ink Pen
 - e. Calculator
 - f. Camera
 - g. OIG7 Property Receipt
 - h. Vendor Handbook
 - i. Infant Supplier List
 - j. A-50

7. Visits conducted by more than one Investigator will require each Investigator who completed the inventory count to initial the associated VRF pages 1-3 on the bottom of the form. The assigned Investigator should always complete last page of the VRF, no initials are necessary. The assigned Investigator will complete the review of the form with the store representative. The vendor must initial all sections of the VRF. The representative as well as the assigned Investigator will sign in the designated areas.

B. Conducting the Pre-Approval Visit

9. The Investigator should analyze the surroundings. Should the Investigator feel unsafe, note the issues in the comments section of the review form. Sign and date the form and go to the next store or return to the office, if applicable. Should the Investigator become uncomfortable while conducting the visit and feels remaining in the store could become a detriment to their safety; the Investigator will sign the form and place his/her comments in the comment section. Denote what happened to compromise the safety.
10. The Investigator will always complete an introduction when first entering the store and ask for the store manager/owner. If the manager is not present ask for the person "in-charge." If there is no one in-charge, introduce yourself (name/office) and let the person know you are there to conduct a pre-approval review of their WIC food items. Request to see any WIC vouchers that are on-hand in the store (the store should not have any vouchers on hand. If they have vouchers note this in the comment section and take pictures of the vouchers). Also let the store contact know an approximate length of time it will take to conduct the visit and he/she will be needed at the conclusion of the visit to review all completed forms.
11. Once the introduction has been completed the Investigator will need to take one photograph of the outside of the store and one photograph of the inside of the store.
12. Check minimum inventory size, brand, dates, and prices and ensure the store carries sufficient non-WIC inventory.

13. The Investigator will photograph deficiencies discovered during the visit. Example: the vendor has expired formula – the photo must reflect the product & the expiration date. Other examples are: non-edible fruit, sites containing WIC only products, improper use of the WIC logo, store signage advertising WIC only etc. The photos must be clear and easily viewed.

14. The Investigator should only submit 2 photos (max) on vendors with NO deficiencies.

C. Complete the Vendor Review Form

1. Conduct the inventory inspection using the Vendor Review Form as a guide. (Reference the Vendor Review Form Instructions)

D. Submitting Final Pre-Approval Documents

1. The Investigator will submit via email to the Team Leader the following attachments (in order):

a. OIG3 Memo – date reflected must be the date the Investigator is submitting the completed pre-approval. The Investigator will not make any vendor recommendations on the memo.

b. Research Form

1. Pre-Approval Confirmation Email
2. Vendor Application
3. OIG Databases
4. Vendor Owner List
5. GWIS
6. STARS
7. Georgia Secretary of State
8. USDA Do Not Term List
9. Georgia Department of Agriculture
10. IPA (if applicable)
11. CLEAR
12. Vendor Visit

c. Scanned Vendor Review Form (VRF)

d. Site photographs

e. Vendor appointment email confirmation (PDF format)

f. A50 Application Verification Form OIG10

g. STARS Screen-print

h. Secretary of State Screen-print

i. Department of Agriculture Screen-print

j. CLEAR

k. Inadequate Participant Access Forms (if applicable)

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2. The OIG Case Tracking System will be updated at the time the pre-approval investigation is submitted to the Team Leader. Team Leader will submit approved pre-approval investigation to the Supervisor. The OIG Case Tracking System will be updated in the events section with the date submitted to the Supervisor.
 3. The Supervisor will review the pre-approval email along with all attachments and indicate approval or denial via e-mail. If all pre-approval procedures are met and no corrections are required, the Supervisor will submit directly to the Compliance Analysis Unit (CAU) and update the OIG Case Tracking System. The assigned Investigator will be copied on the email.
 4. Upon review of the pre-approval documents, should the Team Leader or Supervisor determine corrections are needed, the Investigator will be notified via e-mail. The OIG Case Tracking System events section must be updated with the date returned for revisions. The Investigator must correct the error(s) and submit all pre-approval documents via email within 1 business day. If the error represents another site visit must be completed the due date will be determined by the Supervisor.

E. Pre-Approval Follow-up Visits

Follow-up visits must be conducted on all approved vendors.

- a. 60 days for non-chain vendors
- b. 61-90 days for Pharmacy non-chain vendors
- c. 91-120 days for chain vendor