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**SECTION:** Food Delivery System

**SUBJECT:** Therapeutic Formula and WIC-Eligible Nutritionals

**ITEM:** Coordinating with Healthcare

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## Policy

WIC staff shall coordinate with health plans and other programs that reimburse for the provision of prescribed [therapeutic formulas](#) and/or [WIC-eligible nutritionals](#) to ensure access to medically necessary formulas and WIC-authorized WIC-eligible nutritionals for WIC participants. WIC staff shall issue therapeutic formulas or WIC-eligible nutritionals only when access to these products from another health plan or program is not available and a documented medical condition exists.

## Required Procedures

- I. Coordinating with Health Plans: Local Agency (LA) staff shall determine if the participant currently has healthcare, is in the process of applying for healthcare, or if appropriate, provide referral to healthcare as discussed below.
  - A. If the participant currently has Medi-Cal, send the participant to their Medi-Cal pharmacy to fill their therapeutic formula prescription (Rx).
    1. If participant has Fee-for-Service (FFS) Medi-Cal, the participant shall take their Rx to any private pharmacy that provides therapeutic formula or WIC-eligible nutritionals for Medi-Cal.
    2. If participant has Medi-Cal Managed Care (MMC), participant shall take their Rx to their MMC contracted pharmacy. For information on MMC pharmacy services, have the participant contact their MMC Plan Membership Services.
    3. LA shall provide one month only of therapeutic formula while participant is waiting for their therapeutic formula Rx to be processed by their MMC health plan or Medi-Cal FFS. LA may provide therapeutic formula/WIC-eligible nutritionals only if WIC therapeutic formula issuance requirements are met. (Refer to WPM 390-10)

- B. If participant has no healthcare plan, refer them to Medi-Cal or other programs that provide formula and/or WIC-eligible nutritionals such as California Children's Services (CCS). While the participant is applying for healthcare, WIC may provide up to two months of therapeutic formula or WIC-eligible nutritionals, if all WIC therapeutic formula requirements are met. (Refer to WPM 390-10)
    - 1. If after two months, healthcare has not been established, further issuance of formula shall be assessed monthly.
  - C. Document and update the above information in the Integrated Statewide Information System (ISIS) Family Comments.
- II. Healthcare Denials: If a Rx for a therapeutic formula or WIC-eligible nutritionals is denied by a healthplan, LA staff shall take the following action depending on the type of health plan:
- A. Private or military insurance plan:
    - 1. Have participant contact their insurance plan for therapeutic formula/WIC-eligible nutritionals coverage;
    - 2. Document denial in ISIS Family Comments; verbal or written denials are acceptable.
    - 3. LA may provide therapeutic formula/WIC-eligible nutritionals only if WIC therapeutic formula issuance requirements are met. (Refer to WPM 390-10)
  - B. Medi-Cal Managed Care:
    - 1. Determine from the MMC denial letter if participant needs to follow-up with the medical provider or the pharmacy.
    - 2. If participant follow-up with the medical provider or the pharmacy is needed, LA may provide one month of therapeutic formula or WIC-eligible nutritionals if the issuance requirements are met. (Refer to WPM 390-10)
    - 3. If no follow-up is needed, LA may provide therapeutic formula/WIC-eligible nutritionals only if WIC therapeutic formula issuance requirements are met. (Refer to WPM 390-10)
    - 4. Document the receipt of the denial letter and any follow up needed in the Family Comments Section of ISIS.

5. Fax the denial letter, the pediatric referral form, the participant consent form, and all medical documentation provided from the medical provider to the State agency.
6. If it is apparent the participant was incorrectly denied, according to [Medi-Cal enteral nutrition policy](#), ask the participant or the participant's parent/caretaker to appeal the denial. Provide the participant a copy of the MMC Policy Letter 14-003 ([MMC PL 14-003](#)) and refer the participant to the MMC's Ombudsman phone number (1-888-452-8609). If the LA has any questions after reading the denial letter contact State agency therapeutic formula team for assistance.
  - a. Advise participant to update WIC if Medi-Cal begins to provide therapeutic formula due to appeal.
  - b. LA may provide therapeutic formula/or WIC eligible nutritionals until the appeal process is successful. Therapeutic formula and/or WIC-eligible nutritionals shall only be issued if WIC therapeutic formula issuance requirements are met. (Refer to WPM 390-10) and shall stop if the appeal process is successful.

## C. Fee-for-Service Medi-Cal:

1. Determine from the Medi-Cal denial letter if participant needs to follow-up with the medical provider or the pharmacy.
2. If participant follow-up with the medical provider or the pharmacy is needed, LA may provide one month of formula/WIC-eligible nutritionals until follow-up is complete. Therapeutic formula and/or WIC-eligible nutritionals shall only be issued if WIC therapeutic formula issuance requirements are met. (Refer to WPM 390-10)
3. If no follow-up is needed, LA may provide therapeutic formula/WIC-eligible nutritionals if all WIC therapeutic formula issuance requirements are met. (see WPM 390-10)
4. If no follow-up is needed, LA may provide therapeutic formula/WIC-eligible nutritionals if all WIC therapeutic formula issuance requirements are met (see WPM 390-10)
5. Document the receipt of the denial and any follow-up needed in the Family Comments Section of ISIS.

6. Fax the denial letter, the pediatric referral form, the participant consent form and all medical documentation provided from the medical provider to the State agency.
7. If it is apparent the participant was incorrectly denied, according to [Medi-Cal enteral nutrition policy](#), ask the participant or the participant's parent/caretaker to appeal the denial. If the LA has any questions after reading the denial letter contact State agency therapeutic formula team for assistance.
  - a. Advise participant to update WIC if Medi-Cal begins to provide therapeutic formula or WIC eligible nutritionals due to appeal.
  - b. LA may provide therapeutic formula or WIC eligible nutritionals until the appeal process is successful. Therapeutic formula and/or WIC-eligible nutritionals shall only be issued if WIC therapeutic formula issuance requirements are met. (Refer to WPM 390-10) and shall stop if the appeal process is successful.

## Guidelines

The LA is strongly encouraged to establish a memorandum of understanding (MOU) with local Medi-Cal Managed Care health plans and CCS to coordinate nutrition services and improve access for participants needing therapeutic formula or WIC-eligible nutritionals.

## Resources

[Therapeutic Formula Training Part 2 – Medi-Cal Training \(PPT\)](#)  
[Therapeutic Formula Training Part 2 Q and A \(PDF\)](#)  
[California Children's Services](#)  
[Regional Center](#)  
[Child Health and Disability Prevention \(CHDP\)](#)

## Authority

7 CFR 246.10 § (2) (ii) (A) through (E)  
7 CFR 246.10 § (3) (ii) through (vi)  
21 CFR 107.3, 22 CCR 51313.3 (e) (2)  
WPM 120-10