



State of California—Health and Human Services Agency
California Department of Public Health



EDMUND G. BROWN JR.
Governor

April 8, 2013

VENDOR ALERT 2013-02

TO: ALL WIC VENDORS
SUBJECT: eWIC Planning Process Announcement and Vendor Survey

Purpose The California Women, Infants and Children Program (WIC) is starting the planning phase of a multi-phase, multi-year project to replace its paper checks (also known as food instruments) with an electronic card. It will allow WIC participants to receive financial benefits on an electronic card (WIC Card) to purchase WIC approved foods from WIC authorized vendors.

Background The Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010 was enacted on December 13, 2010. As part of the Act, State WIC agencies are mandated to implement Electronic Benefit Transfer (EBT) systems by October 1, 2020.

Programs like CalFresh have already begun using EBT cards. Since the term “EBT” is most commonly associated with CalFresh, the California WIC Program will refer to WIC EBT as “eWIC” to eliminate any confusion between CalFresh and WIC electronic benefits.

eWIC updates During the multiple phases of the eWIC project, we plan to post information on our website to keep vendors informed. At any time you can check for updates on the status of the project by visiting www.wicworks.ca.gov and then click on “eWIC Updates” which is listed under “News & Updates.”

Vendor Survey As part of the information gathering activities to plan for eWIC, the California WIC Program is conducting an online survey to assess WIC Authorized Vendors’ technical readiness to transition from the paper FIs to electronic benefits. The survey has questions about store management, staffing, operations, cash registers, point of sale systems, FI processing, internet providers, and costs. The information gathered will help our EBT contractors in the assessment of the cost benefits analysis which is a federal requirement for EBT funding and planning.

It is very important that as many vendors complete the survey as possible so we fully understand what it will take to get vendors ready for the transition from paper FIs to an electronic card. Moreover, we need a good representation from all vendors throughout the state to help inform the decisions in moving forward with planning for EBT.

To ensure survey results are statistically valid, WIC may randomly contact stores by mail and/or telephone to encourage completion of the survey.



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**Vendor
Action**

A link to the vendor survey is posted on the WICworks website. Please visit www.wicworks.ca.gov and then click on “**eWIC Updates**” which is listed under “**News & Updates.**”

For your convenience the direct hyperlink is provided below:
<http://www.cdph.ca.gov/programs/wicworks/Pages/eWIC.aspx>

You will have until Friday, May 3, 2013 to complete the survey.

Questions

If you have any questions regarding the survey or wish to receive a copy of the survey, please contact the WIC Program toll free at (855) WIC-STOR or (855) 942-7867. You can also contact the WIC Vendor Management Branch by email at WICVENDORINFO@cdph.ca.gov



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