California WIC Vendor Annual Training Newsletter

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Check out our website at: www.wicworks.ca.gov
The California Department of Public Health/Women, Infants and Children (CDPH/WIC) Division wants to thank WIC authorized vendors for your dedication to reducing the spread of COVID-19. By following state guidance, wearing a mask, washing your hands, and keeping your distance, you are not only providing a safe and positive shopping experience, but you are saving lives. For the latest California news on COVID-19, please visit: www.COVID19.ca.gov

Flu Season is Here

Simultaneous outbreaks of flu and COVID-19 could affect the response and resources available for seasonal illness. Getting a flu shot protects you and your family. For information about where you can get a flu shot, go to: www.vaccinefinder.org/find-vaccine
About WIC

The Purpose of WIC

WIC’s purpose is to prevent health problems and to improve participants’ health during critical times of growth and development.

Federally funded through the United States Department of Agriculture/Food and Nutrition Service (USDA/FNS), WIC supports low income pregnant women, infants, and children up to the age of five. Dads, grandparents, foster parents, and caregivers of young children are welcome at WIC. WIC helps its participants to grow healthy by providing benefits for nutritious foods, such as fruits and vegetables, whole grains, milk, eggs, cereal, peanut butter, and much more. WIC foods supplement participants’s diets by providing important nutrients that women, infants, and children need during critical stages of their life. WIC also provides personalized nutrition education tailored to meet the needs and lifestyles of participants, promotes breastfeeding support, and offers referrals to health care and other community services. WIC is one of the nation’s most successful public health programs, with proven results showing it improves lifetime health for women, their infants, and young children.
Vendor Training Requirements

Annual Vendor Training

Per WIC Bulletin Regulations section 71800, each WIC authorized vendor is required to complete annual vendor training on a yearly basis. Annual vendor training is completed by retrieving and reading the California WIC Vendor Annual Training Newsletter located on the VWIX website. All WIC authorized vendors must certify their participation and understanding of the newsletter by completing a statement of acknowledgement indicating they have reviewed it; this acknowledgment must be completed within 30 days of notification by CDPH/WIC to complete the annual vendor training. Failure to complete annual vendor training will result in the termination of a WIC authorized vendor’s agreement.

Interactive Training Requirement

Per WIC Bulletin Regulations section 71800, prior to WIC authorization and at least every three (3) years, WIC vendor applicants and WIC authorized vendors must attend an interactive training and successfully pass an examination upon completion of the interactive training. Failure to complete interactive training will result in the termination of a WIC application or WIC authorized vendor’s agreement.

The California WIC Card

California WIC Card Success

CDPH/WIC is excited to share that the California WIC Program has completed statewide implementation of the California WIC Card!

Beginning with the Solano and Napa County Pilot in June 2019 and continuing through Spring 2020, CDPH/WIC successfully transitioned nearly 800,000 WIC participants and 4,000 WIC authorized vendors from paper food instruments and cash value vouchers (FIs/CVVs) to the California WIC Card. CDPH/WIC appreciates the participation and support of our authorized vendors over the past few years as we worked together to successfully roll out WIC EBT throughout California. With the completion of the roll-out, paper FIs/CVVs are no longer in circulation. All California WIC transactions are now processed electronically, with an average of over 45,000 WIC Card purchases taking place each day!
How to Conduct a WIC Card Transaction

The WIC Card is used for the California WIC Program only and cannot be combined with other benefit programs, such as CalFresh or CalWORKS. In California, participants use the WIC Card to shop at any WIC authorized vendor. There is one card for the household, meaning an entire family’s benefits are combined onto one card. Shopping with the WIC Card requires a 4-digit Personal Identification Number (PIN) that the participant chooses. WIC benefits are still redeemable for one month at a time, starting on a “First day to Use,” and food benefits automatically expire at midnight on the “Last Day to Use.” The same card is used month after month since food benefits are reloaded onto the same card.

Cashier Training Videos

CDPH/WIC created two WIC Cashier Training videos to assist vendors with accepting the WIC Card for Integrated and Stand-beside POS systems. These videos can serve as a valuable resource for helping to train staff on conducting WIC Card transactions. The videos include helpful tips and information regarding the Authorized Product List (APL), a summary of the WIC Authorized Food List Shopping Guide, a step by-step transaction overview, troubleshooting, and a receipt summary.

To access the Cashier Training Videos, go to our website at www.wicworks.ca.gov

1. Left side, find Grocers
2. Click on Vendor Education
3. Select the Cashier Training Video link listed under Vendor Training Tools.
Integrated System
Basic WIC Card Transaction Steps

1 Cashier** Scans the Food.**

2 Customer** Swipes the WIC Card** before any other form of payment and **Enters Their PIN.**
   - The POS system determines if a food is WIC authorized and available to the WIC customer.

3 **POS Prints Out** the beginning balance and benefits utilized receipt(s).
   - **Cashier Must Hand the Receipt(s)** to the WIC customer and the customer confirms that WIC foods were purchased as expected.
   - If the POS system does not print out a benefits utilized receipt, purchase information must be viewed by the customer on a cash register or POS screen.
   - If an item did not deduct from the WIC food balance as expected, the customer may request the cashier void that item from the purchase.

4 **Customer Approves** WIC purchase using the card terminal or key pad.
   - WIC authorized food items available to the customer are automatically removed from the balance on their WIC Card.
   - Cashiers cannot perform overrides with a WIC Card purchased.

5 Customer** Uses Other Forms of Payment** next if **Non-WIC Items** are also being purchased.

6 Cashier** Gives Customer the Final Receipt.**
   - **After purchase is complete, the cashier cannot void the transaction or put items back onto the WIC Card.**

Reasons a food may not scan as a WIC benefit for the customer.
- The food item is not included in the WIC customer's benefits.
- There are not enough benefits left on the WIC Card to buy the item. Compare the ounces in the beginning balance with package size of the item. *(Exception: Juice. Read Juice, page 11 for more details.)*
- The food item is not WIC authorized.
- A Universal Product Code ( UPC) is not in the APL. To add new products you think meet CDPH/WIC requirements, visit [www.wicworks.ca.gov](http://www.wicworks.ca.gov), click **WIC Foods**, click **UPC Submissions**, and follow the online instructions.

Stores must ensure that the APL is current and perform daily updates.

If Your POS is Not Able to Complete WIC Card Transactions Correctly:
- Try to update the APL file.
- Call your corporate office or your POS provider/Value Added Reseller.
- There are not enough benefits left on the WIC Card to buy the food item. Compare the ounces in the beginning balance with package size of the item. *(Exception: Juice. Read Juice, page 11 for more details.)*
- A UPC is not in the APL. To add new products you think meet CDPH/WIC requirements, visit [www.wicworks.ca.gov](http://www.wicworks.ca.gov), click **WIC Foods**, click **UPC Submissions**, and follow the online instructions.

Note: CDPH/WIC cannot fix your POS system.
Stand-Beside POS System
Basic WIC Card Transaction Steps

1. Customer **Separates WIC foods** from other items.
2. Cashier **Presses F2** to activate the WIC purchase option in the main menu.
3. Customer **Swipes the Card** through the card reader.
4. Customer **Enters PIN**.
5. Cashier **Scans barcodes and Enters Prices** into the Stand-beside POS, starting with all non-fruit and vegetable items. Cash Value Benefits (CVB) are fresh, frozen, or canned fruits or vegetables and dried fruits. CVB will be rung up later in the transaction.
   - After scanning each item, enter the price and **Press Enter**.
   - If the terminal displays an error message, after scanning an item, set the item aside. Read Understanding Stand-Beside Error Messages.
   - **Press F1** after all non-fruit and vegetable foods have been scanned.
   - The terminal will ask if there are any CVB items. If the customer is purchasing fruits and vegetables with their WIC Card, the cashier enters the price of each item and presses Enter after each entry. **Do not scan CVB items even if the CVB item has a UPC.**
   - **Press F1** after all WIC CVB items have been entered.
6. If coupons are being used, **Enter Coupon Amounts**, one at a time, and press **Enter** after each amount. **Do not enter the total price in the Coupon Mode.**
   - **Option:** Press **F2** (List) to print out WIC foods being purchased. Hand print-out to customer to review and approve.
7. Cashier **Presses F1** to complete the transaction. A receipt will print. Cashier **Hands Receipt to Customer** and can **Press F1** to print out a merchant copy.

Understanding Stand-Beside Error Messages

- **Invalid UPC:** A UPC is not in the APL. It may not be allowed, or it may be a new item that has not yet been added. Or a CVB UPC was scanned. **Prices must be entered for CVB items.**
  - To add new products you think meet CDPH/WIC requirements, visit [www.wicworks.ca.gov](http://www.wicworks.ca.gov), click **WIC Foods**, click **UPC Submissions**, and follow the online submission instructions.
- **Insufficient Funds:** A customer does not have enough benefits left to buy this item or the item may not be available in the customer’s balance.
  - Compare the ounces in the beginning balance with package size of the item. *(Exception: Juice. Read Juice, page 11 for more details).*

Stores must ensure that the APL is current and perform daily updates. The Stand-beside POS must be powered on overnight to ensure APL updates are made.

The Stand-beside POS may not be moved from the authorized store to another location.

Contact Fidelity Information Services (FIS) Merchant Help Desk at 1-833-257-2165 for Stand-beside POS system questions.
Whether your store uses an Integrated or Stand-beside POS system, here are some helpful tips to help you conduct successful WIC Card transactions.

Tip #1: Stores must ensure that the APL is current and perform updates. Read more about the APL in the APL section.

Tip #2: WIC only provides WIC authorized foods that are available in the participant’s benefits and in the APL.
- No overrides.
- No substitutions or rain checks.
- Cashiers must scan the UPC on the food’s package. Do not scan a sheet of UPCs or a different food item.
- Fresh fruit and vegetables with a Price Look-up Code (PLU) may need to be entered manually.

Tip #3: The California WIC App and the California Authorized Food List Shopping Guide are resources for helping customers to select foods or know why a food is not available to them.

Tip #4: Do Not Ask for a second form of identification for a WIC purchase.
- Just the WIC Card and PIN are needed.

Tip #5: Some receipts may show the difference between the vendor’s price for a WIC food item and the maximum amount the state will pay for that particular food item. The WIC shopper is not responsible for paying the difference and the vendor may never ask the WIC shopper to pay this amount.

Tip #6: If a participant is experiencing problems with their WIC Card, they may contact their WIC office or call the toll-free number on the back of their WIC Card, 1-844-4MYFAMILY (1-844-469-3264).

Tip #7: Even though participants are not required to buy all of their WIC foods at one time, Minimum Stocking Requirements (MSR) must still be met at all times.
**Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)**

**Must WIC participants Buy All of their WIC foods in one trip with the WIC Card?**

No. Participants may purchase as many (or as few) of their foods as they want as long as the selected item is in the APL and benefits are available on their WIC Card.

- WIC food benefits for a household are combined on one card.
- Participants use the same card month after month.
- Food benefits are good for 30 days, then expire.

**Can a WIC participant purchase WIC food items if they Do Not Know Their PIN?**

No. If a participant forgets their PIN, direct them to the phone number or website on the back of their WIC Card. If a WIC participant enters the PIN incorrectly four (4) times, the WIC Card will be locked and they will need to call the phone number on the back of their WIC Card to unlock it.

**What if a WIC participant Forgets Their WIC Card At My Store?**

If a California WIC Card is found, vendors must return the card within seven (7) days to the address printed on the back of the card.

**What do I do if a WIC Participant Cannot Buy their Food at the Store?**

If a participant has questions or problems getting their WIC foods at the store, share with them that they can follow these directions:

Call the participant support line at 1-800-852-5770 and have this information ready:

- WIC Card number
- Store location (name, city, street)
- Approximate day and time of visit
- Product description (brand and size)
- Details of what happened

**If possible:** They can use their phone to take a picture of the front and back label, ingredients, and UPC/Barcode of the food they were unable to purchase.
Reading the WIC Card Receipts

WIC participants are responsible for knowing which food benefits are on their WIC Card. Participants are also responsible for reading their WIC Card Food Balance and determining the correct sizes, brands, and amounts of WIC authorized foods they may purchase. If a participant has questions about their Food Balance, WIC Card, or food purchase, they may contact the phone number listed on the back of their WIC Card (1-844-4MY-FAMILY), contact their local WIC office, or call the Participant Support Line at (1-800-852-5770).

**SAMPLE STORE**

123 ANY STREET ADDRESS
ANYTOWN, CA, 99999

TERMINAL ID: 123
MERCHANT TERM ID: NEW123456
CLERK ID: 999
DATE & TIME: 4/12/2020 11:05AM
SEQ NUMBER: 005
CARD: ************1234
AUTH CODE: 123456

**WIC PURCHASE**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>QTY UNITS</th>
<th>DESCRIPTION</th>
<th>PRICE</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>16.00 OZ</td>
<td>CHEESE, REGULAR</td>
<td>4.99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16.00 OZ</td>
<td>WHOLE WHEAT TORTILLA</td>
<td>2.99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.00 DOZ</td>
<td>EGGS</td>
<td>2.79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.97 $$$</td>
<td>FRUITS &amp; VEGGIES CVB</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**PURCHASE SUBTOTAL**: 

13.74

**DISCOUNTS APPLIED**: 

0.50

**APPROVED PURCHASE TOTAL**: 

13.24

**BALANCE DUE—$0.00**

**BENEFITS EXPIRE ON 04-27-2020**

*****REMAINING WIC BENEFITS*****

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>QTY UNITS</th>
<th>DESCRIPTION</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>16.00 OZ</td>
<td>WW BREAD OR GRAINS</td>
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<tr>
<td>36.00 OZ</td>
<td>BREAKFAST CEREAL</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.00 GAL</td>
<td>LOWFAT MILK (1% FAT)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>32.00 OZ</td>
<td>YOGURT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.00 CTR</td>
<td>PB OR DRY BEANS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>128.00 OZ</td>
<td>JUICE—ALL CATEGORIES</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.03 $$$</td>
<td>FRUITS &amp; VEGGIES CVB</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

***CARDHOLDER COPY***

***PLEASE SAVE THIS RECEIPT***
Reading WIC Card Receipts

Juice

The participant’s WIC Card and WIC Food Balance provide the total amount of juice in ounces for their family. This total amount is reflective of the reconstituted (mixed with water) amounts for 11.5, 12, and 16 oz concentrated juices and not the container sizes. A 16-oz concentrate makes 64 oz of juice; a 12-oz concentrate makes 48 oz of juice; and an 11.5-oz concentrate makes 46 oz of juice. If leftover ounces are available on the WIC Food Balance, a participant needs at least 46 oz available to get the smallest authorized juice container size (the 11.5-oz concentrate).

- The oz of Juice listed on the WIC Food Balance for concentrated juice is the amount made after mixing with water.
- The type and sizes of juice chosen at the store will affect the amount deducted from the Food Balance.
- Participants may short themselves the full benefit of juice if they choose juice types/sizes that do not add up to their maximum benefit.

Note: When participants have less than 46 oz of juice available in their WIC Food Balance, they cannot redeem any more juice.

Reconstituted Juice Amounts by Container Size

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Juice Package Size</th>
<th>Makes This Much Juice</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>64-oz Ready-To-Drink</td>
<td>64 oz</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16-oz Concentrate</td>
<td>64 oz</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12-oz Concentrate</td>
<td>48 oz</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.5-oz Concentrate</td>
<td>46 oz</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
WIC Authorized Food List Shopping Guide

The Shopping Guide is the educational document that summarizes the requirements for supplemental foods authorized by WIC Bulletin Regulations sections 82000–83000. The most recent publication is dated April 2, 2019 and is available in both English and Spanish. We recommend you keep a copy at each register for use as a WIC transaction tool. To access the WIC Authorized Food List Shopping Guide:

1. Visit our website at www.wicworks.ca.gov
2. Click on WIC Foods
3. Click on WIC Authorized Food List Shopping Guide-April 2, 2019

Note: CDPH/WIC is currently authorizing additional foods with approval from USDA/FNS in response to food shortages associated with COVID-19. These additional foods are authorized in CDPH/WIC’s Temporary WIC Authorized Food List (WAFL), which allows new brands, sizes, and food items to be purchased using WIC benefits when a participant’s regular foods are not available. The Temporary WAFL will remain in effect until 30 days after the end of the nationally-declared public health emergency under section 319 of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 247d), the termination of the State of Emergency declared by the Governor of California on March 4, 2020, the rescission of Executive Order N-40-20, or the amendment or termination of these temporary changes by the Director of the California Department of Public Health, whichever occurs sooner.

Please visit www.wicworks.ca.gov, click Laws and Regulations, and select Temporary WIC Authorized Food List to review more information.

Find your WIC Foods During the COVID-19 Pandemic

1. Visit our website at www.wicworks.ca.gov
2. Click on WIC Foods
3. Click on Find Your WIC Foods During the COVID-19 Pandemic
The California Authorized Product List

What is the California Authorized Product List (APL)?

The APL is an electronic file of UPCs and PLUs codes for foods authorized by CDPH/WIC. In addition to UPCs and PLUs, the APL includes detailed product information, including brand, product name, and food category/subcategory classifications.

Why Do I Need the APL?

When a WIC food item is scanned at the cash register, its UPC/PLU must match one listed in the APL. If the UPC or PLU is not in the APL, WIC shoppers will be unable to purchase that food item. **There are no overrides.** Cashiers must scan the UPC on the food package. Do not scan a sheet of UPCs or a different item. Some fresh fruit and vegetables with a PLU may need to be entered in manually. In instances when an item is rejected, the WIC shopper can swap the food item for one that is in the APL as long as they have a remaining benefit.

How Does the APL work?

Keep in mind, the APL is a continuously updated file. CDPH/WIC regularly collects new UPCs to review, authorize, and add to the APL to ensure the file is as comprehensive as possible. If you find a product you think meets CDPH/WIC requirements that should be in the APL, you can visit [www.wicworks.ca.gov](http://www.wicworks.ca.gov), click **WIC Foods**, click **UPC Submissions**, and follow the online submission instructions. For more information about WIC authorized foods, visit **WIC Foods** to review California WIC’s Authorized Food List Shopping Guide.

Produce Mapping: Integrated Stores

Produce mapping is matching the store product numbers (UPC or PLU) to a PLU in California’s APL. All WIC authorized fresh produce UPCs in **Integrated** POS systems must be mapped to a corresponding PLU. Integrated stores requiring assistance with produce mapping should contact their POS system Provider or corporate office.

**Note:** Integrated stores not properly mapping PLU codes to fresh produce may result in fresh produce being rejected.

Cash Value Benefits: Stand-beside POS system

Stores using **Stand-beside** POS systems will be prompted on the screen to **enter the dollar amount** for fruit and vegetable purchases.

**Note:** Never scan a fruit or vegetable on a Stand-beside POS system, even if the item has a UPC or PLU.
When is the APL Available and How Do I Get It?

Remember, WIC authorized vendors are required to use the most updated version of the APL to support successful WIC transactions with the WIC Card. For Integrated POS systems, the updated APL will automatically download on a daily basis. For Stand-beside POS systems, it is critical that the system is left powered on overnight for the updated APL to download. Stores with Integrated POS systems, should check with their third party processors to make sure their systems are set up to perform an automatic nightly download of the APL. The APL is also available online to review and download. You may visit www.wicworks.ca.gov, click on WIC Foods, click on CA Authorized Product List and select which copy of the APL format you wish to view.

If you have questions or concerns about a WIC food item or the APL, email WICfoods@cdph.ca.gov.

For general questions, you can contact CDPH/WIC at 1-800-852-5770 during normal business hours (Mon–Fri, 8–5 PM) or 1-844-4MY-FAMILY (1-844-469-3264).
Infant Formula

Contract Infant Formula

In compliance with federal regulations, infant formula cost containment in California is operated through competitively bid infant formula rebate contracts for milk-based and soy-based infant formula. Per regulation, CDPH/WIC awards contracts to the responsive and responsible bidder(s) offering the lowest total net cost per month for each type of infant formula. Mead Johnson, the maker of Enfamil, is the current CDPH/WIC contractor for both milk-based and soy-based formula. Authorized primary contract brand milk-based formula in powdered form is part of your Minimum Stocking Requirements.

Therapeutic Formula

A WIC participant may have a medical condition that needs a non-contract therapeutic formula. CDPH/WIC provides some therapeutic formulas for purchase with the WIC Card.

Purchasing Infant Formula From an Authorized Supplier

As a WIC authorized vendor, you must only purchase infant formula from wholesalers, distributors, or retailers having a valid California seller’s permit issued by the California Department of Tax and Fee Administration (CDTFA). To verify that wholesalers, distributors, or retailers have a valid seller’s permit in California, visit the CDTFA website at: https://onlineservices.cdtfa.ca.gov/.
Store Shelves

Minimum Stocking Requirements

As a WIC authorized vendor, you are required to stock the CDPH/WIC authorized foods and quantities listed in WIC Bulletin Regulations section 71100. These minimum stocking requirements ensure WIC participants have access to the foods they need while shopping at your store. WIC foods included in the minimum stocking requirements must be stocked in full quantities at all times in a public area. WIC foods on order that are not yet delivered do not count toward meeting the minimum stocking requirements.

To review the Minimum Stocking Requirements:

1. Visit our website at www.wicworks.ca.gov
2. Left side, find Grocers
3. Click on Authorized Vendors
4. Click on Minimum Stocking Requirements

Note: With approval from USDA/FNS, Minimum Stocking Requirements are currently suspended until 30 days after the end of the nationally-declared public health emergency under section 319 of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 247d), the termination of the State of Emergency declared by the Governor of California on March 4, 2020, the rescission of Executive Order N-40-20, or the amendment or termination of these temporary changes by the Director of the California Department of Public Health, whichever occurs sooner.

Please visit www.wicworks.ca.gov, click Laws and Regulations, and select Temporary Food Delivery System Regulations to review more information.

Posting Shelf Prices

Vendors must post prices for all WIC authorized foods so that the prices are visible to customers, as specified in WIC Bulletin Regulations section 71900.

The Mandatory Shelf Price Submission

On October 17, 2013, the California WIC Vendor Authorization Criteria became effective, requiring vendors to comply with WIC Bulletin Regulations section 70600, Competitive Price Criteria. Competitive Price Criteria requires vendors to submit their shelf prices to the Department.

Federal regulations (7 Code of Federal Regulations part 246.11(g)(4)(ii)(B)) and State WIC Bulletin Regulations section 70600 require CDPH/WIC to collect vendor shelf prices every six months to evaluate vendor compliance with cost containment measures. Additional federal regulations (7 Code of Federal Regulations part 246.11(h)(3)(xxv)) require vendors to comply with the vendor selection criteria in place throughout the agreement period, including any changes to the criteria during that timeframe.

When notified by CDPH/WIC, vendors must collect and log into VWIX to submit their lowest and highest shelf prices of 11 market basket items during the 14-Day Vendor Price Collection Period.
Using Shelf Talkers

Vendors are encouraged to display shelf talkers to help WIC shoppers identify WIC authorized foods. Shelf talkers are a great way to prevent confusion at the register. Shelf talkers may only be affixed to store shelves to identify where WIC food items are located or shelved.

To order your free California WIC Shelf Talkers:

1. Visit our website at www.wicworks.ca.gov
2. Left side, find Grocers
3. Click on Authorized Vendors
4. Click on Vendor Materials Ordering Process

Did You Forget Your VWIX User ID or Password?

If you forget your User ID and/or Password, follow the steps below:

1. Reach out to your Vendor Consultant (either directly or through the WIC Vendor helpline: 1-855-942-7867) for your VWIX Access Code.
2. The Vendor Consultant will send you a VWIX Access Code Request Form that needs to be completed and signed by the owner of your store. Next, submit the completed form to your Vendor Consultant.
3. Your Vendor Consultant will then return the form to you. Included on the form will be your VWIX Access Code (keep this form for your records).
4. Once you have your VWIX Access Code, you can call the ITSD helpdesk at 1-800-224-7472 to reset your User ID and/or password.

How to Order FREE Authorized WIC Materials!

As a WIC authorized vendor, you may (free of charge!) order WIC materials, such as Shopping Guides, WIC decals, posters, and shelf talkers.

For more information on how to order your free WIC materials, contact your Local Vendor Liaison or:

1. Visit our website at www.wicworks.ca.gov
2. Left side, find Grocers
3. Click on Authorized Vendors
4. Click on Vendor Materials Ordering Process
Promotions and Incentives

Peer Group 20 (A-50 Stores)

Vendors in peer group 20 are allowed to offer incentive items after receiving written approval from CDPH/WIC. Examples of allowable incentive items include: fresh fruit and vegetables, beans, tortillas, whole wheat bread, or canned fish. Vendors should reference WIC Bulletin Regulations section 70800 Incentive Item Requirements.

Peer Group 21–25

Vendors in peer groups 21–25 are allowed to offer promotions/discounts to WIC shoppers as long as the promotions/discounts are equally offered to non-WIC shoppers. Examples of allowable promotions/discounts are: buy one/get one free offers, or manufacturer/store coupons.

Ways to Stay Informed

Look for important information (click on the links below) from CDPH/WIC about the WIC Card and WIC Program.

1. Vendor Alerts
2. Regulatory Alerts and Bulletins
3. WIC Card webpage
4. Emails from CDPH/WIC
5. CDPH/WIC website (www.wicworks.ca.gov)

If you have questions about the California WIC Card, please send an email to: WICCard@cdph.ca.gov

WIC Changes

Vendor Alerts

Summaries of Vendor Alerts issued in 2020 are included below. Please review to make sure you are up to date about recent directives and information shared with California WIC authorized vendors.

Vendor Alert 2020-01

On January 29, 2020, CDPH/WIC notified vendors that packaged fresh produce must be mapped to a PLU in the APL. Vendors equipped with Integrated POS systems contain software capable of produce mapping: linking the store’s UPC to a WIC authorized packaged fresh produce product (fruit or vegetable) to a PLU. California WIC authorized stores equipped with Integrated POS systems must ensure that the UPC for WIC authorized fresh packaged produce is mapped to a PLU that is in the APL. Included on page two (2) is a chart with mapping details for WIC authorized fresh produce. Integrated stores must never map frozen or canned fruits and vegetables or other types of WIC foods; only map fresh fruits and vegetables. Integrated stores may consult their POS provider for specific details on how to complete PLU mapping within their system. Vendors equipped with Stand-beside POS systems do not need to take any action.

Vendor Alert 2020-02

On April 7, 2020, CDPH/WIC provided information to prospective WIC vendor applicants about their eligibility to potentially receive a state-funded single-function Stand-beside POS machine. At that time, CDPH/WIC was implementing the new WIC Card statewide, requiring all California WIC authorized vendors to have EBT capable POS system equipment certified to transact the WIC Card at their store.
All vendor applicants whose applications were received by CDPH/WIC on or before May 15, 2020 had the opportunity to be eligible to receive one state-funded single-function Stand-beside POS machine. All stores who sent applications received after May 15, 2020 were ineligible for a state-funded single-function Stand-beside POS machine and are responsible for purchasing their own POS system equipment and all related transactions fees. A chart of Vendor Equipment Options for the WIC Card was included on page two (2).

Vendor Alert 2020-03

On April 9, 2020, CDPH/WIC notified vendors of a temporary expansion to the WAFL and APL due to COVID-19. WIC participants were also informed of this change and that food substitutions could be made when a prescribed food benefit was unavailable for purchase. On March 30, 2020, Governor Gavin Newsom issued Executive Order N-40-20 that allowed CDPH/WIC to implement temporary WAFL regulations during the COVID-19 public health emergency. The Temporary WAFL temporarily added new products to the APL that met the federal minimum requirements for authorizing foods found in 7 Code of Federal Regulations part 246.10(e)(12), table 4. USDA/FNS also granted CDPH/WIC a waiver to make additional food substitution exceptions, which are described in the Guidelines for Temporary New Food Items, included on page two (2). Products currently in the APL and authorized in the Shopping Guide would continue to be authorized.

CDPH/WIC will continuously add new foods to the temporary APL. WIC participants began seeing new options authorized in their food benefits starting on April 7, 2020.

This Vendor Alert stated that CDPH/WIC has the authority to implement the Temporary WAFL until May 31, 2020 (the expiration date has since been extended; see information below). CDPH/WIC will remove the temporarily authorized products from the APL when the Temporary WAFL is no longer in effect.

CDPH/WIC asked all vendors to notify employees about these temporary changes, explaining that for a limited time, if WIC participants find that the foods they have been prescribed are unavailable, they are allowed to buy foods that are different or different sizes than they would normally purchase. Vendors were asked to share with employees the instructions contained in this Vendor Alert, as well as ensure the most current APL is downloaded every day, as required. There was no change to the WIC Card. Cashiers should rely on the WIC EBT system to either approve or not approve purchases.

Though the food list was expanded to add new foods that meet federal requirements, not all foods will be immediately available in the APL. CDPH/WIC is required to review them first to ensure they meet requirements so a product may be missing if it has not yet been reviewed; therefore, participants should not expect every available brand of the food type to be authorized. The best way for participants to identify newly-authorized products is by scanning UPCs using the California WIC App. Information is also posted on the CDPH/WIC web page New WIC Food Choices During the COVID-19 Pandemic.

Note: The Temporary WAFL will remain in effect until 30 days after the end of the nationally-declared public health emergency under section 319 of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 247d), the termination of the State of Emergency declared by the Governor of California on March 4, 2020, the rescission of Executive Order N-40-20, or the amendment or termination of these temporary changes by the Director of the California Department of Public Health, whichever occurs sooner.
**Vendor Alert 2020-04**

On April 27, 2020, CDPH/WIC requested vendors review information from the California Attorney General regarding the prohibition of price gouging, which is available at [https://oag.ca.gov/consumers/pricegougingduringdisasters#1C](https://oag.ca.gov/consumers/pricegougingduringdisasters#1C). On March 4, 2020, Governor Gavin Newsom declared a State of Emergency due to the spread of COVID-19. In response, California Attorney General Xavier Becerra issued an alert reminding all Californians that price gouging is illegal in all California communities during a declared State of Emergency. According to the Attorney General, price gouging refers to sellers greatly increasing prices for essential consumer goods and services to take advantage of consumers during an emergency. However, if the increase price is directly attributable to increases in the cost of labor or materials needed to provide the good or service, the seller may not be liable under the statue.

**Vendor Alert 2020-05**

On June 2, 2020, CDPH/WIC notified vendors that some WIC participants may experience technical difficulties when trying to use the WIC App. The California WIC App allows WIC participants to use their smartphone to check WIC food benefit balances, scan food item UPC codes and access other WIC-related services. Vendors were reminded they must provide WIC participants with a printed copy of their WIC benefit balance summary upon request. WIC participants can also call the phone number listed on the back of their WIC Card to receive automated benefit balance information.

**Vendor Alert 2020-06**

On July 23, 2020, CDPH/WIC notified vendors of the phase-out of paper FIs and final vendor redemption requirements. CDPH/WIC completed the statewide transition from using paper FIs to the WIC Card. All active WIC participants have been issued a WIC Card and paper FIs/CVVs are no longer in circulation.

The final submission date for paper FIs/CVVs was July 10, 2020. The final date for vendors to deposit paper FIs/CVVs into their bank account was July 13, 2020. Maximum Allowable Department Reimbursement rates for paper FIs will no longer be available for viewing or download from VWIX after July 17, 2020. Any paper FIs/CVVs that have been rejected for payment may be submitted to CDPH/WIC for reconsideration, but were required to be postmarked by August 24, 2020.

**Vendor Alert 2020-08**

On September 22, 2020, CDPH/WIC notified vendors that Dannon Strawberry Whole Milk Yogurt, 32 ounce, UPC 036632007896 was deactivated in the APL on September 1, 2020. Production of Dannon Strawberry Whole Milk Yogurt, 32 ounce was discontinued earlier this year. As of July 28, 2020, the product was no longer available or had very limited availability in stores. Vendors were advised to share this information with their staff.

**Vendor Alert 2020-09**

On November 17, 2020, CDPH/WIC notified vendors that USDA waivers have been extended until 30 days after the end of the nationally-declared COVID-19 public health emergency. These waivers include the temporary expansion to the WAFL and APL due to COVID-19. CDPH/WIC asks all vendors to notify employees that the temporary changes to the WAFL have been extended. Vendors must continue to ensure that the most current APL is downloaded every day, as required.

**Note:** There is no change to processing a WIC Card transaction. Cashiers should continue to rely on the WIC EBT system to approve or decline WIC Card purchases.
WIC Regulatory Bulletins

Regulatory Bulletin 2019-02

On December 6, 2019, CDPH/WIC released Regulatory Bulletin 2019-02, which amended WIC Bulletin Regulations section 71100, Minimum Stocking Requirements. These amendments removed the option for vendors to meet MSR with bulk dry food items (e.g., bulk: dry beans, peas, lentils, oatmeal or oats, and brown rice) and 3.5-ounce containers of infant fruits and vegetables. The amendments also include an increase of the MSR for fruits and vegetables from $38 to $40. These changes became effective on January 5, 2020.

Regulatory Bulletin 2020-01

On May 28, 2020, CDPH/WIC released Regulatory Bulletin 2020-01, which amended the WIC Peer Group Criteria and Vendor Authorization Criteria regulations; specifically amending WIC Bulletin Regulations sections 50200, 70000, 70300, 71400 and adopting sections 70001, 70725, and 71050. These changes reflect the California WIC Program’s transition from a paper food instrument system to an Electronic Benefit Transfer food instrument system and were necessary to complete statewide implementation of the California WIC Card. These amendments became effective on June 30, 2020.

Did You Know?

You can sign up to receive WIC Vendor Alerts and other important news and updates regarding the California WIC Program:

1. Visit our website at www.wicworks.ca.gov
2. Left side, find Laws & Regulations
3. Click on Sign-up to receive important regulatory notices regarding California’s WIC Program
WIC Regulations

State

California Health and Safety Code
- California WIC statutory authority can be found in sections 123275–123355.

California Code of Regulations
- Title 22 of the California Code of Regulations, Chapter 6, California Special Supplemental Food Program for Women, Infants and Children provides regulatory requirements for WIC local agencies, authorized vendors, and participants.

Federal

United States Code
- Title 42 of the United States code section 1786 is the federal authority for the WIC Program.

Code of Federal Regulations
- Title 7 of the Code of Federal Regulations parts 246 and 248 are the federal requirements for states to implement and administer the WIC Program.

Authority for the WIC Program

The WIC Program is authorized by the Child Nutrition Act of 1966 and the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010 (Title 42, United States Code, section 1786). The CDPH/WIC Division is authorized to administer California’s WIC Program through California Health and Safety (H&S) Code sections 123275–123355.

Authority for Expedited Regulations

California Health and Safety Code section 123322 authorizes the CDPH/WIC Division to adopt regulatory requirements via an expedited process for vendor peer groups and reimbursement, vendor authorization criteria, and WIC authorized foods.

Vendor Sanction and Claim Process

CDPH/WIC may seek restitution from vendors by establishing a claim for payment of any benefits or monies received as a result of WIC program violations; impose disqualification and/or termination from the program; impose vendors from adding additional store locations for an outstanding vendor claim, and make referrals to other public programs for investigation and/or possible criminal prosecution under state and federal laws. A civil money penalty may be imposed in lieu of a disqualification if CDPH/WIC determines there is a participant access concern in the geographic area. Failure to pay claims timely may result in non-reauthorization of a vendor agreement.
Resources for Vendors

Local Vendor Liaisons (LVL)

Did you know you have access to a local resource for answering common questions about your requirements as a WIC vendor? LVLs are located in your area and are there to provide ongoing technical assistance and promote a positive shopping experience for WIC participants. LVLs work at local WIC offices within your community. They serve vendors by answering questions regarding recent Vendor Alerts, information about new and existing resources, use of the WIC logo, and instructions on how to order WIC vendor materials. LVLs are available to help and support your continued compliance with the rules and regulations of the California WIC Program.

Opening Another Store Location?

Adding Another Store Location to your Existing WIC Contract is Easy!

Here’s how to apply:

1. Visit our website at: www.wicworks.ca.gov
2. Left side, find Grocers
3. Click on How to Apply
4. Review the information on how to apply to become a WIC Authorized Vendor. To help get you started, below is a list of Frequently Asked Questions regarding the application process. To learn more about becoming a WIC authorized vendor, please visit the How to Apply webpage.

A. What is required to be included in the Vendor Application Packet?

B. What other documents do I need to provide?

a. Submitting all of the required items may result in expedited processing of your Vendor Application Packet. All required items are listed below:

• Health Permit
• Parent Company Information (if applicable)
• Additional Vendor Ownership Disclosure Information (if applicable)
• California Sales and Use Tax Forms

C. How do I submit my completed application?

a. Upon completion of the Vendor Application Packet, please follow the instructions for submitting your Vendor Application Packet.

• Application Package Submission (PDF)
Vendor Training Tools

In addition to Cashier Videos, WIC authorized vendor materials are also posted online for educational purposes and can be found at www.wicworks.ca.gov. Click Grocers, Vendor Education, then select from the links listed under Vendor Training Tools. CDPH/WIC encourages all vendors to share these materials to help train store staff in order to enhance WIC Program knowledge and customer service.

Questions or Concerns

CDPH/WIC wants to ensure you have the tools you need to succeed. If you have questions or concerns, contact us and ask to speak to your Vendor Consultant by:

Phone: (855) 942-7867
Email: WICVendorInfo@cdph.ca.gov

WIC Card Questions or Concerns

If you have questions about the WIC Card, please email us at:

Email: WICCard@cdph.ca.gov

Report Fraud or Abuse

Have you witnessed something you want to report? Reporting fraud or abuse of the WIC Program is easy. Just document the “who, what, when, where, and how” and file your concern by:

Phone: (800) 852-5770
Email: WICABUSE@cdph.ca.gov
Online: Submission Form
Mail: CDPH/WIC Division—Program Integrity Unit
3901 Lennane Drive
Sacramento, CA 95834
Families Grow Healthy with WIC.

California Department of Public Health, California WIC Program
This institution is an equal opportunity provider.
1-800-852-5770 | MyFamily.WIC.ca.gov
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