

Subject: Certification Periods**Item: Timeframes for Processing Applications/Applicants**

PURPOSE:

To provide to local agencies (LAs) mandatory timeframes for processing applications.

POLICY:

- I. LAs must accept applications, make eligibility determinations, notify the applicants of eligibility determinations, and issue initial food benefits within specific timeframes.
 - A. These timeframes must begin on the date of the applicant's initial request for WIC program benefits.
 - B. Eligibility status must be determined and communicated within 10 days of the initial request for pregnant applicants eligible as Priority 1 participants and migrant farmworkers and their family members, who soon plan to leave the LA service area. For all other applicants, eligibility status must be determined and communicated within 20 days.
- II. LAs may submit to CDPH/WIC a request for an extension of the notification period under certain circumstances. The request must include a written justification. Any approval of such a request would remain in effect through the current contract year.

PROCEDURES:

- I. Beginning of notification timeline
 - A. LAs must screen into WIC Web Information System Exchange (WIC WISE) all applicants on the day of their initial request for WIC program benefits. This will ensure that the date of the initial request for benefits is properly documented.
- II. Specific notification timelines for specific applicants
 - A. LAs must notify all applicants eligible as Priority 1 participants and migrant farmworkers and their family members of their eligibility status within 10 days of screening. Refer to WPPM 230-10.
 - B. LAs must notify all other applicants of their eligibility status within 20 days of screening.
- III. Extensions to notification period
 - A. LAs may submit a request for CDPH/WIC approval to extend the 10-day notification time frame to 15 days for pregnant applicants eligible as Priority 1 participants and migrant farmworkers and their families. Such requests must be submitted in writing to the LA nutritional consultant with justification of the need

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for an extension. Acceptable justifications for requesting such an extension include, but are not limited to, the following:

1. Sites that operate a limited number of days per month such that it would impact their ability to meet the processing timeframe requirements.
2. LA staff shortages.
3. A declared local emergency.

- B. If CDPH/WIC approves the extension, the approval will be valid through the end of the current contract year during which the request was made. LAs must adhere to the original processing timelines when the CDPH/WIC approved extension expires. Extension approvals do not automatically renew.

IV. Time frame for food benefit issuance.

- A. LAs must issue food benefits to eligible participants at the initial certification. Refer to WPPM 330-00.
- B. LAs must provide food benefits for the current month or the remaining portion thereof and must be redeemable immediately upon receipt by the participant.

AUTHORITY:

[7 CFR §246.7 \(f\)\(2\) Timeframes for processing applicants](#)

[22 CCR §40675 Processing Standards](#)

CROSS REFERENCE:

WPPM 330-00 WIC Card and Food Benefits Issuance

WPPM 230-10 Priority Ranking System