

Subject: Checkstock Receipt and Distribution

Item: Participant Education for Food Instrument Use

PURPOSE:

To establish procedures for participant instruction on the proper use of food instruments (FIs) provided by the California Department of Public Health/Women, Infants and Children Division (CDPH/WIC).

POLICY:

- I. The local agency (LA) must instruct each participant/parent/caretaker on the selection of authorized foods and quantities and on the correct use of FIs at authorized grocers.

PROCEDURE(S):

- I. Enrollment
 - A. The LA must instruct the participant/parent/caretaker on the correct use of FIs at the initial enrollment by providing education on the following areas:
 1. First and last days the FIs can be redeemed.
 2. Where to shop for WIC foods.
 3. Use of the WIC Authorized Food List Shopping Guide.
 - a. Type of food to buy.
 - b. Quantity of food to buy.
 4. Procedures at checkout.
 - a. Separate WIC foods from other grocery items.
 - b. Group foods by each FI.
 - c. Show where the purchase price is entered and by whom.
 - d. Identify when and where the FIs must be signed.
 5. Procedures to address FI problems at the grocery store.
 - B. The LA must assess the participant/parent/caretaker's understanding of WIC authorized foods and FI use.
 - II. The LA must review this information with the participant/parent/caretaker when food instrument abuse is suspected or identified.
 - III. FI use at check-in.
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- A. LA staff must check-in with the participant/parent/caretaker regarding FI use during:
 - 1. Subsequent nutrition education contacts.
 - 2. Certification appointment.
 - 3. A separate activity (e.g., brief contacts to document missing certification information, FI pick-up, telephone, etc.).
 - B. The check-in must be customized to address the participant/parent/caretaker's immediate questions and/or concerns regarding their shopping experience and to provide relevant FI informational updates, as needed.
 - C. The follow-up check-in must not replace a nutrition education contact.
 - D. It is the responsibility of the participant/parent/caretaker to ensure their designated alternates understand the use of FIs and of WIC authorized foods. See WPPM 290-10 for the definition of an alternate.
- IV. Food instrument package change.
- A. If the food package is changed, LA staff must review any new information with the participant/parent/caretaker to ensure continued understanding of correct FI use. See Job Aid Basic Food Package Description for more information on food packages and authorized foods.

EXCEPTION(S):

While the LA is strongly encouraged to single issue FIs to families who are new to WIC, the FI issuance schedule is left to the discretion of the LA.

LAs opting to implement the two-step program orientation process are restricted to single issuing FIs to families who are new to WIC and have no recent history of WIC participation (See WPPM 330-10)

AUTHORITY:

[7 CFR §246.10](#)

[7 CFR §246.12\(r\)\(3\)](#)

[Nutrition Services Standards: Standards 17 and 18](#)

CDPH/WIC Directive

CROSS REFERENCE:

WPPM 290-10 Designation of Alternate

WPPM 330-10 Single / Double / Triple Food Instrument Issuance