

## Subject: California WIC Card

## Item: Lost, Stolen, or Damaged WIC Cards

---

### PURPOSE:

To provide guidance for handling and replacement of lost, stolen, or damaged California WIC Card (WIC Card) upon notification from the family representative/caretaker within a specific timeframe.

### POLICY:

- I. Local agency (LA) staff must respond to reports of a lost, stolen, or damaged WIC card within one business day and replace the WIC Card within seven business days upon notification from the family representative/caretaker.

### PROCEDURES:

- I. LA staff must adhere to the following roles and responsibilities prior to issuing a replacement WIC Card and transferring remaining unredeemed food benefits in a timely manner.
  - A. General Responsibilities
    1. Educate cardholders about their responsibility to protect their WIC card. Refer to WPPM 270-40.
    2. If an active WIC Card is found and returned to the clinic before the card is reported lost or stolen, LA staff must attempt to contact the family representative and hold the WIC Card in a secure place for them to pick up in person from the clinic or offer to mail. If the attempt to contact the family representative is unsuccessful, LA staff can deactivate the card, destroy and document in the WIC Web Information System Exchange (WIC WISE) "Notes".
    3. If a deactivated WIC Card is found and returned to the clinic, LA staff must destroy it.
    4. For suspected fraud or abuse, LA must report to [WICabuse@cdph.ca.gov](mailto:WICabuse@cdph.ca.gov).
  - B. Ways that family representative/caretaker can report lost, stolen, or damaged WIC Cards:
    1. Report directly to the LA. When family representative/caretaker contacts LA to report a lost, stolen, or damaged card over the phone or in-person LA staff must:
      - a. Verify the identity of the family representative/caretaker by asking them to state the family representative's first and last name, date of birth, and

**Subject: California WIC Card****Item: Lost, Stolen, or Damaged WIC Cards**

---

- mailing zip code if on the phone, or check WIC approved ID if reporting in person. Refer to WPPM 270-20.
- b. Deactivate the lost, stolen, or damaged WIC Card.
  - c. Document the reason for replacement.
  - d. If on the phone, ask if they prefer to receive the replacement card in person or by mail. If they prefer replacement card to be mailed, LA staff must verify the address.
  - e. Inform the family representative/caretaker that once the WIC card is deactivated, it cannot be reactivated or used, even if found.
  - f. Issue a replacement WIC Card immediately if in-person. Mail the replacement card if requested.
  - g. Inform the family representative/caretaker that any remaining WIC food balances and Personal Identification Number (PIN) will transfer to the new card.
2. By contacting CDPH/WIC contracted 24/7 Customer Service Line (Automated Response Unit - ARU). When the card is reported lost, stolen or damaged to ARU, LA staff must:
- a. Run the lost, stolen, or damaged deactivated WIC Cards report daily from WIC WISE for the prior date/date(s).
  - b. Contact the family representative of all WIC families that appear on the report within one business day of the date of report.
  - c. Document the attempt to contact the family representative in WIC WISE.
  - d. Verify the identity of the family representative/caretaker by asking the family representative's name, date of birth, and mailing zip code.
  - e. Ask if they prefer to receive the replacement card in person or by mail.
  - f. Issue a replacement WIC Card when the family representative/caretaker is in-person. Mail the replacement card if requested and check the Card Mailed check box when issuing a replacement WIC Card.
  - g. Inform the family representative/caretaker that the deactivated WIC Card cannot be reactivated or used, even if found.
  - h. Inform the family representative/caretaker that any remaining WIC food balances and Personal Identification Number (PIN) will transfer to the new card.
-

**Subject: California WIC Card****Item: Lost, Stolen, or Damaged WIC Cards**

---

**C. Prior to mailing a replacement card, LA staff must:**

1. Verify the mailing address, update the address if requested, and document in WIC WISE "Notes" if applicable.
2. Use an envelope that prevents identification of the WIC Card.
3. Label the front of the envelope with "Return Service Requested" - a free United States Postal Service (USPS) service that provides senders with the new address or the reason for non-delivery.
4. Mail within seven business days from the date of notification or report using First Class Mail through the USPS.

**D. Expedited WIC Card Replacement**

1. LA must establish procedures to expedite card and benefit replacement through the use of express or overnight mail when the following circumstances occur:
  - a. Travel to a nearby clinic to pick up the replacement WIC Card will cause an unreasonable barrier for the family and
  - b. Food benefits will expire within seven calendar days.

**AUTHORITY:**

[7 CFR §246.12\(bb\)\(2\)](#)

[7 CFP §246.12\(bb\)\(3\)](#)

**CROSS REFERENCE:**

WPPM 270-20 Proof of Identity

WPPM 270-40 Program Orientation