PURPOSE
To ensure applicants/participants are aware of other health, community, or public assistance services and programs for which they may be eligible.

POLICY
I. Local agencies (LA) must provide applicants, participants, parents, legal guardians, and caretakers with information on Medi-Cal and other health-related or public assistance programs at each certification.

II. During certification, LAs must also determine if any additional programs would benefit the applicant/participant and provide the necessary information for accessing the service(s), including explaining the program’s services to the applicant/participant, and the specific steps needed to access the service(s). LAs must discuss the available referrals with applicants/participants and attempt to provide targeted referrals to them.

III. LA staff must document each referral in the WIC management information system (WIC MIS). For ease of use, the LAs are encouraged to maintain a list of commonly used referrals in the WIC MIS referrals screen.

PROCEDURE(S)
The LA staff must provide the following:

I. Written Referrals

   A. At each certification, each individual applying for WIC services for themselves or on behalf of others must be provided written information about the Medi-Cal Program.

   B. LA staff may use the Referrals – How May We Support You pamphlet to refer applicants who are not currently participating in the following services, when appropriate:

      1. CalFresh (SNAP).
      2. California Work Opportunity and Responsibility to Kids (CalWORKS).
      3. Substance abuse programs for alcohol, drugs, smoking or other harmful substances.
      4. Child Health and Disability Prevention Program (CHDP), if appropriate.
OUTREACH and REFERRALS

Subject: Referrals

Item: Referral Requirements

II. Screenings and Referrals

A. Immunization Screening and Referral

LA staff must screen for immunizations at enrollments and subsequent certifications using the applicant/participant’s immunization record for all infants and children under age two. LA staff must also provide referrals to health care providers, health departments, or community clinics when children are under-immunized or when the parent/caretaker does not present the immunization record. LA staff may use the Minimum Immunization Screening and Referral Protocol (WPPM Appendix 970-100) for more information on immunization screening.

B. Blood Lead Test Screening and Referral

LA staff must screen and refer for blood lead testing at each child’s one year certification appointment or at the child’s initial enrollment (if child is initially enrolled when older than age one).

Required Procedures for Blood Lead Screening:

1. When the child has not had a blood lead screening test or if it is not known whether the child has had a test, LA staff must:
   a. Ask the parent caretakers if their child has had a blood lead test.
   b. Advise parents/caretakers that blood lead screening test results are requested as part of the certification and health screening process, but are not required to obtain WIC benefits.
   c. Encourage the parent/caretaker to obtain the test through the child’s health care provider or provide referral services to a program where the test can be performed.

2. When blood lead test information is provided, appropriate LA staff must determine if the lead level meets the criteria for lead poisoning (≥ 5 mcg/dl), at which time the LA must:
   a. Enter the lead poisoning biochemical risk code into the WIC MIS (current risk code is B92).
   b. Make referrals for treatment for lead exposure (if not already in treatment).
   c. Provide information on and emphasize the importance of diet in the treatment of lead exposure.
d. Offer an appointment with the Registered Dietitian/Degreed Nutritionist (per LA protocol) to assist in developing an appropriate nutrition intervention plan.

C. Drugs, Alcohol and Harmful Substances Referral

LA staff must screen for the use of drugs, alcohol and other harmful substances and provide information on drug and other harmful substance abuse to all pregnant, postpartum, and breastfeeding women.

Required Procedures for Drugs, Alcohol, and Harmful Substances Referrals:

1. At initial enrollment and each recertification appointment, LA staff must screen all pregnant, postpartum and breastfeeding women participating in the program for alcohol, drugs, and other harmful substances by:

   a. Asking the alcohol/drugs and smoking assessment questions listed in the WIC MIS.
   b. Completing a nutrition assessment using the nutrition questionnaire.

2. After assessing past and present alcohol, drug and tobacco use, the counselor must determine if the applicant/participant is at risk for substance abuse and if so, provide:

   a. Information about the dangers of smoking, tobacco (nicotine), alcohol, drugs, and other harmful substances.
   b. Referrals to local programs that provide counseling, prevention, and treatment for smoking and for the abuse of alcohol, drugs, and other harmful substances.

D. Food Assistance Program Referrals

A LA may provide information about local food assistance programs to individuals applying/reapplying for WIC for themselves or on behalf of others, especially in situations where these individuals cannot be served because the LA is operating at or above its maximum caseload allocated by CDPH/WIC.
III. Additional Referrals:

Where appropriate and beneficial to applicants and participants, LA staff may provide referral information regarding programs including, but not limited to:

A. Other FNS nutrition programs such as the Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservations (FDPIR).
B. Head Start, Early Head Start, or Migrant Head Start Programs.
C. Maternal and Child Health programs.
D. Family planning programs.
E. Teen mothers’ programs.
F. HIV prevention, testing, and treatment programs.
G. Child Protective Services.
H. School breakfast and lunch programs.
I. Public and Private Foster Care Agencies.
J. Homeless shelters.
K. Early and Periodic Screening Diagnostic and Treatment Services (EPSDT).
L. Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program (EFNEP).
M. Oral health services.
N. Organizations providing lactation support and breastfeeding assistance.
O. Behavioral/Mental health services programs.

IV. Documenting Referrals in WIC MIS:

LA staff must document each referral given to or declined by the participant in WIC MIS.

A. Documenting Referrals on Referrals Screen
   1. If participant is given a referral, the LA staff must document a “Y” in WIC MIS.
   2. If participant declines a referral or indicates that they already participate in the program that they were referred to, the LA staff must document an “N”. A blank field in WIC MIS indicates that a referral was not attempted for the indicated program.
   3. If a participant is given a referral from the additional referrals list, the LA staff should document an “S” next to each referral accepted by the participant.
OUTREACH and REFERRALS

Subject: Referrals
Item: Referral Requirements

AUTHORITY
7 C.F.R. §246.4(a)(7)-(9) State Plan
7 C.F.R. §246.7(a) Certification of participants
7 C.F.R. §246.7(b)(1) and (3) Program referral and access
7 C.F.R. §246.7(e) Nutritional Risks
7 C.F.R. §246.7(n)(1)-(2) Drug and other harmful substance abuse screening
7 C.F.R. §246.11 (a)(3) Nutrition education

WIC Nutrition Services Standards, August 2013, Standards 6 and 11

CROSS-REFERENCE
CDPH/WIC Program pamphlet, “Referrals - How Can We Support You? (English)”
CDPH/WIC Program pamphlet, “Referrals - How Can We Support You? (Spanish)”
Free Publications- Resources for WIC Clinics from USDA Food and Nutrition Service
CDPH/WIC Nutrition Questionnaires
Minimum Immunization Screening and Referral Protocol (WPPM Appendix 970-100)
California Department of Public Health Immunization Branch
California Department of Public Health’s Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention Branch
FNS Website: Immunization Screening and Referral in WIC