



Bureau of Nutrition Services
Women Infant and Children (WIC)
Authorized Vendor Annual Training

September 2016

Louisiana WIC Program Vendor Training

The purpose of this training is to provide an overview of the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children (WIC) and to convey important information relative to WIC vendor management.

Louisiana WIC Program

Mission:

To **safeguard the health** of low-income women, infants, and children up to age 5 who are at nutrition risk by providing nutritious foods to supplement diets, information on healthy eating, and referrals to health care.

Purpose of the Program

Background about the WIC Program

The Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children (WIC or “the Program”) is administered by State agencies, which receive federal grants to provide supplemental foods, health care referrals, breastfeeding promotion and support, and nutrition education for low-income pregnant, breastfeeding and non-breastfeeding postpartum women, infants, and children up to age five, who are found to be at nutritional risk. WIC supplemental foods promote good health and nutrition during critical times of growth and development by providing target nutrients (e.g., iron, fiber, calcium, protein, and vitamins A, D and C). WIC Program benefits include health care referrals, support of breastfeeding as optimal for baby and mom, and nutrition education that has a practical relationship to the participant’s nutritional needs, household situation, and cultural preferences.

In order to qualify for the WIC Program, applicant household gross income cannot exceed 185 percent of the U.S. Poverty Income Guidelines (about \$3,100 a month for a family of three). Applicants that currently receive SNAP, Medicaid, or Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), also meet the income eligibility requirements for WIC.

Since 1974, research has shown that WIC participation has resulted in cost savings to the American public due to improved birth outcomes, and healthier babies and moms. Vendors play an important role in the WIC Program since participants obtain nutritious, competitively priced foods from WIC authorized retail stores.

Louisiana WIC Program Vendor Training

- **WIC Provides:**
 - Nutrition Assessment
 - **Nutritious Foods**
 - Nutrition Education
 - Breastfeeding Support
 - Referrals to Other Health Services



Louisiana WIC Program Vendor Training Refreshers

Please visit our website at <http://www.dhh.louisiana.gov/index.cfm/page/990>

For the following documents

- **WIC Approved Food/Minimum Stocking Requirement (WIC 23)**
- **Transaction and Procedure (WIC 33)**
- **Reimbursement Form (WIC 20)**
- **Vendor Participant Complaint Form (WIC 19)**
- **Vendor Guide**
- **Vendor Agreement**

Rejected FIs/ CVVs

- **The WIC contracted bank may reject or adjust WIC FIs or CVVs for a variety of reason including, but not limited to:**
 - No vendor number or unreadable or invalid vendor number
 - Outside of allowable dates
 - Signature issues
 - Altered FI or CVV
 - Amount over Maximum Allowable Reimbursement Level
 - No date
 - Purchase Price Missing

Louisiana WIC Program Vendor Training: WIC Approved Foods

A complete list of WIC-approved foods can be found in the current Louisiana WIC Program Food List, which is available online in both English and Spanish at:

[http://new.dhh.louisiana.gov/assets/oph/nutrition/
WIC/FoodsBrochure2015.pdf](http://new.dhh.louisiana.gov/assets/oph/nutrition/WIC/FoodsBrochure2015.pdf)

Louisiana WIC Program Vendor Training Refreshers

Requests for Reimbursement

If a Vendor has an FI or CVV that has been rejected or had the payment amount adjusted by the Louisiana WIC contracted bank, and the Vendor feels that the rejection or adjustment was made in error, the Vendor should follow the following steps:

Louisiana WIC Program Vendor Training

Requests for Reimbursement (Cont'd)

- 1) Complete a WIC Food Instrument/CVV Reimbursement Form (WIC-20) found at:
 - a. <http://new.dhh.louisiana.gov/index.cfm/newsroom/detail/2328>
- 2) Staple original FIs/CVVs to a blank 8½ X 11 sheet of paper (maximum of three FIs/CVVs per page; do not overlap FIs/CVVs).
- 3) Make copies of the WIC-20 and its corresponding WIC FI/CVVs (originals/Image Replacement Documents (IRDs) only).
- 4) Mail the original completed WIC-20 along with its corresponding FIs/CVVs to the State Agency at the address found on the WIC-20.

Louisiana WIC Program Vendor Training

Complaint Process

Use the Vendor/Participant Complaint Forms, which are available online at <http://dhh.louisiana.gov/index.cfm/page/990>

(click on “File a WIC Complaint”), to immediately notify the State Agency of any instance in which a participant or proxy fails to comply with WIC requirements.

Louisiana WIC Program Vendor Training

Redeeming Food Instruments (FIs)

Reminders:

- Counter signature by participants a **MUST** on face of FI
- FI can **ONLY** be redeemed within the **valid date** of FI
- Amount of transaction **MUST** be indicated on the FI at the time of transaction
- Cashier training is essential to ensure the above are part of **every** WIC transaction!
- Issue **ONLY** what is printed on the FI
- Issue **ALL** or nothing
- See attachment WIC 23 and WIC 33

Louisiana WIC Program Vendor Training: Shelf-Talkers

Shelf-talkers, commonly utilized to identify WIC approved foods, are allowed to be used by vendors but must be approved by the Vendor Management Unit prior to usage.

Vendors should contact the Vendor Management Unit for further details on obtaining approval.

Vendors who choose to not utilize shelf talkers are encouraged to post the WIC Approved Food List (WIC-23) next to WIC food items. The WIC-23 allows participants to view a complete listing of all WIC allowable food items. A copy of the WIC-23 can be obtained from the Vendor Management Unit.

Louisiana WIC Program

Vendor Training: WIC Acronym and Logo

The WIC acronym and logo have been registered and trademarked by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA). A WIC Vendor is not permitted, without specific State Agency authorization, to use either the acronym “WIC” or the WIC logo, including close facsimiles thereof, in total or part, in either the official name in which the Vendor is registered or the name under which it does business, if different, on product labels or packages, store signs, pamphlets, advertisements, brochures or any proprietary materials.

Louisiana WIC Program Vendor Training Refreshers

INFANT FORMULA WHOLESALER

Vendor must purchase infant formula only from vendors included on Louisiana WIC's list of infant formula manufacturers registered with the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) that provide infant formula, and licensed infant formula wholesalers, distributors, and retailers.

This list can be found at

<http://new.dhh.louisiana.gov/index.cfm/newsroom/detail/2328>.

Failure to comply will result in denial of application or termination from the WIC Program.

Louisiana WIC Program Vendor Updates

Incentive Items

Vendors are prohibited from giving, providing or selling at a reduced price incentive items to Program participants. Failure to comply with this requirement will result in termination of Agreement.

Louisiana WIC Program Vendor Training Refreshers

Violations:

- The WIC vendor agreement details all mandates required of WIC-authorized vendors
- Sanctions are actions taken against a vendor that fails to comply with Program regulations
- A full list of all vendor sanctions can be found starting on page 35 of the Vendor Guide. Please review this section in its entirety
- Vendors that are sanctioned due to violation of the vendor agreement may be deemed high-risk, disqualified from the program, and/or assessed a monetary penalty. Violations are tracked throughout the duration of the vendor agreement.

Louisiana WIC Program Vendor Training Refreshers: Non - Discrimination Rules

In accordance with federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, the USDA, its Agencies, offices, and employees, and institutions participating in or administering USDA programs are prohibited from discriminating based on race, color, national origin, sex, disability, age, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity in any program or activity conducted or funded by USDA.

Louisiana WIC Program Vendor Training Refreshers: Routine Monitoring

- Routine vendor monitoring by the Sanitarian Specialists will be completed twice per year on a minimum of 5% of WIC vendors in order to:
- Promote compliance with Federal and State rules of the Louisiana WIC program.
- Check compliance with minimum inventory and sanitary criterion
- Identify and document any non compliance.

Louisiana WIC Program Vendor Training Refreshers: Routine Monitoring (cont'd)

- Ensure that the “WIC Authorized Vendor” poster is displayed
- Ensure that food lists and vendor check/CVV transaction procedure are posted at each register
- **Ensure that the dollar amount and signature are completed on all FI's and CVV's on hand**
- Verify that the vendor has the minimum stocking requirement available

Louisiana WIC Program Vendor Training Refreshers: Record Keeping Policy

Vendors must maintain, during and after any WIC authorization, for a period of four (4) full Federal Fiscal years after the date the record was created and provide to the State Agency upon request, paper or electronic records used for State or Federal tax reporting purposes and other WIC Program records including: inventory records showing all WIC purchases, wholesale and retail, in the form of invoices that identify the quantity and prices of specific WIC-approved foods; books of accounts; shelf price records; records of total food sales revenue, based on the definition of SNAP eligible food items (available at <http://www.fns.usda.gov/snap/eligible-food-items>), which must be verifiable or documented; and other pertinent documents.

Louisiana WIC Program Vendor Training Refreshers: Vendor Portal

The VP is a website that was designed for Louisiana WIC and has been in use since 2010. As a Vendor, you are required to be able to access and make regular use of the VP. This requires access to a computer and the internet, as well as regular use of an email account. The VP serves as the primary point of contact for all Vendors in Louisiana.

The VP must be used by Vendors to:

- Input required price reports quarterly and upon request from the State Agency.
- Receive official communications from the Louisiana WIC Program.
- Take part in web-based WIC Vendor training.
- Update store information.

Louisiana WIC Program Vendor Training Refreshers: Change of Ownership

WIC authorization does not transfer to a new owner when a change of ownership occurs, nor does authorization extend to new store locations opened or acquired by an existing Vendor.

Each store location operated by a business entity constitutes a separate Vendor and must be authorized separately from other stores operated by the business entity. Each store must have a single, fixed location.

Louisiana WIC Program Vendor Training: Any Vendor Changes

- Notify the State Agency in writing at least fifteen (15) days prior to or immediately upon knowledge of (whichever occurs first): the loss or relinquishment of SNAP authorization; cessation of Vendor operations; a change in Vendor ownership, management, corporate officers or majority stakeholders; a change of location; store name (including d/b/a); or, a change in mailing address, email address, or telephone number.
- **Note:** *The Vendor Agreement shall become null and void on the date of the loss or relinquishment of SNAP authorization, cessation of Vendor operations, a change in Vendor ownership, or a change in store location of two or more miles walking distance from the previous store location. Once the Vendor Agreement becomes null and void, WIC business shall immediately cease and FIs and CVVs shall be deposited promptly.*

Louisiana WIC Program Vendor Training: Above 50 Vendors (A50)

- Vendors that derive more than 50 percent of their annual food sales revenue from WIC food instruments, and new vendor applicants expected to meet this criterion under guidelines approved by FNS will no longer be authorized on the program after October 1, 2016 unless needed for participant access.

Louisiana WIC Program Vendor Training Refreshers: Reciprocal Disqualification



USDA programs communicate regularly!

- Disqualification from SNAP will result in the WIC State Agency's disqualification of the Vendor from the WIC Program.
 - As per section 246.12 (l)(1)(vii) of the WIC regulations, the WIC disqualification must be for the same length of time as SNAP disqualification, may begin at a later date than SNAP disqualification, and is not subject to administrative or judicial review under the WIC Program, and
- Disqualification from WIC may result in disqualification as a retailer in SNAP. Such disqualification is not subject to administrative or judicial review under SNAP.

Louisiana WIC Program Vendor Training: Peer Groups

- The following Table describes the Peer Group System that LA WIC will be using. The groupings will be based on the number of Cash Registers present in the store. LA WIC defines a cash register as a point of sale device that is capable of processing a WIC transaction. This would include fixed cash registers as well as any mobile devices with similar capabilities to process a retail sales transaction. See chart below:

Peer Group	Number of Cash Registers
• 1	1 – 3
• 2	4 – 7
• 3	8 – 11
• 4	12 – 15
• 5	16+
• 6	A50*

- *Any Authorized A50 Vendors would be categorized into this Peer Group.

Louisiana WIC Program Vendor Training: MARLs

- **Maximum Allowable Reimbursement Levels (MARLs)**
 - New MARLs will be in effect October 1, 2016.
 - Allowable pricing is based on vendor reported prices for all WIC allowable products adjusted for pricing within each vendor peer group.

Louisiana WIC Program Vendor Training: Full Line Grocery (Effective 10/01/2016)

LA WIC defines a Full-Line Grocer as a store that carries the following items:

- 5 or more varieties of cereal with 3 or more units of each variety
- 4 or more varieties of fresh vegetables with 5 or more units of each variety
- 3 or more varieties of bread or tortillas with 6 or more units of each variety
- 4 or more varieties of fresh or frozen meat, poultry or fish 5 or more units of each variety
- 2 or more varieties of rice with 3 or more units of each variety
- 3 or more varieties of fresh dairy products with 5 or more units of each variety
- 4 or more varieties of fresh fruits with 5 or more units of each variety

Louisiana WIC Program Vendor Training: Competitive Price Criteria (CPC)

The CPC is the price level at or below which WIC-approved foods must be priced in order for a vendor applicant to be considered for authorization. The State Agency determines CPC for each WIC-approved food item based on shelf prices for Vendors within each peer group of regular Vendors. CPC varies by vendor peer group. All Vendors are subject to the CPC at all times in order to ensure that Vendors do not raise prices, subsequent to selection, to a level that would make such Vendors ineligible for authorization.

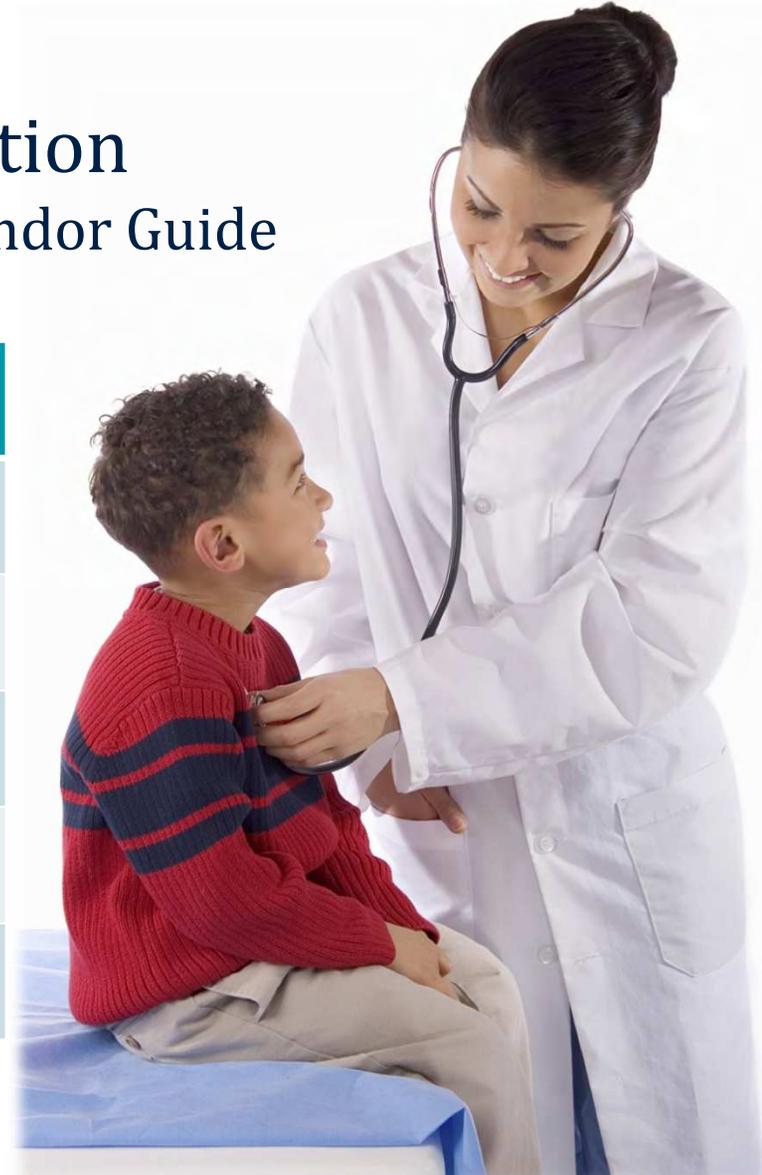
Louisiana WIC Program Vendor Update

- All current WIC Vendor Agreements/Authorizations expire September 30, 2016
- Vendors who submitted complete applications and were determined to meet all Selection Criteria will be notified of their eligibility status prior to October 1, 2016

Sources for Further WIC Information

Please Review the following portions of your Vendor Guide

Topic	Location
Louisiana WIC Program Food List	Vendor Guide Pg. 9-11
Reauthorization Process/Selection Criteria	Vendor Guide Pg. 12-13
WIC FI and CVV Transaction and Procedure	Vendor Guide Pg. 20-24
Vendor Portal	Vendor Guide Pg. 34
Administrative Review (hearing) Process	Vendor Guide Pg. 40-42



Questions?

Please contact us at lawicvendor@la.gov or 504-568-8229.

Bureau of Nutrition Services
WIC Vendor Management Unit
P.O. Box 60630
New Orleans, LA 70160-0630

Phone #: 504/568-8229

Fax #: 504/568-8232

lawicvendor@la.gov

www.dhh.la.gov

Louisiana Department of Health and Hospitals

628 North 4th Street, Baton Rouge, Louisiana 70802

(225) 342-9500