

Section 8.3: Issuing WIC Cards

3/2021

References: 7CFR 246.12 (p)

Policy: Issue a WIC Card to a household with an individual(s) in a valid certification period to provide their household food benefits.

Purpose: To ensure that certified individuals have access to the food benefits for which they are eligible.

Procedures

Issue a WIC Card to each household.

- Households are provided **only one WIC Card** at a time. To replace a card, the previously-issued card must be deactivated first. See [Section 8.5: Replacing WIC Cards](#).
- Verify identity *whenever* issuing/reissuing a WIC Card. See [Section 5.2.3: Identity](#).
 - If the person is known to staff or has a valid form of identification (e.g., driver's license, tribal ID, MN State Identity Card, etc.), a WIC Card may be issued (or reissued).
 - If they do not have identification, verify their identity by requesting from them **at least two of the following**:
 - The identity of the Primary Card Holder, the Authorized Representative, or an Alternate Representative/proxy listed in the participant's record
 - The Primary Card Holder's date-of-birth
 - The household's mailing address zip code
 - The names of household members participating in WIC

If you determine (or suspect) that the person is not authorized to obtain a card (i.e., they are neither the Authorized nor Alternate Rep.), tell them that you are unable to issue them a Card and ask them to have the Authorized Rep. or an Alternate Rep./proxy contact the WIC office so that a card can be issued.

- Issue the card to the Participant/Parent/Guardian (PPG) if present at the appointment in which the card is being provided. If the PPG is not at that appointment, the card may be issued to one of the designated Alternate Representatives/Proxies. See Guidance.

SECTION 8.3: ISSUING WIC CARDS

- The person issued the WIC Card is designated the *Primary Card Holder* (PCH) in the Information System, whether that person is the Authorized Representative (PPG) or an Alternate Rep./Proxy, and that person must sign the signature pad acknowledging receipt of the card. See Guidance for options for obtaining signatures.
- Explain to the Primary Card Holder (PCH) how to use their WIC Card, reviewing either the flyer “How to use your WIC Card” or the information in the Shopping Guide.
- Review the *WIC Rights and Responsibilities* associated with using the WIC Card. Staff must inform participants that *neither redeemed nor expired food benefits* can be replaced.
- Assist the PCH in setting up their 4-digit PIN either by calling the WIC customer service line or through the Web Portal.
 - The person setting up the PIN will need to provide the *PCH’s date-of-birth* and the zip code for the *household’s mailing address*.
 - If the person chooses not to set-up a PIN while at clinic, and instead intends to do it later, notify the participant that their benefits can’t be accessed until a PIN is set-up. (Note – if the Card is a replacement, the original PIN transfers to the new Card, and the Card can be used immediately.)
 - The PIN is private - it should be set up by the PCH. It should *not be known* to WIC staff and is *not stored* in the system.

Guidance

The Alternate Representative/proxy must be a competent person, at least 16 years old.

Designating a Proxy by Phone

Participants may designate a proxy by phone. If a Participant/Parent/Guardian (PPG) calls the Local Agency requesting that a particular person be designated their proxy, staff must verify the identity of the person calling and making the request. As above, this can be done by requesting from them **at least two of the following**:

- The identity of the Primary Card Holder, the Authorized Representative, or an Alternate Representative/proxy listed in the participant’s record
- The Primary Card Holder’s date-of-birth
- The household’s mailing address zip code, and/or
- The names of household members participating in WIC

Household Mailing Address

There are situations in which a participant (or household) either does not have mailing address because they are homeless, or for safety reasons, chooses to keep it confidential (e.g., due to domestic violence). As necessary, Local Agencies may use:

- **WIC clinic address** (or that of another clinic in a different city if preferred). Be sure to give the participant that zip code.

- **The *Safe at Home* address for those participating in the program:**

PO Box 17370, Saint Paul MN 55117-0370.

Include the individual's unique Lot#, which is essential for them to receive their mail.

See [Section 5.2.2: Residency](#) for more about *Safe at Home*.

Primary Card Holder Signature Options

If staff are unable to collect the Primary Cardholder's signature when setting or changing the WIC Card's Primary Cardholder, the staff member must enter the reason on the signature pad. Use one of the following options to obtain the signature. Scan the form into the Information System:

- Obtain an electronic signature using the [Participant Signature Form](#) or by another electronic signature platform like DocuSign.
- Use [Exhibit 5-B: Registers for Manual Signatures](#)

Reference – Complete Listing of Hyperlinks

[Section 8.5: Replacing WIC Cards](#)

(https://www.health.state.mn.us/docs/people/wic/localagency/program/mom/chsctns/ch8/sctn8_5.pdf)

[Section 5.2.3: Identity](#)

(https://www.health.state.mn.us/docs/people/wic/localagency/program/mom/chsctns/ch5/sctn5_2_3.pdf)

[Section 5.2.2: Residency](#)

(https://www.health.state.mn.us/docs/people/wic/localagency/program/mom/chsctns/ch5/sctn5_2_2.pdf)

[Participant Signature Form](#) (<https://redcap.health.state.mn.us/redcap/surveys/?s=TD4P4PEJPT>)

[Exhibit 5-B: Registers for Manual Signatures](#)

(<https://www.health.state.mn.us/docs/people/wic/localagency/program/mom/exhbts/ex5/5b.docx>)

Minnesota Department of Health - WIC Program 625 Robert St N, PO BOX 64975, ST PAUL MN 55164-0975; 1-800-657-3942, health.wic@state.mn.us, www.health.state.mn.us. To obtain this information in a different format, call: 1-800-657-3942

This institution is an equal opportunity provider.