

# Arkansas WIC Program Cashier and Bookkeeper Guide to Successful WIC Transactions

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## Cashier and Bookkeeper Guide to Successful WIC Transactions

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## **Introduction**

### WHAT IS WIC?

The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children (WIC) provides supplemental food, nutrition education, breastfeeding support, outreach information, and referrals, serving pregnant, breastfeeding and postpartum women as well as infants and children up to age five who are found to be at nutritional risk and are income and residency eligible.

### HOW DOES WIC WORK IN ARKANSAS?

The Arkansas Department of Health (ADH) administers the WIC Program in Arkansas. Individuals may apply for certification in the WIC program by contacting any Local Health Unit or WIC Clinic. If certified as income and residency eligible and at nutritional risk, the WIC participant will receive appropriate nutrition education, including breastfeeding support, education for pregnant and postpartum women, as well as WIC Checks and Cash Value Benefits for supplemental foods. In 2016, the WIC Program plans to pilot a new method of delivering benefits called eWIC. Benefits will be loaded and decremented from a plastic card embedded with a SmartCard chip.

### HOW DO RETAIL FOOD STORES FIT INTO THE PICTURE?

The Arkansas WIC Program authorizes eligible retail stores to accept WIC Checks and Cash Value Benefits (and in the near future, EBT – eWIC cards) for the purchase of the prescribed supplemental foods for WIC participants. Retail stores (vendors) and ALL of their employees play a key role in assisting WIC participants to access the nutritious food they need. Employees also play a key role in ensuring that the regulatory and financial interests of the store and the WIC Program are protected.

Retail stores seeking to become authorized vendors for the Arkansas WIC Program must complete an application, meet selection criteria, provide price information, participate in interactive training and pass an on-site store visit. Authorized vendors sign and must abide by a written Vendor Participation Agreement that outlines all of the conditions and requirements for vendor participation in the Arkansas WIC Program.

## **WIC Vocabulary**

**WIC Checks** – are issued to WIC participants through the Local Health Unit of the Arkansas Department of Health. WIC Checks are printed on pink and blue variegated check stock with an overlay in black ink with the program logo and ARKANSAS WIC PROGRAM pre-printed at the top. Each check specifies the food items and quantities that are to be purchased for a specific participant during a specific period of time.

**Cash Value Benefit (CVB)** – are issued to WIC participants through the Local Health Unit of the Arkansas Department of Health. CVBs are printed on pink and blue variegated check stock with an overlay in black ink with the program logo and ARKANSAS WIC PROGRAM pre-printed at the top. Each CVB specifies that it is for the purchase of fresh or frozen fruits and vegetables only. CVBs have a cash value of 4, 8, 11, or 16.50 dollars. The cash value is printed in the quantity column on the left side of the CVB.

**eWIC** – In 2016, the Arkansas WIC program will introduce the new eWIC system. WIC participants will receive their food benefits loaded on a card similar to a credit card. The card has an electronic chip that stores the food benefits information and will require that the WIC participant enter a PIN to start/accept the transaction. Vendors' cash register systems will be programmed and certified to accept the cards and process the WIC purchases electronically.

**WIC Identification (ID) Folder** – is pre-printed with the program logo and is a multi-fold yellow folder. The folder contains all of the names of the WIC eligible participants in a single household. This may be one participant or several participants. The folder also lists the names and signatures of all individuals who are authorized to use WIC Checks or CVBs for purchase of WIC food items for the participants whose names are listed in the folder. For WIC Program use, the folder has a Household ID number. This number may not match the individual participant's WIC ID number that is printed on the WIC Check or CVB. DO NOT use the Household ID number on the folder to determine proof of identification.

**WIC Food Package** – is a standard group of supplemental food items prescribed by the WIC Program to meet the specific nutritional needs of a WIC participant on a monthly basis. Currently there are seven different food package categories prescribed in Arkansas. Some food packages items may be specifically prescribed if the participant has a food allergy or other special medical condition.

**Arkansas WIC Program Approved Food List** – is a list of foods approved for purchase with WIC Checks and CVBs. A copy of the list should be kept at every cashier station. The list is arranged by food type, with specific brands or varieties indicated. Some items are specified as “the least expensive brand available at the time of purchase.” The Approved Food List also lists items that are not allowed.

**Food Description** – the prescribed food items will be pre-printed on the WIC Check or CVB. This is the **exact product type and amount** that must be purchased. Substitutions of any kind are not allowed. Partial purchase or purchases in excess of the specified quantity are not allowed. Some items may specify a quantity range such as “Up To” or “Or Less” e.g. “36 oz. or Less of WIC Approved Cereal.” CVB's

do not have to be redeemed at the full amount if the participant chooses to purchase less than the face value.

**First Day To Use** – is pre-printed on the front of the WIC Check and CVB. This is the first date that the WIC Check or CVB may be used. Do not redeem WIC Checks or CVBs before this date as they will not be reimbursed by the Arkansas WIC Program.

**Last Day To Use** – is pre-printed on the front of the WIC Check and CVB. This is the last date that the WIC Check or CVB may be used. Do not redeem WIC Checks or CVBs transacted after this date as they will not be reimbursed by the Arkansas WIC Program.

**Amount of Sale** – for the WIC Check, this is the actual price of the WIC food items purchased. For the CVB, this is the actual price of the purchase, up to the maximum value of the CVB. For the CVB, the cashier may have to enter amounts on multiple CVBs, depending on the amount of purchase and number of CVBs (see How to Process a Cash Value Benefit Transaction).

The cashier must write on the WIC Check or CVB, using **black or blue ink**, the exact purchase price in the box labeled “Amount of Sale”. Do not enter dollar signs or decimal points. The box is split in two with a vertical line. Enter the whole dollar amount to the left of the line and the cents amount to the right of the line e.g. for \$56.49.

56	49
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**Signature of Participant, Authorized Representative or Proxy** – the WIC participant, authorized representative, or proxy must sign the WIC Check or CVB (on the signature line in the right front, lower corner) **AFTER** the cashier has filled in the amount of sale. The cashier must verify the signature on the WIC Check or CVB with one of the names listed for Authorized Representative or Proxy on the WIC ID Folder. No other form of ID is necessary or may be required by the vendor.

**Authorized WIC Vendor Stamp** – each authorized store is issued a 4-digit self-inking vendor stamp. The vendor stamp **must** clearly appear on the front right-hand side of the check just above the pre-printed words “Authorized WIC Vendor Stamp.”

**Vendor** – a store authorized by the Arkansas WIC Program to provide WIC foods to WIC program participants. Each store must have a single, fixed location.

**Not to Exceed (NTE) Amount** - is the highest reimbursement price for regular vendors for a WIC Check for a specific food package. A NTE is calculated for each WIC Check for each vendor peer group and sent with a daily WIC Check issuance file to the Arkansas WIC Program contract bank.

**Maximum Allowable Reimbursement (MAR)** – is equal to the Not-to-Exceed (NTE) amount for the respective regular vendor’s peer group by type of WIC Check.

**Automated Clearing House (ACH)** – is an electronic payment mechanism used by the Arkansas WIC Program’s contract bank to accumulate and credit vendors’ bank accounts with an appropriate amount up to the Not-to-Exceed amount for WIC Checks and CVBs deposited.

## WIC Identification (ID) Folder

**Arkansas WIC Program**



**Participant Identification Folder**

Household ID: \_\_\_\_\_

**The following person(s) is (are) enrolled in the WIC Program:**

1. Name: \_\_\_\_\_ BD: \_\_\_\_\_  
Last, First

2. Name: \_\_\_\_\_ BD: \_\_\_\_\_  
Last, First

3. Name: \_\_\_\_\_ BD: \_\_\_\_\_  
Last, First

4. Name: \_\_\_\_\_ **SAMPLE** \_\_\_\_\_

5. Name: \_\_\_\_\_ BD: \_\_\_\_\_  
Last, First

**Persons authorized to sign and pick up WIC Checks and CVBs:**

Authorized Representative: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Proxy: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Proxy: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

The WIC ID Folder is issued by a Local Health Unit to a participant or multiple participants residing in the same household.

The names of up to ten (10) participants residing in the same household (five (5) on the front cover and five (5) inside) can be listed on the folder. The Household ID# is for WIC internal use only. Do not compare this number to the ID number on the WIC Check or CVB.

DO NOT accept a WIC ID Folder that has not been signed by the Authorized Representative (this is either an adult participant or person responsible for an infant or child) prior to the start of any WIC transaction. The Authorized Representative should have signed the folder at the local health unit at the time it was issued.

The Authorized Representative may list up to two proxies who can use WIC Checks or CVBs on behalf of the participant(s). The proxy's name and signature **MUST** be on the folder prior to the start of any WIC transaction.

The WIC ID Folder must be presented to the cashier at the beginning of **every** WIC transaction. Compare the signature/name on the folder with the signature/name written on the signature line on the WIC Check or CVB at the end of the transaction after the amount of sale has been entered on the WIC Check/CVB.

## Processing WIC Transactions

### HOW DO I PROCESS A WIC CHECK TRANSACTION?

1. The WIC Authorized Representative (AR) or Proxy will inform the cashier that she/he wishes to make a purchase using a WIC Check(s).
2. Ask for the WIC ID Folder and WIC Check(s) that will be used for this purchase.
3. Only accept a WIC Check(s) presented within the valid dates printed on the front.
4. Separate the items to be purchased with the WIC Check(s) from any other items the participant may be purchasing.
5. Make sure the types and quantities of foods listed on the WIC Check have been selected by the participant.
6. Total the WIC items and deduct any coupons, process loyalty card discounts, and/or any other types of discounts.
7. Enter the amount of sale for the WIC items using **blue or black ink** in the Amount of Sale box on the WIC Check.
8. Ask the AR or Proxy to sign the WIC Check on the signature line on the front of the check in the lower right-hand corner.
9. Verify the signature on the check with one of the name(s) listed for AR or Proxy on the WIC ID Folder.

WIC ID NUMBER		NAME OF PARTICIPANT		FIRST DAY TO USE	LAST DAY TO USE	AMOUNT OF SALE
00670118		Roxie Brown		6/12/2012	7/11/2012	10968322
QTY	DESCRIPTION					
1	GALLON(S) 2%, 1% OR FAT-FREE MILK					
1	QUART(S) 2%, 1% OR FAT FREE MILK					
1	UNIT= (4 CANS 14-16 OZ BEAN/PEA) OR (1-LB BAG DRY BEAN/PEA)					
1	64 OUNCE CONTAINER(S) JUICE					
2	16OZ WHOLE GRAIN BREAD/OATMEAL/TORTILLAS OR 14-16 BROWN RICE					
XXX END OF ORDER XXX						
<b>SAMPLE</b>						
VENDOR MUST DEPOSIT WITHIN 60 DAYS FROM FIRST DAY TO USE DATE						
Signature of Participant or Authorized Representative						MP

ARKANSAS WIC PROGRAM  
5800 W 10th Suite 810 Little Rock, AR 72204  
Act# 804025  
FSMC St. Louis Park, MN 55425  
75-1248 919

PAYMENT WILL BE DENIED WITHOUT  
AUTHORIZED WIC VENDOR STAMP

10968322 091912482 804025

#### Remember:

- Each WIC Check must be entered as a separate transaction.
- The WIC AR or Proxy must purchase all of the items listed on the WIC Check. No substitutions. No rain checks or due bills.
- The WIC Check is valid only if the WIC participant, AR, or proxy signs on the signature line on the front of the check in the lower right-hand corner at the time of purchase. **Vendors may not obtain the signature at a later date.**
- Do not accept a WIC Check that has been altered using correction fluid, written over, signed in advance of the purchase or copied.

**HOW DO I PROCESS A CASH VALUE BENEFIT (CVB) TRANSACTION?**

1. The WIC Authorized Representative (AR) or Proxy will inform the cashier that she/he wishes to make a purchase using a Cash Value Benefit (CVB).
2. Ask for the WIC ID Folder and CVB(s) that will be used for this purchase.
3. Only accept CVBs presented within the valid dates printed on the CVBs.
4. Separate CVB items (fresh or frozen fruits and vegetables) from any other food items she/he may be purchasing. **NOTE:** Unlike WIC Checks, CVBs from a single household may be combined in a single transaction.
5. Make sure the types of fresh or frozen fruits and vegetables as allowed on the Approved Food List have been selected by the participant (\$4 CVB – may only purchase fresh fruits or vegetables).
6. Total the CVB items and deduct any coupons, process loyalty card discounts and/or any other type of discount.
7.
  - a. If the amount of purchase is **less than or equal to** the dollar value of the CVB(s), enter that amount in the “Amount of Sale” box. No change is given.
  - b. If the amount of the purchase **exceeds** the face value of the CVBs presented, inform the AR/Proxy of the excess (including tax on the excess amount) and ask if he/she would like to pay the excess and with which type of tender. The AR/Proxy must also be given the opportunity to decrease the number of items purchased if she/he does not wish to pay the excess amount.
  - c. If the AR/Proxy agrees to pay the excess (including tax on the excess amount unless participant is paying with SNAP EBT), complete the transaction by entering in the full face value of the CVB(s) in **blue or black ink** and accept the tender from the AR/Proxy. **Note:** For CVB transactions where the AR/Proxy pays the excess, you may give a receipt.
8. Ask the AR or Proxy to sign the CVB on the signature line on the front of the check in the lower right-hand corner.
9. Verify the signature on the check with one of the name(s) listed for AR or Proxy on the WIC ID Folder.

**ARKANSAS WIC PROGRAM**  
 5800 W 10th Suite 610 Little Rock, AR 72204  
 Act# 804025  
 FSMC, St. Louis Park, MN 55426  
 75-1248 919  
 10968323

WIC ID NUMBER 00670118	NAME OF PARTICIPANT Roxie Brown	FIRST DAY TO USE 6/12/2012	LAST DAY TO USE 7/11/2012	AMOUNT OF SALE
QTY	DESCRIPTION	PAYMENT WILL BE DENIED WITHOUT		
\$6.00	FOR FRESH/FROZEN FRUITS OR VEGETABLES XXX END OF ORDER XXX	AUTHORIZED WIC VENDOR STAMP		

VENDOR MUST DEPOSIT WITHIN 60 DAYS FROM FIRST DAY TO USE DATE  
 Signature of Participant or Authorized Representative

⑈ 10968323⑈ ⑆091912482⑆ 804025⑈

**Remember:**

- Cash Value Benefits (CVBs) are to be used for the purchase of fresh or frozen vegetables and fruits only. See the AR Approved Food List for all items that are not allowed such as spices, nuts, and party trays.
- CVBs have a cash value, but you may **not** give change back to the AR/Proxy if the purchase is less than the face value.

**Points to Remember about the Cash Value Benefit (CVB):**

CVB transactions are **different** from traditional WIC Check transactions:

- CVBs from a single household may be combined in one transaction
- ARs/Proxies may purchase items whose total dollar value is less than the face value of the CVB(s)
- ARs/Proxies may purchase items whose total dollar value exceeds the face value of the CVB(s), but the participant must pay any dollar amount over the face value including tax on that amount, if applicable
- ARs/Proxies may pay the excess amount with any type of tender that the vendor accepts for regular food purchases – cash, check, debit card, credit card, or SNAP EBT
- Vendors may not charge tax on the amount of the transaction that is covered by the face value of the CVB(s)

**Examples of Possible CVB Transactions:**

1. Ms. Harris purchases a variety of fruits and vegetables. The purchase amount is \$7.83. She presents a CVB for \$11.00. The cashier completes the sale, writes “\$7.83” in the Amount of Sale box, has Ms. Harris sign the CVB, compares the signature with the WIC ID Folder, and returns the folder. No change or receipt is given.
2. Mr. Robinson purchases items for his two children who each have a CVB with the face value of \$8.00 (total available for purchase is \$16.00). The purchase amount is \$15.54. The cashier completes the sale, writes “\$8.00” on the first CVB and “\$7.54” on the second CVB in the Amount of Sale box, has Mr. Robinson sign the CVBs, compares the signatures with the WIC ID Folder, and returns the folder. No change or receipt is given.
3. Mrs. Russell’s fruit and vegetable purchase amount is \$12.37 (without the tax added). She presents a CVB for \$11.00. The cashier informs her that the transaction exceeds the value of the CVB and asks if she would like to reduce the amount of her purchase or pay the excess dollar value. If she chooses to reduce to or below the CVB face value, follow the procedures in Example 1. If she chooses to pay the excess, the cashier asks what type of tender and informs Mrs. Russell what the amount of the excess will be, including the tax on that amount (unless she is paying with SNAP EBT which is not taxable). The cashier completes the transaction by writing “\$11.00” on the CVB in the Amount of Sale box, has Mrs. Russell sign the CVB, compares the signature with the WIC ID Folder, and returns the folder, and lastly accepts the tender for the excess amount. The cashier may give her a receipt for the transaction.
4. Miss Chen is purchasing \$28 of fresh and frozen produce. This amount is more fruits and vegetables than can be covered by her three CVBs that have face values of \$4.00, \$8.00, and \$11.00. Follow the same procedures as in Example 3 to reduce the value or pay the excess. If she chooses to pay the excess, write in the full value of each CVB, for example “\$4.00”, “\$8.00” and “\$11.00” in the Amount of Sale box. Miss Chen must sign all three CVBs.

## **Best Practices for Cashiers**

- Treat WIC participants, Authorized Representative (AR) and/or proxies for WIC participants with the same benefits and courtesies as your other customers.
- Establish a routine for WIC transactions. Do it the same way every time.
  - Ask the AR/proxy for the WIC ID Folder and WIC Check or CVB.
  - Verify that the WIC Check or CVB presented is within the valid dates for use.
  - Before scanning/ringing up purchase, look at the items to be purchased and compare them to the items listed on the WIC Check or CVB.
  - Enter the Amount of Sale in the box on the front of the WIC Check or CVB.
  - Ask the AR/proxy to sign the WIC Check or CVB.
  - Verify the signature with the names written on the front of the WIC ID Folder.
  - Return the WIC ID Folder to the AR/Proxy.
- Make sure you always have a copy of the Arkansas WIC Approved Food List at your register.
- Keep an inexpensive calculator or pencil and pad at your register to assist with calculations for items such as cereal and fish which allow an “up to” amount and for CVB transactions.
- Keep ONLY blue or black ink pens at your register. Checks signed with other colors of ink cannot be deposited and must be sent in to the WIC State Office for processing.
- If a WIC AR/Proxy has selected the wrong food item, politely let them know which item or items qualify, using the Approved Food List as a guide. For items that require the AR/Proxy to purchase the least expensive brand, inform her/him which brand currently is the least expensive. Some ARs/Proxies who are not familiar with your store may need someone to help them locate the item. Never announce publicly that this is a WIC transaction as customers must be treated with confidentiality and courtesy.
- Refuse any attempt by a WIC AR/Proxy to use a WIC Check or CVB to receive cash, non-food items, cigarettes, or alcoholic beverages. Entering into such a transaction is against federal WIC Program regulations and can have very serious consequences for both the participant and the vendor. Immediately report to your supervisor any attempts by WIC participants to make these types of purchase.
- Don't accept WIC Checks or CVBs before the First Day to Use or after the Last Day to Use. Do not accept WIC Checks or CVBs that have been altered by using correction fluid or writing over the preprinted information. Local Health Units are not allowed to make these types of alterations. Report any

such abuse to your supervisor. If possible, please note the number of the WIC Check or CVB or the WIC participant's name appearing on the WIC Check or CVB that was altered.

- Check infant formula purchases carefully to make sure the AR/Proxy has selected the correct:
  - Brand name such as Similac
  - Type – specific product such as Advance Stage 1 or Soy Isomil
  - Form – powdered (PWD), concentrate (CONC), ready to feed (RTF)
  - Quantity – the number of cans/bottles to be purchased is listed in the Quantity (QTY) column on the WIC Check

Some types of formula have very similar labeling. Depending on the needs of the WIC participant, formula may be authorized in powdered, concentrate, or ready to feed (RTF) form. This will be specified on the WIC Check along with the brand name and the type of formula. **DO NOT** allow the purchase of any formula other than what is **exactly** specified on the WIC Check, even if the types of formula seem to be similar, there is similar packaging or the AR/proxy brings a different kind to the lane. Low-iron formula is not allowed on the Arkansas WIC Program. Be sure to scan **EACH** can of formula separately.

- Expect to be respected – immediately report to your supervisor any verbal or physical abuse by anyone who is making a WIC purchase. If possible, try to determine the name of the participant or number on the check the AR/proxy is attempting to use for the purchase.
- Keep on top of what's up with WIC – routinely ask your supervisor if there have been updates to the WIC program, especially the Approved Food List. Program changes are sent to each store in the form of "WIC Flash" memos and e-mails.

## Information for Bookkeepers

The vendor's bookkeepers/cash office staff plays an important role in successfully completing a WIC transaction. Here are the procedures for processing WIC Checks and CVBs once they leave the register.

1. Review WIC Checks and CVBs for completeness. The cashier should have entered the "Amount of Sale" and the AR/proxy should have signed in **blue or black ink** on the signature line on the front for the check in the lower right hand corner - "Signature of Participant or Authorized Representative." If the participant signs the check on the back **AND** the front, the check is still valid. If the signature is **only** on the back of the check, it must be sent to the WIC State Office for processing. **Checks without a signature will not be paid by the Arkansas WIC Program.**

Amount of Sale      Vendor Stamp

<b>ARKANSAS WIC PROGRAM</b> 5800 W 10th Suite 810 Little Rock, AR 72204		Act# 804025	FSMC St. Louis Park, MN 55416 75-1248 919	10968322
WIC ID NUMBER 00670118	NAME OF PARTICIPANT Roxie Brown	FIRST DAY TO USE 6/12/2012	LAST DAY TO USE 7/11/2012	AMOUNT OF SALE
QTY	DESCRIPTION			
1	GALLON(S) 2%, 1% OR FAT-FREE MILK			
1	QUART(S) 2%, 1% OR FAT FREE MILK			
1	UNIT= (4 CANS 14-16 OZ BEAN/PEA) OR (1-LB BAG DRY BEAN/PEA)			
1	64 OUNCE CONTAINER(S) JUICE			
2	16OZ WHOLE GRAIN BREAD/OATMEAL/TORTILLAS OR 14-16 BROWN RICE			
	XXX END OF ORDER XXX			
VENDOR MUST DEPOSIT WITHIN 60 DAYS FROM FIRST DAY TO USE DATE				
<b>SAMPLE</b>				
PAYMENT WILL BE DENIED WITHOUT				
AUTHORIZED WIC VENDOR STAMP				
Signature of Participant or Authorized Representative				
MICR Line: @ 10968322 @ : 0919 248 21 : 804025 @				

MICR Line      Signature Block

2. The Amount of Sale may be corrected only **ONCE** by making a line through the incorrect price and clearly printing the correct price just below the pre-printed words "Payment will be denied without" on the right-hand side. The WIC Check or CVB can then be deposited in your bank. Checks or CVBs with more than one correction will not be processed by the WIC Program's bank. Checks or CVBs with more than one correction may be sent in to the WIC State Office for review. Please provide any supporting documentation (such as receipts or transaction summaries) you may have to assist with the review.
3. If the cashier has incorrectly entered an amount that is greater than the face value of the CVB, the cashier or cash office may correct the Amount of Sale once before depositing. The Amount of Purchase entered should not be greater than the face value. For example, for an \$8 CVB, if the cashier enters the full purchase price of \$8.39, draw a line through the \$8.39 and enter \$8.00 just below the pre-printed words "Payment will be denied without". **DO NOT** deposit CVBs with a purchase price entered that is greater than the face value. The CVB will be rejected by the WIC Program bank and paid as an ACH, thus delaying the payment to the vendor. If the Amount of Sale is less than the face value, the actual amount of sale must be entered.

4. CLEARLY stamp each WIC Check and CVB with the self-inking vendor stamp in the block provided on the right-hand side on the front of the WIC Check or CVB before depositing at your bank. WIC Checks or CVBs with the vendor stamp upside down or stamped outside the block on the right-hand side of the check will not be accepted by the WIC Program's bank. Checks incorrectly stamped may be sent in to the WIC State Office for review. **The number one reason WIC Checks and CVBs are returned by the WIC Program's bank is "Missing Vendor Stamp."**
5. If the MICR Line is not printed clearly on the check stock, do not deposit. Send the check to the WIC Program State Office for review.
6. Deposit WIC Checks and CVBs promptly. All WIC Checks and CVBs, either deposited **or** redeposited, must clear the WIC Program's bank within **60 days of the "First Day to Use" date** regardless of the transaction date. WIC Checks or CVBs received after the 60 day period will not be paid.
7. Rejected Checks and CVBs – following are the procedures to follow if you receive WIC Checks or CVBs back from your bank:

**A. WIC Checks and CVBs rejected for the following reasons CAN BE CORRECTED AND REDEPOSITED by the Vendor:**

- a. Missing Vendor Number – vendor stamps the check(s) with the official stamp provided by the Arkansas WIC Program and redeposit.
- b. Unreadable Vendor Number – vendor clarifies by re-stamping or writing in ink the vendor number next to the original stamp and redeposit. Be sure the 4-digit vendor number is right side up and legible.
- c. Encoding Error – vendor returns check or CVB to their bank so the bank can correct the electronic amount of sale that was submitted to the WIC Program's bank. Amount submitted and amount written on the check must be the same.

**B. Returned Over the Max – ACH Applied - DO NOT REDEPOSIT:**

- a. The WIC Program's bank will reject any WIC Check for a purchase amount above 110% of the peer group average, which is the Not to Exceed (NTE) amount or a CVB submitted for over the face value.
- b. The rejected WIC Checks and CVBs will be stamped "Returned Over the Max – ACH Applied" and returned to the vendor's bank.
- c. The vendor does **not** need to resubmit the WIC Check or CVB stamped "Returned Over the Max – ACH Applied". At the end of the week, the vendor's bank account will be credited up to the amount of the NTE for these WIC Checks and CVB.
- d. This applies to all vendors.

**C. WIC Checks or CVBs rejected for the following reasons, WILL NOT BE PAID:**

- a. Unauthorized vendor number
  - b. Altered (including use of correction fluid and writing over pre-printed information)
  - c. Purchase date prior to "First Day to Use" printed on check
  - d. Purchase date after "Last Day to Use" printed on check
  - e. Stale - deposited or redeposited more than 60 days after the "First Day to Use"
  - f. Second presentment
  - g. Redeemed prior to vendor authorization
  - h. No signature in signature block (if signature is on the back of the check/CVB, send it in to the WIC Program State Office for review).
8. Vendors are no longer required to retain cash register receipts, but are encouraged to do so. Cash register receipts may only be given to ARs/Proxies for **CVB transactions** for which they pay an excess amount.
9. If you believe that a check or CVB has been rejected in error, please contact the WIC Program office promptly by phone, e-mail or mail. Requests for review and adjustments must be made no later than 60 days after the "First Day to Use."
10. Checks and CVBs with the following problems may be sent to the WIC State Office for review and possible payment: damaged, improperly corrected Amount of Sale, cash register endorsement problems (including endorsements on the wrong WIC check), signed with ink other than blue or black, and signature only on back.

QUICK CHECK and CVB REFERENCE FOR BOOKKEEPERS		WHERE TO SUBMIT CHECKS
REJECTED REASON	HOW TO CORRECT THE PROBLEM	
No Vendor Stamp Illegible Vendor Stamp	Stamp (re-stamp) the WIC Check or CVB with the WIC vendor Stamp	Redeposit the WIC Check or CVB into the bank.
Encoding Error	Vendor requests their bank to correct the deposit amount (must be same as Amount of Sale) and redeposit.	
Refer to Maker No Signature (but signature is on back)	The WIC Program will reimburse the vendor for the items listed using the most recent pricing information or face value.	Send WIC Check or CVB to the Arkansas WIC Program for reimbursement.
Excessive Dollar Amounts; NTE/MAR Applied	The bank has reduced the payment amount on the WIC Check or CVB to an appropriate amount for the items listed.	The WIC Check or CVB will be paid at the MAR and should not be re-deposited.
Counterfeit/Invalid Vendor Stamp	If a WIC Check or CVB is rejected for either of these reasons, please contact the Arkansas WIC Program vendor staff for assistance.	The WIC Program will not reimburse WIC Checks or CVBs that are rejected for these reasons.
No Signature	The WIC Check or CVB must be signed at the store after the actual purchase price has been entered. Vendor may not ask AR/Proxy to come back to sign at a later time.	
Altered Signature	WIC Checks or CVBs should not be accepted if the signature has been altered.	
Future Dated	WIC Checks or CVBs should not be accepted before the "First Day to Use" date.	
Expired	WIC Checks or CVBs should not be accepted after the "Last Day to Use" date and must be deposited within 60 days from the "First Day to Use" date.	
Altered Date	WIC Checks or CVBs should not be accepted if the "First Day to Use" or "Last Day to Use" date has been altered.	

## **Shelf Price Surveys - Determining Peer Group Average Prices**

The WIC Program is required to periodically collect shelf prices for all authorized vendors. This information is used to ensure competitive pricing for WIC approved items sold by WIC vendors. A different average price list is prepared for each of the four (4) vendor peer groups in the state. Peer groups are based on legal structure, size of the store and type of store. Each authorized WIC vendor is assigned to a peer group.

Peer group average prices are used to calculate the competitive prices vendors must maintain to meet vendor selection criteria as well as the maximum amount the WIC program will pay for each food item or combination of food items. More information about peer group average prices, competitive price levels and maximum prices is provided in the *Arkansas WIC Program Vendor Participation Agreement and Handbook*.

At the time of the shelf price survey, vendors are asked to provide shelf prices for the **most expensive WIC approved brand that the store carries** in each food category on the survey. It is extremely important that the price given is for the **most expensive**. The items listed by the vendor on the survey may not be the same brands most commonly sold to WIC customers, especially in categories such as milk or juice that require vendors to sell the least expensive brand available at the time of purchase. Providing the highest priced items on the survey ensures that the calculated average price allows vendors room to sell a more expensive brand if necessary (i.e. if the store is temporarily out of the brand that is most often the least expensive).

“Cost plus” stores and commissaries should provide the shelf prices without the percentage that is applied to the total purchase at checkout. WIC Program staff will add the percentage to each food item after the survey is received.

Shelf price surveys are collected at least three times each year. If there are significant price increases on certain categories of food items such as milk or formula, spot surveys may be conducted. If your store is experiencing significant price hikes on WIC approved foods, please contact the WIC state office with information on the product name, size container, new price and date that the increase is expected.

### **Tips for Completing a Shelf Price Survey**

- Read the instructions first. This will help avoid errors that will delay acceptance of the price survey. It is extremely important that the survey is completed accurately and that all requested information is provided.
- Make sure that any identifying information such as vendor number and peer group is provided. Each store is identified by a unique vendor number. It is the number on the stamp(s) issued to each store.

- Read through the survey to identify the food items. Make sure the Authorized Food List is used to complete the survey. Prices for unauthorized foods cannot be used.
- Some food items are available in a variety of sizes. If the size is not already specified on the survey, make sure this column is completed. This is used to calculate a price per ounce for some food categories.
- Complete **ALL** blank columns on the survey. Missing information delays acceptance of the survey.
- Check the survey before it is submitted for completeness and accuracy.
- Submit the survey **in the requested format** by the deadline given by the WIC state office. Late surveys delay preparation of the peer group average price list. A delay in the release of an updated peer group average price list can result in WIC Checks being rejected because they are over the maximum amount the WIC Program will pay.

### **Tagging WIC Approved Items**

All vendors are required to mark the appropriate approved food items with shelf tags issued by the Arkansas WIC Program (see Vendor Participation Agreement). The following are best practices and guidance on how to ensure that your store complies with this requirement.

For the purpose of determining compliance with shelf tag placement requirements, we are using the follow descriptions for the eight “section” designations:

1. Juice - Frozen, shelf stable and refrigerated juice
2. Dairy – Milk, soy beverages (shelf stable and refrigerated), cheese, eggs, yogurt
3. Protein – Peanut butter, sardines, tuna, salmon
4. Beans – Canned and dry beans
5. Cereal – Cold and hot breakfast cereals, oatmeal (those in whole wheat category)
6. Whole Grains – Bread, tortillas, brown rice, pasta
7. Infant Foods – Infant cereal and infant fruits, vegetables and meats
8. Formula – All AR WIC approved contract infant formula

For food categories that require the purchase of the “least expensive brand at time of purchase” tag **ONLY** the least expensive approved brand available in each variety in each container size. These food categories are: milk (refrigerated, dry, canned; regular, lactose-free, and acidophilus), cheese, eggs, canned beans, and juice. In the Arkansas Approved Food list, these categories list this requirement in bold print at the beginning of each section if it applies.

For juice, the container **size**, not type (canned, frozen, shelf stable bottle, or refrigerated carton or bottle), should be taken in consideration when determining least expensive. For example, if you sell a 46 oz. plastic bottle of tomato juice for \$2.15

and a 46 oz. can for \$1.87, the least expensive to tag/sell is the can. Sometimes the least expensive juice may be in a different location in the store – e.g. a 64 oz. carton of refrigerated orange juice for \$2.25 vs. a 64 oz. shelf stable bottle of orange juice for \$3.99. Frozen juice prices should not be compared to the prices of 46 oz. containers for the purpose of determining least expensive brand.

IF items are not in a category subject to the least expensive brand rule, tag ALL brands/items listed in the Arkansas Approved Food List. For example, if you have 3 of the WIC approved breads, tag all 3 breads.

You do not have to re-tag items that are on temporary sale (less than 15 days), but must sell that item if it is the least expensive brand at the time of purchase.

#### Miscellaneous Shelf Tag Do's and Don'ts

- DO tag in a consistent manner, such as placing the tag to the right of the price tag.
- DO assign someone in your store to check the placement of WIC shelf tags on a regular basis.
- DO keep extra tags in a central location, like the brown WIC folder issued to each store
- DO NOT tag fresh or frozen fruits and vegetables that are purchased with the Cash Value Benefit check.
- DO NOT use food company, homemade or corporate office shelf tags or product stickers. Use ONLY official tags (currently white with blue and red printing) issued by the AR WIC Program.

If you think you need more tags, first check to see if the store has any tags in the WIC folder that is usually kept in the cash office or at customer service. If the store is out of tags, contact: Administrative Assistant, Food Delivery Section, WIC State Office, 501-661-2508.

### **Transaction Discounts: Coupons, Loyalty Cards, Buy One Get One**

WIC participants are entitled to all of the transaction discounts that other customers benefit from. Following are the most common types of discounts and how they are to be handled in a WIC transaction.

- **Manufacturers' Cents Off Coupon** – the value of the coupon is applied to the WIC transaction. (example: WIC participant has a coupon for 45¢ off 64 oz. bottle of juice. Coupon is applied and transaction is reduced by 45¢)
- **Buy One, Get One Free (BOGO)** - applies to WIC approved or non-WIC approved items. The free item should NOT be counted against the WIC transaction. The free item goes to the WIC participant. (example: The offer is

buy one box of cereal and get one free (same price or lower). With 36 oz. in cereal benefits on one check, the WIC participant could purchase 2 18 oz. boxes of WIC approved cereal (with WIC benefits) and get 2 18 oz. boxes of WIC approved or non-WIC approved cereal free.)

- **Buy One, Get One at a Reduced Price** - reduced amount is applied to the WIC transaction. (example: since the reduced price item would be a WIC item (“mixed basket” not allowed in paper check transactions), the first bottle of juice would be full price and second bottle would be half price. If there are no WIC benefits available for the reduced price item (e.g. only one bottle of juice is on the check), there will be no discount applied to the WIC transaction.)
- **Free Ounces Added to Food Item by Manufacturer** (e.g. 20% More Free)- apply ONLY the ounces of the original/standard size to the WIC transaction. (example: a 16 oz. box of cereal included 4 oz. free for a total of 20 oz.; only 16 oz. would be credited to the WIC transaction. The participant would still have 20 oz. remaining from a benefit of 36 oz. of cereal to purchase other cereal.)
- **Transaction Discount** – stores offers \$\$ or % off when transaction is for a specific amount. The \$\$ or % discount is applied to the WIC transaction. (example: The store promotion is “if your purchase is \$50 or more, you receive a 10% discount”.)
- **Store Loyalty/Rewards Cards** – WIC participants may, but are not required to, use store loyalty cards. Do not use a dummy card or another customer’s card on a WIC transaction. The loyalty card benefit is applied to the WIC transaction.
- **Cash Back** – is not allowed in a WIC transaction.

### **Taxability of Manufacturer and Retailer Coupons**

Manufacturer coupons: Manufacturer coupons are considered part of the gross receipts received by retailers for purchases. Per GR18 and 28, the State of Arkansas does not tax the gross receipts of a transaction paid for in full by WIC benefits (food instruments). Therefore, there is no tax applied to manufacturer coupons applied to WIC purchases.

Retailer coupons: The amount of any coupon that is issued by the retailer and is not reimbursed by a third party is not part of gross receipts/proceeds and is not taxable.

## **Frequently Asked Questions**

***May I ask the person presenting the WIC Check/CVB and WIC ID Folder for a photo ID?*** No. The only identification allowed is the WIC ID Folder. At least one of the signatures on the WIC Check or CVB must match one of the names listed for Authorized Representative or Proxy on the WIC ID Folder. Do not accept WIC Checks or CVBs that have been signed before the amount of sale has been entered.

***If I know the person, can I go ahead and process the WIC transaction if they have forgotten to bring their WIC ID Folder with them?*** No. You must compare the signature on the WIC ID folder with the signature on the check/CVB every time.

***What do I do if I enter the wrong amount of sale?*** Each store will have its own policy on who can correct the number written in the "Amount of Sale" box. See bookkeepers' section of this guide for specific instructions on correcting the amount of sale.

***Does a participant have to buy everything that is printed on a WIC Check/CVB?*** Yes, on WIC Checks. ARs/Proxies are required to purchase every food item listed on the WIC Check and the quantity listed. If the AR/Proxy indicates that she/he does not want everything listed on the check, please refer them to their Local Health Unit or WIC Clinic. If the store does not have one of the items on the check available, the transaction cannot be completed. However, on a CVB for fresh/frozen fruits and vegetables, the AR/Proxy may choose to purchase less than, equal to, or greater than the face value printed on the CVB.

***Why does a participant have more than one check for the same dates e.g. three checks all with a First Day to Use date of 11/1/2015?*** To give participants more flexibility in when they make their food purchases, the month's allocation may be split in two or more checks. Also, WIC Checks for the purchase of formula are always printed on a separate check from other food items the participant may be receiving.

***Can a participant use more than one WIC Check/CVB at the same time?*** Yes, but each WIC Check must be handled as a separate transaction. CVBs for the same household may be combined on the same transaction to maximize the benefits used.

***If I recognize the child's name on the top of a WIC Check and I know the person who signed the check is not the parent or guardian, should I be concerned?*** No. Not as long as the signature on the check matches one of the names on the WIC ID Folder.

***Can a participant purchase other items at the same time as they are purchasing their WIC food items?*** Yes, but the WIC food package items must be treated as a completely separate transaction.

***What do I do if a participant tries to buy an unauthorized food?*** Do not allow unauthorized foods to be purchased with WIC Checks. Point out to the AR/Proxy the allowed foods listed on their check and/or the WIC Approved Food List. If you are still unsure if the WIC Program allows the food item, call the supervisor or store manager for assistance.

***What happens if a food item does not scan as WIC approved in the cash register system?*** ARs/Proxies MUST be allowed to purchase food as authorized under the conditions stated in the Approved Food List and printed on the checks presented. The vendor cannot disallow a food item or require the AR/Proxy to select another item because it does not scan as WIC approved. Vendors should notify their corporate offices concerning any possible discrepancies between WIC flagged items and the Approved Food List.

***Do I have to accept a WIC Check if it is damaged?*** If the check is damaged but all of the printing on the check, including the information entered at the time of purchase is legible, the vendor is allowed to decide whether or not to accept the check. Please send any damaged checks that you have accepted for payment to the WIC State Office for approval.

***If I have any questions about WIC policies or procedures, what should I do?*** First, call the supervisor or store manager for assistance. Arkansas WIC Program staff, at regional and state levels, is also available to answer your questions. See *Annex C* for a list of current WIC staff and their contact information.

## Infant Foods



### Infant Fruits and Vegetables

1. Participants may purchase only the brand names and varieties listed in the Approved Food List.
2. Containers must be 4 oz glass jars or 4 oz plastic tubs (packaged in a 2-pack). One plastic 2-pack equals two 4 oz. jars.

### Infant Meats

1. Participants may purchase only the brand names and varieties listed in the Approved Food List.
2. Containers must be 2.5 oz glass jars.
3. **Not allowed:** Multi-packs.

### Infant Cereal

1. Participants may purchase only the brand names and varieties listed in the Approved Food List.
2. Containers must be 8 oz box.
3. **Not allowed:** Cereal with fruit/fruit flakes, high protein, mixed or individual servings.

### Formula

1. Only brand, variety, and type listed on WIC Check. Carefully check variety as many labels are similar. Check will specify type: powdered, concentrate or ready to use (RTU).
2. October 1, 2015 – September 30, 2018 – Contract Formulas  
**Similac Advance Stage 1 and Similac Soy Isomil**
3. No substitutions of any kind, even if it is for another WIC approved formula.
4. **Not allowed:** Low iron formula or any brand or type not listed on the WIC Check. No exchanges. Participants must contact the local health clinic if they wish to change or exchange formulas.

## Milk and Soy-Based Beverages



1. The specific variety(ies) (reduced fat, fat free, skim, 1%, 2%, whole; lactose free – whole, 1% or skim; acidophilus) and size(s) (gallon, half-gallon, quart) authorized for the participant are printed on the WIC Check. The standard issuance for children 1 to 2 years old is whole milk; for children 2 and older and women, the standard issuance is 1% or skim milk. No substitutions allowed.
2. Least expensive brand applies to all forms of cow's milk. All brands are approved. The participant is required to purchase the least expensive brand of milk at the time of purchase in one of the specified varieties and sizes on the WIC Check. For example, if "Brand A" is usually the least expensive 1% milk, but is not currently available, the participant may purchase the higher priced "Brand B" 1%. The participant does not have to choose another variety such as skim milk just because it is less expensive than "Brand B" 1% or is listed on the check. Which ever brand is chosen, the variety must be one that is indicated on the WIC Check.
3. The quantity of gallons, half-gallons, and quarts will be indicated on separate lines on the WIC Check in the quantity column.
4. For quarts ONLY – if the store does not stock quarts in a variety of milk that is printed on the check and the participant wishes to purchase, the store may substitute two (2) pints for each quart (must be one of the varieties printed on the check). For example, if the WIC Check indicates one (1) quart of "1% or skim", the participant may NOT get two (2) pints of whole milk, but they could get two (2) pints of 1% or skim milk.
5. The participant does not have to purchase the same brand for gallons, half-gallons, and quarts. It must be the least expensive in that variety and size of container available at time of purchase. For example, the participant may purchase two (2) "Brand A" gallons of skim milk (least expensive skim gallon) and one (1) "Brand C" half-gallon of 1% (least expensive 1% half-gallon) and one (1) "Brand B" quart of 1% (least expensive 1% quart).
6. Two half-gallons may NOT be substituted for a gallon.

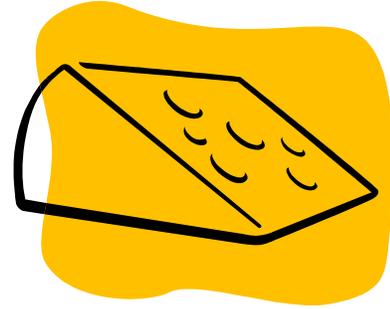
7. Non-fat Dry Milk – Only a 25.6 oz package of non-fat dry milk is allowed for purchase. The number of packages to be issued will be listed in the quantity column (QTY) on the WIC Check.
8. Evaporated Milk – The number of cans and variety of evaporated milk will be indicated on the WIC Check. **Not allowed:** Filled milk.
9. Lactose Free Milk – The number of half gallons or quarts and variety will be indicated on the WIC Check. Soy-beverage MAY NOT be substituted for lactose free milk.
10. Acidophilus Milk – The number of half gallons or gallons is indicated on the WIC Check.

**Not allowed:** For all varieties of cow's milk: "Deluxe", "Plus", organic, flavored, sweetened-condensed, non-dairy, goat's milk, Copy Cow, or Vitamite.

## **Soy Beverage**

**Soy-based Beverage** - participants may purchase only the brands and varieties on the Approved Food List. Quantity is listed in units – 1 unit = 1 half gallon (refrigerated) OR 2 quarts (Pacific Ultra shelf-stable). Least expensive brand at time of purchase DOES NOT apply to soy-based beverages.

## Cheese and Yogurt



### Cheese

1. Cheese must be 100% cheese in one of the following five varieties: American, Cheddar, Colby, Colby-Jack or mozzarella.
2. Cheese must be the least expensive brand available at the time of purchase within the variety selected by the participant.
3. 14-16 oz pre-packaged cheese only.
4. Participants may select either regular **or** low-fat cheese. “Low-fat” is not printed on the WIC Check.
5. Packages of individually wrapped slices are allowed **only if** they are the least expensive package of 100% cheese in the variety selected or the same price as the unwrapped slices in the variety selected.
6. Cheese from the store’s deli is no longer allowed. Cheese must be pre-packaged by the manufacturer, not in store.
7. **Not allowed:** Cheese foods, cheese products, whips or spreads, shredded, grated, cubed, crumbled, blended, smoked, imported or deli sliced.

### Yogurt

1. Yogurt in 32 oz. containers, only brands on Approved Food List, any flavor.
2. Quantity and variety (whole fat or low-fat/non-fat) will be listed on the WIC Check.
3. **Not allowed:** Organic, with granola or candy, Greek style.

# Grains



## Whole Grains

1. Whole grains - products such as whole grain breads, brown rice, whole grain tortillas, selected oatmeals and whole wheat pasta.
2. On WIC Checks, the whole grain products are listed on the same line separated by the word “or” – Whole grain: bread, tortillas, oatmeal, brown rice, or whole wheat pasta.
3. Each single product is a unit. Participants may choose which product(s) they wish to purchase from the whole grains category. For example, if one (1) unit is indicated in the quantity, they may choose:
  - 1 16 oz loaf of whole grain bread OR
  - 1 16 oz package of whole grain tortillas OR
  - 1 16 oz round canister/bag of oatmeal OR
  - 1 14-16 oz bag/box of brown rice
  - 1 16 oz package of whole wheat pasta (spaghetti or macaroni – any shape)

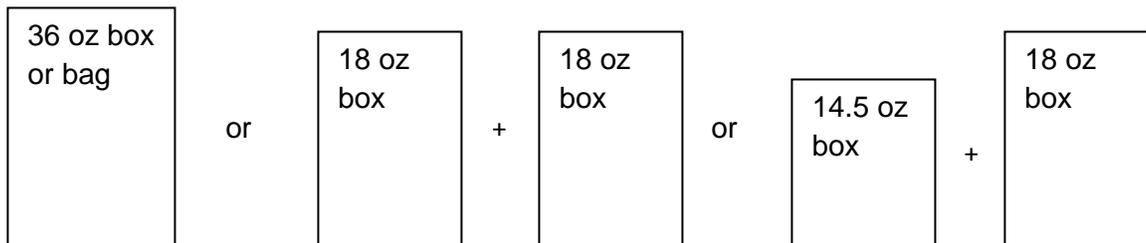
If two (2) units are indicated, they may choose **any combination**, such as two (2) 14-16 oz boxes of brown rice **or** one (1) 16 oz package of tortillas **AND** one (1) 16 oz loaf of bread.

4. Whole Grain Bread – 16 oz loaf of brands listed on Approved Food List.
5. Whole Grain Tortillas – 16 oz package of brands listed on Approved Food List.
6. Whole Grain Oatmeal – 16 oz package of oatmeal brands **listed in the whole grain section** of the Approved Food List. Other brands of oatmeal are listed in the cereal section, but they **do not** qualify as a product in the whole grain category.
7. Brown Rice – 14-16 oz package of any brand of brown rice. Brown rice may be instant, quick, boil-in-bag or regular cooking type.
8. Whole Wheat Pasta –16 oz package of whole wheat pasta (spaghetti or macaroni-any shape) of brands listed on Approved Food List.

## Cereal

1. The WIC Check will indicate the **maximum** number of ounces of cereal that can be purchased. The participant may choose a combination of boxes that **equal to or is less than** the number of ounces indicated on the WIC Check.
2. The standard monthly issuance amount for cereal is thirty-six (36) ounces. However, there may be a smaller number of ounces indicated on a WIC Check that is issued to a participant who is receiving less than a full month of benefits. Cashiers should check the quantity column carefully.
3. Only the brands and varieties of cereal listed on the Approved Food List may be purchased. Participants may choose any combination of size boxes or cereal varieties (cold and hot) as long as they are approved products and do not **exceed** the number of ounces listed in the WIC Check. Here are some examples of possible combinations of different size packages for a WIC Check for 36 oz of cereal:

### Example: 36 ounces maximum



4. Oatmeal: Currently, Quaker Instant Oatmeal is the only approved oatmeal in the **cereal category**. Other brands of oatmeal are listed in the **whole grain category**, but they **DO NOT** qualify as an oatmeal for the cereal benefit.

# Fruits and Vegetables



## Fresh Fruits and Vegetables

1. Participants may purchase any variety of fresh fruits and vegetables except as noted below. This includes all potatoes, mixed salads, mixed vegetables or mixed fruits, as well as organic varieties.
2. Fruits and vegetables may be in any type container (loose, paper bag, plastic bag, plastic container, Styrofoam tray, etc.) and may be whole or cut/peeled.
3. Participants may choose to purchase fruits or vegetables that have been reduced for quick sale.
4. **Not allowed:** Nuts, fruit/nut mixtures, fruit baskets, party trays with items other than vegetables or fruit, items from a salad bar, herbs (see Appendix D for details on herbs), dried fruit or vegetables, spices, mixed salad kits that contain salad dressing, croutons or other non-vegetable ingredients, vegetable or fruit containers containing dip, decorated pumpkins or gourds.

## Frozen Vegetables

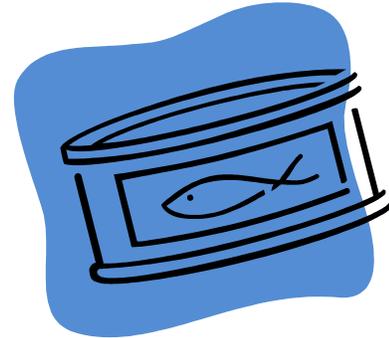
1. Participants may purchase any brand and variety of frozen vegetables, including vegetable mixtures. Organic varieties are allowed.
2. Any package type (bag or box) in any size is allowed.
3. Frozen vegetables containing salt or other preservatives are allowed as well as salt-free varieties.
4. **Not allowed:** French fries, tater tots, vegetables with sauces, butter, oil, seasonings, flavoring, breading, and vegetables mixed with pasta, rice or any other non-vegetable ingredient.

## Frozen Fruit

5. Participants may purchase any brand and variety of frozen fruit, plain or plain fruit mixtures. Organic varieties are allowed.
1. Any package type (bag, box or tub) in any size is allowed.
2. **Not allowed:** Any ingredient other than fruit, including added sugar. Preservatives are allowed.

Participants may purchase both fresh and frozen fruits and vegetables with a single CVB.

## Protein



### Eggs

1. Least expensive brand available at time of purchase.
2. One dozen containers only.
3. Large or medium white grade A or AA.
4. **Not allowed:** Egglard's Best, cage free, brown or organic.

### Peanut Butter

1. 16-18 oz jar.
2. Brands: JIF, Peter Pan and store brands only.
3. Variety may be creamy, chunky, crunchy or extra crunchy. Regular, natural and reduced/low-fat varieties are allowed if available in a 16-18 oz jar.
4. **Not allowed:** Varieties labeled with "Plus" - such as "with calcium" or Omega-3, whipped or peanut butter combinations (honey, jelly, etc.).

### Fish

1. Three types of canned fish are allowed on the Arkansas WIC Program – chunk light tuna in water, pink salmon and sardines (any flavor). Participant may choose any combination of fish types and can sizes not to exceed the number of ounces listed on the WIC Check.
2. Maximum number of **ounces** will be indicated on the WIC Check.
3. Brands: chunk light tuna in water (any brand); pink salmon (any brand); sardines (Beachcliff, Port Clyde, Polar, La Preferida, or Crown Prince only)
4. Cans only. Product may contain bones and skin.
5. **Not allowed:** Tuna – albacore, breast of tuna, tuna spread, flavored tuna including smoked, tuna in oil, with soy protein, or low salt/low fat tuna. 3 oz

pop-top cans (2 or 3 pack). Salmon – blueback salmon, red salmon, chum or flavored salmon.

### **Beans/Peas**

Dry **or** canned beans - a participant may purchase **either** one (1) 16 oz package of dried **or** four (4) 14 – 16 oz cans of canned beans/peas.

#### **Dry Beans/Peas**

1. Any brand, any variety of dried, plain, unseasoned mature beans, peas or lentils in a 16 oz (1 lb) package.
2. **Not allowed:** Mixed beans, soup mixes or flavored.

#### **Canned Beans/Peas**

1. Participants must purchase the least expensive brand available at time of purchase **within the chosen variety**. For example, the participant may choose “Brand A” black beans, if those are the least expensive black beans. They do not have to purchase pinto beans because they are cheaper than the black beans.
2. Participants may select any combination of bean and pea varieties to fill their purchase of four (4) cans. For example, two (2) pinto beans, one (1) lima beans and one (1) purple hull peas.
3. Participant **must** choose from the varieties (lima beans, pinto beans, chick peas, etc.) listed on the Approved Food List. Other varieties, even if they are less expensive or have similar contents, are **not allowed**.
4. Low Salt and Low or Reduced Sodium are considered the same variety. They are considered a different variety than the regular beans for the purpose of determining the least expensive brand and for tagging. For example, Brand A regular pinto bean is .69. There is no Brand A low salt or low sodium pinto bean. There is a low sodium pinto bean in Brand B but it is .92. The vendor may sell and tag both of these items since they are considered different varieties of pinto beans.

# Juice



1. Juice must be 100% pure juice in the specific variety, type and size container authorized for the participant and printed on the WIC Check.
2. Juice must be the least expensive brand available at the time of purchase within the variety, type and container size selected by the participant.
3. For some varieties, participants may purchase only the brands listed on the Approved Food List:

Any Brand

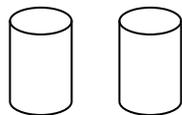
Orange, Grapefruit & Pineapple

Specific Brands

Apple, Tomato, Blended, Vegetable & Grape (purple and white)

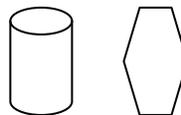
4. Participants may purchase a particular type within a variety, such as country style, pulp-free, or low acid. In order to meet the least expensive criteria, the juice selected must only be the least expensive type. For example, the participant must purchase the least expensive frozen pulp-free orange juice, not the least expensive frozen orange juice.
5. Some participants are issued WIC Checks that allow them to choose to purchase frozen concentrate or 46-48 oz single strength cans or bottles. The participant can “mix and match” container types. If the WIC Check indicates two (2) units of juice, the participant may purchase **any** combination of container types.

**Example:**



two frozen concentrate

or



one frozen concentrate /  
one 46-48 oz can or bottle,  
single strength

6. **Not allowed:** For any type juice (frozen concentrate or single strength): cocktails, fruit or juice drinks, ades, fruit/vegetable blends, or blended juices other than noted in the Approved Food List. Calcium fortified allowed **only** if specified on WIC Check.

## **Appendix A: Scenarios for Training Cashiers**

### **Scenario #1: I Know It's Here Somewhere**

Tanya, who's been one of your reliable cashiers for years, looks up to see LaShona in her line. LaShona has been here dozens of times to use WIC Checks for her baby. Today she seems really stressed out. She has a WIC Check with her, but can't seem to find her yellow WIC ID Folder anywhere in her purse. Tanya knows LaShona – their sons play softball together. Tanya also knows that LaShona wouldn't do anything that she shouldn't do. What does Tanya do?

#### **Discussion Questions:**

- Is it necessary to see the WIC ID Folder every time a participant uses a WIC Check? Why or why not?
- Can cashiers decide which participants have to show their folders – for example, people they don't know or people who don't look like they would qualify for the WIC program?
- Can a participant bring the folder later in the day for the cashier/manager to look at?
- Should the cashier call the manager and have the manager call the Local Health Unit to see if they can go ahead and accept the check? Or should the cashier ask to see a driver's license?

### **Scenario #2: The Missing Meat**

Carissa is at the store to pick up her daughter's WIC supplemental foods. She has picked up all of her items – infant vegetables and fruits, infant cereal, and infant meats. When she gets to the register, she is one jar short of the infant meat. A quick check of the shelf shows that the store is out of stock. What happens next?

#### **Discussion Questions:**

- Can Carissa come back later to pick up the one jar of infant meat when your shipment comes in and complete the transaction?
- Can Carissa get one more jar of vegetables to substitute for the infant baby meat? Why or why not?
- Can Carissa voluntarily agree to take less than the number of jars listed on her check?
- What should the cashier do at this point?

### **Scenario #3: Problem Pattie**

Today I had another run-in with “Problem” Pattie. She always complains about the type of milk she has to buy and refuses to get one of the cereals on the Approved Food List. Today she brought up whole milk and Sugar Smacks along with the other foods listed on her check. When I told her that she would need to select one of the approved cereals on the food list and one of the milk types on her WIC Check, she started yelling and telling me that the store down the street always lets her get what she wants. She left everything on the belt and stormed out of the store, shouting profanities.

#### **Discussion Questions:**

- Does it really matter what type of milk or cereal a participant selects as long as it is not more expensive than the type indicated on the Approved Food List or WIC Check?
- What should a cashier do when a participant doesn't want something listed on their check?
- What should cashiers and managers do when a participant uses abusive language or threatening actions?
- What could happen if a store sells unauthorized items or does not sell all of the items on a WIC Check?

### **Scenario #4: Juice Dilemma**

Maria gave her WIC Check to the cashier. One of the items listed on the WIC Check is two (2) units of 11-12 oz frozen or 46-48 oz can/bottle single strength juice. Maria has brought to the register one (1) 64 oz bottle of V-8 spicy vegetable juice. Has Maria selected the correct item(s)?

#### **Discussion Questions:**

- Can a participant get one (1) 64 oz container of juice instead of two (2) 46-48 oz containers if the flavor the participant wants is not available in the 46-48 oz container?
- Isn't the participant who chooses two (2) bottles of 46-48 oz single strength juice getting more juice than the participant who selects two (2) 11-12 oz cans of frozen concentrate? Does the cashier need to add up the ounces of the containers to determine if the participant has selected the correct mix of containers?
- If she can't purchase the V-8, can Maria get frozen calcium fortified orange juice instead?

### **Scenario #5: Got Milk?**

Anna presents her WIC Check which indicates that she is to purchase two (2) gallons and one (1) half-gallon of skim or 1% milk. Anna has decided she wants to purchase skim milk. The store has available its store brand of skim in gallons (which is the least expensive today), but not skim in half-gallons. She selects 2 gallons of store brand skim and one half-gallon of another brand of skim milk (which everyone knows is a more expensive brand of milk than the store brand). Larry, the cashier, tells Anna that she can't get the half-gallon because it is too expensive. He tells her that she must instead get 6 cans of fat-free evaporated milk (after all, it's the same thing after you add water) or a half-gallon of 1% milk in the store brand.

#### **Discussion Questions:**

- Are participants required to purchase different size containers of milk – gallon, half-gallon, and quart – all of the same brand?
- Can a cashier or manager decide what type or brand of milk the participant selects?
- Can evaporated milk or powdered milk be substituted for any of the containers of fresh milk on the WIC Check?

### **Scenario #6: Shopping with Cash Value Benefits (CVBs)**

James is shopping for his grandson's WIC approved food items. He's used WIC Checks before, but this is the first time he is using the Cash Value Benefit. Today he has two WIC Checks and one Cash Value Benefit (\$8). He brings to the register all of the milk, juice, cereal, bread and eggs that are listed on the WIC Checks as well as some bananas, bagged salad, peanuts, white baking potatoes, and frozen corn.

#### **Discussion Questions:**

- Are there any items that James is going to have to put back/substitute? Which one(s)?
- How many transactions will the cashier need to process? Which ones?
- What happens if the purchase price of the items James wants to purchase with the CVB is greater than the maximum value of \$8 printed on the CVB?
- Can you combine fresh and frozen fruits and vegetables in the same transaction? What if the bagged salad contains a packet of croutons?

## **Answers to Scenarios**

### **Scenario 1**

1. Yes. The WIC ID Folder is the only identification required and ensures the WIC Check or CVB is being redeemed by the authorized representative or proxy.
2. No. Everyone must present the WIC ID Folder at the time of purchase.
3. No. The WIC ID Folder must be available at the time of the purchase in order to verify the signature. Failure to do so is a violation of Section II, #1, Vendor Participation Agreement.
4. No. Vendors may not ask for any form of ID other than the WIC ID Folder.

### **Scenario 2**

1. No. No rain checks or due bills.
2. No. The participant must purchase only the food types and amounts listed.
3. No. The participant must purchase the full quantity and types of food listed on the check. If the participant wants to adjust their food package, they must do so through the Local Health Unit.
4. The cashier should inform the participant that they do not have the required stock and cannot complete the transaction. The participant will need to go to another vendor or check back with the store later to see if adequate stock has arrived.

### **Scenario 3**

1. Yes, it does matter. Food items are prescribed to address specific nutritional needs of each participant.
2. Inform that participant that the store cannot vary the purchase from what is written on the WIC Check. If the participant wishes to make changes, they must do so at the Local Health Unit.
3. Get as much information as possible – name of person committing abuse, check number, WIC ID number etc. and report it immediately to the regional Food Delivery Liaison.
4. Provides unauthorized foods: One (1) year disqualification for three documented incidents within a period of three (3) years. Claim will be made for the value of the check (Sanction 9).  
Fails to provide all food: On the first violation, the vendor will receive a warning letter and the second and each subsequent violation, will receive two (2) sanction points and a claim will be made for the value of the check (Sanction 12).

### **Scenario 4**

1. No. The participant must purchase only the container size(s) indicated on the check.
2. No. The reconstituted amounts in these different containers are the same.
3. Yes, 2 cans, but only if “calcium fortified” is written on the WIC Check.

**Scenario 5**

1. No. They are required to purchase the type indicated on the check in the least expensive brand in the container type, which may not be the same brand as the other container sizes.
2. No. It just must be the least expensive at the time of purchase for the variety and the type of container. If there are two types of milk listed on the check, as in this scenario, the participant is not required to accept the other type just because it is least expensive.
3. No. Evaporated or powdered milk must be specifically indicated on the WIC Check.

**Scenario 6**

1. Yes. Peanuts. Nuts are not allowed on the Approved Food List.
2. Three (3). Two WIC Check transactions and one (1) CVB transaction.
3. First, he is asked if he would like to put something back or if he would like to pay the excess. If he wants to pay the excess, the cashier asks him what type of tender he wishes to use. The cashier enters the face value on the CVB (for example, \$8; **NOT** the full amount of the transaction) and receives from James the remaining amount due, including tax on the excess amount, using any of the following: cash, debit card, credit card, check, or SNAP EBT (no tax on SNAP EBT). If the participant pays for the excess, they may receive a receipt for the transaction.
4. Yes – you can combine fresh and frozen items in the same transaction. Bagged salad or cut-up fruit are allowed as long as the container has no other ingredients such as dip, croutons, sugar, etc.

## **Appendix B: Post-Training Sample Test**

1. Least expensive brand at time of purchase applies to which of the following types of food? (Circle all that apply)  
Juice                  Peanut Butter                  Cheese                  Milk                  Yogurt
2. If a WIC food item listed on the Arkansas WIC Approved Food List shows as “not in our system” when scanned, the participant cannot receive the food item.  
True                  False
3. The cashier should enter the Amount of Sale in blue or black ink on the WIC Check or CVB at time of the transaction before obtaining the participant’s signature.  
True                  False
4. The WIC ID Folder (yellow) is not required each time a participant redeems a WIC Check or CVB.  
True                  False
5. If your store is out of the least expensive brand gallon/half-gallon/quart of milk, the participant can receive the next highest priced brand of milk.  
True                  False
6. If the cashier fails to get the participant’s signature on the WIC Check, the vendor should call the Local Health Unit and have staff contact the participant.  
True                  False
7. Abusive WIC participants, authorized representatives, and proxies should be reported to the WIC Program.  
True                  False
8. All brands of formula listed on the WIC Check are WIC approved.  
True                  False
9. Participants can purchase Quaker Instant Oatmeal (box) with their whole grain benefit.  
True                  False
10. Four (4) half-gallon containers of milk can be given to the participant if the vendor is out of gallon containers even though the WIC check indicates two (2) gallons.  
True                  False

Cashier and Bookkeeper Guide to Successful WIC Transactions

11. A pre-packaged container of cut-up fruit (with no dip or sugar added) is not an allowable Cash Value Benefit purchase.

True            False

12. If a WIC ID folder is not signed by the Authorized Representative or proxy, it is OK to let them sign it in the store as long as they sign before the cashier enters the amount of sale on the WIC Check/CVB.

True            False

13. It is OK to substitute the formula written on the check, if the store is out, with another WIC approved formula that is available.

True            False

14. If a check has the participant's signature missing from the signature line on the front, lower right-hand corner of the check but is signed on the back, you can send it to the WIC State Office for processing.

True            False

15. If frozen concentrate and single strength juice are listed on the same line on the WIC Check, the participant may choose any combination of container types if receiving 2 or more units.

True            False

16. The vendor has 90 days from the date of the transaction to submit a WIC check for payment or review.

True            False

17. If a participant wishes to purchase \$9.59 worth of vegetables with a \$8.00 Cash Value Benefit, they can, but they must pay the difference in cash.

True            False

18. A participant can now combine several WIC Checks in a single transaction as long as the checks are for individuals all living in the same household.

True            False

19. Vendors are not required to put their vendor stamp on Cash Value Benefit checks.

True            False

20. If the WIC participant has forgotten her store loyalty card, can you use the one from customer service for her WIC transaction?

True            False

**Post-Training Sample Test Answers**

- |                        |           |
|------------------------|-----------|
| 1. juice, cheese, milk | 11. False |
| 2. False               | 12. False |
| 3. True                | 13. False |
| 4. False               | 14. True  |
| 5. True                | 15. True  |
| 6. False               | 16. False |
| 7. True                | 17. False |
| 8. True                | 18. False |
| 9. False               | 19. False |
| 10. False              | 20. False |

## **Appendix C: Arkansas WIC Program Contact Information**

### **State Office**

Telephone: (501) 661-2508; fax (501) 661-2004  
Address: 5800 W. 10<sup>th</sup> Street, Suite 810, Little Rock, AR 72204  
Website: [www.healthyarkansas.com/wic](http://www.healthyarkansas.com/wic)

Pamela Woodard George, Manager, Food Delivery Section

[pamela.woodardgeorge@arkansas.gov](mailto:pamela.woodardgeorge@arkansas.gov)

**Contact for:** policy, vendor agreements, waivers, administrative reviews, new vendor applications and authorizations

Angie Mack, Health Program Specialist, Vendor Financial Information Management

[angelia.paynemack@arkansas.gov](mailto:angelia.paynemack@arkansas.gov)

**Contact for:** financial information, vendor payment/review/questions, banking/WIC Check and CVB issues, shelf price survey, vendor EBT readiness

De'Shunda Davis-Brown, Health Program Specialist, Vendor Education and Compliance

[deshunda.davis@arkansas.gov](mailto:deshunda.davis@arkansas.gov)

**Contact for:** vendor education, compliance, violations /sanctions, minimum stock information, WIC approved foods, vendor monitoring issues, and vendor training materials

Kimberly Newsom, Health Program Specialist II, Data Management

[kimberly.newsom@arkansas.gov](mailto:kimberly.newsom@arkansas.gov)

**Contact for:** price surveys, vendor sales reviews

Keeley Bailey, Administrative Assistant

[keeley.bailey@arkansas.gov](mailto:keeley.bailey@arkansas.gov)

**Contact for:** address and e-mail changes, mailings, WIC Flash distribution, vendor advisory committee, vendor supplies (food lists, shelf tags, replacement stamps/ink pads, etc.)

**Regional Staff**

**Contact your regional staff person for:** general questions and support, monitoring and educational visits, vendor training, shelf talkers/signs/food lists, minimum stock review, complaint resolution

**Northeast Region**

Selina Felton, Food Delivery Liaison

E-Mail: [selina.felton@arkansas.gov](mailto:selina.felton@arkansas.gov)

Telephone: (501) 319-5457 cell; (870) 236-7782 office; fax (870)-236-9610

Address: 801 Goldsmith Road, Paragould, AR 72450

**North Central Region**

Karen Lee, Food Delivery Liaison

E-Mail: [Karen.Lee@arkansas.gov](mailto:Karen.Lee@arkansas.gov)

Telephone: (501) 837-7070 cell; (501) 745-2485 office; fax (501) 745-2435

Address: 526 Quality Drive, Clinton, AR 72031

**Northwest Region**

Brenda Davis, Food Delivery Liaison

E-Mail: [brenda.davis@arkansas.gov](mailto:brenda.davis@arkansas.gov)

Telephone: (479) 422-2041 cell; (479) 444-7700 ext. 213; fax (479) 444-7189

Address: 27 West Township, Fayetteville, AR 72703

**Southwest Region**

Catherine Crouch, Food Delivery Liaison

E-Mail: [catherine.crouch@arkansas.gov](mailto:catherine.crouch@arkansas.gov)

Telephone: (870) 648-9333 cell; (870) 773-2108 ext. 251; fax (870) 773-7252

Address: 503 Walnut, Texarkana, AR 71854

**Southeast Region**

Christine Watts, Food Delivery Liaison

E-Mail: [paula.watts@arkansas.gov](mailto:paula.watts@arkansas.gov)

Telephone: (870) 589-3797 cell; (870) 734-1461 office; fax (870) 734-1466

Address: 306 West King Dr., Brinkley, AR 72021

**Central Region**

Melissa Gift, Food Delivery Liaison

E-Mail: [melissa.gift@arkansas.gov](mailto:melissa.gift@arkansas.gov)

Telephone: (501) 786-6111 cell; (501) 280-4965 office; fax (501) 280-4999

Address: 5800 W. 10<sup>th</sup> Street, Suite 907, Little Rock, AR 72204

**Appendix D: Arkansas WIC Approved Food List – Herbs/Other Items Not Allowed for Purchase with the Cash Value Benefit (CVB)**

These are NOT Arkansas WIC approved for the CVB purchases:

Aloe  
Anise  
Basil  
Bay leaves  
Caraway  
Chervil  
Chives  
Cilantro  
Dill  
Fenugreek  
Ginger  
Hierbauena  
Horseradish  
Jamaican hibiscus  
Lemon grass  
Marjoram  
Mint  
Oregano  
Parsley  
Rosemary  
Sage  
Savory  
Sugar cane  
Tarragon  
Thyme  
Vanilla bean  
Yucca root

**Appendix E: Arkansas WIC Approved Food List (valid until 10/1/16)**

Go to the following web page to download the current WIC Approved Food List (in English and Spanish)

<http://www.healthy.arkansas.gov/programsServices/WIC/Pages/VendorManagement.aspx>