



WIC Flash

News from the Arkansas WIC Program

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September 20, 2018

Reauthorization

Thank you to all vendors who were able to continue to participate in the WIC program and complete your reauthorization. Stacie Torrence, Administrative Assistant, have received the majority of the signature pages back. There are still a few more vendors who need to return to signature page to complete the reauthorization process. Please note if the signature page is not returned you do not wish to continue to an authorized WIC Vendor.

Vendor Advisory Committee

I also want to thank those vendors who were able to participate in the September meeting. I realize there were some who had planned, but were not able to. The consensus of the group is to have telephone conference calls twice a year and call a meeting if important information needs to be shared. The next meeting will be March 13, 2019. We will meet via telephone conference. I will send out the telephone number and access code as we get closer to this time.

Least Expensive Brand at the time of purchase

Arkansas is not a state that requires vendors to declare Least Expensive Brands. However, we have items that fall in this category such as Milk, Cheese, Eggs, Canned Beans/Peas, and Juice. If a WIC item falls in these categories we require the Least Expensive Brand sold at the time of purchase. However, if the Least Expensive Brand is not available at the time of purchase, the participant is allowed to purchase the next available Least Expensive Brand. Example, if your store brand of juice is not available at the time of purchase and Old Orchard is the next available cheaper brand the participant can purchase Old Orchard.

You cannot set your system up to only scan certain brands, store brands or the Least Expensive Brands only and deny the participant the ability to get the next available brand. This is a program violation and continuing in these unauthorized practices will result in sanctions.

Receipts

Participants are not being given their Balance Inquiry Receipt and the Utilization Receipt to determine whether or not to accept the purchase. The participant is being told hit the “YES” key and the cashier gives the participant the Balance Inquiry Receipt, Utilization Receipt, and the Ending Balance Receipt at the end of the transaction.

The participant is to be given the Balance Inquiry at the beginning of the transaction, the Utilization Receipt after the items have been scanned to determine whether to purchase the items. The beginning balance receipt is not meant for the cashiers use in determining what a participant should and should not get. The beginning balance is for the participant to review.

Mixed Basket

The cashier does not have to separate WIC items versus non-WIC items now that we have rolled out eWIC Card. All WIC items and non-WIC items can be scanned. When a non-WIC item is purchased the participant will have a balance due. This is similar to the SNAP Card. It is also important for cashiers to remember that participants do not have to purchase all of their benefits at the same time with eWIC.

Cash Value Benefits

Effective October 1, 2018 the CVB (Cash Value Benefit) for children will increase from (\$8 to \$9). Also, please remind cashiers that multiple participants can be on an eWIC card, therefore they will not always see an available CVB amount of only \$11.00 for women or the \$9.00 for children. It is also not the concern of the cashier to determine the amount of benefits a participant should or should not have. This has been an ongoing complaint that needs attention.

WIC Approved Tags

The new eWIC tag (red/blue) has been distributed to some stores while others still have the current (white/blue tag). All vendors will have the opportunity to transition from the old tag to the new tag throughout the remainder of the year. As stated in the eWIC trainings and the Reauthorization training, vendors will not be penalized for using one tag v/s the other. Either of the two tags are approved to use on Arkansas WIC Approved items for now. We will not impose the *Sanction 21: Unauthorized Tag Use*, until February 1, 2019.

Electronic Cash Register Systems Training

The certification team is willing to come out and train vendors if they are having issues on how to use their system. Ideally the IT individual or the VAR who sold the system should do the training. However, because the certification team has certified the vendor Electronic Cash Register System and are familiar with all the systems being used in the state and they are willing to help with training. For example, If the transaction is still open the cashier can do a Benefit Reversal. There are a lot of cashiers and management who do not know what this is and

are struggling. If you are interested in this contact Leslie Foreman via email or her office telephone at Leslie.Foreman@arkansas.gov or office phone at 501-671-1753. Brian Musick can be reached at Brian.Musick@arkansas.gov or office phone at 501-661-2087.

UPC / PLU Request Reminders

As soon as a store is aware there is a WIC approved item that is not scanning, contact the store's IT/Scanning Department and/or management. In order to verify an item is WIC Approved, utilize the WIC Approved Food List and the UPC/PLU list online which can be found in the Vendor Section. If the store's IT/scanning Department cannot verify the item they must contact the EBT/vendor Helpline for assistance at 501-661-2156 / Glen Poteet. Please keep in mind that ALL generic fresh fruits and vegetables UPC's or PLU's should be mapped by your IT/ Scanning Department to the National PLU. This applies to any fruits and vegetables that your store has tagged and placed in containers for sale.

If an item is not already WIC approved, a UPC Request form must be submitted. The UPC request form can be found online <http://www.healthy.arkansas.gov/programs-services/topics/wic-vendor-management>.

- Complete all areas in the Vendor and Product Information Sections.
- Email completed form to ADHWICVendor@Arkansas.gov attach pictures of the actual product label that show the manufacturer, product name, package size, UPC Bar Code, ingredients and the nutrition facts.
- Request forms and pictures may also be mailed to:

APL Manager
Arkansas WIC Program
5800 West 10th Street, Suite 300
Little Rock, AR 72204

Approved Food List

The current Approved Food List (lavender in color) effective October 1, 2016- September 30, 2018 will be replaced effective October 1, 2018. We will begin sending these out to each individual store the end of September 2018. Each store will receive a food list for each register as well as a few extra copies. We will also send a copy of the July 16, 2018 thru July 15, 2021 Vendor Handbook and Participation Agreement as well.

Formula Changes

In the June 13, 2018 WIC Flash, we informed you of the upcoming Infant Formula Changes. All benefits with a First Day to Use of October 1, 2018 or later will be for one of the following (individual unit UPC codes):

UPC	Name	Unit of Measure	Package Type
050000216673	Gerber GS Gentle powder	12.7 oz.	Can
050000035304	Gerber GS Soy powder	12.9 oz.	Can
050000624003	Gerber GS Soothe powder	12.4 oz.	Can

Through September 30, 2018, WIC participants may use checks that have a “First Day to Use” of September 30 or earlier to purchase Similac Advance or Similac Soy formulas. Local health units will encourage WIC participants to use their September formula benefits as soon as they can be used in September. **There will be no valid WIC checks for Similac Advance or Similac Soy formulas after September 30.**

If you run out of Similac Advance or Similac Soy before September 30 and a participant presents a check for one of them, they must go to another vendor to use their check. **Vendors may not substitute one brand or type of formula for another.** Vendors may face sanctions and repayment of WIC checks or eWIC benefits for any formula substitutions. Since the benefits for the Gerber Good Start formulas will not have a “First Day to Use” date before October 1, there will be **no** Arkansas WIC demand before that date.

Minimum Stock Requirements

October 1, 2018 – October 15, 2018 the minimum stock requirements for Gerber Good Start products will be **suspended**. **ALL** other minimum stock requirements will remain in effect. Please make every effort to keep enough inventory for your expected customer flow in early October. Again, you may NOT substitute one formula for another. Vendors will be required to refund the WIC program for any formula checks that were not redeemed with the correct formula. The sale of incorrect formula will not be an issue in the EBT world because of the APL.

October 15, 2018 – the following minimum stock requirements will be in effect for the new Gerber formulas:

Gerber Good Start Gentle, powdered, 12.7 oz.	15 cans
Gerber Good Start Soothe, powdered, 12.4 oz.	11 cans
Gerber Good Start Soy, powdered, 12.9 oz.	11 cans

The minimum stock requirements above will be in effect throughout the current Vendor Agreement period of July 16, 2018 - June 15, 2021.

The chart below shows the formulas currently issued and which will be authorized for benefits with “First Day to Use” on or after October 1, 2018. The new items will need to be tagged as WIC Approved after 11:59 p.m. CST on 9/30/2018 and tags of current Infant formulas can be removed.

Current	New
Similac Advance Stage 1, powdered, 12.4 oz.	Gerber Good Start Gentle, powdered, 12.7 oz.
Similac Advance Stage 1, concentrate, 13 oz.	Gerber Good Start Gentle, concentrate, 12.1 oz.
Similac Advance Stage 1, RTF, 32 oz.	Gerber Good Start Gentle, RTF, 4 pack/8.45 oz.
Similac Soy Isomil, powdered, 12.4 oz.	Gerber Good Start Soy, powdered, 12.9 oz.
Similac Soy Isomil, concentrate, 13 oz.	Gerber Good Start Soy, concentrate, 12.1 oz.
Similac Soy Isomil, RTF, 32 oz.	Gerber Good Start Soy, RTF, 4 pack/8.45 oz.
Similac Advance Stage 1, powdered, 12.4 oz. OR special formula issued by the local health unit	Gerber Good Start Soothe, powdered, 12.4 oz.

If you have questions about the content of this WIC Flash, please contact:

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