



Department of Health

ANDREW M. CUOMO
Governor

HOWARD A. ZUCKER, M.D., J.D.
Acting Commissioner

SALLY DRESLIN, M.S., R.N.
Executive Deputy Commissioner

May 1, 2015

Re: WIC Check Reimbursement

Dear NYS WIC Vendor Banking Partners:

The New York State Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children (WIC) recently implemented several changes to existing operations in order to meet new requirements specified by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) and more effectively manage vendor related activities. Effective April 4, 2015, the Not to Exceed (NTE) amounts have been removed from the face of the WIC check. Effective April 11, 2015, the NYS WIC banking contractor began rejecting payment of exempt formula checks that were submitted by unauthorized vendors.

As a result of these changes, some WIC vendors have experienced an increase in the number of WIC checks rejected for exceeding authorized amounts. Although the NYS WIC Program's banking contractor is not imposing bank fees for rejected checks, we have been made aware of instances where the vendor's bank of deposit is charging additional fees. While the WIC vendor is receiving an automatic reimbursement from the NYS WIC Program, the amount reimbursed is based on a regional area average and may be lower than what the vendor requested for payment.

To assist WIC vendors through this transition, the NYS WIC Program is recommending that vendors contact their bank and discuss options for negotiating bank fees. Some WIC vendors have been successful in requesting a temporary waiver from bank fees, while other vendors have negotiated a onetime reduced monthly fee for all rejected checks. Other vendors have elected to use this opportunity to research national and regional banks to determine which offerings, incentives and services can best meet their needs.

We respectfully request that your institution offer WIC vendors a courtesy waiver of additional bank fees as a result of rejected WIC checks. WIC vendors are critical partners in administering WIC benefits by ensuring that participants have access to safe and nutritious foods for adequate growth and development. The NYSWIC Program is committed to maintaining a positive, productive working relationship with WIC vendors and will continue to monitor pricing and patterns by region to address market price fluctuations and ensure that reimbursement levels are set at appropriate levels.

Sincerely,

Loretta A. Santilli, M.P.H.
Director, Division of Nutrition