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</table>
OVERVIEW OF WIC

What is WIC?

WIC is a Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC). The main purpose of the program is to ensure the health and well-being of eligible pregnant, postpartum and breastfeeding women, children, and infants. WIC provides participants with individually tailored food prescriptions. These prescriptions call for specific types, brands, and amounts of foods that meet strict nutrition requirements. Local agency staff also offer nutrition education, breastfeeding counseling, support services, and referrals to health and social services.

WIC is funded by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) and the State of New York. WIC is administered by the New York State (NYS) Department of Health (DOH). WIC program services are provided throughout the state by contracted local agencies, which include hospitals, county health departments, and other nonprofit organizations.

Participants in the program receive checks for WIC approved foods and formula and vouchers for vegetables and fruits. Participants can redeem these checks and vouchers at WIC authorized grocery stores and pharmacies. All WIC authorized grocery stores and pharmacies are under contract with approved New York State Vendor Management Agencies (VMAs) and must meet certain requirements set by the state and federal governments.

What is a Vendor Management Agency?

A Vendor Management Agency (VMA) oversees the retail food delivery system. New York State WIC contracts with 4 VMAs. Each VMA oversees authorized WIC vendors within a different region of the state.

VMAs are responsible for:
- Enrolling, overseeing, training, and monitoring WIC vendors to ensure compliance with federal and state regulations, and
- Assisting vendors, participants, and local agency staff with using WIC benefits at authorized WIC stores.

If you have questions, please contact the VMA that services your region (see page 4). A list of VMAs, including contact information and areas served, can also be found by visiting the NYS Department of Health website.
INTRODUCTION

The NYS WIC Vendor Handbook is a training and reference guide for vendors (grocery stores and pharmacies) that are authorized to accept WIC checks. The Vendor Handbook is designed to help store owners, cashiers, managers, and bookkeepers understand vendor responsibilities, WIC acceptable foods, minimum stock requirements, and how to process WIC checks.

Please use this handbook to help ensure that your store is in compliance with all policies, procedures, and federal and state rules and regulations.

Using the WIC Acronym

Vendors may not use the WIC acronym in the store’s name nor can stores use the letters "W", “I” and “C” in that order in the store’s name. The purpose of this restriction is to avoid giving the false impression that the business is affiliated with or sponsored by the State agency, USDA, or the WIC Program.

The WIC acronym and the WIC Logo are registered service marks of the USDA for USDA’s WIC, Registration Nos. 1,630,468 and 1,641,644, respectively, hereinafter referred to collectively as the “service marks.” Private organizations may not use the service marks in ways likely to cause confusion regarding their involvement with the WIC Program. It is USDA policy to avoid endorsements, directly or indirectly, of any commercial product, service, or enterprise.
WHICH VENDOR MANAGEMENT AGENCY
SHOULD I CONTACT?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>If your store is located in this county:</th>
<th>CONTACT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>DOWNSTATE</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Kings, Nassau, Queens, Richmond, Suffolk, New York (Manhattan), Rockland, Orange | **Public Health Solutions**  
WIC Program Vendor Management Agency  
40 Worth Street, 5th Floor  
New York, New York 10013  
Telephone: (646) 619-6400  
Fax: (646) 619-6784  
Director: Rudy Sicari  
rsicari@healthsolutions.org |
| Bronx, Putnam, Westchester             | **Montefiore New Rochelle Hospital**  
WIC Program Vendor Management Agency  
1600 East 233rd Street  
Bronx, NY 10466  
Telephone: (718) 654-2690  
Fax: (718) 654-3127  
Director: Charlie Gonzalez  
chargonz@montefiore.org |
| **UPSTATE**                            |         |
| Eastern Counties:                      | **Commission on Economic Opportunity for the Greater Capital Region, Inc. (CEO)**  
WIC Program Vendor Management Agency  
2328 Fifth Avenue  
Troy, New York 12180  
Telephone: (518) 272-6012  
Fax: (518) 687-0160  
Director: Penny Bashford  
pbashford@ceoempowers.org |
WIC Program Vendor Management Agency  
2328 Fifth Avenue  
Troy, New York 12180  
Telephone: (518) 272-6012  
Fax: (518) 687-0160  
Director: Penny Bashford  
pbashford@ceoempowers.org |
| Central Counties:                      |         |
| Broome, Cayuga, Chenango, Cortland, Herkimer, Jefferson, Lewis, Madison, Oneida, Onondaga, Oswego, St. Lawrence, Tioga, Tompkins | **Society for the Protection and Care of Children (SPCC)**  
WIC Program Vendor Management Agency  
148 S. Fitzhugh Street  
Rochester, New York 14608  
Telephone: (585) 730-8282  
Fax: (585) 730-8286  
Director: Lonnie Reaves  
lreaves@spcc-roch.org |
| Western Counties:                      |         |
| Allegany, Cattaraugus, Chautauqua, Chemung, Erie, Genesee, Livingston, Monroe, Niagara, Ontario, Orleans, Schuyler, Seneca, Steuben, Wayne, Wyoming, Yates | **Society for the Protection and Care of Children (SPCC)**  
WIC Program Vendor Management Agency  
148 S. Fitzhugh Street  
Rochester, New York 14608  
Telephone: (585) 730-8282  
Fax: (585) 730-8286  
Director: Lonnie Reaves  
lreaves@spcc-roch.org |
VENDOR’S ROLE, RIGHTS, AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Vendor’s Role
As an authorized WIC vendor, you play an important role in the WIC Program by:
• Making sure that participants have access to safe and nutritious foods
• Making sure that participants receive exactly what is prescribed on the WIC checks
• Respecting WIC participants and offering a positive shopping experience
• Offering competitive prices to help the WIC Program limit costs and reach the greatest number of eligible women, infants, and children

Vendor’s Rights
As an authorized WIC vendor, you have the right to:
• Be considered for enrollment in the WIC Program
• Receive training
• Be paid for WIC checks when all program rules are followed
• Be notified before any action is taken by the WIC Program
• Receive a fair hearing in certain situations
• Refuse to serve any rude or abusive participant and file a complaint

Vendor’s Responsibilities (see WIC Vendor Contract for more information)
As an authorized WIC vendor, you must:
• Follow all WIC Program rules, regulations, policies, and procedures as outlined in the contract, WIC Vendor Handbook, Vendor Bulletins, and any additional authorizing materials issued by the NYS Department of Health
• Follow all check cashing and depositing policies, and accept the terms and conditions for reimbursement
• Be responsible for all actions of employees, owners, officers, managers, and agents of your store
• Stock a required minimum of the types and quantities of WIC acceptable foods at reasonable prices at all times
• Issue all authorized foods in the amounts specified on the WIC check
• Not turn participants away for reasons other than abusive behavior
• Not accept WIC checks that have been altered
• Maintain sanitary and safe conditions in your store
• Return the WIC vendor stamp and cling when closing or selling your business
• Not allow a new owner or another store to use your WIC vendor stamp

[Return to Table of Contents]
WIC VENDOR CONTRACT

As an authorized WIC vendor, you are required to sign a contract developed and approved by the NYS Department of Health.

What is a Vendor Contract?

The WIC Vendor Contract is a binding agreement between the WIC vendor and a VMA. By signing the contract, you are agreeing to all WIC Program rules, regulations, policies, and procedures as outlined in the contract, WIC Vendor Handbook, Vendor Bulletins, and any additional authorizing materials issued by the NYS Department of Health.

The WIC Vendor Contract can only be signed by the store’s owner, a corporate officer, or another representative authorized to enter into a legally binding agreement.

How long does the Vendor Contract last?

The contract is effective for a 3-year period. You must meet the enrollment criteria at all times throughout the 3-year contract period. During the contract period, your VMA may monitor you at any time and as often as necessary to make sure you are following all program rules.

At the end of the first and second year of your contract, your VMA has the option to “non-renew” the contract if you are not meeting all program requirements (without cause).

Your contract can also be terminated if you break any program rules. The WIC Vendor Contract is not transferable.

You must apply for a new contract at the end of each 3-year period. This process is known as “reauthorization.” Your VMA will send a reauthorization application packet 120 days before the end date of the current contract.
VENDOR PEER GROUPS

What are vendor peer groups?

When you become an authorized WIC vendor, your store is assigned to a vendor peer group. Vendor peer groups are groups of vendors who are alike in ways that impact food prices.

Vendor peer group assignment is based on:

1. Your location
   - Urban
   - Non-urban
2. Your store size (based on number of cash registers)
   - Small
   - Medium
   - Large
   - Extra-large
3. Your business model
   - Major chain grocery store*
   - Minor chain grocery store*
   - Independent grocery store*
   - Chain pharmacy
   - Independent pharmacy
   *Includes grocery stores, grocery stores with pharmacies inside, and grocery stores approved to accept checks for exempt formula

What is the function of a vendor peer group?

Vendor peer groups allow WIC to set maximum prices for each WIC eligible food, using a rolling calculation that relies on average prices across peer groups to promote fair market pricing.

Can my peer group change?

Your vendor peer group assignment may change if your store size, location, or business model changes. During a vendor monitoring, VMA staff will confirm this information, including your store's register count. A change may also occur as a result of information shared if a vendor completes an Exempt Formula Application. Your VMA will alert you if there are any changes to your vendor peer group assignment.

If you feel an error was made to your vendor peer group assignment, or if your store size, location, or business model changes, fill out the Request for Peer Group Reassignment. Follow the instructions provided on the request. For more information visit the NYS WIC Vendors website.
How do I use a WIC cling?

Your VMA will provide you with a WIC cling. The cling is a sign that helps participants identify where they can use WIC checks. The cling must be clearly posted at the entrance of your store and is the only sign that is allowed to be used to identify your store as WIC-authorized. The cling must not be shared with other vendors. It must be returned to your VMA with your vendor stamp, if your business closes or is sold, or your WIC authorization ends for any reason.

WIC Grocery Store Cling:
WIC Pharmacy Cling:

WE ACCEPT
ACEPTAMOS
WIC
FORMULA CHECKS
CHEQUES PARA COMPRAR FÓRMULA

* This institution is an equal opportunity provider.
* Esta institución es un proveedor que ofrece igualdad de oportunidades.

A Program of the New York State Department of Health.
Un Programa del Departamento de Salud del Estado de Nueva York.
WIC ACCEPTABLE FOODS

What are WIC acceptable foods?

WIC acceptable foods are foods that WIC participants are allowed to purchase. Participants can choose from these WIC acceptable foods based on what is prescribed for them on their WIC check.

Participants learn about WIC acceptable foods when they pick up their checks at the local agency.

How do I know what foods are WIC acceptable?

The WIC Acceptable Foods Card and the WIC Pictorial Foods Guide identify foods that WIC participants are allowed to purchase with their WIC checks.

- The WIC Acceptable Foods Card and the WIC Pictorial Foods Guide should be used in combination with the WIC check to determine what foods can be purchased.

- You and your staff must have a good understanding of the WIC Acceptable Foods Card and the WIC Pictorial Foods Guide.

- Keep a copy of the WIC Acceptable Foods Card and the WIC Pictorial Foods Guide at each cash register and any additional copies at the customer service counter.

- The WIC Acceptable Foods Card and the WIC Pictorial Foods Guide are available in English and 20 other languages on the NYS Department of Health website and on the NYS WIC Vendors website.

- Vendor Bulletins are used to notify authorized WIC vendors of changes or updates to the WIC Acceptable Foods Card and WIC Pictorial Foods Guide.

- Information about WIC acceptable foods is also available from your VMA.
MINIMUM STOCK REQUIREMENTS

What are minimum stock requirements?

Minimum stock requirements are a list of certain varieties and amounts of WIC acceptable foods that you must keep in stock at all times throughout your contract period.

It is important to maintain the minimum stock requirements at all times because WIC participants rely on you to have all the foods that are listed on their WIC checks. Participants can only redeem their checks when all the foods listed on the check are in stock.

Minimum stock requirements include information about container types, sizes, varieties, and brands of WIC foods. Minimum stock requirements vary based on the type of store authorized.

Grocery Stores
- Must stock specific varieties and amounts of WIC Acceptable Foods, and
- Must stock contract infant formula.

Pharmacies
- Must stock contract infant formula, and
- Must agree to order exempt formulas and medical foods upon request by the VMA.

Grocery Stores with a Pharmacy Inside
- Must stock specific varieties and amounts of WIC Acceptable Foods, and
- Must stock contract infant formula, and
- Must agree to order exempt formulas and medical foods upon request by the VMA.

Grocery Store without a Pharmacy with an Exempt Formula Exemption
- Must stock specific varieties and amounts of WIC Acceptable Foods, and
- Must stock contract infant formula.
These are the minimum stock requirements for grocery stores, grocery stores with a pharmacy inside, and grocery stores without a pharmacy with an exempt formula exemption.

### New York State WIC Program - Minimum Stock Requirement

**Effective July 15, 2015**  
**Grocery Stores**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Food Item</th>
<th>Type/Brand</th>
<th>Size</th>
<th>Minimum Stock</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Milk</strong></td>
<td>Whole Milk</td>
<td>Gallon</td>
<td>3 Gallons</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Quart</td>
<td>4 Quarts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1% Low Fat or Nonfat/Skim</td>
<td>Gallon</td>
<td>5 Gallons</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Quart</td>
<td>4 Quarts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Cheese</strong></td>
<td>Cheddar, Colby, Pasteurized Process American, Monterey Jack, Mozzarella, Swiss, Muenster, Provolone, blends of these cheeses</td>
<td>8 oz. or 16 oz.</td>
<td>6 total pounds</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2 Types</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Eggs</strong></td>
<td>Medium, Large</td>
<td>1 Dozen Carton</td>
<td>8 - 1 Dozen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Juice</strong></td>
<td>Shelf-Stable Concentrate</td>
<td>11.5 oz.</td>
<td>6 Containers - 2 Varieties*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Frozen Concentrate</td>
<td>11.5-12 oz.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Single Strength</td>
<td>64 oz.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Frozen Concentrate</td>
<td>16 oz.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Breakfast Cereal</strong></td>
<td>WIC Approved Cereal Brands and Types (see WIC Acceptable Foods Card)</td>
<td>12-36 oz.</td>
<td>12 Boxes - 3 Types (Corn, Wheat, Oat, Rice, Multi-Grain)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Whole Grains</strong></td>
<td>Whole Grain Bread</td>
<td>16 oz.</td>
<td>12 Packages - 2 Types</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Brown Rice</td>
<td>14-16 oz. or 28-32 oz.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Whole Grain Tortillas</td>
<td>16 oz.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Whole Wheat Pasta</td>
<td>16 oz.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Dry Beans, Peas, Lentils</strong></td>
<td>Dried Beans/Peas/Lentils</td>
<td>16 oz.</td>
<td>5 Packages</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Canned Beans</strong></td>
<td>(see WIC Acceptable Foods Card)</td>
<td>16-16 oz.</td>
<td>12 Cans - 2 Varieties</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Peanut Butter</strong></td>
<td>(see WIC Acceptable Foods Card)</td>
<td>16-16 oz.</td>
<td>5 Jars</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Canned Fish</strong></td>
<td>Tuna</td>
<td>5 or 8 oz.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Pink Salmon</td>
<td>5, 6, or 7.5 oz.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sardines</td>
<td>3.75 oz.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Vegetables &amp; Fruits</strong></td>
<td>Vegetables</td>
<td>Fresh, Frozen, Canned</td>
<td>3 Varieties - 1 must be Fresh</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Fruits</td>
<td>Fresh, Frozen, Canned</td>
<td>3 Varieties - 1 must be Fresh</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Infant Cereal</strong></td>
<td>Gerber Dry Cereal</td>
<td>8 oz.</td>
<td>6 Containers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Baby Food (Vegetables &amp; Fruits)</strong></td>
<td>Single or Combination Vegetables</td>
<td>4 oz.</td>
<td>35 containers - 2 Varieties of each Type</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Baby Food Meat</strong></td>
<td>(see WIC Acceptable Foods Card)</td>
<td>2.5 oz.</td>
<td>10 Jars - 2 Varieties</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Infant Formula (Concentrate or Powder)</strong></td>
<td>Enfamil Infant Concentrate</td>
<td>13 oz.</td>
<td>24 Cans</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Enfamil Infant Powder</td>
<td>12.5 oz.</td>
<td>12 Cans</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Type - anything that is listed in the "Type" column.  
Variety - An assortment or flavor within each Type.
These are the minimum stock requirements for pharmacies.

**New York State WIC Program - Minimum Stock Requirement**

*Effective July 1, 2015*  
*Pharmacies*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Food</th>
<th>Type/Brand</th>
<th>Size</th>
<th>Minimum Stock</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Infant Formula (Concentrate or Powder)</td>
<td>Enfamil Infant Concentrate</td>
<td>13 oz.</td>
<td>24 Cans</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Enfamil Infant Powder</td>
<td>12.5 oz.</td>
<td>12 Cans</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*In addition, pharmacies must order and stock exempt and soy formula as requested by the VMA.*
INFANT FORMULA

The NYS WIC Program allows 2 types of formula:
- Contract Infant Formula
- Exempt Formula

**What is Contract Infant Formula (also known as Standard Infant Formula)?**

The WIC Program has contracts with certain infant formula manufacturers. The infant formula contracts have a mandatory restriction: no substitutions are allowed. This means that the participant must purchase the brand, product name, form (concentrate, powder, ready-to-use), and container size printed on the WIC check.

**What is Exempt Formula (also known as Non-Contract Formula or Special Formula)?**

Exempt formula is any product on the Approved Formulas in the New York State WIC Program Formulary list other than the contract formulas.

All formulas issued by the NYS WIC program are listed on the [Approved Formulas in the New York State WIC Program Formulary](#) document.

**Which formula checks can a store accept?**

**All WIC Authorized Stores**

All authorized WIC pharmacies and grocery stores may accept WIC checks for contract infant formula.

**Pharmacies and Grocery Stores with Embedded Pharmacies**

Authorized WIC pharmacies and authorized WIC grocery stores with a pharmacy inside may redeem WIC checks for any authorized infant formula, including exempt formula that is listed on the Approved Formulas in the New York State WIC Program Formulary list.

In order to accept WIC checks for exempt formula, these vendors must ensure that their VMA has a valid copy of their pharmacy license.
**Grocery Stores with Exempt Formula Exemption**

Authorized exempt formula grocery stores may redeem WIC checks for SOME exempt formulas on the Approved Formulas in the New York State WIC Program Formulary list. These formulas include:

- Boost/Boost High Protein/ Boost Kid Essentials
- Enfamil Nutramigen
- Enfamil Nutramigen with Enflora LGG
- Ensure/Ensure Plus
- PediaSure/PediaSure with Fiber
- PediaSure Enteral/PediaSure Enteral with Fiber
- Similac Alimentum

Contact your VMA if you have any questions about which exempt formula WIC checks you can accept. Any exempt formula check redemption that does not follow WIC Program policy may result in:

- Check rejection by the NYS WIC banking contractor
- Bank fees from your bank of deposit
- Recovery of funds paid, civil monetary penalties, or disqualification by the WIC Program

**What are the Infant Formula Supplier Requirements?**

Federal law restricts which businesses can supply infant formula to a WIC vendor for resale to a WIC participant. You may only purchase infant formula from businesses on the [WIC Infant Formula Supplier List](#).

Before a company can be included on this list, the WIC Program must verify that the company is:

- Licensed by the NYS Department of Agriculture and Markets (if required to have a food license), or
- Registered with the NYS Department of Taxation and Finance, or
- Approved by another state’s WIC program (if the business is located in another state).

If you want to use a company that is not on the Infant Formula Supplier List, you may submit that company’s name, address, and contact information to your VMA for review. You must not purchase infant formula from that company until your VMA indicates that your request has been approved, or until the supplier has been added to the WIC Infant Formula Supplier List.
**Additional Restrictions for WIC Approved Formulas**

- WIC participants may not substitute another brand of formula for any reason, even if the approved brand is out of stock. Participants who want a different formula than is printed on the check should be referred to the WIC local agency.

- WIC participants may not purchase approved formula with a WIC check and then exchange it for other formulas or for cash. Participants who request to exchange formula should be referred to the WIC local agency.

- The only allowable exchange is when a WIC participant returns a container that is damaged, past its expiration date at the time of purchase, or contains defective or spoiled formula, and requests to exchange it for an intact, unexpired container of the exact same product.

- Permitting a WIC participant to purchase an infant formula other than the prescribed brand is a violation of the WIC Vendor Contract and could result in fines and/or disqualification from the WIC Program.

- A WIC check is a prescription for certain types and amounts of formula. The WIC participant must get everything listed on the WIC check.

- The WIC participant may not “pay the difference,” “put a can back,” or “receive change back” from a WIC purchase for infant formula.

**How should I stock infant formula?**

- Formula must be kept in cool, dry conditions. The very best temperature range is between 55 and 75 °F (12 and 24°C). Temperatures below 32 °F (0°C) or above 95 °F (35°C) are unacceptable.

- Extreme hot and cold temperatures can destroy the ingredients and the nutrients in formula.

- It is important to follow proper storage of formula to ensure its highest level of quality, since it may be the only source of nutrition for a baby for the first several months of life.
**INFANT CEREAL**

**Which infant cereals are on the program?**

The NYS WIC Program has a contract with one manufacturer for infant cereal. Under this contract, participants are only allowed to purchase the brand of infant cereal printed on their WIC check. The NYS WIC Acceptable Foods Card and the WIC Pictorial Foods Guide both contain additional information on contract infant cereal.

**What are the restrictions on infant cereal?**

The infant cereal contract has a mandatory restriction: no substitutions are allowed. Due to this restriction:

- WIC participants may not purchase approved infant cereal with a WIC check and then exchange it for other cereals, for cash, or for credit. Participants that request to exchange infant cereal should be referred to their local agency.

- The only allowable exchange is when a WIC participant returns a container that is damaged, past its expiration date at the time of purchase, or contains defective or spoiled cereal. In this situation, participants may exchange the container for an intact, unexpired container of the same exact product.

- Allowing a WIC participant to purchase an infant cereal other than the prescribed brand is a violation of your WIC Vendor Contract and could result in fines and/or disqualification from the WIC Program.

- The WIC participant may not “pay the difference,” “put a box back,” or “receive change back” from a WIC purchase for infant cereal.
What is a WIC identification card?

The WIC Program Identification Card (WIC ID card) is used to ensure that only authorized persons can use WIC checks.

How is a WIC ID card used?

- Every WIC local agency issues WIC ID cards to each of its enrolled participants. The WIC local agency’s name and the WIC participant’s name appear on the card.

- This card must be presented whenever WIC food instruments are used. NO OTHER FORM OF IDENTIFICATION MAY BE SHOWN OR REQUESTED (such as a driver’s license).

- If a participant loses a WIC ID card, the WIC local agency will issue a replacement.

- If there are questions about a WIC ID card, call the VMA immediately.

- You and your employees must always request the WIC ID card when a WIC check or voucher is used. By checking the WIC ID card, you can verify that the participant signing has been authorized by the WIC Program and that the signature on the WIC check or voucher matches the signature on the WIC ID card.

- One or more signatures (participant, parent/caretaker, proxy) may appear on the WIC ID card. The person using the WIC check MUST be listed on the WIC ID card.

- A proxy is an individual other than the participant who is authorized to pick up and redeem WIC food instruments on behalf of the participant. A proxy MUST be listed on the participant’s WIC ID card.

Are there different types of WIC ID cards?

Yes, there are 3 types of WIC ID cards that may be issued to participants. Examples of each type of card are included in this section.
• The **WIC Program Identification Card** is the WIC ID card that is typically issued to WIC participants. This card is valid for use with regular WIC checks.

• The **Manual Check WIC Program Identification Card** is used along with a specific set of manual WIC checks. Manual WIC checks are issued to participants when the computer system is not working. Each individual set of manual checks has its own ID card. The check numbers associated with a specific Manual Check ID card are listed on the left side of the card. In addition to verifying the signature of the person redeeming the check, the cashier must also verify that each check number appears on the Manual Check ID card.

• The **Temporary WIC Program Identification Card** is used when the computer is unable to produce a regular WIC ID card for participants who are using regular WIC checks or participants using Special Formula Food Instruments (SFFIs).
The WIC ID Card

The WIC ID card is used to ensure that only authorized persons cash WIC checks. The person cashing the checks will need to show the WIC ID card at the check out when cashing the checks.

**The WIC Agency where the participant receives checks.**

**Signature of the primary caretaker of the child or the signature of the woman participant.**

---

**The WIC ID Number**

**People receiving WIC checks.**

**The signature of authorized proxy (or proxies). If the line is not used, the X’s make the line unusable.**
The Manual Check WIC Program Identification Card

Manual checks are issued to participants when the computer system is non-operational. Each individual set of manual checks has their own ID card. The check numbers associated with a specific Manual Check ID Card are listed on the left side of the card. Like the regular WIC ID Card, the Manual Check ID Card is used to ensure that only authorized persons cash WIC checks. The cashier must not only verify the signature of the person redeeming the check, but also verify that they are redeeming the correct check.

The WIC Agency where the participant receives checks.

Signature of the primary caretaker of the child or the signature of the woman participant.

The signature of another person authorized to redeem the checks. If the line is not used, the X's make the line unusable.

The temporary participant ID number associated with the manual checks being issued.

The ONLY check numbers that this WIC ID Card is valid for.
The Temporary WIC Identification Card

The Temporary WIC ID card is issued to WIC participants when the computer is unable to provide the regular WIC ID card. It is intended for use with regular WIC checks and is hand written by the WIC local agency staff.

This Temporary WIC ID Card may only be used to redeem checks that bear this participant's name and ID Number.

**Metropolitan Agency**
123 Main St Albany, NY 12204

**PHONE:** (518)555-1234  **FAX:** ( )
**Local Agency No:** 1  **Site No:** 1
**Card Number:** 30645

**Participant Name:** Gray, Dorian
**Participant ID:** S0412045

**FOR USE WITH WIC FOOD INSTRUMENTS**
**VALID THROUGH:** April 5, 2003
**Date Issued:** March 1, 2003

**WIC PROGRAM**
**TEMPORARY IDENTIFICATION CARD**
**NYS DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH**

**Participant/Parent/Guardian Name:** Gray, Anna
**Participant/Parent/Guardian Signature:** Anna Gray

**Parent/Caretaker/Proxy Name:** Windsor, Beth
**Parent/Caretaker/Proxy Signature:** Beth Windsor
**Proxy Signature:** Brianna Bodair
**Local Agency Authorized Signature:**

This WIC ID Card must have the original signature of a WIC local agency staff member.

The signature of another person authorized to redeem the checks. If the line is not used, the X's make the line unusable.

Signature of the primary caretaker of the child or the signature of the woman participant.
VENDOR STAMP

What is a vendor stamp?

A vendor stamp includes the unique 5-digit number that the NYS Department of Health assigns to each authorized WIC vendor. The stamp is not to be duplicated. Only stamps provided by the NYS Department of Health may be used to validate WIC checks, Cash Value Vouchers, and Special Formula Food Instruments.

- Your vendor stamp is the property of New York State and it MUST be returned to your VMA if your WIC authorization ends for any reason.

How do I use a vendor stamp?

- You must stamp all WIC checks, Cash Value Vouchers, and Special Formula Food Instruments that you accept in black ink in the “Pay To” box on the front of the check.
- The stamp must make a clear legible number.
- The vendor stamp must be maintained in your store during all business hours.
- Vendors must request replacement of worn, broken or lost stamps by the NYS Department of Health.
- If your vendor stamp is lost or stolen, contact your VMA immediately.

How do I get a replacement vendor stamp?

To request a replacement vendor stamp, you must complete the Vendor Stamp Request. Send your completed request along with a check for $10.00 (rubber) or $16.00 (self-inking) payable to the New York State Department of Health and mail to the address listed below. Allow 4 to 6 weeks for delivery of the stamp. When NYS issues you a replacement vendor stamp, you must return your old stamp with the completed and signed Vendor Stamp Receipt to the address indicated. A sample receipt is included in this section.

New York State Department of Health
Division of Nutrition
Food Delivery and Vendor Management Section
150 Broadway, Room 650
Albany, NY 12204-2719
MEMORANDUM

WIC VENDOR STAMP RECEIPT

TO:  Contact Person's Name
     Store Name

FROM:  Food Delivery & Vendor Management Section (FDVMS)

DATE:

SUBJECT:  WIC Vendor Stamp Receipt

Enclosed is your WIC Vendor Stamp order. You must acknowledge that you received the correct stamp and quantity listed below. Place a checkmark in the box to the left of the Vendor Stamp Number, sign and date this receipt.

You must mail this receipt **AND** the old/broken/worn WIC Vendor Stamp to the:

New York State Department of Health
Division of Nutrition
Food Delivery and Vendor Management Section
150 Broadway, Suite 650
Albany, NY  12204-2719

Your old/broken/worn WIC vendor stamp #XXXXX is the property of the NYS Department of Health and MUST be returned with this receipt no later than 15 days from the date of this receipt.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Received by the Vendor</th>
<th>Vendor Stamp Number</th>
<th>Quantity Ordered</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

______________________________________________  __________________
Vendor Contact Signature                        Date Received
As an authorized WIC vendor, you are required to provide bank account information during both the application process and the reauthorization process. You may have up to 2 WIC bank accounts; an account for deposit and an account for reimbursement. Bank account information must be provided by completing a [Bank Designation Notification](#).

You must submit a completed Bank Designation Notification for each account and attach a voided check or bank letter to the Bank Designation Notification. Original signatures are required.

**What happens if my bank information changes?**

If your banking information changes (for example; bank name, account number or router number, bank being sold or closed), you must complete a new Bank Designation Notification and mail it to your VMA along with a voided check or bank letter.

You are required to notify your VMA in writing at least 30 days before any banking changes are made.
Are all WIC checks the same?

No, the WIC Program issues 4 types of WIC checks. Examples of check types are included in this section.

1. Computer generated or regular WIC Checks are the most commonly used checks. All information is computer-printed on these checks. This information includes the participant and local agency information, the “Not Good Before” (NGB) date, the “Not Good After” (NGA) date, and the prescribed foods.

2. Manual WIC Checks are used when a computer-generated WIC check cannot be printed by the WIC local agency due to computer problems. Manual checks have a handwritten participant name and NGB date. The prescribed foods are computer-printed onto the check.

3. WIC Vegetables and Fruits Cash Value Vouchers (CVVs) are similar to the computer-generated WIC check and contain similar information. These checks are used to purchase fresh/frozen/canned vegetables and/or fruits. These checks have a fixed dollar amount listed in the food prescription area. The check cannot exceed the dollar amount listed.

4. Special Formula Food Instrument (SFFI). Refer to the Special Formula Food Instrument section for more information.
What is a Special Formula Food Instrument?

A Special Formula Food Instrument (SFFI) is a paper voucher for exempt infant formula. The WIC Program gives WIC participants SFFIs when regular WIC checks are not available.

Only vendors authorized to accept exempt formula may redeem Special Formula Food Instruments.

Just like a WIC check, the SFFI is a food prescription that meets a medical or nutritional need. You must provide the exact amount and type of formula listed on the SFFI voucher.

Before sending a participant to your store, your VMA or a WIC local agency may call to ask if you have the special formula in stock (or if you will order the product).

How does an SFFI work?

The “Local Agency” section at the top of the SFFI will already be complete when the participant brings the SFFI to your store. A sample SFFI is included at the end of this section.

- A participant can redeem as many as 4 SFFIs per month
- The maximum number of individual cans of formula allowed on a single SFFI voucher is 96

If the local agency portion of the SFFI is incomplete, illegible, or altered, you must refuse to accept it and instruct the participant to return the SFFI to the WIC local agency.

Vendor and Participant Transaction

Follow the step by step instructions on the back of the form to complete the vendor portion.

You must keep both the yellow and white copies of the SFFI document after giving the participant the formula.
How do I submit an SFFI for payment?

Follow the instructions on the bottom portion of the form and mail the original white copy within 60 days of the Not Good Before date on the SFFI to:

WIC Program SFFI Reimbursement
P.O. Box 22074
Albany, NY 12201-2074

Photocopies are not acceptable.

Vendor Payment

The state’s contracted bank reviews the SFFI for completeness and legibility.

- If acceptable, the SFFI is processed for payment via the electronic reimbursement system. A sample of a properly completed SFFI is included in this section.

- If the Vendor Stamp is missing/illegible or if the payee has failed to sign the instrument, it will be returned to you with a letter. You must properly complete the form and return it to the WIC Program SFFI Reimbursement P.O. Box within 60 days of the Not Good Before date.

- The following circumstances may cause an SFFI to be ineligible for payment:
  
  o Invalid Vendor Stamp
  o Vendor accepted voucher prior to the Not Good Before (NGB) date
  o Vendor accepted voucher after the Not Good After (NGA) date
  o Vendor submitted the instrument after the 60-day submission deadline
  o Missing participant signature and/or redemption date
  o Missing amount
  o Incomplete form
  o Invalid bank account or bank router number
  o Terminated Vendor
Sample Completed SFFI:

```
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Local Agency Stamp</th>
<th>Vendor Identified to Accept Instrument</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Appleville Health Center</td>
<td>Pathway Market</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th># of Units</th>
<th>Unit Size</th>
<th>Concentrate (C)</th>
<th>Name of Formula</th>
<th>Cost per Unit</th>
<th>Total Cost</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>31</td>
<td>13 oz</td>
<td></td>
<td>Nutramigen</td>
<td>$9.00</td>
<td>$279.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
```

I certify that I received formula in the quantity and type specified above.

```
[Vendor Signature]
```

Vendor Name and Address:
PATHWAY MARKET
1234 CENTRAL AVE
ANYTOWN, NY 12303
Phone Number (518) 555-2180

Date: 05/08/16

Redemption Date: 05/08/16

[Return to Table of Contents]
WIC CHECK CASHING POLICY

The WIC check is a food prescription that meets a medical or nutritional need. You must fill the prescription with the exact amounts and types of WIC foods written on the check.

WIC vouchers for vegetables and fruits are different from regular WIC checks. Vouchers for vegetables and fruits only show a dollar value. The participant can choose which specific types of vegetables and fruits to buy.

When cashing WIC checks, you must adhere to the following:

- Accept WIC checks issued by any NYS WIC agency.
- Use the WIC Acceptable Foods Card and/or WIC Pictorial Foods Guide to verify correct foods.
- Require the WIC ID card as the only form of ID; match the ID number and name on the card against the WIC ID number and name on the check.
- Confirm the Not-Good-Before (NGB) and Not-Good-After (NGA) dates, these dates should never span more than 30 days.
- Accept the participant’s coupons/club cards and “buy one, get one free” deals.
- At the time of purchase, clearly print the amount of the transaction in the “Pay Exactly” box in black or blue ink.
  - If the cashier makes a mistake in recording the transaction amount, the cashier must put a line through the mistake, initial the mistake, and then write the correct transaction amount above the mistake.
- Have the participant sign and date the check after the cashier has entered the transaction amount in the “Pay Exactly” box in black or blue ink. Checks should be dated using a 2-digit month, 2-digit day, and 4-digit year. Checks using the common United States numeric format will be accepted (for example, 4/4/16, 04/04/16, 4/4/2016, 04/04/2016). Checks will not be accepted if words are used to write out the month (for example, April 4, 2016) or if European dating formats are used.
- If a participant makes a mistake dating the WIC check, instruct the participant to put a line through the mistake, initial the mistake, and then write the correct date above the mistake.
• Compare the participant’s (or proxy’s) signature on the WIC check against the signature on the WIC ID card.

• Stamp the check with the vendor number in black ink and deposit the check into the vendors bank account within the timeframe printed on the check.

• Checks scanned by the Bank of Deposit (BOD) or a BOD supplied scanner need to be legible and readable by the NYS banking contractor. The NYS Department of Health is not responsible for scanning quality issues that result in checks being rejected.

**Authorized WIC vendors and their employees must NOT:**

• Discriminate against a WIC participant based on race, color, creed, political beliefs, national origin, sex, age, or disability.

• Refuse to honor WIC checks for reasons other than abusive participant behavior.

• Exchange WIC foods or WIC checks for cash or credit.

• Issue unauthorized foods or amounts.

• Deny WIC participants the use of coupons or club cards if your store accepts them from other customers.

• Issue rainchecks or IOU’s.

• Charge WIC participants more than other customers.

• Substitute infant formulas.

• Accept expired checks or post-dated checks.

• Accept checks that have altered Not Good Before (NGB) or Not Good After (NGA) dates, participant information, agency information or food amounts.

• Accept pre-signed checks.

• Accept damaged or illegible checks.

• Use a date stamp to “date” the check.
• Expect payment from the NYS WIC Program for WIC checks issued by states other than New York.

• Allow the use of self-check-out registers. These registers are not approved for WIC transactions. The entire WIC purchase must be verified by cashier/store personnel.

• Give change when transacting a regular WIC check.

• Charge WIC participants money for WIC foods (see the exception below).

**Exception for WIC vegetables and fruits checks only:** Participants may “pay the difference” when the actual purchase amount is more than the dollar value printed on the WIC vegetables and fruits check. In this instance, you may accept cash (or other forms of payment, including other benefits). When the transaction amount is more than the WIC check amount, you should write only the WIC check amount in the “Pay Exactly” box.
What should I do before depositing a WIC check?

Always review each WIC check before you deposit it to make sure the information is correct. This will reduce the number of checks returned by the state’s contracted bank. Review each check to confirm that:

- The check is stamped with your NYS-issued VENDOR STAMP in black ink.
- The vendor stamp number is legible.
- The back of the check is stamp-endorsed with your bank of deposit and account number.
- The check is appropriately SIGNED and DATED by the participant or proxy.
- The following areas of the WIC check have NOT been altered: participant information, agency information, Not Good Before date, Not Good After date, and/or the WIC food prescription.

- The “Pay Exactly” amount is present and legible. If the “Pay Exactly” is altered in any way (for example, if the amount has been crossed out or retraced), the check should be mailed to the Post Office (PO) Box for reimbursement. You must include a completed NYS reimbursement form.
- The check is deposited WITHIN 60 days of the NGB date into the authorized bank account. Please do not hold checks for deposit as they are all time sensitive. Stale dated checks will not be reimbursed.
• If you scan the check, please be certain the scan is clear and legible. Unreadable scans will not be processed by the NYS Banking Contractor and may result in bank fees imposed by the vendor’s bank of deposit (BOD).

If there is a problem with a check, contact your VMA for instructions before depositing the check. This will help avoid rejected checks.
How do I get reimbursed for certain check errors and returned checks?

Payment is handled by mailing the checks to a specified Post Office (PO) Box using the Electronic Reimbursement Request.

The “Electronic Reimbursement” system is used to credit your WIC bank account through direct electronic payment for approved reimbursements. Each time a reimbursement request is processed, you will receive a statement from the state’s contracted bank with information about the transfer of funds to your WIC bank account. The contracted bank’s statement should be compared to the statement from your WIC bank account every month.

Once processed, these checks will not be returned to vendors.

What is the reimbursement policy for specific returned checks?

1. For checks that reject with “Altered Amount,” you are permitted to seek reimbursement through the PO Box address listed on the following page. These include checks that were deposited and rejected for having an altered “Pay Exactly” amount, including cashier errors, and checks never deposited in anticipation of being rejected for altered amount.

2. For checks with a missing vendor number or illegible vendor number, you must correct the errors and re-deposit at the bank.

3. For checks that reject with “Exceeded Authorized amount,” no action is required. You will be reimbursed through an Automated Clearing House (ACH) transaction. These checks will be reimbursed at an amount based on the vendor peer group system for that check type.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Check error</th>
<th>How to handle reimbursement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Altered “Pay Exactly” Amount</td>
<td>• Mail the checks and a completed copy of the Electronic Reimbursement Request Form to:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>WIC Program Check Reimbursement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>P.O. Box 22074</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Albany, NY 12201-2074</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Do NOT deposit the checks in the bank.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Do NOT staple or tape the form to the checks.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Submit checks within 70 days from the Not Good before (NGB).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Stale dated checks will not be reimbursed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• To help prevent future errors in the “Pay Exactly” box, train cashiers to write the correct purchase amount on the checks at the time of the sale.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Missing Vendor Number</td>
<td>• Do not mail the checks to the PO Box for reimbursement.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Use the NYS-issued vendor stamp to stamp your vendor number in black ink in the appropriate area on the face of the check.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Re-deposit the check in the bank.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• The check must be deposited within 70 days from the NGB date.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Stale dated checks will not be reimbursed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Illegible Vendor Number</td>
<td>• Do not mail the checks to the PO Box for reimbursement.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Wash your WIC vendor stamp in warm, soapy water to remove excess ink from the stamp. Use a small brush to remove ink from stamp surface.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Test the stamp on a blank piece of paper to be sure that all five digits are clear and legible. Use only a <strong>BLACK</strong> inkpad to improve stamp readability. Do NOT use blue, red or any other color inkpad. Re-ink your stamper often.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• With the check on a smooth, flat surface, stamp your vendor number on the check ABOVE or BELOW the illegible stamp.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Re-deposit the check in the bank.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• The check must be deposited within 70 days from the NGB date.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Stale dated checks will not be reimbursed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exceeds Authorized Amount</td>
<td>• Do not mail the checks to the PO Box for reimbursement.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Checks with be automatically paid via an ACH transaction based on the vendor peer group system for that check type.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
If the returned check is a substitute check, you can re-stamp your vendor number in the lower left area of the substitute check, above the Magnetic Ink Character Recognition (MICR) line (as shown in the example below).

Are there any checks that I cannot be reimbursed for?

Yes, there are checks that will not be reimbursed and should not be submitted for reimbursement or re-deposited.

Checks with the following errors will not be paid, and should not be sent to the PO Box for reimbursement or re-deposited at the bank:

- Missing or altered participant/proxy signature and/or date
- Missing “Pay Exactly” amount
- Accepted check before the Not Good Before (NGB) date
- Accepted check after the Not Good After (NGA) date
- Postdated/Future dated
- Stale dated (deposited after the final deposit by date listed on the check)
- Checks more than 70 days past the Not Good Before (NGB) date
- Altered food prescription
- Unauthorized or terminated vendor
- Unauthorized bank account for WIC check deposit

Note: Depositing or re-depositing these checks in the bank for payment may result in bank charges from your bank of deposit.

To avoid rejected WIC checks, please have your staff regularly review the handbook section on WIC Check Cashing Policy.

For additional questions, contact your VMA.
NOT-TO-EXCEED AMOUNT

What is a Not-To-Exceed Amount?

The NYS WIC Program has a contract with a bank to review and pay for WIC checks that you redeem. Each WIC check has a maximum dollar amount, called a Not-To-Exceed (NTE) amount. This NTE is not listed on most WIC checks. The NTE amount is only listed on Cash Value Vouchers (CVVs) (also known as WIC Vegetables and Fruits checks).

The maximum dollar amount for each check is determined based on the food or formula items on the check, and the peer group assignment of the vendor submitting the check for reimbursement.

What happens if the “pay exactly” amount is more than the NTE amount?

If the “pay exactly” amount written on the check is more than the NTE amount for the check, the check will at first be rejected. Your bank may impose a “rejected check” fee when a check exceeds the NTE. Checks that exceed the NTE should not be redeposited or sent to the PO Box.

The check will be automatically paid via an Automated Clearing House (ACH) transaction based on your vendor peer group. The ACH transaction will deposit directly into your WIC approved bank account.

How do I limit the number of checks that are rejected for exceeding the NTE amount?

You can reduce the number of WIC checks that are rejected for exceeding the NTE amount by:

- Being careful to provide participants with the exact type and amount of foods and formula listed on the check
- Keeping prices of WIC foods competitive with similar sized vendors
- Properly completing CVV transactions
Examples of WIC checks that rejected for exceeding the NTE amount:

This check was rejected because the vendor wrote in a “pay exactly” amount that is more than the maximum dollar amount ($8.00) printed on the check.

This check was rejected because the vendor wrote in a “pay exactly” amount that is far more than the maximum dollar amount for which this check type can be redeemed. Unlike the WIC vegetables and fruits vouchers, this check does not list the not-to-exceed amount. However, the requested reimbursement amount is much higher than the average reimbursement amount for 1 gallon of milk.

This check was rejected because the vendor wrote in a “pay exactly” amount that is far more than the maximum dollar amount for which this check type can be redeemed. WIC vendors are required to offer competitive prices.
COMPETITIVE PRICES

**How are competitive prices determined?**

As a NYS WIC Program vendor, your store will be assigned to a vendor peer group. Your store’s shelf prices for WIC foods and formula will be compared to prices for the same types of products from other vendors in your peer group. This price comparison will be made:

- When you apply to be a WIC vendor, and
- When your store is monitored by VMA staff.

A group of commonly purchased WIC foods used for this comparison is called a Market Basket. Your store’s prices on contract formula will also be used for this comparison.

Having competitive prices indicates that the store’s prices, on average, are similar to other stores in the vendor peer group.
SHELF TALKERS

What are shelf talkers?

Shelf talkers (also known as shelf stickers, shelf tags, shelf strips, or channel strips) are tags that you can put on your store’s shelves to label which foods are WIC approved. Shelf talkers help participants identify the types and brands of WIC approved foods available in your store.

This is an example of what a shelf talker looks like:

Do I have to use shelf talkers?

No, shelf talkers are optional. It is up to you to decide if you want to use them.

How do I request approval for shelf talkers?

Due to preparation efforts by NYS for eWIC/NYWIC activities, NYS is not accepting requests for new approvals or requests to review current approvals for changes.

How do I use shelf talkers?

If you are approved to use shelf talkers in your store, the shelf talkers must be used for all approved brands of food within each food category. For example, if shelf talkers are used for cereals, all WIC approved cereals that your store sells must have shelf talkers. The “WIC” acronym must be the same size on all of the shelf talkers.

You may not place shelf talkers near:

- Infant formula, because each check explains the exact brand, form (powder, concentrate, ready-to-use), and container size a participant must buy.
- Items approved for purchase by only a limited population (for example, homeless participants). These are special items that a WIC local agency may ask you to stock, such as single-serving juices and ultra-high temperature (UHT) milk boxes.

- Shelf talkers must never be attached to the WIC approved foods. They can only be attached to the shelving or other fixture where the foods are located in the store.

- Your VMA will provide training and help on how to use shelf talkers. It is your responsibility to properly align shelf talkers with WIC approved foods and move shelf talkers whenever WIC approved foods are moved in your store.

- During vendor monitoring visits, VMA staff will let you know if shelf talkers are being used incorrectly. If shelf talkers continued to be used incorrectly, you may be denied the right to use them in your store.
Examples of Acceptable Shelf Talkers

**W.I.C.**
Approved Item

WIC Acceptable

---

W.I.C. AUTHORIZED

WIC Approved

Examples of Unacceptable Shelf Talkers

[Return to Table of Contents]
Can WIC participants use coupons and bonuses?

Yes, as an authorized WIC vendor you must offer WIC program participants, parents, caretakers of infant and child participants, and proxies the same courtesies that are offered to other, non-WIC customers. Additionally, authorized WIC vendors shall provide WIC foods to the participant at the same price or less than the price charged to non-WIC customers.

What are the rules for coupon use?

- You must allow WIC participants to use in-store promotions such as “Buy One, Get One Free” and “Cents Off” coupons to be in compliance with this requirement.

- You may not treat WIC customers differently from non-WIC customers by excluding them from in-store promotions.

- You may not treat WIC customers differently by offering them incentive items, vendor discounts, coupons, or other promotions that are not offered to non-WIC customers.

- Failure to provide the same courtesies to WIC participants is a violation of regulations and is subject to sanctions.

- Follow the guidance written on the coupon during the transaction.

- Cash back is not permitted as a result of vendor discounts in any WIC transaction.
What is a Vendor Bulletin?

Vendor Bulletins are announcements sent by the WIC Program by either email Listserv or regular mail, depending on the information being shared. Vendor Bulletins provide important information to authorized WIC vendors, WIC local agencies, and other stakeholders. You MUST maintain an active email address in order to receive Vendor Bulletins, and you must fill out the Vendor Email Update page if your email information changes. It is your responsibility to make sure your email settings do not block or prevent you from getting the Vendor Bulletins.

Vendor Bulletins may include information regarding:

- Changes to (or clarifications of) the WIC Acceptable Foods Card and/or Pictorial Foods Guide
- Changes to (or clarifications of) minimum stocking requirements
- Policy changes (reimbursement of exception checks, banking, etc.)
- eWIC Implementation

Information should be reviewed immediately and shared with all store employees that handle WIC transactions and checks.

If you need clarification on the information in the Vendor Bulletin, please contact your VMA for guidance.

You may want to keep copies of all Vendor Bulletins with this Vendor Handbook for future reference.

A sample Vendor Bulletin is included in this section.
SAMPLE VENDOR BULLETIN

NYS WIC PROGRAM
VENDOR BULLETIN
Title: Electronic Monitoring Implementation

This is an important notice. Please have it translated.

The New York State (NYS) WIC Program will replace the current paper-based vendor monitoring system with an electronic monitoring system in August 2016. Vendor Management Agency (VMA) staff will use a handheld tablet to complete each monitoring visit. VMA staff will review results of the monitoring visit with the vendor and ask the vendor to sign an electronic Summary Report. By signing the Summary Report, vendors are verifying they have been informed of the results of the WIC vendor monitoring visit, including a review of prices of WIC allowable foods and formula. The Summary Report will:

- Identify whether the vendor passed or failed the monitoring session
- Include details of any findings
- Identify areas requiring follow up
- Determine whether the vendor is price reasonable

A link to the Summary Report will be sent to the vendor via email. This electronic Summary Report will be the only copy of the results of the monitoring visit provided to the vendor; paper copies will no longer be provided. Authorized WIC vendors MUST maintain an active email address in order to receive the electronic Summary Report.

Vendors must contact their VMA immediately if there are any changes to their email information.

It is the vendor’s responsibility to ensure their email settings do not block or otherwise disallow receipt of the Summary Report. The sender of the Summary Report will be noreply@healthsolutions.org. This is an unmonitored mailbox set up for one-way sending of information. Do not attempt to respond to this email. If a monitoring visit is completed for your store and you do not receive the emailed Summary Report, you must notify your VMA to request a copy.

If you have questions about this information, please contact your VMA.

Thank you for your participation in the NYS WIC Program.
VENDOR RECORDKEEPING

What records do I have to keep?

You must maintain all WIC Program related records, invoices, and purchase slips for a period of 3 years.

Some examples of documented food and formula sales include:

- Inventory records showing all purchases, wholesale and retail, in the form of invoices that identify the amounts and prices of specific WIC foods.
- Other important records necessary to validate the amounts and the prices charged through WIC check/voucher redemptions.

What are the recordkeeping criteria for invoices and receipts?

Invoices and receipts must:

- Be completed and prepared by the wholesaler or supplier from whom you made the purchase.
- Include the name and address of the supplier/wholesaler.
- Indicate the date of purchase, name, and address of you or your employee who made the purchase.
- Provide an accurate description of the items purchased. Be specific when identifying WIC food items, as they are identified in the WIC Acceptable Foods Card. For example:

  “Milk” must be specified as to the type of milk, such as fluid, dry or evaporated and whether it is whole, low fat or non-fat.

  “Fruit juice” must be specified as to the type of juice, such as “orange” and the brand of juice must also be noted for all types of juice for which specific brands are listed on the WIC Acceptable Foods Card.

- Identify the amount of each WIC food item purchased (for example, the number of containers, cans, boxes, ounces, or pounds).
- Indicate the unit price and total cost for each WIC food item purchased. (See the sample of an appropriate wholesaler’s invoice included in this section.)
What are the recordkeeping requirements?

- Your invoices, purchase slips, and inventory records must be kept for 3 years as a condition of participation in the WIC Program.

- Your records must be made available to the NYS Department of Health and your VMA upon request. The state reserves the right to review your store’s records of inventory if necessary to make sure your store is in compliance.

- Failure to maintain records as described in this section may result in recovery of funds, civil money penalty (CMP), or disqualification from the WIC Program.

- Invoices/receipts for infant formula **MUST** be from an approved infant formula supplier/wholesaler. You are required to notify the WIC Program of your supplier(s)/wholesaler(s) at the time of application and reauthorization. If that information changes, you must notify your VMA within 15 days of that change.

- Cash register receipts must include specific identification such as:
  - Wholesaler/supplier information
  - Quantity
  - Unit price
  - Total price
  - WIC food items purchased

- Cash register receipts without specific identification will not be accepted as proof of WIC food and formula purchases.
### Sample Acceptable Wholesaler’s Invoice

**Date:**

**Wholesaler Name:**

**Wholesaler Address:**

**Store Name:**

**Store Address:**

**Phone #:**

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VENDOR MONITORING

What is vendor monitoring?

A vendor monitoring is when an employee from a VMA comes in to inspect your store. As an authorized WIC vendor, you will be monitored continuously to make sure you are compliant with all policies, procedures, and federal and state regulations. You must allow on-site monitoring visits.

What can I expect during a vendor monitoring?

During a monitoring, you can expect the VMA to:

- Request to speak with the store owner, manager, or another responsible representative.
- Make sure that the minimum stock requirements are met.
- Review shelf prices and determine, on average, price reasonableness of WIC acceptable foods in comparison to other vendors in your peer group.
- Review WIC checks that are currently in your store. Some things the monitor will look for include: the price is written in the “Pay Exactly” box, the check is signed and dated, and the check has valid dates.
- Provide the opportunity to communicate face to face and give guidance to help you understand all program requirements.
- Provide you with a WIC cling, if needed.
- Respond to claims of abuse from vendors, participants, or other sources, if necessary.
- Review completed monitoring documentation and summary report at the end of the monitoring and provide guidance when additional information is required.
- Conduct follow up visits, if necessary, to determine if violations from previous monitoring have been corrected.
What is the purpose of vendor training?

The purpose of vendor training is to make sure that you, your representatives, and your employees have a clear understanding of the rules and regulations of the NYS WIC Program. The vendor training is designed to improve program service and prevent program errors and abuse. A representative from your store (for example, the owner, manager, head cashier, and/or bookkeeper) will participate in interactive training on WIC procedures at initial enrollment and at least once every 12 months. The representative from your store must be the person responsible for training your other employees who do not attend training.

How will I be scheduled for a training?

You will be informed by your VMA of scheduled and rescheduled training sessions by mail and/or electronic communication stating the place, date, and time of the session. If you are unable to attend the scheduled mandatory training session, you may be allowed to attend training on an alternate date. If you fail to attend 3 consecutive scheduled training sessions, you will be terminated from the WIC Program.

What should I expect from a training?

The types of WIC vendor training include:

- Initial training: provided to new vendors during the authorization process
- Routine interactive training: provided to existing vendors at least once every 12 months by your VMA
- Training provided when problems arise
- Training when vendors request assistance from their VMA

Training vendors about the WIC Program may be done in a variety of ways, including:

- Classroom training at a central location for groups of vendors
- Newsletters, letters, Vendor Bulletins, and telephone contacts
- Online training modules

Topics covered during routine training include:

- Describing the purpose of the WIC Program
- Vendor contract terms
• Procedures for handling WIC checks
• WIC acceptable foods
• Infant Formula Supplier List
• Minimum stock requirements
• Process for requesting reimbursement for exception checks
• Use of incentive items, coupons/bonuses
• Vendor complaint process
• Penalties and sanctions that can be imposed by the State for WIC Program abuse and violations
• Any changes to program requirements since the last training

When you attend a training, you will receive an electronic signed “Certification of WIC Vendor Training” as proof of attendance.
CHANGE IN OWNERSHIP/CHANGE IN BUSINESS STRUCTURE

What do I do if there is a change in ownership or business structure?

You must report all changes of your business structure to your VMA 30 days before the change. All changes in business entity ownership, WIC vendor location, and/or operations must be reported to your VMA in writing using the Change in Business Structure Notification.

It is your responsibility to contact your VMA and report changes. Failure to provide notification within 30 days of the change may result in the termination of your vendor contract and/or denial of future authorizations.

What changes do I have to report?

Changes to the business structure that you must report to your VMA within 30 days of the change include:

- New sole owner, partner, or corporate officers
- Changes to existing corporate owners/officers
- Purchase of a corporation or LLC
- Incorporation
- Change in trade name or corporate name
- Change in corporate location
- Change in store location
- Change in store hours of operation
- Change in New Federal Employer Identification Number (FEIN)
- Change to Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) Authorization
- Exceptional circumstances (for example; unanticipated change, such as the death of a sole owner, partner, or corporate officers, or a store closing due to damage)

NYS WIC has the authority to determine whether any change in business structure requires a new application.
Can a WIC Vendor Contract be transferred?

No, your WIC Vendor Contract is not transferable to another vendor or business entity. A store with new ownership cannot accept WIC checks using another vendor’s authorized vendor stamp or deposit checks into the authorized bank of deposit. These are serious violations of the WIC Vendor Contract and NYS Regulations and may result in a fine, civil money penalty (CMP), or disqualification from participating in the WIC program.

Contact your VMA with questions regarding any changes to store ownership and/or status.
REPORTING PROGRAM COMPLAINTS AND SUSPECTED FRAUD AND ABUSE

It is very important that authorized WIC vendors and participants understand and follow the rules and regulations of the WIC Program. Participants and authorized WIC vendors who violate program rules and regulations may be suspended from the program.

How can I file a complaint or report suspected fraud?

In cases where participants may not understand program rules, how to use their WIC checks, or the NYS WIC Acceptable Foods Card, you may document these complaints to your VMA for follow up using the WIC Program Complaint Form.

When you suspect program fraud or abuse, you can complete the Bureau of Special Investigations Referral Form. Follow instructions on the form on how and where to submit the completed form.

Suspected fraud and abuse may also be reported to the Bureau of Special Investigations via phone at 1-877-282-6657 or via email at foodfraud@health.ny.gov.

Suspected fraud and abuse may also be reported directly to United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) by:

- **Mail**: U.S. Department of Agriculture  
  Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights  
  1400 Independence Avenue, SW  
  Washington, D.C. 20250-9410;
- **Fax**: (202) 690-7442; or
- **Email**: program.intake@usda.gov
It is very important that you and all your employees understand and follow the rules and regulations of the WIC Program as it relates to authorized WIC vendors.

If you do not follow all rules and regulations (called a violation), you may be subject to a warning letter, a fine/civil money penalty, or disqualification from participating in the WIC Program. A civil money penalty is calculated according to a formula in federal regulation which is as follows: “average monthly WIC sales multiplied by 10% multiplied by the number of months of potential disqualification.” In addition, violations of WIC Program regulations can cause you to lose your authorization in the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) - previously known as the Food Stamp Program.

The Bureau of Special Investigations (BSI) is an independent office of public health law located within the NYS Department of Health. BSI’s primary purpose is to find WIC Program abuse and investigate fraud. BSI works to maximize WIC Program integrity through investigation of vendors, participants, and local agencies based on complaints they receive. Compliance buys are conducted by BSI through unannounced visits to the stores during any hour of operation. Violations will be prosecuted to the fullest extent of the law.

**VIOLATIONS**

Violations 1-10 have mandatory sanctions as specified below. (Federal Regulation: 7CFR 246.12)

1. A food vendor criminally convicted of buying or selling food instruments for cash or selling firearms, ammunition, explosives or controlled substances in exchange for food instruments: **Permanent disqualification**

2. One incidence of buying or selling food instruments for cash: **Six-year disqualification**

3. One incidence of selling firearms, ammunition, explosives or controlled substances (as defined in section 102 of the Controlled Substances Act (21 U.S.C. 802) in exchange for food instruments: **Six-year disqualification**

4. One incidence of sale of alcohol, alcoholic beverages or tobacco products in exchange for food instruments: **Three-year disqualification**

5. A pattern of claiming reimbursement for the sale of an amount of a specific supplemental food item which exceeds the store’s documented inventory of that supplemental food item for a specific period of time: **Three-year disqualification**

6. A pattern of charging the State or local agency or participant more for supplemental food than non-WIC customers or charging the State or local agency or participant more than an item’s shelf or contract price: **Three-year disqualification**
(7) A pattern of receiving, transacting and/or redeeming food instruments outside of authorized channels, including the use of an unauthorized vendor and/or an unauthorized person: **Three-year disqualification**

(8) A pattern of charging for supplemental foods not received by the participant: **Three-year disqualification**

(9) A pattern of providing credit or non-food items: **Three-year disqualification**

(10) A pattern of providing unauthorized food items in exchange for food instruments including charging for supplemental food provided in excess of those listed on the food instrument: **One-year disqualification**

A food vendor who, in the course of a transaction involving a food instrument (WIC check) commits any of the following acts, shall be liable for disqualification from the WIC program for a period of up to three years in addition to being liable for civil penalties of up to $1,000 per violation (New York State Regulation: 10 NYCRR 60-1):

(11) The vendor provides cash for the return of items purchased with a WIC check;

(12) The vendor provides unauthorized items and/or items not specified on the face of the WIC check in exchange for a WIC check;

(13) The vendor provides unwholesome items in exchange for a WIC check, such as, but not limited to, items provided past their expiration date and/or spoiled foods;

(14) The vendor charges for foods not received by the participant;

(15) The vendor issues a document (rain check) to a person utilizing a WIC check purporting to give that person the right to buy, at a later date, a particular WIC item which the vendor does not have in stock at the time the document (rain check) was issued;

(16) The vendor has not marked all WIC eligible food with the price charged for these products to the general public or prominently displayed the price of the foods near the location of the foods in clear view of participants and in a manner, that clearly identifies the specific food item;

(17) The vendor accepts WIC checks before or after the dates indicated on the checks during which the checks are valid;

(18) The vendor fails to ensure that the amount of purchase is written in the space provided on the WIC check at the time of purchase and prior to the participant signing the WIC check;

(19) The vendor fails to verify the signature on the participant’s WIC identification card against the required signature on the participant’s WIC check for all foods delivered or sold to the participant;
(20) The vendor forges a participant’s signature and/or date onto a WIC check;

(21) The vendor stamps a check that was accepted at a location other than the sole authorized location contained in the vendor’s contract;

(22) The vendor stamps a WIC vendor number onto a WIC check redeemed by any other vendor;

(23) The vendor fails to maintain, on premises of the authorized location, a State-issued WIC vendor authorization stamp;

(24) The vendor deposits WIC checks into a bank account different than the vendor’s sole authorized bank account listed on the vendor’s contract;

(25) The vendor accepts WIC checks without being a WIC vendor;

(26) The vendor fails to surrender WIC stamp(s) upon disqualification, suspension or termination;

(27) The vendor continues to redeem food instruments after the store has been sold;

(28) The vendor fails to have invoices and purchase slips for WIC food items equal to the type and volume of WIC food sold;

(29) The vendor fails to maintain, for a minimum of three years, all invoices and purchase slips for WIC food items, for inspection by authorized Federal, State or local agencies;

(30) The vendor fails to allow unobstructed examination of all WIC food instruments, invoices and purchase slips for WIC food items;

(31) The vendor discriminates against or harasses any person utilizing a WIC check

Certain violations may result in the vendor being disqualified or called in for a vendor conference. See the “Common Vendor Abuse Sanctions for Conferences” chart contained in this section. At a vendor conference, violations will be fully described and the NYS Department of Health Commissioner’s designee will assess a fine and/or additional training for the vendor. The fine will be paid to New York State and the vendor must contact their VMA to schedule the mandatory training, if required. If the vendor does not meet the terms of the Stipulation and Order, the vendor will be disqualified. The vendor can either pay the fine or accept a disqualification and request a fair hearing. The vendor has no right to a fair hearing unless an action is taken.
## Common Vendor Abuse Sanctions for Conferences
### Settlement by Stipulation & Order

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>VIOLATION</th>
<th>ADMINISTRATIVE SANCTION</th>
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<td>Cash for returned WIC items</td>
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<tr>
<td>Unauthorized items not specified on WIC check</td>
<td>Up to $500 per violation</td>
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<td>Providing unwholesome, expired, spoiled items in exchange for WIC checks</td>
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<td>Charging for foods not received by participant</td>
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<td>Issuance of a rain check</td>
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<tr>
<td>WIC items not priced or prices not posted</td>
<td>Up to $250 per violation</td>
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<tr>
<td>Accepting WIC checks prior to the Not Good Before date or more than 30 days after the Not Good Before date</td>
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<tr>
<td>Purchase price not entered at time of transaction and prior to participant signing</td>
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<tr>
<td>No WIC ID card requested</td>
<td>Up to $250 per violation</td>
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<tr>
<td>Forging participant signature on WIC check</td>
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<tr>
<td>Stamping a check accepted at another location or accepted by another vendor</td>
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*Chart continued on the next page*
### Chart continued from prior page:

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<tr>
<td>Failure to maintain, on premises, the State issued vendor stamp</td>
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<td>Deposits WIC checks into an account other than the one authorized on vendor contract</td>
<td>Up to $250 per violation</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fails to have invoices matching WIC food sold</td>
<td>Up to $500 per violation</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fails to maintain, for three years, invoices/purchase slips for WIC food items, for inspection by Federal, State and local agencies</td>
<td>Up to $500 per violation</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fails to allow unobstructed examination of all WIC food instruments, invoices, and purchase slips for WIC food items.</td>
<td>Up to $500 per violation</td>
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Contract violations after conference may result in doubling of the sanctions listed in this schedule.

**TO REPORT WIC PROGRAM FRAUD OR ABUSE CALL THE BUREAU OF SPECIAL INVESTIGATIONS HOTLINE 1-877-282-6657 or email to:** foodfraud@health.ny.gov
ABOVE 50 PERCENT VENDORS

What is an above 50 percent vendor?

An “above 50 percent vendor” is an authorized WIC vendor that derives more than 50 percent of its annual Food Sales revenue from WIC food instruments. Above 50 percent vendors also include new vendor applicants who are expected to meet this criterion based on projected sales.

Food Sales are defined as “the sales of all SNAP eligible foods intended for home preparation and consumption.” A description of Food Sales is included in this section. Please note that infant formula is included in Food Sales.

How does the Department of Health determine A50 status?

Federal regulations require states that operate a retail food delivery system to evaluate vendors at the time of authorization and then each year to determine if the vendor should be designated as an above 50 percent vendor or regular vendor. Newly authorized vendors must also be reviewed six months after authorization to determine if they have been properly designated as being an above 50 percent vendor or not.

All authorized vendors must maintain a record of all documented Food Sales for a period of 3 years and must provide this information for evaluation purposes upon request. A documented Food Sales amount is an amount that is supported by written sales or financial statements, reports, tax forms, or other records sufficient for establishing SNAP eligible Food Sales.

If you are requested to provide documentation of your Food Sales amount and you are unable to prove that you are not an above 50 percent vendor or if you do not respond to the request for documentation, your store will be labeled as an above 50 percent vendor. Your WIC authorization may continue if you sign a Contract Amendment (see the sample in this section) agreeing to be paid through the 50 percent vendor reimbursement system. This reimbursement system, which is only for above 50 percent vendors, reviews payments for all NYS WIC checks redeemed at your store to make sure they are paid at the statewide average amount for that check type. The system makes adjustments, when necessary, through debits (withdrawals) from your designated WIC bank account.

Why is this reimbursement system necessary?

Federal regulations on vendor cost containment consider above 50 percent vendors to be higher priced compared to other WIC vendors. Controlling WIC program costs is important so that federal funding is available to serve as many eligible women, infants and children as possible.
Based on these federal regulations, the NYS WIC Program is required to make sure that payments to above 50 percent vendors do not result in higher food costs than if participants redeemed their WIC checks at regular WIC vendors (those that are not above 50 percent vendors).

This means that WIC checks redeemed at above 50 percent vendors cannot be reimbursed more than the statewide average amount for each check type (a specific grouping of foods listed on the WIC check).

**How does the A50 vendor monthly debit process work?**

The payment you receive for each NYS WIC check redeemed at your store will be reduced to the statewide average amount for that check type based on a monthly analysis of WIC check redemption information.

- When you first deposit or request electronic reimbursement of your NYS WIC checks, they will be reimbursed using the standard WIC check payment process and the rules for all WIC vendors.

- On a monthly basis, the NYS WIC Program will compare the redemption amounts of every WIC check redeemed at your store to the statewide average amount for that check type. If your store’s redemption amount is more than the statewide average amount, your designated WIC bank account (bank of deposit) will be debited for the difference.

- Once a month, you will receive a letter (see sample debit letter in this section) from the NYS WIC Program notifying you of the following:
  - The amount of money that will be debited from your account, the date your account will be debited, and
  - The account from which the funds will be withdrawn.

- You are required to have enough funds in your WIC bank account by the date the money will be withdrawn to cover this debit transaction.

- You must not have an Automated Clearing House (ACH) debit block on your WIC bank account. Contact your bank immediately to make sure that your account is not blocked. If your account is blocked, you must ask your bank to remove the ACH debit block.
What happens if there is not enough money in my WIC bank account to cover the monthly debit transaction?

Each month the NYS WIC Program will send you a letter in advance of the debit transaction to help you make sure that enough funds are available to cover the debit transaction.

If the debit transaction rejects due to not enough funds in your WIC bank account, you will be notified by your VMA or the NYS Department of Health. You are required to have the funds in this account within 2 business days from the notification to cover the second debit transaction. Your WIC Vendor Contract will be terminated if the second debit transaction rejects.

How are my monthly check redemption amounts compared to the statewide average amounts?

Here are 2 examples of how the analysis will be completed each month for all WIC checks redeemed at your store.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Example 1</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Check Number</td>
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<tr>
<td>Check Type</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Your Store’s Redemption Amount</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Statewide Average Amount for this Check Type</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Difference Between Your Store’s Redemption Amount and Statewide Average Amount</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

In this example, when your store deposits this check in the bank, you will initially receive payment of $8.15. When the check redemption amount is compared to the statewide average amount, the payment system will discover that the redemption amount of $8.15 is more than the statewide average amount of $8.09; therefore, the difference of $0.06 for this check will be debited from your designated bank account.

<table>
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<th>Example 2</th>
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<tr>
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In this example, when your store deposits the check in the bank you will receive payment of $8.00. When the check redemption amount is compared to the statewide average amount, the payment system will discover that your store’s redemption amount of $8.00 is lower than the statewide average amount of $8.09; therefore, it is not necessary to debit your bank account.
You should contact your VMA if you have questions about the reimbursement system, including providing the required notifications for the debit process.

**As an above 50 percent vendor, can I offer incentive items to participants?**

No, above 50 percent vendors are prohibited from providing any incentive items to customers.

Federal regulations state that the WIC Program may not authorize or continue the authorization of an “above 50 percent vendor”, or make payments to an “above 50 percent vendor”, which provides or indicates an intention to provide prohibited incentive items to customers.
Food Sales
(Eligible for purchase with SNAP Benefits)

Use the following information to determine what may be included in the reported food sales amount:

“Food sales” includes sales of:

- Foods for the household to eat such as:
  - Breads and cereals
  - Fruits and vegetables
  - Meats, fish and poultry
  - Dairy products
- Infant Formula
- Coffee, tea, cocoa, carbonated and noncarbonated drinks, ice, candy, condiments and spices, when sold along with the items above
- Snacks foods (such as potato chips and cupcakes)
- Cold ready-to-eat foods intended for off-premises consumption only
- Specialty foods (such as diabetic and dietetic foods), enriched or fortified foods, infant formulas, and certain health food items. Examples include weight loss products (such as Slim Fast), Pedialyte, Ensure, wheat germ, and brewer’s yeast. If the ordinary use of the item is as a food, rather than as a medicine or therapeutic agent, it may be included in food sales.
- Vegetable oils, shortening, and food coloring
- Cooking wine, wine vinegar, flavorings, extracts

Food sales does not include sales of:

- Any non-food items, such as:
  - Pet foods
  - Soaps, paper products
  - Household supplies
- Beer, wine, liquor, and all other alcoholic beverages
- Cigarettes, cigars, and all other tobacco products
- Vitamins and medicines
- Foods that will be eaten in the store
- Hot foods and hot food products (such as soups, roasted chicken, coffee, steamed seafood)
What is reauthorization?

NYS WIC Vendor Contracts are valid for 3 years. You must apply for a new contract at the end of each 3 year period.

How does reauthorization work?

Your VMA will send you an application packet 120 days before the end of your current contract period. When applying for reauthorization you must complete the application packet with current store/business information. During the reauthorization process, your VMA will confirm that you:

- Meet the NYS WIC Vendor enrollment criteria
- Have provided current ownership and store information
- Have submitted all required documents with your application
- Maintain reasonable prices
- Maintain minimum stock and variety of WIC foods
- Operate with business integrity

What happens if I don’t complete the reauthorization application?

Failure to submit all necessary documents to your VMA prior to the end of your contract date will result in expiration of your contract. If the contract expires, you must wait 1 year from the contract expiration date to re-apply to the WIC Program.
What is Electronic WIC?

Beginning in 2018, the NYS WIC Program will be changing to an Electronic Benefit Transfer (EBT) system for the redemption of WIC benefits. The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) ordered all states to start the new system by October 1, 2020.

Will WIC still use WIC checks?

No, an eWIC card will replace paper checks and allow for faster purchases and improved customer service. eWIC will have positive benefits for both WIC participants and vendors.

How will WIC change over to eWIC?

In New York, eWIC will be tested with a small number of vendors in 2018. After that, eWIC will be steadily rolled out statewide by 2019. Moving to eWIC will take a lot of planning, development and teamwork with WIC vendors, including you.

Is there certain equipment I will need to be ready for eWIC?

Yes, the NYS WIC Program will be working closely with you to make sure all WIC authorized vendors are eWIC ready. To be eWIC ready, you will need the right equipment and technology to accept eWIC. You will need one of the following types of cash register devices:

**Integrated Electronic Cash Registers (IECR)** – A point of sale system (POS) that combines WIC into the normal transaction process is preferred. It allows you to keep track of inventory, payment, and settlement for WIC items within the same system that manages purchases for cash and other tenders. Customers and cashiers will find it easier to use WIC. Separation of WIC items from non-WIC items will not be necessary.

**Stand-beside WIC terminals** – The stand-beside POS solution consists of a terminal and item scanner that operates separately from a vendor’s cash register system. This solution is not an integrated solution, so the stand-beside POS is entirely separate from the store’s overall inventory, payment, and settlement system for other tender types. This device may require double scan for those stores that use an electronic inventory system. Separation of WIC food items from non-WIC items will still be necessary. Vendors currently operating a State-provided SNAP stand-beside device should note that the WIC stand-beside POS will be a separate device.