

Administration Volume  
Vendor Responsibilities Section

Local WIC provider/WIC Authorized Retailer Role (3.08400)

ER# 3.08400

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**POLICY:** The local WIC provider (LWP) shall designate at least one WIC staff person to collaborate with the state vendor staff to assure adequate numbers of stores are available for their participants and that authorized retail vendors have a local contact person for questions regarding food instrument issuance.

The LWP vendor contact person shall use the WIC Vendor Manual to provide assistance to authorized retail vendors.

**PROCEDURES:**

- A. In the annual Local Agency Plan (LAP), the LWP will provide the state agency with the name of an individual to serve as vendor contact person.
  - 1. The LWP should notify the state agency when this individual changes.
  - 2. The state agency may ask for updates as needed.
- B. The state agency will solicit input from the LWP prior to contracting with any retail vendors in their service area regarding any issues with participation access.
  - 1. The final decision regarding contracting with any new or existing retail vendors in each service area will be the responsibility of the state agency.
  - 2. The state agency's decision will be based on the "Vendor Selection and Limitation Criteria" as listed in the WIC Vendor Manual.
- C. The LWP vendor contact person will:
  - 1. Be the LWP representative for authorized retail vendors to contact when there are problems related to food instrument issuance by the LWP or with concerns or complaints about participants.
  - 2. Make recommendations to the State WIC office regarding local vendor selection during the application process.
  - 3. Locate stores for potential contracts when an emergency situation occurs in which participants could be denied access to WIC foods.
  - 4. Will serve as an information resource, helping to disseminate important information to vendors in a timely fashion.
  - 5. Document all contacts with stores regarding program related issues and complaints, then send the original report to the Vendor Compliance Coordinator in the State WIC office and keep copy of the report in the LWP vendor file.
    - a. Documentation will identify type of contact, the issue discussed, persons

- involved, and what was done to resolve the issue.
- b. Documentation of a complaint must be sent to the State Vendor Compliance Coordinator within ten (10) days of receipt by the LWP.
  - c. Depending on the severity of the complaint, the state agency may investigate or initiate an investigation through:
    - i. LWP monitoring.
    - ii. Retail Vendor monitoring.
    - iii. Local, state or federal law enforcement officials.
    - iv. USDA, FNS Food Stamp investigators.
    - v. State WIC office personnel.
    - vi. Compliance investigators.
    - vii. Other sources as appropriate.
  - d. The LWP will be notified of the results of routine complaints and the resolution.
  - e. If investigations of a complaint lead to further investigations, which may result in sanctions, suspensions or fines, the LWP may not receive information until due process of law has been exhausted.
6. The LWP vendor contact person will maintain a file of all contacts and complaints received relating to the vendors within the LWP's service area.
- a. The reports are to be identified by vendor name, complete address and vendor number.
  - b. All complaints and problems related to food instruments and participants shall be maintained by the LWP, in a file for a period of three (3) years.
7. Provide State WIC office staff access to all documentation of vendor-related activities as requested.
- D. The LWP vendor contact person will be informed of the annual vendor trainings and will be encouraged to attend these trainings. LWP will be sent the same materials that the authorized retail vendors receive for training or information.
- E. The vendor contact person shall use the WIC Vendor Manual to provide assistance to authorized retail vendors:
- 1. Provide vendors with information on current policies and procedures.
  - 2. Assist vendors in maintaining effective working relationships with program participants.
  - 3. Provide feedback to vendors from participants and assist vendors with problem resolution regarding participants.