

VIII. Certification and Eligibility and Coordination of Services

8.1.080 Participant Explanation

Authority 2019 7 CFR 246.7(a), (i), and (j); 246.12(r)(3); WIC Policy Memo 2008-1 WIC Program Explanation for Participants

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POLICY: The local agency (LA) shall provide an explanation of the purpose of the WIC program to each applicant, participant, authorized representative, or alternate representative at certification.

The LA shall provide an explanation of the participant's rights and responsibilities and shall require an electronic signature acknowledging that the participant understands his or her rights and responsibilities. The LA shall provide an interpretation of the participant's rights and responsibilities, when needed.

PROCEDURES:

A. At every certification, the LA shall explain:

1. Dual participation is illegal. Refer to policy [10.1.080](#).
2. Continuity of health care is important. The LA shall provide appropriate referrals for Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services programs, community resources, and substance abuse counseling and treatment. Refer to policy [8.1.020](#).
3. The WIC Participant's Rights and Responsibilities ([WIC-10](#)) is a partnership between the participant, the WIC program, and the LA. If the applicant, participant, authorized representative, or alternate representative is unable to read the WIC Participant's Rights and Responsibilities, the LA shall read the statement aloud prior to obtaining the signature. If a participant refuses to sign the WIC Participant's Rights and Responsibilities, explain that benefits cannot be provided.
4. Applicants and participants are required to be present at all certifications, with limited exceptions. Refer to policy [8.1.060](#).

B. At the initial certification, the LA shall explain:

1. The nutrition assessment process is necessary to identify nutrition needs and interests so WIC can provide benefits that are responsive to the participants.
2. The relationship between WIC staff and the participant is a partnership with open dialogue and two-way communication.
3. Participants must reapply at the end of the certification period and be reassessed for program eligibility.
4. Missouri currently serves all priorities of women, infants, and children. If the LA is not servicing all priorities, explain the WIC priority system and designation. Refer to the [Risk Factor Summary and Priority Sheet](#).

5. The food package may be tailored to meet participant preference.
 6. WIC food benefits are prescribed for the individual to support the nutritional well-being of the participant and to help meet the recommended intake of important nutrients and foods. WIC foods are to be consumed by the participant, and not by other members of the household.
 7. The food provided by WIC is supplemental and is not intended to provide all of the participant's daily food requirements.
 8. The participant will be on a food benefit issuance cycle: monthly, bi-monthly, or tri-monthly.
- C. First time applicants must receive instruction regarding proper use of the food instrument and redemption of food benefits to include transaction procedures at the authorized WIC retailer, food benefit periods, how to read a receipt, and how to receive a balance inquiry. The LA must review these instructions at subsequent certifications to ensure the participant's or authorized representative's understanding.
1. Food benefits may only be redeemed at authorized WIC retailers.
 2. A food instrument is the responsibility of the participant or authorized representative and must be safely stored.
 3. The participant or authorized representative must keep the personal identification number (PIN) private and only share with someone they trust.
 4. The participant or authorized representative will be held responsible for any program violation(s) committed by the person to whom they have shared their PIN.
 5. A food instrument that has been lost or stolen can be replaced in accordance with policy [9.1.020](#).
 6. Food benefits expire at midnight on the last day of the month.
 7. Participants can access the WIC retailer directory for their service area using the WIC retailer directory on the state agency (SA) website or through the WICShopper application, if available.
 8. It is a participant violation to request a refund or to exchange WIC food for other items at the retailer.
 9. Participants have the right to be treated fairly at authorized WIC retailers and may submit a complaint to the SA via LA staff using the WIC Participant Redemption Complaint ([WIC-40](#)). Refer to policy [1.1.010](#).
- D. At all future appointments, the participant shall be asked if changes are needed to their food package. Refer the participant, authorized representative, or alternate representative to the competent professional authority (CPA) or nutritionist if a change is requested.