

VIII. Certification and Eligibility and Coordination of Services

8.1.110 Timelines for Applicant Processing

Authority 2008 7 CFR 246.7(b)(5) & 246.7(f)(2)

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POLICY: The LA (LA) shall process all requests for program benefits, within time frames required by federal regulations. The LA shall attempt to contact all prenatal applicants who miss the first eligibility determination appointment within five calendar days of the original appointment.

The LA shall provide WIC certification services and benefits without charge or expense to the applicant or participant.

The LA shall document all appropriate contact information to assure timeframe compliance and follow-up.

PROCEDURES:

A. Processing requests for service

1. The application process begins when a categorically eligible applicant makes a request in person or in writing to the LA for program benefits during regular LA office hours.
2. If the applicant cannot be assessed for program eligibility on the day initial contact is made, the LA shall record demographic information using the Applicant Prescreening screen in MOWINS. It is recommended that the income information be collected at the same time. If the applicant does not meet the income eligibility guidelines, the LA shall inform the applicant and make no appointment.
3. If the applicant meets the income eligibility guidelines, the LA shall schedule a certification appointment to determine program eligibility according to the following time frames:
 - a. Within ten (10) calendar days from date of request for services for:
 - i. Prenatals.
 - ii. Infants under six months old.
 - iii. Members of the migrant population who plan to leave the agency.
 - b. Within twenty (20) calendar days from date of request for services for:
 - i. Infants over six months old.
 - ii. Children.
 - iii. Breastfeeding women.
 - iv. Postpartum women.
4. Inform the applicant or guardian:
 - a. The certification appointment is for health assessment and program

eligibility determination.

- b. All individuals to be assessed must be present at the certification visit.
- c. The guardian of the infant or child applicant must also be present at the assessment to verify information and to sign the consent statement. Note that this does not necessarily have to be the legal guardian. The LA may make the determination of who should bring in the infant or child based on the agency's best assessment of the situation.
- d. For exceptions to b. or c., refer to [8.1.190](#), [8.1.200](#) and [8.1.060](#).
- e. To bring proof of income, identity and residency.

B. When the applicant keeps the certification appointment, agency staff:

- 1. Interviews the applicant/guardian, collects health assessment data and enters all required data into the MOWINS for the appropriate program category. Follow the Certification Guided Script to complete the certification process.
- 2. Determines program eligibility.
- 3. Notifies the applicant of eligibility decision.
 - a. If eligible, the agency shall provide program benefits including computer generated food instruments for supplemental foods.
 - b. If ineligible, the agency shall give the applicant written notice. Refer to [8.1.170](#).

C. Neither the LA nor its contracted designees will charge the applicant or participant for:

- 1. Services or tests used to determine program eligibility.
- 2. Forms or brochures used in the program.

D. When a LA cannot schedule an appointment within the appropriate time frames as defined in A.3., the LA should contact the SA immediately to determine steps necessary to correct the situation.

E. If the LA has an approved waiting list:

- 1. The applicant will be informed of placement on the waiting list within the same time frames.
- 2. Individuals due for recertification will not receive priority over new applicant requests, but rather they will be scheduled appropriately according to their program category and establish the waiting list according to policy