

VIII. Certification Eligibility and Coordination of Services

8.1.190 Authorized Representatives and Alternate Representatives

Authority 2019 7 CFR 246.7(c)(2)(i), 246.12(r)

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POLICY: An authorized representative is a participant or the parent, legal guardian, or caretaker of a participant. The authorized representative is responsible for providing proof of identity, residency, and income; attending appointments; completing paperwork; participating in nutrition education; and redeeming benefits at the retailer.

The parent, legal guardian, or caretaker who brings in an infant or child for their first appointment is the authorized representative and can designate up to two (2) alternate representatives, or two (2) proxies, or one of each.

The authorized representative signs the WIC Participant's Rights and Responsibilities ([WIC-10](#)). Refer to [policy 8.1.080](#).

The alternate representative is a parent or caretaker for an infant or child participant and may attend certification appointments when the authorized representative is not available.

Regardless of age, a parent of a participant may be designated as the authorized representative or alternate representative for their infant or child.

PROCEDURES:

A. Assigning an authorized representative:

1. The following person(s) may apply for benefits on behalf of an infant or child under five years of age:
 - a. Natural mothers or fathers, if the child is living with them.
 - b. Guardians or foster parents who are legally responsible for the care and management of the infant or child. Legal documents should be used to verify the guardianship status of the child.
 - c. Relative or other caretaker with whom the child is living if they have written verification. This verification can be a letter from a natural parent or documentation from the Department of Social Services (DSS) granting kinship and identifying that the infant or child is living with this person.

B. The LA shall not change the authorized representative unless one of the following conditions apply:

1. The current authorized representative sends a signed and dated statement requesting the authorized representative be changed. The local agency (LA) may then change the authorized representative with accompanying proof of identification. Proof of residence and income must be shown if the participant has moved and/or the household size has changed. Refer to [policy 8.1.140](#).

2. Change in custody: If at any time a caretaker arrives at the clinic with legal proof of full (100%) custody of an infant or child participant, staff may change the authorized representative with accompanying proof of identity, residency, and income information.
 - a. It is the responsibility of the caretakers who share 50 percent custody to determine who will be the authorized representative.
 - b. Clinic staff will not be involved in making decisions as to who will be the participant's authorized representative.
 3. Foster care: When a child is placed in foster care, the foster parent becomes the authorized representative with proof of custody from the DSS. If the foster parent changes, the new foster parent becomes the authorized representative with legal proof of custody.
- C. The authorized representative may change the alternate representative at certification. If the change needs to occur during the certification period, the authorized representative shall complete the Proxy/Alternative Authorized Representative Form (WIC-33).
- D. An authorized representative may receive copies of participant information for themselves or the participant for whom they are caring. Refer to policy [8.1.010](#).