

Nutrition/Health Volume  
Certification Section

Physical Presence at Certification or Mid-certification Assessment

(2.02700)

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**POLICY:** The Local Agency (LA) shall require that the person being certified be physically present at the time eligibility for the WIC Program is determined or the mid-certification assessment (MCA) is completed, with limited exceptions allowed.

**PROCEDURES:**

**A. Physical Presence Requirement:**

1. Individuals seeking participation in the WIC program must be physically present when determining eligibility or completing the MCA unless the applicant, participant, parent or guardian meets the limited exceptions allowed.

**B. Exceptions for Physical Presence:**

1. Reasonable Accommodation of Disabilities.
  - a. If an applicant, participant, parent, or guardian has a disability that makes it difficult to come to a clinic for certification, or MCA, the applicant or participant may be certified or assessed without being physically present. Only those disabilities that create a current barrier to the physical presence requirement may serve as a basis for an exception.
  - b. Examples of disabilities creating a current barrier are:
    - i. A newborn infant with medical complications.
    - ii. A medical condition that necessitates the use of medical equipment not easily transportable.
    - iii. A medical condition requiring confinement to bed.
    - iv. A serious illness that may be exacerbated by coming into the clinic.
    - v. A highly contagious illness that may be readily communicated to others by coming into the clinic.
  - c. The applicant, participant, parent, or guardian shall provide documentation from a physician or primary care provider stating the disability status and length of disability.
2. Receiving Ongoing Health Care.
  - a. An infant or child who was present at his/her initial WIC certification and is receiving ongoing health care may be exempt from the physical presence requirement, if being physically present would pose an unreasonable barrier.
3. Working Parents or Caretakers.

- a. Infants or children present for certification/MCA at least once within the prior 12 months and are under the care of one or more working parents or caretakers whose working status presents a barrier to bringing the infant or child into the LA.
  - i. The child must have one or more working parents/primary caretakers for the exception to apply.
  - ii. The LA shall obtain a statement from the parent(s)/caretaker(s) documenting his/her employment and work hours.

4. Infants Under Eight (8) Weeks of Age.

- a. Infants under eight (8) weeks of age who cannot be present at certification for a reason determined appropriate by the LA and for whom all necessary information is provided.
- b. Document reason for absence in a General Note or SOAP Note in MOWINS.

- C. The LA must document whether the applicant or participant is physically present.
- D. The participant, guardian or caretaker shall provide the LA with appropriate medical referral data and anthropometric measurements, which have been collected within 60 days prior to date of certification or MCA and must reflect current health status.
- E. Statute of Limitation
  - 1. The exemption from physical presence shall be handled on an individual basis and only applies to the certification period for which applying. At each certification, the request for exemption from physical presence must be reassessed.
  - 2. Any long-term permanent disabilities requiring exemptions for physical presence must be approved by the State Agency, and the documentation must be maintained in the participant's file.