

Nutrition/Health Volume  
 Certification Section

Guidelines for Annual Certifications and Mid-Certification Assessment (MCA)  
 Data Collection and Risk Factor Assignment (2.02800)

ER# 2.02800

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**POLICY** Each applicant must have a health and nutritional assessment to determine eligibility as required by federal guidelines and the Missouri WIC Program. Determination of risk must be based on anthropometric and biochemical (hematological) data, nutrition assessment, screening for immunizations, and health history all of which shall be documented in the Missouri WIC Information Network System (MOWINS). These assessments/screenings provide the guidance to personalize nutrition education, referrals, and food package tailoring for WIC participants. Infants, children and breastfeeding women certified for longer than 6 months must have a Mid-Certification Assessment (MCA) to maintain quality nutrition services. A MCA must include anthropometric measurements, blood work (as needed), immunization screening and a nutrition assessment to ensure that health and nutrition services are not diminished.

**PROCEDURES**

A. Required Elements of Certifications and Mid-Certification Assessments

**Table for Certification and Mid Certification Assessment (MCA)**

Data Collection/ Assessed	Certification				MCA		
	Infant	Woman and Child	Hospital Infant	Hospital Post-Partum Woman	Infant	Child 1 – 5 yrs old	Breastfeeding Woman (≥ 6 mos)
Anthropometric Measurements	X	X	X		X	X	x
Blood Work		X			Infant Blood Work is done at 9-11 months	X	If she was on the program as an N or B during the first six months no blood work is required
Nutrition Assessment	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Immunization Screening	X	X (children only)	X		X	X	

Data Collection/ Assessed	Certification				MCA		
	Infant	Woman and Child	Hospital Infant	Hospital Post-Partum Woman	Infant	Child 1 – 5 yrs old	Breastfeeding Woman (≥ 6 mos)
Initial Nutrition Education	X	X	X	X			
Category/Age Appropriate Nutrition Education	X*	X*			X*	X*	X*
Referrals	X**	X**	X**	X**	X**	X**	X**

\*Refer to ER# 2.06400 for more information on nutrition education requirements

\*\* Refer to ER#1.01800 for more information on referrals.

## B. Obtaining Data

1. At certification and MCA the following information must be obtained.
  - a. Anthropometric data collected within the WIC agency or provided by referral.
    - i. Anthropometric data includes height/length and weight. The data must have been collected within 60 days prior to the date of certification or MCA and must reflect current health and categorical status. Although data may be up to 60 days old, such data may not be appropriate for pregnant women, or infants and children during critical periods of growth.
    - ii. The Local Agency (LA) must acquire and maintain accurate health assessment equipment (scales and measurement boards).

Refer to [Health and Nutrition Assessment Handbook](#) for minimum criteria and maintenance guidelines for weighing and measuring equipment.
    - iii. For Labor Delivery Recovery Postpartum (LDRP) hospital certifications refer to Section E.
  - b. Hematological data collected within the WIC agency or provided by referral.
    - i. Hematological data includes a hemoglobin or a hematocrit. The blood work data may be deferred for up to 90 days after the date of certification or MCA if the participant has another qualifying risk factor.
      - a.) If an applicant or applicant's parent or guardian refuses to have a blood test done or provide referral data, the LA shall

emphasize the importance of blood work and encourage the applicant, parent or guardian to have the test completed.

- b.) If an applicant or applicant's parent or guardian refuses bloodwork, the participant shall be placed on a monthly cycle until the data has been collected. The reason for refused blood work must be documented in MOWINS.
- ii. **The delayed blood work box must be checked in MOWINS** and the participant kept on a monthly cycle until the data has been collected.
- iii. For all categories, the data must have been collected while in the same status as that of the certification or MCA for the WIC Program as explained below.
  - a) All infants shall have hematological data collected **on or after 9 months of age and prior to their first birthday.**
  - b) All children must have hematological data collected according to the following guidelines.
    - 1) For children between 12 months of age and prior to their second birthday, blood work must be taken at least once - recommended at 15-18 months of age, ideally 6 months after the infant blood work. If the infant blood work at 9-11 months of age is below recommended levels, it is suggested that blood work be taken again at 15 months of age.
    - 2) Blood work data is required for the 2-year old certification or MCA visit (minimum 22 months of age). For children 24-60 months of age, blood work must be taken at least once every 12 months.
    - 3) For children 24 to 60 months of age, blood work must be rechecked at the next certification or MCA visit if Risk Factor 201 was assigned.
  - c) For all postpartum women (B and N), the blood work shall be taken between 4 and 6 weeks postpartum. If they are certified later than 4 to 6 weeks postpartum, blood work shall be taken at the time of certification.
  - d) For breastfeeding women, no additional blood test is necessary at MCA, as long as she was on the program as an N or B during first six months. If no other risk factor exists, including Risk Factor 501, a follow-up blood test is an allowable WIC cost to determine if the low hemoglobin/low hematocrit risk factor still applies.
  - e) For prenatal women blood work shall be taken at certification.

- iv. The following are exempted from blood work:
  - a) An applicant whose religious belief won't allow him/her to have blood drawn.
  - b) An applicant who has a documented medical condition e.g. hemophilia, fragile bones (osteogenesis imperfecta), a serious skin disease, leukemia, or thalassemia in which the procedure for collecting blood could cause harm to the applicant.
- v. The appropriate exemption must be documented in the MOWINS HT/WT/Blood tab. In addition, documentation from a physician of the medical condition must be documented in MOWINS.
- vi. The LA must acquire and maintain accurate hematological equipment. Refer to [Health and Nutrition Assessment Handbook](#) for minimum criteria and maintenance guidelines for hematological equipment.
- c. A nutrition assessment. (Refer to [Health and Nutrition Assessment Handbook](#) for guidance.)
  - i. At certification the initial and follow-up questions shall be completed for all program categories.
    - a) Initial nutrition assessment questions shall be completed on the day eligibility was determined.
    - b) Follow-up nutrition assessment questions shall be completed by the CPA within 60 days for non-high risk participants or 30 days by nutritionist for high-risk participants or sooner as needed.
  - ii. Mid-certification nutrition assessment for infants, children and breastfeeding (fully and mostly breastfeeding) women shall be accomplished by:
    - a) completing the initial nutrition assessment questions and follow-up nutrition questions or
    - b) completing the initial nutrition assessment questions and mid-certification nutrition questions or
    - c) completing the mid-certification nutrition assessment questions.

<b>Certification</b>	
Initial Questions	CPA, Nutritionist or WIC Certifier
Follow-Up Questions	CPA or Nutritionist
<b>MCA</b>	
<b>Option 1</b>	
Initial Questions	CPA, Nutritionist or WIC Certifier
Follow-Up Questions	CPA or Nutritionist
<b>Option 2</b>	
Initial Questions	CPA, Nutritionist or WIC Certifier
MCA Questions	CPA or Nutritionist
<b>Option 3</b>	
MCA Questions only	CPA or Nutritionist

2. For breastfeeding woman category change to a non-breastfeeding woman during a current certification.
  - a. Prior to changing a breastfeeding woman to non-breastfeeding woman category, refer the WIC participant to a CPA for appropriate counseling.
  - b. The woman must have had at least one other risk factor besides risk factors 601 or 602 assigned during her breastfeeding certification in order for the agency to complete a breastfeeding to non-breastfeeding category change in MOWINS.

If no other risk factors were assigned (other than 601 or 602), the agency shall complete a non-breastfeeding certification by completing all requirements as indicated in procedure A.

3. Adolescent females who are pregnant or postpartum are considered prenatal or postpartum women for purposes of health assessment for WIC eligibility. Health assessment follows the same procedures as that for prenatal or postpartum women and includes obtaining data related to anthropometric, biochemical/hematological, health history, and nutrition assessment. Refer to Procedure B.

**C. Documenting**

1. Anthropometric data, hematological data and health history information must be documented in MOWINS for women, infants and children.
2. The nutrition assessment must be documented for women, children and infants in the nutrition assessment tab in MOWINS.

**D. Assessing and Assigning Risk Factors**

1. Determination of risk at certification, MCA, or during a current certification period must be based on anthropometric and/or hematological data and nutrition

assessment collected within the WIC agency or provided by referral.

2. For all applicants, the participant must be assessed for all risk factors and the individual must be found to have at least one of the WIC nutritional risk factors to qualify for the WIC Program.

- a. Risks which include the phrase:

- i. "as reported or documented by a physician, or someone working under physician's orders," require verification of diagnosis or condition.

Acceptable documentation or verification of diagnosis from health care provider includes a note on a physician's prescription pad, referral form, medical record, other reliable record, or verbal confirmation from physician or someone working under physician's order.

- ii. "diagnosed by a physician as self reported by applicant or participant/caregiver" require validation by the CPA. To validate self reported diagnoses, document

1. The name and contact information of the health care provider

2. Whether the condition is being controlled by diet or medication

3. If diet, special formula or medication has been prescribed, document the diet, formula, or drug name(s).

- b. Risk factors identified anytime during the current certification period shall be added to the participant's certification record as new risk factors; this may change the participant's priority and/or make them high risk.

3. Refer to the risk factor policy [ER# 2.03500](#) and specific [USDA Definition and USDA Justification](#) for detailed information.

4. MOWINS will automatically determine priority for the certification/[MCA](#) based on assigned risk factors.

#### E. Labor Delivery Recovery Postpartum (LDRP) (Hospital) Certifications

1. Certifications performed in the LDRP (hospital) setting must be performed in compliance with all current WIC policies. Only a CPA or Nutritionist shall perform the certification.
2. Participants must be placed on a monthly cycle until they are seen in a non-LDRP WIC site.
3. If a woman's height and weight are not obtained by WIC staff at the time of certification, verbal information or postpartum data obtained from the hospital record may be used. The CPA or Nutritionist entering this information into MOWINS shall select "Hospital Certification" from the "Possible Incorrect Measurement Reason" drop-down menu on the Add Weight/Height screen of the Certification Guided Script.
4. The certifying agency shall set an alert and a general note for each participant certified in an LDRP setting. The alert and general note shall:
  - a. Identify the participant as having been certified in the LDRP and the

agency that performed the certification.

- b. Indicate if nutrition assessment follow-up is needed.
5. Women certified at the LDRP shall have height and weight taken at the first visit at a non-LDRP WIC site.
  6. It is recommended the local agency obtain infant weight and length at the first visit at a non-LDRP WIC site.
  7. The non-LDRP WIC site shall review the certification information to ensure that all components of the certification are completed.
- F. Providing Appropriate Counseling (See [Counseling Guides](#) and the [Nutrition Training Manual](#) for suggested counseling and additional information. Refer to [ER# 2.06400](#) for procedures and policies on nutrition education.)
1. Counseling and education shall be provided by the CPA.
  2. Document counseling contact in MOWINS.
- G. Providing Referrals
- Provide appropriate referral information and document in MOWINS. Refer to [ER# 1.01800](#).