

Administration Volume
Food Instrument Accountability Section

Explaining the Food Instrument Redemption Process (3.05600)

ER# 3.05600

Authority CFR 246.12(r)(3)
Issued 1/81
Revised 10/13

POLICY: The local WIC provider (LWP) shall give the participant a complete explanation of how to redeem the food instrument.

PROCEDURES:

- A. The local WIC provider shall assure that the participant or proxy understands the proper care and use of food instruments.
 1. Food instruments are negotiable instruments and must be handled with care. Food instruments:
 - a. Are the responsibility of the participant, guardian or proxy and must be properly redeemed.
 - b. should be safely stored at home in the participant identification folder for future use.
 - c. Lost or stolen food instruments can only be replaced in accordance with policies. Refer to [ER# 3.06200](#).
 2. Food instruments may be redeemed only at WIC authorized retailers.
 3. Foods that may be purchased with the food instrument are those that are:
 - a. WIC approved.
 - b. Issued on the food instrument, in the quantities, sizes and brands shown on the food instrument, and the "Approved Missouri WIC Food List."
- B. The local WIC provider should assure the participant knows when the next food instrument pick-up will be, whether monthly, bi-monthly or tri-monthly.
- C. Local WIC provider instructions to each participant regarding food instrument redemption must include the following:
 1. Do:
 - a. Take the food instrument and the participant identification folder to the store on or after "first date to use."
 - b. Use food instruments by the "last date to use." The store cannot accept the food instruments after that date.
 - i. Return unused expired food instruments to the local WIC provider.
 - ii. Unused food instruments cannot be reissued after the last date to use.

- c. Use the food instrument, the Missouri WIC Approved Food List and the participant identification folder as a shopping guide. Purchase:
 - i. Only the food items in the quantities and sizes issued on the food instrument being redeemed.
 - ii. Less food than issued if desired, but do not request any other item in exchange.
 - iii. Only the brands and flavors of foods specified on the Missouri WIC Approved Food List.
 - iv. Only non-nationally advertised brands where so specified.
 - d. Place the fresh fruits and vegetables on the check-out counter before the frozen fruits and vegetables. Refer to [ER# 2.06950](#) for use of the Cash Value Benefit (CVB).
 - e. Separate the foods for each food instrument being redeemed at the same time, since each must be rung up separately by the cashier.
 - f. Separate non-WIC foods or other items also being purchased. The food instrument cannot be used to pay for them.
 - g. Present the food instrument to the cashier before the items are rung up.
 - h. Sign the food instrument when the cashier requests it, but not until:
 - i. The items have been rung up on the cash register and the register receipt is totaled.
 - ii. The correct date and total purchase price without sales tax have been entered on the food instrument.
 - i. Show the participant identification folder for signature verification. Other identification may be requested by the cashier.
 - j. Inform the local WIC provider of all questions or problems with the vendor or the food instrument.
2. Do not:
- a. Make any changes on the food instrument, instead return to the local WIC provider for changes.
 - b. Use before the "first date to use." Doing this can lead to the loss of bi-monthly and tri-monthly pick-up privileges.
 - c. Sign the food instrument before entering the store.
 - d. Send anyone to the store with the food instrument except a proxy. The store cannot accept the food instrument if:
 - i. The participant or proxy does not present the participant identification folder at the time of purchases.
 - ii. The signature does not match an authorized signature on the participant identification folder.

- iii. The participant or proxy signs the food instrument in advance of the purchase.
 - e. Accept or request change back from the food instrument.
 - f. Pay money for food issued on the food instrument if it exceeds the limit.
 - g. Accept rainchecks from the store for items not in stock. Instead, do one of the following:
 - i. Take nothing and go to another store where all items are available.
 - ii. Take nothing and return to the store when all items are available.
 - iii. Substitute another WIC approved brand and/or flavor when possible, except for infant formula.
 - iv. Only in the case of hardship regarding formula, ask the store to complete a Partial Formula Redemption Form to take to the local WIC provider to get another food instrument for the rest of the formula. Refer to [ER# 3.08500](#).
 - h. Request cash, refund or exchange for foods purchased with the WIC food instrument from:
 - i. The store where purchased.
 - ii. Any other store.
 - i. Exchange food instruments for money, credit or other food.
- D. The local WIC provider shall inform the participant of the local WIC provider policy on making changes to the food instrument at future visits. See F below.
- E. The local WIC provider shall inform the participant that failure to comply with correct redemption procedures may be considered participant violations and subjects the participant to sanctions.
- F. On future visits the local WIC provider shall:
 - 1. Question participant acceptance of WIC foods. Refer to the CPA to tailor the food package, if necessary.
 - 2. Ask if all food was consumed. Refer to the CPA to tailor the food package, if necessary.
 - 3. Ask if participant wants changes on food instruments or food package. Adjust if requested, according to local WIC provider policy.
 - 4. Ask if participant had problems at the store. If the answer is yes, report problems according to instructions in [ER# 3.08400](#).