

Administration Volume
Food Instrument Accountability Section

Food Instrument (FI) Replacement - Lost or Stolen Reported by Participant (3.06200)

ER# 3.06200

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POLICY: FIs reported lost/stolen due to natural disaster or personal misfortune may be replaced for up to three months without a waiting period. Third party documentation is required.

FIs reported lost/stolen for other reasons or without documentation, shall not be replaced for the current month (except on a case-by case basis as explained below). The LWP shall wait seven (7) calendar days after the participant reports a lost or stolen check before replacing the current month's FIs. Schedule new appointment for participant to return to pick-up full sets of FIs for future month(s).

Exception to replace the current month's full or partial set of FIs can only be made on a case-by-case basis and approved by the WIC Coordinator or Nutrition Coordinator. Reason(s) for granting the exception must be documented.

When any FIs are reported lost or stolen, the participant must sign the [Lost/Stolen Food Instrument Report form](#). The signed form must be scanned and saved in the participant folder in MOWINS.

Participants must be sanctioned if any reported lost/stolen FIs that have been replaced are redeemed by the participant, guardian or authorized proxy.

Replacement FIs must be issued in person and only to the guardian or adult participant. A proxy cannot pick up replacement FIs.

PROCEDURES:

- A. Third party documentation:
 1. Examples of acceptable documentation are a police report or report number, fire department report, a statement from homeless shelter or crisis center on the organization's letterhead, or a newspaper article documenting the natural disaster.
 2. Documentation must be verified. If a copy of third party documentation is not available from the participant, the LWP may contact the organization to verify the reason for the incident. If the LWP cannot establish verification, the FI reported as lost/stolen can only be replaced under the exception rule.
 3. Documentation from friends and relatives is not acceptable.
- B. Check the food instrument screens in MOWINS to determine if the reported FIs have been redeemed.
 1. Any reported FIs that show as redeemed, cannot be replaced until a copy of the FI has been requested and received from the state agency. The validity of the signature must be determined once the copy is received. If the FI image is not available, inform the

participant that the decision to replace must wait until the copy of the redeemed FI is available for verification. Refer guardian to local area food banks, churches, human service agencies, etc. for assistance during the waiting period.

2. To replace reported lost/stolen FIs that do not show as redeemed, refer to the MOWINS training manual for void and replacement procedures.
- C. Participants must be instructed of the importance of returning the lost FIs if found. Written warning must be provided to the participant that if any of the lost or stolen FIs are redeemed after being replaced, the participant may have to repay the WIC Program for the additional foods they received and may be disqualified from the WIC Program. Refer to [ER# 1.06200](#). Counsel the participant/guardian about safe guarding their WIC FIs, which should be treated as cash. Document in the general notes in the participant folder in MOWINS.
 - D. Any FIs replaced under the exception rule must be well documented in the general notes in the participant folder in MOWINS for state agency monitoring. The LWP has the discretion to place the participant on a monthly FI issuance cycle.