

Mississippi eWIC Vendor Kickoff Meeting

November 18, 2020

Introduction

- WIC vendors play an important role in the health of WIC participants. The eWIC process allows WIC participants to redeem benefits at grocery stores and pharmacies. Vendors act as the final step in the WIC process. The vendor's role is vital to the success of the WIC Program. WIC appreciates you partnering with us to provide nutritious foods to Mississippi families.

Internal Stakeholders

MSDH WIC works with several contractors to implement eWIC.

MSDH WIC Vendor Management

- Responsible for the recruitment, authorization and monitoring of potential and authorized vendors.
- Works diligently with vendors to ensure compliance with Federal and State guidelines.

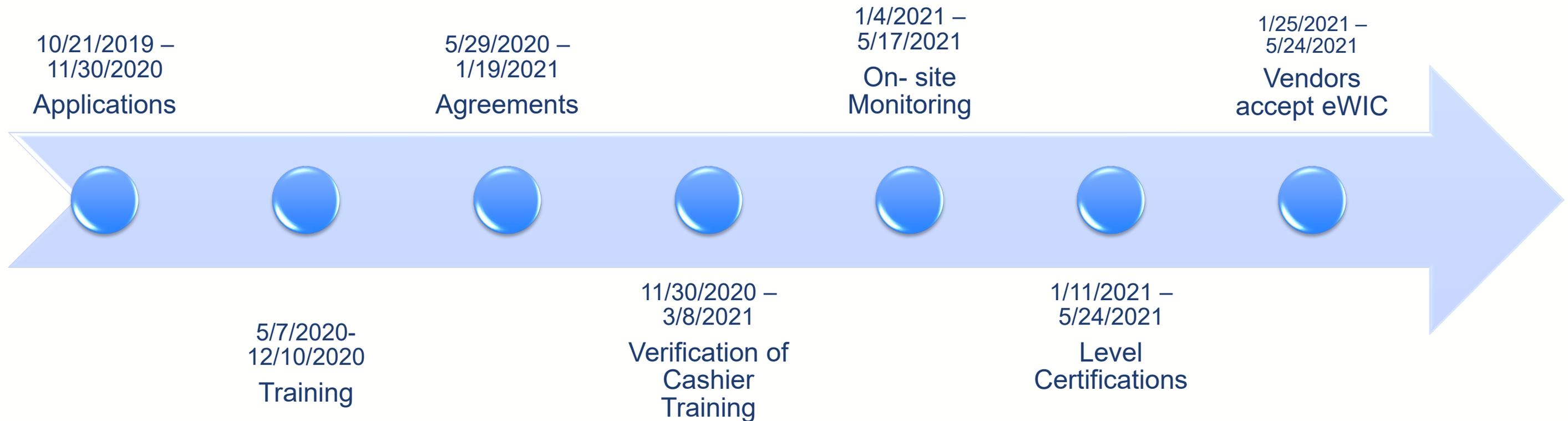
Conduent

- eWIC Processor
- Works with authorized vendors, Value Added Resellers/Electronic Cash Register system providers and Third Party Processors to ensure eWIC readiness.

Maximus

- Quality Assurance Contractor
- Work closely with the State and Conduent in preparations and the development of a remote Level III Certification plan.
- Plan and coordinate remote certifications in close collaboration with the State.
- Schedule Level III Certifications with vendors.

Timeline of Vendor Activities



Topics for Discussion

- What is eWIC?
- What is the Approved Product List (APL)?
- Integrated Transaction Processing
- Stand Beside Transaction Processing
- Vendor Training
- Level III certifications
- Questions/Answers

What is eWIC?

What is eWIC?

- eWIC is simply the electronic issuance, redemption, reconciliation and payment of WIC benefits using a magnetic striped card and PIN (similar to a debit card) as the method to purchase.
- With SNAP, benefits are issued in a dollar amount, but with eWIC, benefits are issued using WIC approved food categories and assigned a benefit period the benefits are available to be purchased.
- Some WIC participants are assigned a Cash Value Benefit (CVB) to purchase fruits and vegetables. If a participant exceeds their available CVB balance, they can pay the overage with another tender type. This is called split tender.
- WIC participants are only allowed to purchase prescribed foods. No substitutions are allowed.

What is eWIC?

- During an eWIC transaction, each item is first verified against the approved product list (APL) file to confirm it is a WIC eligible item. It is then compared to the benefit balance and the benefit start/end dates.
- The WIC purchase transaction is then sent to Conduent where the vendor status must be 'active' and the food items are validated against the APL data as well as the available benefit balance for the WIC family. If these validations are passed, the requested price of the food item is compared to the not to exceed (NTE) price assigned by Mississippi WIC and adjusted if the requested price is higher. Conduent will return an approved WIC purchase along with the adjusted payment amount, if appropriate.
- If the initial validations are not passed, then the WIC purchase is returned to the vendor as denied.

Mississippi eWIC Card

- One card per family.
- Benefits will be aggregated.
- eWIC should always be used as the first payment type, followed by SNAP and then debit/credit.



What is the Approved Product List (APL) file?

What is the Approved Product List (APL) File?

- The APL file is a list of approved food items established by MS WIC for their eWIC program.
- If a food item is not in the APL file, the vendor can complete a UPC submission form and submit it to MS WIC for review. This form is available at www.freshnewwic.com.
- The APL file will need to be downloaded daily to the vendor's cash register system to ensure accurate WIC eligible food items are available for purchase.
- Integrated vendors can obtain the file from Conduent's FTP site.
- Stand beside devices are configured to automatically receive the APL file if they are left on and have connectivity (analog phone line or wired internet connection).

Produce Mapping

- The MS WIC Program is requiring integrated vendors to map produce to a MS WIC approved Price Look-Up(PLU) code.
- Any WIC-approved fresh fruit or vegetable without an International Federation of Produce Standards (IFPS) approved PLU must be mapped to an IFPS-approved PLU. This includes produce items with a UPC bar code.
- It is the store's responsibility to map all required fresh fruits and vegetables. If produce mapping is not completed, the WIC transaction will decline.
- Stores should reach out to their Electronic Cash Register (ECR) provider for instructions on how to map produce items.

Integrated Transaction Processing

Integrated Vendors

- Vendors use eWIC software to submit transactions through a certified Third-Party Processor (TPP).
 - Fiserv Solutions, Inc. (First Data Corporation)
 - Worldpay US, Inc.
- A TPP is a full-service provider for transaction processing, reconciliation and settlement for all payment types supported by the vendor (including eWIC).
- TPPs charge vendor fees based on the type of service selected (i.e. per transaction fee).
- Questions regarding settlement or transaction processing should be directed to your TPP.

Current Conduent Certified Vendors

- Food Giant
- Kroger
- Rouses
- Save A Lot
- Walmart
- Many Mississippi WIC vendors are using software that has previously been certified for eWIC processing.
 - Contact your Electronic Cash Register (ECR) provider to determine what is needed to accept eWIC transactions.

Certified Electronic Cash Register (ECR) Systems

- IBM ACE v7.2/8
- StoreNext ISS45 v7/v8
- StoreNext Scanmaster v2
- NCR RealPOS Model 7446
- IBM System 3200
- Dell Optiplex 760
- Retail Professional, V2010.1301.0.127
- LOC SMS v3.3/3.4

Integrated eWIC Purchase Flow

- An APL is downloaded nightly to the vendor's ECR system.
- Items are scanned (no need to separate WIC items).
- The universal product codes (UPCs) and price look-up codes (PLUs) are verified against the APL file.
- Items are checked against the WIC family's benefit balance.
- Items scanned are transmitted to Conduent's WIC Connect system for approval.
- WIC Connect responds with approval and remaining benefit balance.
- Once completed, if there are any non-WIC items remaining, the WIC family will be given the opportunity to pay the remaining balance with another form of tender.

Note: Depending on the vendor's ECR system, the card swipe and PIN entry could occur at the beginning, middle or end of initiating the WIC purchase transaction.

Stand Beside POS Transaction Processing

Overview

Stand Beside Vendors (MS WIC provided equipment)

- Often utilized by small chains or single store merchants.
- No cost to vendor for initial point of sale (POS) terminal lane.
- Equipment maintenance and vendor support provided at no cost.
- No fee to merchant for transaction processing.

Less efficient

- Need to scan items twice, at POS and in vendor's ECR system.
- Takes up valuable counter space.
- Requires dedicated power and analog phone line or wired internet connection for each stand beside in the lane.
- Can only process WIC transactions.
- Vendor's with an integrated ECR system *will not* receive a stand beside terminal.



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Stand Beside Requirements

- Must complete and return a Conduent vendor agreement and W9 form.
- Conduent will not ship stand beside equipment without a fully executed vendor agreement, including W9 form and payment instructions.
- Conduent will only be able to conduct training once the vendor has a working analog phone line or wired internet connection.

Stand Beside eWIC Purchase Flow

- Cardholder swipes their eWIC card.
- Cardholder will then enter his/her PIN.
- Cashier scans the UPCs or enters the PLUs into the stand beside POS and scans each item on the register as well.
- Cashier enters or confirms the food item price on the stand beside.
- Cashier completes the transaction on the stand beside POS .
- The stand beside POS prints a receipt that has the remaining benefit balance details for the cardholder.

Vendor Training

Vendor Training

Stand beside

- Uses a “ship and train” process.
- A manual and quick reference guide are sent with the stand beside POS shipment.
- After the vendor receives the stand beside POS and has a working analog phone line or wired internet connection for the device, the vendor will need to call the vendor help desk to schedule a time for telephone-based training.
- Vendor is contacted at the schedule appointment time and is trained on the functionality of the POS.

Integrated vendors

- Vendors are trained by their corporate staff or ECR provider.

Level III Certifications

Level III Certifications

- A live test by WIC staff, or other designated personnel, will be conducted to verify that the ECR system can successfully process eWIC transactions.
- The live test will consist of a balance inquiry, WIC purchase and WIC void transaction.
- All vendor locations must pass Level III Certification prior to accepting eWIC.
- Due to COVID-19, MSDH WIC is planning to perform Level III Certifications virtually. Details on the process will be provided at a later date.

Level III Certification

Mississippi eWIC Level III Certification Schedule	
Pilot 1 and Pilot 2	January 11, 2021 – January 22, 2021
Rollout 1	March 22, 2021 – April 9, 2021
Rollout 2	April 12, 2021- April 30, 2021
Rollout 3	May 3, 2021 – May 21, 2021
Note: This is an estimated timeframe of when the level III certification will be performed.	

Questions & Answers

CONDUENT

