



MISSISSIPPI STATE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH



Vendor Advisory Meeting
Thursday, January 16, 12 pm

MSDH WIC Program
Vendor Management Team

Welcome!

- Please type your name, corporation/store name, and email address into the chat.
- If your chat is not operable, please email vmu@msdh.ms.gov
 - Subject Line: Advisory Meeting Attendance 1/16/2025
 - Include store name and person(s) attending and their title

Agenda

- Policy Updates
- Program Updates
- Program Reminders
- Upcoming Projects
- Questions & Answers



Policy Update – FINAL RULE: Revisions in the WIC Food Package (2024)

- This final rule revises Federal regulations to align the WIC food packages with the current *Dietary Guidelines for Americans* and to reflect recommendations from the National Academies of Science, Engineering, and Medicine while promoting nutrition security and equity and considering program administration.
- The changes are intended to
 - provide WIC participants with a wider variety of foods that align with the latest nutritional science;
 - provide WIC state agencies with greater flexibility to prescribe and tailor food packages that accommodate participants' special dietary needs and personal and cultural food preferences;
 - and address key nutritional needs to support healthy dietary patterns.



Policy Update –

FINAL RULE: Revisions in the WIC Food Package (2024)

Mississippi WIC Approach

- The Mississippi WIC Program plans to implement a phased approach, making changes to 1 food category at a time.
- Proposed completion date is September 2025

Areas Impacted

- Breakfast cereal
- Infant formula
- Fruits and vegetables
- Canned fish
- Whole grains
- Legumes and eggs
- Juice
- Infant foods
- Milk and milk substitutes



Policy Update –

FINAL RULE: Revisions in the WIC Food Package (2024)

Change	Estimated Timeline
75% of all breakfast cereal varieties must be whole grain	January 2025
Breakfast cereal must contain no more than 6 grams of added sugar	January 2025
Increased amount of infant formula for partially breastfed infants	February 2025
Fresh herbs will be allowed for fresh fruits and vegetables	March 2025
White potatoes will be WIC eligible	March 2025



Policy Update

Minimum Stocking Requirements include at least 5 varieties of fresh fruits and 5 varieties of fresh vegetables.

Category	Type or Brand	Minimum Quantity
Fruits and vegetables	At least 5 varieties of fresh fruits and 5 varieties of fresh vegetables – WIC approved	\$24 dollar retail value
	At least 5 varieties of canned fruits and 5 varieties of canned vegetables – WIC approved	24 cans total



Policy Update

Civil Money Penalties

- Trafficking in food instruments - \$18,760 for each violation, and maximum penalty for violations occurring during a single investigation is \$75,042.
- Vendor convicted of selling firearms, ammunition, explosive, or controlled substances in exchange for food instruments is \$18,299 for each violation, and maximum penalty for violations occurring during a single investigation is \$75,042.



Program Updates

- Temporary Infant Formula Substitutions
 - Please be reminded the substitutions for infant formula expired 11/30/2024, and all grocery vendors are required as outlined in the vendor agreement to stock the minimum requirements of standard formula.



Program Reminders

- Treatment of WIC participants
 - Remember to treat WIC participants with courtesy and respect
 - WIC-only lanes are not allowed (*unless you have a single function POS device*)
- Participant complaints
 - All complaints will be forwarded to vendors.
 - Vendors with more than 9 complaints in a year will be determined to be **high risk**



Program Reminders

- Ordering supplies
 - Shelf tags, Decals, Vendor handbook, etc.
 - Send an email to vmu@msdh.ms.gov
- WIC Vendor Complaint Form
 - Use this form to submit complaints
 - Complaints range from issues with a product, WIC staff member, WIC participant, etc.
 - Please note no staff or participant information can be shared so you will not receive updates on actions taken



Program Reminders

- Produce mapping
 - ALL produce PLUs must be mapped to a UPC to be scanned at checkout
 - Mapping is the responsibility of the store
 - Please contact your POS servicer or VAR for assistance with mapping



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Produce Mapping Information for Integrated Mississippi WIC Retailers

The Mississippi WIC Program requires retailers with integrated electronic cash registers and point of sale

(ECR/POS) systems to "map" produce to a Mississippi WIC approved Product Lookup Code (PLU) prior to eWIC certification. Produce mapping refers to linking packaged fresh fruits and vegetable universal product codes (UPCs) to standard International Federation of Produce Standards (IFPS) PLUs. The Mississippi WIC Approved Product List (APL) contains only IFPS approved PLUs.

Mississippi WIC Vendor APL Mapping Rules:

- Mapping is allowed only for fresh fruits and vegetables identified as WIC food items eligible for cash value benefit (CVB) redemption in the APL.
- UPCs and other unique product identifiers for WIC approved fresh fruit and vegetables must be mapped to an IFPS PLU in the APL.
- Full mapping of UPCs for WIC authorized fresh fruits and vegetables, on a one-to-one (1:1) basis, to an IFPS PLU on the APL is required.
- Integrated WIC Vendors will not use the FNS designated CVB PLU 4469. Produce using a generic "any fruit" or "any vegetable" IFPS PLU (#4469), need to be mapped to the closest specific IFPS PLU.
- Canned or frozen fruits or vegetables should not be mapped.
- Produce already using an approved IFPS PLU will continue to use that PLU.

If UPCs or store-assigned PLUs for produce are scanned without having been mapped, the ECR/POS system will not identify those products as WIC approved food items and the WIC shopper will not be able to make a produce purchase with their WIC benefits.

Here are two examples of how to map fresh fruits and vegetables to ensure they can be purchased by a WIC shopper:

- Map the UPC for a single type of fruit or vegetable to a corresponding IFPS PLU.
[EX: A bag of carrots can be mapped to PLU#4094 for carrots]
- Map the UPC for a mixture/medley of fresh vegetables or fruits to the corresponding IFPS PLU for the first or the predominant vegetable or fruit item.
[EX: DOLE American Blend Salad can be mapped to PLU#3097 for lettuce]



Mapping is an ongoing process since new produce UPCs are added to store inventory frequently. All ECR/POS systems capable of accepting eWIC transactions are capable of mapping produce. Contact your ECR Provider for specific instructions on how to map produce.



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Program Reminders

- Routine monitoring spot checks
 - Designed to provide technical assistance and give vendors an opportunity to find and resolve issues
- Routine monitoring visits
 - A total of 133 authorized vendors will be monitored this year
 - Routine monitoring may occur any time the location is open
- Compliance investigations
 - Covert visits are happening year-round
 - You will not be notified of this visit



Program Reminders

- Updated vendor documents
 - www.freshnewwic.com
 - Mississippi WIC Approved Product List
 - Medical Formulas Amount Guide
 - Medical Formulas Available
 - Pharmacy Quick Reference Guide

FORMS

→ WIC Participant Complaint Forms Form 1114	
→ WIC Program Grocery Price Survey Form 1166	
→ WIC Program Pharmacy Price Survey Form 1199	
→ WIC Program Store Brand Declaration Form Form 1112	
📄 WIC Vendor Complaint Form Form 1235	PDF (249KB)
📄 Additional Store Attachment Form Form 1167	XLSX (71KB)
📄 Verification of Cashier Training Form 1224	PDF (281KB)
📄 Vendor Technology Survey Updated May 2024 (Form 1185)	PDF (171KB)
📄 Mississippi WIC Program UPC Submission Form 1178	PDF (457KB)

PRODUCTS

📄 Mississippi WIC Approved Products List Updates Updated October 2024	XLSX (114KB)
📄 Mississippi WIC Approved Products List Updated November 2024	XLS (2MB)
📄 Medical Formulas Available	PDF (122KB)
📄 Medical Formula Amounts Guide	PDF (98KB)

DOCUMENTS

📄 WIC Pharmacy Guide	PDF (258KB)
📄 Produce Mapping for Integrated Mississippi WIC Retailers February 2021	PDF (247KB)
📄 Authorized WIC Vendors	PDF (179KB)
📄 Mississippi WIC Vendor Handbook December 2022	PDF (502KB)
📄 Mississippi WIC Vendor Food Guide	PDF (4MB)
📄 Notice of Deferral of Application Processing	PDF (132KB)
📄 WIC-Approved Infant Formula Suppliers	PDF (17KB)
📄 WIC Program Minimum Stock Requirements Form 6044	PDF (1MB)

TRAINING

📄 WIC Vendor Training for Pharmacy Associates	PDF (3MB)
📄 WIC Vendor Training for Grocery Store Associates	PDF (8MB)



Upcoming Projects

- New application process coming soon
 - Red Cap
 - Completely electronic
 - Tentative launch date is **February** 2025
 - Used for new authorizations, change of ownership, adding a store, and re-authorization



Upcoming Projects

- WIC Online Shopping
 - WIC online shopping will allow WIC participants to order and pay for WIC approved items
 - Tentative launch date is in 2026
- Where are we now?
 - Vendor listening sessions will be completed in January 2025.
 - Vendors who completed a listening session will be contacted for next steps and additional information.
 - Participant listening sessions are scheduled for February 2025.



Question & Answer Session



Next Meeting



March 20, 2025



12:00 PM, CST



Submit any discussion topics or training needs to vmu@msdh.ms.gov

Contact Us



vmu@msdh.ms.gov



1-800-359-7832



www.freshnewwic.com



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Thank You

WIC appreciates you being a partner with us
in providing nutritious foods to Mississippi
families!

