

WIC Retailer Training

2011 Annual Requirements



To meet the annual training requirements of the WIC Nutrition Program:

- All store employees involved with WIC should read and understand the information presented here
- Keep a record of employees who read this information for state WIC staff to review on request

WIC Approved Foods and Infant Formula

The WIC Nutrition Program chooses foods that are good sources of nutrition. We select foods rich in calcium, fiber, iron, protein, and vitamins A and C. We analyze foods to make sure they meet federal and state nutritional standards. We also consider cost, availability, and preferences of WIC shoppers.

The WIC Shopping Guide

This product guide is the main source of information about WIC approved foods for retailers and shoppers:

www.doh.wa.gov/cfh/WIC/wicfoods.htm



Infant Formula

Retail stores must purchase infant formula from approved distributors. Details on infant formula are available at:

www.doh.wa.gov/cfh/WIC/formula.htm

Contact Us

Business Hours

Monday – Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.
(except holidays)

E-mail: wic@doh.wa.gov
Phone: 1-800-841-1410

Contact the WIC Nutrition Program for help with:

- WIC approved foods or infant formula
- Ordering the WIC Shopping Guide, shelf tags, or other materials
- Concerns or complaints

WIC Retailer Bulletin

Stay In the Know

Something is always changing. It could be food packaging, approved brands, or federal rules.

By participating in the WIC Nutrition Program, retailers and their employees are responsible for staying informed of changes. We are exploring ways to improve communications. E-mail and web notices will be a priority. The goal is to share needed information in a timely, easy-to-read format, and to keep costs as low as possible.

Please read and share these bulletins with everyone in your store involved with WIC, including those in inventory, sales, and bookkeeping.

What's new at WIC?

Re-apply for the next three-year contract period

Starting in late 2011, the WIC Nutrition Program will be distributing retailer applications for the three-year contract period beginning April 1, 2012.

All participating stores and owners must re-apply to be considered for authorization for the new contract period.

Watch for the next WIC Shopping Guide in March 2012

The guide will be ready for distribution next spring. It will be effective April 1, 2012.

Minimum Inventory Requirements

WIC retailers must have the required amount of WIC approved foods on hand at all times. These minimum amounts should be easy for the store to achieve.

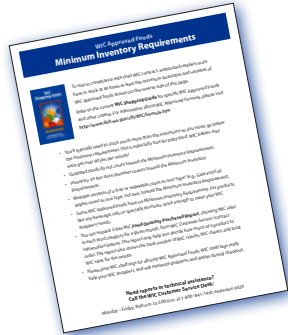
WIC Approved Foods Minimum Inventory Requirements

www.doh.wa.gov/cfh/WIC/materials/retailers/min-inventory.pdf

Use this list along with the **WIC Shopping Guide** to know which brands are approved in each food category.

Contact the WIC Nutrition Program if you need help with minimum inventory requirements:

E-mail: wic@doh.wa.gov
Phone: 1-800-841-1410



WIC Food Sales Reports

These reports, called Food Quantity Purchased Reports, show your store's monthly sales in each WIC food category. Having enough WIC approved foods usually requires much more inventory than our minimum requirements. This information can help with your inventory planning and ordering.

Available on request:

1-800-841-1410, extension 3615

Get Paid for Every Check: Follow These Steps

General Guidelines

- Use black or dark blue ink pen when writing on the check. Do not use other colored pens, gel pens, or markers.
- If you make a mistake when you write in the "Actual Purchase Price" box:
 - Draw a one line through the incorrect amount.
 - Clearly write the correct amount in or close to the box and write your initials close by.
 - Do not scribble or write over numbers. Do not use white out or try to erase the incorrect amount.

How to Take a WIC Check

- 1 Process each WIC check as a separate transaction.

NOTE: WIC checks for fresh fruits and vegetables may be combined in a single transaction.

Ask for the check and the customer's ID. The name on the customer's ID must match one of the names printed below the signature box. Put a mark in the box next to the customer's name.

- 2 Look at the dates on the check. Do not accept WIC checks before the "First Day to Use" or after the "Last Day to Use." Write today's date in the "Transaction Date" box.
- 3 Sell only WIC approved foods, in the right amount, approved size, and container type. Ring up the food in the order listed on the check.

- 4 Write the total amount of the sale in the "Actual Purchase Price" box.

NOTE: On WIC checks for fresh fruits and vegetables **never** enter more than the value of the check in the "Actual Purchase Price" box.

- 5 After you complete the "Actual Purchase Price" box, have the customer sign the check in the signature box.

Ask the customer to return the check to you. Review the check to make sure it has:

- Valid dates
- Correct "Actual Purchase Price" entered
- Customer's signature
- A mark in the box by the customer's name

Refuse the WIC Check if:

- It is already signed before the purchase starts.
- It is altered in any way or badly damaged.
- The customer tries to use it before the "First Day to Use" or after the "Last Day to Use."
- The customer has no identification.
- The customer's name is not printed below the signature box.

For More Information

See the WIC Shopping Guide, pages 30 through 36.

How to Prepare WIC Checks for Deposit

1. Use your authorized WIC retailer stamp. This customized stamp has the name of your store and your unique five-digit retailer number. Keep it well inked with black ink only.

Contact the WIC Nutrition Program immediately if your stamp is lost, stolen, broken, or worn out: **1-800-841-1410, extension 3615**

2. Stamp each check clearly in the box labeled "Retailer Stamp ID Here." The bank will reject checks without a stamp or if part of a stamped number is missing.
3. Before depositing WIC checks, make sure that all required information is on every check:
 - Valid dates
 - Correct "Actual Purchase Price" entered
 - Customer's signature
 - WIC retailer stamp ID number

We can't do it without our partners

Retailers play a critical role in the WIC Nutrition Program:

- There are more than 750 authorized stores across the state.
- WIC food sales in Washington totaled over \$120 million in 2010.
- Studies show that WIC shoppers spend far more than \$120 million per year on other purchases at the grocery store.

The WIC Nutrition Program is grateful for the help and cooperation of our retail partners.

Local agencies and clinics provide health screening, nutrition and health education, breastfeeding promotion and support, checks for nutritious foods, and help getting other services. All 39 Washington counties provide these services at more than 200 WIC clinic sites.

2010 WIC Annual Report:

www.doh.wa.gov/cfh/WIC/materials/reports/2010/annualreport10.pdf

What to Do When the Bank Returns a Check

The bank may charge a fee for each rejected check. The bank will indicate the reason the check was rejected. Some rejected checks can be corrected and re-deposited, others cannot.

Rejected checks cannot be corrected and re-deposited when:

- They were accepted before the "First Day to Use" or deposited more than 60 days after the "First Day to Use."
- They were accepted from the customer after the "Last Day to Use."

Note: Retailers cannot contact WIC customers directly for any reason, such as missing signatures or rejected checks.

Checks can be corrected and re-deposited when:

- They are still within 60 days of the "First Day to Use." Act quickly on returned checks.
- The retailer stamp is missing or unreadable. Stamp the check in the "Retailer Stamp ID Here" box, or re-stamp it if the number is unreadable. It is okay to carefully draw in missing parts of numbers with a black pen.
- The purchase price is missing. Write the purchase amount in the "Actual Purchase Price" box.
- The purchase price is above the maximum allowable reimbursement level (MARL) and your store does not participate in Presumptive Payment. Draw one line through the purchase price and write the adjusted amount in or close to the "Actual Purchase Price" box.

Note: Do not re-deposit checks when the bank indicates "Excess Dollar Amount – Paid via ACH Transaction."

This means your store has signed up for Presumptive Payment. You will automatically be paid the maximum allowable amount for this check.

Presumptive Payment is a direct deposit system that reduces paperwork and processing time for rejected checks. Call us if you want to sign up for Presumptive Payment: **1-800-841-1410, extension 3636.**

Check Images

A rejected WIC check returned by the bank will not be the actual check you deposited. Federal regulations require the bank to make an electronic image of the paper check and destroy the original. When the bank returns a check, it will be an electronic image. This is a legal copy. It is slightly smaller than the original. Use this electronic copy when re-deposit is allowed.

Complaints Help WIC Improve Service

The WIC Nutrition Program routinely handles complaints about WIC shoppers, WIC clinics, and retail stores. We view complaints as an opportunity to improve program services. We use the information to update materials, training, and education.

Your customer service skills help you handle customer issues at your store, but please let us know if serious problems arise. Our staff will listen to your concerns and help you with difficult WIC shoppers.

We contact retail stores, WIC clinics, and WIC shoppers with reminders about the rules and regulations of the program. Our goal is to improve the WIC shopping experience for everyone.

Please call **1-800-841-1410** to report or discuss a complaint.

Why WIC?

One of the best ways for everyone to stay healthy throughout their lifetime is to start out healthy from birth to five years. WIC helps pregnant women, new mothers, and young children eat well, learn about nutrition, and stay healthy.

- The WIC Nutrition Program has served women, infants, and children in Washington for almost 40 years.
- In 2010, the WIC Nutrition Program served 50 percent of all infants born in Washington—a total of more than 316,000 clients.
- WIC served over 15,000 military families in 2010.

Sanctions and Claims

It's important that retailers comply with all WIC rules. WIC staff provide ongoing training and assistance. We also conduct on-site visits, investigations, and audits.

When problems arise, depending on the frequency and severity, we will first try to help you correct them. WIC may give a verbal warning requiring the store to take corrective action. Typical problems include:

- Not meeting the minimum inventory requirements
- Selling non-approved foods

For some violations, the WIC Nutrition Program may impose sanctions. Possible sanctions include requiring the store to reimburse the program for improperly handled WIC checks or pay a fine or penalty fee. The store would receive a written claim, which explains the violation, the action being taken, the amount owed to the WIC Nutrition Program, how to resolve it, and any available appeal rights. More serious violations may result in termination of a store's WIC contract or disqualification from the program.

State law governing WIC sanctions and penalties:

<http://apps.leg.wa.gov/WAC/default.aspx?cite=246-790-100>

WIC Retailer Webpage

www.doh.wa.gov/cfh/WIC/retailers.htm



Washington State WIC
Nutrition Program

Watch for our WIC Retailer Bulletin

This fall we plan to introduce a new electronic bulletin. It will be produced on a regular schedule, and feature answers to retailers' questions about the WIC Nutrition Program.

This institution is an equal opportunity provider.

Washington State WIC Nutrition Program does not discriminate.

For persons with disabilities, this document is available on request in other formats. To submit a request, please call 1-800-841-1410 (TDD/TTY 1-800-833-6388).

PUBLIC HEALTH
ALWAYS WORKING FOR A SAFER AND
HEALTHIER WASHINGTON

Washington State Department of
Health
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