

Buying Height and Weight Equipment

In the Washington WIC program, height and weight equipment must meet basic standards. Before buying scales, dual-purpose devices, length boards and stadiometers, refer to the following standards.

All equipment must be:

- Medical grade
- Made and used for the planned purpose
- Well-made and long-lasting
- Easily cleaned and sanitized
- Easily “zeroed” or tared to zero and checked
- Easily calibrated per manufacturer’s instructions
- Fixed or replaced when faulty
- Accurate and provide repeatable measurements

Basic Standards

Infant scale:

- Easily and safely supports the infant with no sharp edges
- Digital scale or balance beam
- Allows for weights up to 40 lbs.
- Weighs in 0.1 oz. increments if digital scale, to 1 oz. if balance beam scale

Child/adult scale:

- Digital scale or balance beam
- Allows for weights of at least 300 lbs.
- Weighs to ¼ pound
- If wheeled, can’t rest on wheels during measurement

Dual-purpose infant measuring device:

- Fixed head and sliding footpieces that keep to a right angle with the measuring surface
- Allows for weights up to 45 lbs.
- Weighs in 0.1 oz. increments if digital scale, to 1 oz. if balance beam scale
- Allows for measures of 5-39 inch
- Measures to 1/8 inch

Infant length board:

- Firm flat horizontal surface
- Fixed headpiece and moveable footpiece that keep to a right angle to the length board
- Allows for measures from 5-39 inch
- Measures to $\frac{1}{8}$ inch
- No rulers or tapes on examination tables

Stadiometer:

- Vertical board with attached measurement scale
- Moveable headpiece that keeps to a right angle to the stadiometer
- Allows for measures beginning at 30 inches
- Measures to $\frac{1}{8}$ inch
- Can be fixed or portable but must be stable when used
- Must be on a firm surface; no carpet under the stadiometer
- Can't be attached to a scale
- No tapes, yardsticks or graphics attached to the wall

Type of height and weight equipment products/features not allowed:

- Spring scales (e.g., bathroom scale), because:
 - o They lose accuracy over a variety of weights and over time
 - o They can't be read accurately below $\frac{1}{2}$ lbs.
- Platform scales with a moveable rod (for height), because:
 - o Headpiece (moveable rod) is often unsteady and too narrow
 - o Moveable rod contracts into itself, resulting in measurement reading errors

Staff can't use makeshift tools or incorrect measuring methods because they aren't accurate. For example, using a measuring tape to measure length with two pencil marks on an exam table.



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