

REQUIRED GUIDANCE



Policy and Procedure Manual  
**Volume 1, Chapter 22**  
Issue WIC Food Benefits

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Washington State WIC Nutrition Program

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REQUIRED GUIDANCE - Effective July 14, 2025

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# CONTENTS

<b>Section 1: Issue WIC Cards and Food Benefits</b>	<b>1</b>
REQUIRED GUIDANCE: Monthly or Multi-Monthly Food Benefit Issuance .....	1
REQUIRED GUIDANCE: Issue Food Benefits.....	4
REQUIRED GUIDANCE: WIC Cards and QR Codes are used to Redeem WIC Food Benefits ..	7
REQUIRED GUIDANCE: Issue WIC Cards to Participants.....	9
REQUIRED GUIDANCE: Caretakers and Proxies .....	11
REQUIRED GUIDANCE: Identification to Receive WIC Food Benefits.....	14
REQUIRED GUIDANCE: Family Issuance Day.....	16
REQUIRED GUIDANCE: Delayed Signature for Food Benefits.....	17
REQUIRED GUIDANCE: Remote Food Benefit Issuance .....	18
REQUIRED GUIDANCE: Issue WIC Benefits when Computer System is Down or During an Emergency.....	20
REQUIRED GUIDANCE: Replace WIC Cards.....	22
REQUIRED GUIDANCE: Mail Replacement WIC Cards .....	25
<b>Section 2: WIC Card Education and Use at the Store</b>	<b>27</b>
REQUIRED GUIDANCE: WIC Card Education .....	27
REQUIRED GUIDANCE: Washington WIC Authorized Stores .....	34
REQUIRED GUIDANCE: Unlock a Personal Identification Number (PIN) .....	36
REQUIRED GUIDANCE: Use Coupons or Manufacturer’s Specials with the WIC Card .....	37
<b>Section 3: Void and Replace WIC Food Benefits</b>	<b>38</b>
REQUIRED GUIDANCE: Replace or Change WIC Food or Formula Benefits .....	38

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REQUIRED GUIDANCE: Exchange WIC Formula for Returned Formula.....	39
REQUIRED GUIDANCE: Contact State WIC Staff to Request Food and Formula Replacement in Emergency Situations.....	41
REQUIRED GUIDANCE: Exchanging Formula in the 11th Month Benefit Period after Turning One .....	43
REQUIRED GUIDANCE: Change from Infant to Child Food Benefits .....	46
REQUIRED GUIDANCE: Change Breastfeeding Food Package Benefits when Formula is Provided .....	47
REQUIRED GUIDANCE: Replace WIC Benefits for Transfer WIC Participants.....	50
REQUIRED GUIDANCE: Order WIC Cards .....	52
REQUIRED GUIDANCE: Secure WIC Cards.....	54
REQUIRED GUIDANCE: WIC Card Inventory .....	55

## Section 1: Issue WIC Cards and Food Benefits

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### REQUIRED GUIDANCE: Monthly or Multi-Monthly Food Benefit Issuance

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Staff must issue one, two, or three months of WIC food benefits at each visit as appropriate based on the participant's category and eligibility period.

- Issuing multiple months of benefits is the best way to provide benefits for participants and make the most efficient use of local agency resources.
- Consider the timing of participants' next WIC appointment when deciding how many months to issue.
- Participants can request and receive monthly food issuance.
- Staff must issue one month of benefits when required by state policy.

The local agency is permitted to limit certain categories of participants (for example, pregnant or breastfeeding participants) to one or two months of food benefit issuance. When the agency chooses to limit the issuance frequency for certain categories of participants, the local WIC agency must write a policy to include:

1. A list of participant categories that require staff to issue only one or two months of food benefits.
2. The reason(s) for limiting certain participants' benefit issuance frequency.

The local agency is permitted to limit a participant's benefit issuance frequency even if the participant does not require limited benefit issuance due to local agency or state policy on a case-by-case basis. In these scenarios, the decision to limit a participant's benefit issuance frequency must be made in partnership with that participant and documented in Cascades in the Individual Care Plan.

**Note:** When the Competent Professional Authority (CPA) is following the local agency policy for limiting benefit issuance to certain categories of participants, they do not need to document in each participant's file why issuance is limited.

When state policy requires monthly issuance, documentation in the care plan is not required. For example:

- Staff can only issue benefits with a First Day to Spend within the 30-day temporary certification due to missing documentation for WIC eligibility. Examples include missing proof of income, ID, or residency at a certification appointment.

The **Information** section below lists additional reasons staff must limit a participant's benefit issuance (based on state policy).

#### **PROCEDURE:**

Staff:

- A. Write the local agency's policy if choosing to limit the frequency of food benefit issuance for entire participant categories (for example, pregnant or breastfeeding participants).
  1. See the **Information** section below for examples of reasons why a participant may benefit from limited benefit issuance frequency.
- B. Apply the local agency's policy equally and fairly to all participants.
- C. Document in Cascades in the Individual Care Plan why the participant is issued food benefits on a limited frequency (when the reason is not included in state or local agency policy).

#### **Information:**

1. The choice of one, two, or three months of food benefit issuance gives flexibility for participants and for clinic staffing.
  - Multi-month issuance can enhance clinic resources, participant satisfaction, and nutrition services.
  - Ideally each benefit issuance is associated with nutrition education.
2. Benefit issuance must be limited to one month according to state policy. For example:
  - When required by State staff due to a program violation investigation.
  - When the participant is missing proof of identification, income, or residency at the initial certification, including participants with 30-day temporary certification due to missing documentation for WIC eligibility.

3. Local agencies may choose to limit benefit issuance frequency for specific participant categories. For example:
  - a. Breastfeeding/chestfeeding participants and their infants may benefit from additional help to ensure breastfeeding/chestfeeding is well established and supported.
4. Benefit issuance may be limited to one or two months on a case-by-case basis, in partnership with participants, to best meet the needs of individual participants. Staff must document why the participant is issued food benefits on a limited frequency (when the reason is not included in state or local agency policy). For example:
  - High risk participants may benefit from more than one Registered Dietitian (RDN) contact per certification period.
  - It may be beneficial to schedule foster children in short-term care on a monthly or bi-monthly basis.
  - Participants issued electric breast pumps in the clinic may benefit from monthly benefits until they return the pump. This allows staff to offer support for breastfeeding/chestfeeding and use of the pump.

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**REQUIRED GUIDANCE: Issue Food Benefits**

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Cascades adds together all food benefits for each participant in the family in one Electronic Benefits Account (EBA) for the family, except for foster children. Each foster child has a separate EBA with just their food benefits.

Staff must:

1. Issue food benefits to WIC participants:
  - Based on the participant's category
  - On the day the participant is determined eligible
  - Throughout the eligibility period
2. Follow the procedures below when issuing food benefits.

Staff must not:

1. Issue benefits to disqualified participants.
  - See [Volume 1, Chapter 2 – Program Compliance](#) for more information.
2. Issue benefits to themselves, family members, or friends.
  - See [Volume 1, Chapter 18 – Certification](#) for more information.

**PROCEDURE:**

Staff:

- A. View identification of the participant, parent guardian, caretaker, or proxy before issuing food benefits.
  - Staff aren't required to document identification when issuing benefits.
  - See the "[Identification to Receive WIC Food Benefits](#)" policy in this chapter.
- B. Determine the issuance frequency for the family or foster child.
  1. Give one, two, or three months of benefits according to State policy and participant needs.



- See the “[Monthly or Multi-Monthly Food Benefit Issuance](#)” policy.
- C. Review the current food package or create a new prescription as appropriate.
- D. Issue food benefits.
- E. Have the participant, Parent Guardian, Caretaker, or Proxy sign the electronic signature pad to document receipt of food benefits.
- See the “[Remote Food Benefit Issuance](#)” policy when the person isn’t physically present in the clinic when issuing benefits.
  - See the “[Delayed Signature for Food Benefits](#)” policy when the person is in the clinic but doesn’t sign for benefits immediately when staff issue the food benefits.

**Notes:**

1. The “Save Fake” signature isn’t allowed when issuing benefits to a participant. This displays when the signature pad isn’t connected to the computer. Check the connection to the signature pad and contact Cascades Support if you can’t re-establish the connection.
  2. Cascades no longer prorates food benefits. Benefits won’t prorate when:
    - Adding a new member to the group more than 7 days after the Family Issuance Day (FID).
    - Issuing formula for the first time to a breastfed infant.
    - A participant misses their appointment and receives benefits after the FID in the current benefit period.
- F. Review the food benefits with the participant, Parent Guardian, Caretaker, or Proxy.
1. Provide a printed Shopping List of the family’s or foster child’s benefits, or ensure the family uses the WICShopper app.
  2. Offer a printed Shopping Guide to reference approved products.
- G. Talk about using the WIC Card correctly and redeeming food benefits within the first date and last date to spend.

**Note:** Participants can use the QR Code at farmers markets and farm stores to redeem their Farmers Market Nutrition Program (FMNP) benefits and their WIC fruit and vegetable Cash Value Benefit (CVB).

- See the “[WIC Card Education](#)” policy in this chapter for information about educating participants about using their WIC Card at the grocery store.
- See [Volume 1, Chapter 8 – Farmers Market Nutrition Program](#) for more information about using the QR code to spend FMNP benefits and fruit and vegetable Cash Value Benefit (CVB) at farmers markets.

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**REQUIRED GUIDANCE: WIC Cards and QR Codes are used to Redeem WIC Food Benefits**

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Staff must:

1. Provide a WIC Card with a QR code to active participants at the initial certification to redeem WIC food benefits.
  - WIC Cards are used to redeem WIC food and fruit and vegetable Cash Value Benefits (CVB) at authorized grocery stores.
  - QR codes are used to redeem FMNP or WIC fruit and vegetable CVBs at farmers markets and farm stores. Participants may access their QR code through the WICShopper App.

**Note:** WIC Cards have a QR code printed on them. Participants can continue to utilize the WICShopper App to use their QR code until they receive a new WIC Card.

2. Issue a replacement WIC Card when needed.

**Note:** This policy is part of the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) Mobile Pay Waiver to allow participants to use QR codes to redeem their CVB at farmers markets and farm stores. This policy is in effect from September 1, 2023 until September 30, 2026, or until FNS ends their evaluation efforts, whichever is later.

**PROCEDURE:**

Staff:

- A. Issue a WIC Card to the family or foster child.
  - See the “Issue FMNP Benefits” policy in [Volume 1, Chapter 8 – WIC Farmers Market Nutrition Program](#).
- B. Provide education about using the WIC Card.
  1. See the “[WIC Card Education](#)” policy.
  2. See the “Offer Participant Education on Using FMNP Benefits” in [Volume 1, Chapter 8 – WIC Farmers Market Nutrition Program](#).
- C. Issue a replacement WIC Card when needed.
  1. See the “[Replace WIC Cards](#)” policy.

2. Participants can also access the new QR code by using the WICShopper app or by requesting the code from Cascades Support if they are waiting for a new WIC Card.

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**REQUIRED GUIDANCE: Issue WIC Cards to Participants**

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Use WIC Cards to redeem WIC food and fruit and vegetable Cash Value Benefits (CVB) at authorized grocery stores.

Use QR codes to redeem FMNP or fruit and vegetable CVBs at farmers markets and farm stores.

Staff must issue a WIC Card to active participants:

1. Issue one WIC Card to a family.
  - A family may include one participant or multiple participants.
  - There must be at least one active participant in the family to issue a WIC Card.
2. Issue one WIC Card for each foster child.
  - Each foster child has an individual Electronic Benefit Account (EBA) and a separate WIC Card.
3. Issue the WIC Card at the initial certification.
  - For in-person appointment: only issue the WIC Card when the Parent Guardian, Participant, Caretaker, or Proxy is physically present.
    - See the “[Mail Replacement WIC Cards](#)” policy for more information when the person can’t come into the clinic to receive a replacement card.
    - See the “[Remote Certification](#)” policy for more information about issuing WIC Cards to participants who opt for a remote certification appointment.
  - Only the participant or a Parent Guardian can authorize Caretakers and Proxies to receive the WIC Card.
  - Staff must document Caretakers and Proxies on the Family Demographics screen in Cascades.
    - See [Volume 1, Chapter 25 – Legal Considerations and Confidentiality](#) for more information about Parent Guardians.
    - See the policy “[Caretakers and Proxies](#)” in this chapter.

- Staff may not physically deliver WIC Cards to participants who can't come into the clinic to receive them, including participants who don't have a permanent address.
4. Issue a replacement WIC Card when needed.
- See the "[Replace WIC Cards](#)" policy for more information.

**PROCEDURE:**

Staff:

- A. Issue a WIC Card to the family or foster child.
1. Select a card from the clinic's card supply.
  2. Select the appropriate cardholder's name.
    - The foster child is their own cardholder.
    - The cardholder's date of birth is needed when calling the WIC Card Line to set the PIN before using the card at the store.
  3. Ensure the card number is captured in the participant's or family's file in Cascades by running it through the card reader or entering the card number.
- B. Provide education about using the WIC Card and QR code.
- See the "[WIC Card Education](#)" policy.

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**REQUIRED GUIDANCE: Caretakers and Proxies**

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A participant or a Parent Guardian (custodian) may designate one Caretaker and up to two Proxies.

- **Caretaker** – A person with permission to bring a participant into the clinic for certifications, health assessments, and nutrition education; and can receive and sign for WIC food benefits and shop at the store.
- **Proxy** – A person with permission to receive and sign for WIC food benefits and shop at the store.

Caretakers and Proxies must:

1. Have permission from the participant or Parent Guardian to act on their behalf. The participant or Parent Guardian gives permission in one of the following ways:
  - a. Names the person at a WIC appointment.
  - b. Writes a note for the person to bring to the clinic.
  - c. Calls the WIC clinic and gives permission.
    - Staff must take reasonable precautions to verify the identity of the participant or Parent Guardian when accepting permission over the phone. Examples include voice recognition, verifying the participant's date of birth, ZIP Code, WIC Card number, etc.
    - Document telephone permission in the participant's file on the Sticky Note on the Family Demographics screen.
2. Be at least 18 years old.
  - When the person is the participant's or Parent Guardian's spouse, partner, parent, or caregiver, the age requirement doesn't apply.

Staff must:

1. Inform Caretakers and Proxies about program rules and how to use the WIC Card.
  - When the Caretaker or Proxy isn't physically present in the clinic, the participant or Parent Guardian must agree to provide this information to the person before allowing them to use the WIC Card.

2. Enter the name(s) and date(s) of birth for Caretakers and Proxies in the appropriate fields in the Family Demographics screen in Cascades. Enter the effective date(s) for Proxies in the appropriate field. Document the effective date(s) for Caretakers in the Family Care Plan.

**PROCEDURE:**

Staff:

- A. Ask the participant or Parent Guardian if they would like to name a Caretaker or Proxies and explain the role of each.
  1. Let the participant or Parent Guardian know that they must instruct the person about using the WIC Card and WIC Program rules before the person shops at the store.
  2. Enter the person's name on the Family Demographics screen in Cascades in the appropriate field.
  3. Ask the participant or Parent Guardian for the "active dates" for Proxies.
    - A proxy's active dates can't be greater than one year at a time.
    - Ask the participant or Parent Guardian to let staff know when the person no longer has permission to sign for and use the WIC Card.
    - Staff will inactivate the person on the Family Demographics screen.
  4. The participant or Parent Guardian can change the Caretaker or Proxies at any time.
    - Staff update the names as needed on the Family Demographics screen in Cascades.
    - See [Volume 1, Chapter 18 – Certification](#) for additional information about assigning Caretakers or Proxies.
- B. When a Caretaker or Proxy hasn't been entered on the Family Demographics screen, or the person requesting WIC benefits is different from those listed on the Family Demographics screen:
  1. Get permission from the participant or Parent Guardian.



- Ask for a written note from the participant or Parent Guardian or get permission over the phone.
- 2. Document permission in the participant's file in Cascades.
  - a. Scan the written note into the participant's file.
  - b. Document telephone permission in the Sticky Note on the Family Demographics screen.
- 3. Enter the person's name in the correct field on the Family Demographics screen in Cascades.
- C. Ask the Caretaker or Proxy for ID when they come to the clinic to sign for WIC benefits.
  - Follow the "[Identification to Receive WIC Food Benefits](#)" policy in this chapter.
  - Staff select the correct name before having the person sign on the signature pad when receiving food benefits.
- D. Tell the person how to use the WIC Card, and what WIC foods are approved and how to shop for them at WIC authorized stores, farmers markets, and farm stores.

**Information:**

Caretakers and Proxies don't need to sign the Rights and Responsibilities form to receive food benefits and use the WIC Card.

Federal regulations refer to the Rights and Responsibilities form as the participant agreement.

- See [Volume 1, Chapter 7 – Rights and Responsibilities](#) for more information about the Rights and Responsibilities form.
- See [Volume 1, Chapter 18 – Certification](#) for more information about caretakers at certification and other WIC appointments.

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**REQUIRED GUIDANCE: Identification to Receive WIC Food Benefits**

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Participants, Parent Guardians, Caretakers, and Proxies must show personal identification (ID) to receive WIC food benefits for in-person appointments.

**Note:** Staff don't need to see participant's or caretaker's identification when issuing benefits remotely. Refer to the "[Remote Food Benefit Issuance](#)" policy in this chapter for more information about issuing benefits when a participant or caregiver opts for a remote appointment.

Staff must accept the forms of identification listed in the procedure below.

The local agency must develop a written policy describing the procedure for when a participant, Parent Guardian, Caretaker, or Proxy doesn't bring ID to the clinic when receiving food benefits.

- Submit the local agency policy to the Local Program Consultant (LPC) and get approval.
- Ensure staff apply the policy equally.

**PROCEDURE:**

Staff:

- A. View the ID of the participant, Parent Guardian, Caretaker, or Proxy before issuing food benefits.
- B. Accept the following items as proof of ID for receiving benefits:
  1. WIC ID and Card Folder with the person's name
  2. Staff visual recognition
  3. Driver's license, state identification card, or military identification
  4. Passport
  5. Work or school ID
  6. Health insurance/Military medical card
  7. Social Security card
  8. Voter registration card

9. Birth certificate
10. Tribal ID
11. Resident alien card/Consular card

**Note:** We require staff to see the person's ID before issuing food benefits during in-person appointments. Staff don't have to document ID in Cascades at benefit pick-up. See [Volume 1, Chapter 18 - Certification](#) for ID requirements when determining eligibility for certifications.

- C. Issue food benefits to the participant.

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**REQUIRED GUIDANCE: Family Issuance Day**

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Each family in Cascades must have a Family Issuance Day (FID) which determines the food benefits First Date to Spend and Last Date to Spend.

- Cascades sets the FID when staff certify the first participant in a family.

Staff can change the FID only when no one in the family has current or future benefits issued.

Staff must treat all participants fairly and equally when changing the FID.

**PROCEDURE:**

Staff:

- A. Follow the policy above when changing the FID.

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**REQUIRED GUIDANCE: Delayed Signature for Food Benefits**

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Staff can issue benefits and have the participant sign later. Examples of this could include when the participant is attending a class, seeing a non-WIC provider, or is unavailable to sign for benefits at the time of issuance.

Staff must ensure the participant or an authorized person signs for benefits by going to the Issue Food Benefits screen or the Delayed Signature for Food Instrument (FI) Issuance screen.

**PROCEDURE:**

Staff:

- A. Issue food benefits.
- B. Press the Sign Later button if the participant isn't immediately available to sign for the benefits.
- C. Ensure the participant signs for benefits before leaving the clinic.
  1. Open the Delayed Signature for FI Issuance screen, select the person's name, and have the person sign.
  2. Search for the family, open the Issue Benefits screen, and have the person sign.
- D. Sign for the benefits if the participant forgets to sign.
  1. Staff select their own name in the Food Benefits Issuance Signature box, sign, and write "forgot to sign."

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**REQUIRED GUIDANCE: Remote Food Benefit Issuance**

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Staff must offer both in-person and remote food benefit issuance appointments and let the participant or caregiver decide which option they prefer.

Staff must issue one, two, or three months of WIC food benefits based on the participant's category, certification period, preferences and required contacts or proof documentation. See the "Monthly or Multi-Monthly Food Benefit Issuance" policy in this chapter.

Staff don't need to see participant's or caretaker's identification when issuing benefits remotely.

Caregivers must return unopened, undamaged containers of formula to the clinic when requesting replacement formula before staff can issue replacement benefits.

- ["Exchange WIC Formula for Returned Formula"](#)
- ["Monthly or Multi-Monthly Food Benefit Issuance"](#)
- ["Identification to Receive WIC Food Benefits"](#) - when issuing benefits in person

**PROCEDURE:**

Staff:

- A. Issue food benefits for the appropriate number of months (1, 2, or 3 months of issuance) based on required documentation, participant preference, and next appointment needs.
- B. Staff sign for the food benefits and write "RBI" (Remote Benefit Issuance) and their initials.
- C. Share options for viewing food benefits in the Electronic Benefit Account (EBA).
  1. Encourage the participant to consider downloading the WIC Shopper App.
  2. Offer to send a printout of the participants' Shopping List from Cascades by mail.
  3. Call the WIC Card Line and follow the prompts to check the food benefit balance.
  4. Check the last WIC grocery store receipt.
    - The receipt shows the beginning food balance, the foods purchased, and the foods remaining.

- D. Offer a Shopping Guide and other WIC Card materials as needed.
- E. Schedule the participant's next appointment based on their needs and if follow-up on missing documentation or measurement and bloodwork values is needed.
- F. Let the participant, Parent Guardian or Caretaker know what to provide at (or before) the next appointment, as appropriate.
- G. Thank the participant for participating in WIC and offer a phone number for questions.

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**REQUIRED GUIDANCE: Issue WIC Benefits when Computer System is Down or During an Emergency**

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Local agencies must:

- Attempt to provide services when clinics can't issue WIC benefits because of computer equipment failure (internet connection is down), temporary power outages, or natural disasters if it is safe and appropriate by following the procedures listed below.
- Contact the state WIC office if staff determine they won't be able to issue benefits for participants for more than 3 clinic days. Staff may contact the state WIC office at any time for guidance during an emergency.

**Note:** WIC is a supplemental nutrition program. It doesn't always meet the emergency needs of participants. However, when clinics can't serve participants due to unusual situations, staff make every effort to provide WIC food benefits in a timely manner.

**PROCEDURE:**

Staff:

- A. Determine which option for providing WIC food benefits is most appropriate when staff can't provide them at the participant's scheduled appointment.
  1. Issue benefits when the clinic is operating again. Staff can issue food benefits to a participant's Electronic Benefit Account (EBA) through remote appointments.
    - See the policy "[Remote Food Benefit Issuance](#)" for more information.
  2. Reschedule participants to come back when you expect the clinic to be fully functioning.
  3. Refer participants to another WIC clinic to transfer in and receive benefits.

**Note:** Call the other clinic to make sure it won't be a burden to the clinic and the staff can transfer-in and provide benefits in a timely manner.
- B. Contact the state WIC office for guidance when you anticipate being unable to issue benefits for participants for more than 3 clinic days.

**Information:**



When staff can't issue food benefits due to computer problems, it's recommended staff contact participants who are scheduled for appointments as soon as possible and offer to reschedule them or issue benefits when computers are operating, whichever works best for the participants.

The state WIC office can provide a faxed copy of the clinic schedule showing participant names and phone numbers if requested.

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**REQUIRED GUIDANCE: Replace WIC Cards**

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Staff must provide a new WIC Card as soon as possible and no later than 7 business days after the participant or Parent Guardian requests one.

There is no limit to the number of times staff can replace a WIC Card.

- The participant, Parent Guardian, or Caretaker can report the card lost, stolen, or damaged to their WIC clinic.
- Only WIC staff can issue WIC Cards.
- Benefits remain in the participant's Electronic Benefit Account (EBA). Staff replace the WIC Card so the participant can access WIC foods.

**PROCEDURE:**

Staff:

- A. Accept the request for a replacement WIC Card from the participant or Parent Guardian in person, by phone during clinic hours, or voicemail after clinic hours.
  1. Verify the person's ID when the person is in the clinic.
- B. When the person isn't in the clinic, or doesn't have their identification with them in the clinic, ensure you are talking to the participant or Parent Guardian by asking pertinent questions, for example:
  - Participant's date of birth
  - Pregnant participant's due date
  - Current mailing address
- C. Respond to the request for a replacement card within 1 business day.
- D. Provide a replacement WIC Card as soon as possible, but no later than 7 days from the request.
  1. There isn't a limit for replacement.
  2. Staff discuss card security with the person when issuing a replacement WIC Card.

E. Choose Deactivate or Replace on the Issue EBT Card screen.

1. Select the “**Deactivate**” Action when:

- a. The participant or Parent Guardian isn’t in the clinic and the person will come to the clinic for the replacement WIC Card later.
- b. There’s a change in the Parent Guardian or Caretaker who is the cardholder.
- c. There’s concern about unauthorized use of the card.

**Note:** The family must set up a new PIN code when they receive a newly activated card when their previous card was deactivated.

2. Select the “**Replace**” Action when:

- a. The person is in the clinic or you’re mailing the replacement card.
  - This automatically deactivates the previous WIC Card.
  - The PIN for the new WIC Card will remain the same as the previous card.
  - See the “[Mail Replacement WIC Cards](#)” for more information when the person can’t come into the clinic to receive a replacement card.
- b. Staff check for the following:
  - There’s no concern about unauthorized use of the WIC Card with the same PIN.
  - There’s no change in the Parent/Guardian.
  - There’s no change to the address on file.

3. Document the reason for deactivating or replacing the card according to the following:

- a. **Lost:** Misplaced, missing, or the person doesn’t know the location of the card.
  - Also includes cards that are thrown away or are otherwise inaccessible.

- b. **Stolen:** Taken unlawfully.
- c. **Damaged:** Includes cards that “don’t work,” are defective, or destroyed.
- d. **Replaced:** This includes, but isn’t limited to:
  - There’s a change in the Parent Guardian or Caretaker who is the cardholder.
  - Other reasons not included in Lost, Stolen, or Damaged.

**Note:** Only WIC staff can issue WIC Cards. The WIC Card Line will direct participants who call to report their card as the card lost, stolen, or damaged to their clinic.

- 4. Staff don’t have to reclaim a deactivated or replaced WIC Card.
  - If a participant returns a deactivated or replaced card, destroy it by cutting the card in half.

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**REQUIRED GUIDANCE: Mail Replacement WIC Cards**

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Staff must mail a WIC Card to a participant when they can't come to the clinic to receive a replacement card.

Staff send WIC Cards using regular mail.

- See the "[Replace WIC Cards](#)" policy.

**PROCEDURE:**

Staff:

- A. Determine whether to mail a WIC Card.
  1. Let the person know they can receive a replacement card immediately by coming into the clinic.
  2. Let the person know it may take 5 – 7 days to receive the replacement card by mail.
- B. Ensure you are talking to the participant or Parent Guardian by asking pertinent questions, for example:
  - Participant's date of birth
  - Pregnant participant's due date
  - Current mailing address
- C. Inform the participant or Parent Guardian:
  1. You are mailing the WIC Card and to expect it by a certain date.
  2. Ask the person to call the clinic if the card doesn't arrive by a specific date.
    - See the "[Replace WIC Cards](#)" policy in this chapter.
- D. Document a mailed WIC Card by writing a Sticky Note on the Family Demographics screen.
- E. Ask the person if they need a Shopping List and a WIC Shopping Guide sent with the card.

- F. Print the [Mailed WIC Card Letter](#) from the website.
- Write the person's address on the letter, if needed, and add clinic contact information.
- G. Mail the card and the [Mailed WIC Card Letter](#), with a WIC Shopping Guide and Shopping List as needed, in an opaque (security) envelope.
1. When using a regular or window envelope wrap the [Mailed WIC Card Letter](#) around the card.
  2. Write or stamp on the envelope, "DO NOT FORWARD, RETURN TO SENDER."
  3. Write or stamp the return address of the local WIC clinic on the envelope.
- H. Document on the Family Demographics screen Sticky Note when the card is returned undeliverable.

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## Section 2: WIC Card Education and Use at the Store

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### REQUIRED GUIDANCE: WIC Card Education

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Staff must ensure that participants have the information they need to use the WIC Card to buy the right foods at the grocery store, farmers markets, and farm stores.

This includes sharing information in the participant's language by using bilingual staff or an interpreter, using the state contracted interpreter service, and providing written materials in the participant's language.

#### PROCEDURE:

Staff:

- A. Explain to cardholder how to activate the card and set a Personal Identification Number (PIN) when issuing a WIC Card for the first time.
  1. Call the WIC Card Line at 1-844-359-3104 any time, day or night.
    - The person must set the PIN before using the card at the store.
  2. The WIC Card Line provides services in English, Spanish, and will include teletypewriter (TTY) capability for cardholders with hearing disabilities.
    - WIC staff assist participants in setting up their PIN as needed. This includes providing access to the phone and specific language support either in person or by using the state contracted interpreter service.
    - WIC staff should make every effort to maintain confidentiality when assisting participants. For example, avoid watching the person enter the PIN, ask the person not to share the PIN with staff during the process, etc.
    - Local Agencies may develop their own clinic best practices, if staff apply them fairly and equally.
  3. Follow the prompts and provide the following information to access the account:
    - The ZIP code of the street address (not the mailing address, if different).

- The Cardholder's date of birth, not the child's (unless the child is in foster status, in which case the child is the cardholder and the child's date of birth should be used).

**Note:** Staff select the Cardholder from the participant (if an adult), Parent Guardian, Caretaker, and Proxy names entered in Cascades.

4. Pick a 4-digit Personal Identification Number (PIN).

- The cardholder should choose a PIN that's easy to remember.
- Keep the PIN safe. Don't write the PIN on the card or on anything kept with the card.
- The cardholder shouldn't share the PIN with anyone who isn't designated to use the card.

B. Educate about shopping for WIC foods:

1. Shop only at Washington WIC authorized stores.

- Use the WICShopper app for a list of stores.
- Look for "WIC Accepted Here" signs.

2. Choose only foods that are WIC approved and only in the amounts shown on the Shopping List.

- a. Only use WIC foods and formula for the person on WIC.
- b. Don't buy, or try to buy, foods or formula with a WIC Card that aren't part of the WIC food benefits.
- c. The WIC Shopping Guide lists specific brands and container sizes of WIC approved foods.
- d. The person can buy as much or as little of the foods at one time as desired.
- e. The person can buy less than the total amounts shown on the Shopping List, but not more.
- f. Unused foods don't roll over to the next 30-day period.



- g. Keep receipts. Point out to the participant their receipts show the balance of their WIC foods.
  - 3. Check to see what WIC foods are available before shopping. Options include:
    - a. Shopping List from the clinic.
      - Family food benefits are added together in the WIC account. The Shopping List doesn't list benefits by each participant.
    - b. Last WIC grocery store receipt.
      - Suggest keeping or taking a picture of the receipt. The receipt shows the beginning food balance, the foods purchased, and the foods remaining.
    - c. Ask at the store check stand or customer service.
    - d. Register your WIC Card on the WICShopper app and check My Benefits.
    - e. Call the WIC Card Line and follow the prompts to check the food benefit balance.
    - f. Call the WIC clinic.
  - 4. Use the food benefits on or after the "First Date to Spend."
  - 5. Use the food benefits on or before the "Last Date to Spend."

**Note:** Participants may use their benefits starting at 12:01 a.m. on the day after your Benefits End date.

C. Explain to the cardholder how to use the WIC Card at the store:

- 1. Let the cashier know you're using a WIC Card before they begin to ring up any items.

**Note:** Participants may scan their club card before making purchases with a WIC card to receive discounts (for example, on fruits and vegetables). Some store promotions are not compatible with WIC food purchases. Participants could lose out on store promotions (for example, \$10 off) if they attempt to apply the promotion to their WIC food purchases.

Participants should carefully separate their WIC food and non-WIC foods and use any store promotions carefully to maximize their benefits.

2. Swipe the WIC Card and enter your PIN when asked.
  - ID isn't required to use the WIC Card at the store.
3. The checker will ask you to pay for non-WIC foods, or fruits and vegetables that are more than your food benefit amount.
  - You can ask to see the mid-transaction receipt to ensure the correct WIC foods were taken out of your benefit account.
  - Participants can choose not to purchase any non-WIC items and have the items put back.

**Note:** Participants may want to separate their WIC foods (put on the check stand conveyor belt before non-WIC items) and ask for the mid-transaction receipt. The participant can make sure all items are WIC approved and can be purchased with their WIC benefits. This practice can also help the store troubleshoot any problems on their end.

D. Explain how to use the QR code at farmers markets and farm stores:

1. Participants may use their QR code to spend monthly fruit and vegetable benefits (CVBs) and FMNP benefits at authorized farmers markets and farm stores.
  - QR codes can be found on participants' WIC cards and in the WICShopper App.
  - FMNP benefits can be spent at authorized farmers markets and farm stores Jun 1 through October 31.
  - Monthly fruit and vegetable benefits (CVB) can be spent at authorized farmers markets and farm stores year-round.
2. Participants can locate authorized farmers markets and farm stores in the WICShopper app or on the FMNP webpage.
  - Look for growers with, "WIC & Senior Farmers Market Benefits Welcome Here" signs at authorized farmers markets and farm stores.

3. During a purchase, growers will scan participants' QR codes with their mobile device and enter the amount of the purchase.
  - Growers can manually enter a WIC card number if a QR code is not scanning correctly.
  - Participants will verify the amount of their purchase and enter the WIC card 4-digit PIN to complete the transaction.
  - FMNP benefits will automatically be deducted before monthly fruit and vegetable benefits (CVB).

**Note:** See [Volume 1, Chapter 8 – Farmers Market Nutrition Program](#) for more information about using FMNP benefits at authorized farmers market and farm stores. See the [How to Use Your WIC QR Code at Authorized Farmers Markets and Farm Stores](#) handout for education on the use of QR Codes to make purchases at farmers markets and farm stores.

E. Explain WIC rules for shopping to the cardholder:

1. Don't substitute WIC foods for anything else.
2. Don't sell or try to sell, trade, give away, or donate your WIC Card, WIC foods, or WIC formula.
3. You can't return WIC foods to the store for cash, credit, or any other items.
4. WIC benefits do not accrue.
5. Report lost, stolen, or damaged WIC Cards to WIC staff right away.
6. Keep the WIC Card and PIN safe. Make sure anyone designated to use the card knows WIC rules.

F. Explain where to get help:

1. Call the WIC Card Line to change PIN at any time.
  - See the "[Unlock a Personal Identification Number \(PIN\)](#)" policy.
2. Call the clinic to report lost, stolen, or damaged cards as soon as possible during clinic hours.

3. If you enter your PIN wrong four times, your card will be locked until midnight. To unlock the PIN before midnight:
    - Call the clinic during clinic hours.
    - Call the WIC Card Line 24 hours per day and 7 days a week to unlock the PIN.
  4. Tell WIC staff if there are any problems at the store.
    - See [Volume 1, Chapter 2 – Program Compliance](#) for information about filing a complaint against a store.
  5. Contact WIC if there are foods you couldn't buy at the store and you think they are WIC approved. Share information about the store location, checker name, time and food product.
    - Use the "I couldn't buy this" feature in WICShopper app to notify state staff.
    - Take a picture or write down the UPC code.
    - Call the clinic or state WIC office.
- G. Ask about WIC foods and using the WIC Card at later appointments and subsequent certifications.
- Assess if there were any problems getting the foods at the store or if the person needs more education about WIC foods or using the WIC Card.
  - Example: "Tell me about any problems or questions you had when doing your WIC shopping last month."

**Information:**

Share the following tips with participants:

1. Take care of your WIC Card:
  - Keep it in a safe location.
  - Don't bend, cut, or write on your card.
2. Keep your WIC Card for as long as you participate in WIC.

3. If you call for your benefit balance – it will take a while. The automated voice tells you all the foods you have, item by item. The call line has translation services to help participants whose primary language isn't English.
4. You can use coupons with the WIC Card. See the policy "[Use Coupons or Manufacturer's Specials with the WIC Card](#)" in this chapter.

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**REQUIRED GUIDANCE: Washington WIC Authorized Stores**

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Participants, Parent Guardians, Caretakers, and Proxies must use the WIC Card only at Washington WIC authorized stores, farmers markets, and farm stores.

Staff must let participants, Parent Guardians, Caretakers, and Proxies, know about authorized stores that accept WIC Cards. Staff must also let participants, Parents Guardians, Caretakers, and Proxies know about authorized farmers markets and farm stores where they can make purchases using their QR code.

**PROCEDURE:**

Staff:

- A. Let the person know they can only use the WIC Card at Washington WIC authorized stores.
- B. Let the person know they can only use their QR code at authorized farmers markets and farm stores.
- C. Let the person know which stores, farmers markets, and farm stores are Washington WIC authorized. You can do this by:
  1. Telling the person which stores in the area are authorized.
  2. Referring the person to WICShopper app for a list of authorized stores, farmers markets, and farm stores.
  3. Referring the person to the [WIC FMNP webpage](#) for a list of farmers markets and farm stores.
- D. Help the person find therapeutic formula by calling the store when the participant receives benefits for therapeutic formula.
  - See [Volume 1, Chapter 24 – Medical Documentation for Formulas and Foods](#) for more information about therapeutic formula.

**Information:**

1. Use the following questions to help the person find approved stores and pharmacies in the area:
  - a. Where do you usually shop for groceries?

- b. Do you usually shop at a large chain store or a neighborhood market?
- c. In what city (or county) do you usually shop for groceries?

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**REQUIRED GUIDANCE: Unlock a Personal Identification Number (PIN)**

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Staff must:

1. Unlock a Personal Identification Number (PIN) for a participant or Parent Guardian.
2. Verify the identity of the participant or Parent Guardian by viewing ID when present in the clinic or asking pertinent questions over the phone.
3. Not suggest or help select a PIN for a participant or Parent Guardian.

**Notes:**

- Unlocking a PIN allows the person four more attempts to enter the correct PIN. It doesn't reset the PIN, the PIN remains the same.
- The person needs to enter the correct PIN to access the food benefits.
- Staff don't have access to a person's PIN and can't reset a PIN.

**PROCEDURE:**

Staff:

- A. Verify the participant's or Parent Guardian's identity.
  1. Verify the person's ID when the person is in the clinic.
  2. Ensure the participant or Parent Guardian makes the request by asking pertinent questions when the person isn't in the clinic, or they don't have their identification with them in the clinic. For example:
    - Participant's date of birth.
    - Pregnant participant's due date.
    - Current zip code.
- B. Unlock the PIN on the Issue EBT Card screen.

**Information:**

- The PIN automatically unlocks at midnight.
- Participants and Parent Guardians can call the clinic during clinic hours to unlock the PIN or call the WIC Card Line at 1-844-359-3104 to unlock or reset the PIN anytime.



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**REQUIRED GUIDANCE: Use Coupons or Manufacturer's Specials with the WIC Card**

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WIC participants can use coupons or manufacturer's specials with the WIC Card.

**PROCEDURE:**

Staff:

- A. Let the person know they can use coupons and manufacturer's specials with the WIC Card when the store normally accepts coupons or honors manufacturer's specials.
- B. Ask the person to call the WIC toll-free number (1-800-841-1410) and talk to state WIC Vendor Management staff if they have any questions, or if questions come up at the store.

**Information:**

Examples of manufacturer's specials and coupons which may be used are:

1. "Free additional ounces" - If the food product minus the free ounces meets WIC guidelines, the participant can purchase it with WIC. Free ounces don't count toward the food benefit amount.
2. "Buy one, get one free" - The free item doesn't have to be WIC approved.

**Example:** A store has a buy one, get one free special on milk. The person can buy the WIC approved milk on the benefit list and get another kind of milk of the same or a lesser price for free.

3. "Cents off" coupons - The checker deducts the "cents off" amount when scanning the food item. The "cents off" amount saves the WIC program money.
4. Non-WIC foods or non-food items offered with the purchase of a WIC food.

**Examples:** A coupon for a free bowl is available with a breakfast cereal purchase. The cereal must be WIC approved.

A store will give the person a coupon for a free turkey when they spend a total of \$100.00. WIC purchases count toward the \$100.00 amount.

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### Section 3: Void and Replace WIC Food Benefits

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#### REQUIRED GUIDANCE: Replace or Change WIC Food or Formula Benefits

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Staff must replace current food or formula benefits that haven't been purchased, or unopened formula returned to the clinic when there are changes needed to WIC foods or formula.

Staff can't replace or provide additional benefits to participants who didn't use all their benefits in a previous month (previous benefit issuance cycle).

- See the "[Exchange WIC Formula for Returned Formula](#)" policy for information about replacing benefits for formula returned to the clinic.
- See the "[Contact State WIC Staff to Request Formula Replacement in Emergency Situations](#)" policy. Examples include, but aren't limited to, loss due to flood, fire or fleeing domestic violence.

#### PROCEDURE:

Staff:

- A. Gather information about the need to replace foods or formula and determine if replacement is possible.
  1. Family foods are combined in the Electronic Benefit Account (EBA).
  2. Staff can only replace **foods** remaining in the EBA.
  3. Staff can replace the **formula** remaining in the EBA or unopened formula returned to the clinic.
- B. Issue replacement benefits.
- C. Document the reason for voiding and replacing food benefits in Cascades.

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**REQUIRED GUIDANCE: Exchange WIC Formula for Returned Formula**

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Staff must accept unopened, undamaged, non-expired, returned containers of formula purchased with the WIC Card.

Staff issue benefits to replace the amount of formula returned to the clinic.

**Note:** Policy doesn't allow the Parent Guardian, Caretaker, or Proxy to exchange or return formula to the store.

Staff must not issue returned formula to participants.

- See [Volume 1, Chapter 23 – WIC Foods](#) for more information.
- See [Volume 1, Chapter 24 – Medical Documentation for Formulas and Foods](#) for information about issuing benefits for prescribed formulas.

**PROCEDURE:**

Staff:

- A. Accept unopened, undamaged, non-expired, returned containers of WIC formula.
- B. Get a completed medical documentation when the caregiver asks for a therapeutic formula.
  - See [Volume 1, Chapter 24 – Medical Documentation for Formulas and Foods](#) for more information.
- C. Issue benefits to replace the amount of formula returned to the clinic and what remains in the Electronic Benefit Account (EBA) using the Exchange/Increase Formula screen.

**Note:** Be sure to have all formula that will be exchanged accounted for (on hand, and in the EBA) before starting the exchange.

- D. Don't issue replacements for expired benefits.
- E. Issue replacements for the new formula. Don't issue more than the amount of formula returned to the clinic and what remains in the EBA.
- F. Document the following on the Exchange/Increase Formula screen in Cascades:
  - Food Category – Infant Formula

- Food Subcategory - Brand (name) of formula
  - Quantity - Number of containers returned
  - Type of formula (concentrate, powder, ready-to-feed, etc.)
  - Replacement reason
- G. Destroy all returned formula (unless donating the formula per the clinic's approved donation policy).
- See [Volume 1, Chapter 23 – WIC Foods](#) for more information.

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**REQUIRED GUIDANCE: Contact State WIC Staff to Request Food and Formula Replacement in Emergency Situations**

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Local Agency WIC staff must contact state WIC staff when a participant, Parent Guardian, or Caretaker requests replacement food or formula in emergency situations. Staff should prioritize this contact to ensure replacement requests are fulfilled in a timely manner.

Examples include, but aren't limited to:

- Loss of food or formula due to fire, flood, or natural disaster.
  - Change in foster care or custody and the food or formula wasn't provided to the new Caretaker.
  - Not available for use, for example, fleeing domestic violence and the food or formula was left behind.
1. Receive permission from state WIC staff before replacing the food or formula.
  2. Fill out and review the [WIC Benefit Replacement Form](#) and have the participant, Parent Guardian, or Caretaker sign.
    - a. If food and formula replacement is carried out remotely, staff may sign for the Benefit Replacement Form and write "RBI" (Remote Benefit Issuance) and their initials in place of the participant, Parent Guardian, or Caretaker.
    - b. See the "[Remote Food Benefit Issuance](#)" for additional information about issuing benefits when a participant isn't physically present in the clinic.
- Note:** See the "[Exchange WIC Formula for Returned Formula](#)" policy for information about replacing benefits for formula returned to the clinic.

**PROCEDURE:**

Staff:

- A. Contact Policy Support at the state WIC office when a participant, Parent Guardian, or Caretaker requests replacement food or formula in emergency situations.
  1. This only applies to food and formula issued within a current first and last date to spend.
  2. Staff can't replace expired benefits in any circumstances.

- B. Only provide replacement food or formula when approved by state WIC staff.
  - 1. Contact Cascades Support for assistance replacing the food or formula.
  - 2. Provide referrals to food or formula resources if the staff can't replace the formula or additional formula is needed.
- C. Fill out and review the [WIC Benefit Replacement Form](#) and have the participant, Parent Guardian, or Caretaker sign the form.

**Note:** Staff can print the Benefit Replacement Form from the website.

- D. Scan the form into Cascades and provide the original to the participant, Parent Guardian, or Caretaker.

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**REQUIRED GUIDANCE: Exchanging Formula in the 11th Month Benefit Period after Turning One**

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**Use this Policy and Procedure when a participant has had their first birthday and their 11-month benefits are issued and still within the First and Last Date to Spend.**

1. The Competent Professional Authority (CPA) must exchange unpurchased formula benefits or unopened, returned cans of formula when the caregiver requests to change to a different standard formula.
  - See [WIC Approved Formulas](#) for the list of standard formulas.
2. Staff must complete an Infant to Child Standard Formula Exchange Documentation Form when exchanging formula benefits after the first birthday during the 11<sup>th</sup> month benefit period.

**Note:** Staff must obtain a completed [WIC Medical Documentation Form](#) when exchanging therapeutic formula after the first birthday. See the “Provide Therapeutic WIC Formulas and Foods to Women and Children” policy in [Volume 1, Chapter 24 – Medical Documentation for Formulas and Foods](#) for additional information.

3. Assess the need to transition to a different formula. Staff must provide a reason for the formula exchange. Examples may include:
  - Family requests alternate standard formula.
  - Incorrect formula was issued.
4. Staff must sign the completed Infant to Child Standard Formula Exchange Documentation Form.
5. In the **Attach Medical Documentation** section of the Food Prescription Screen, staff must scan the Infant to Child Standard Formula Exchange Documentation Form into Cascades.
6. Staff must exchange formula benefits using Cascades. Refer to [Cascades Steps- Exchanging Formula Benefits](#) as needed.

**Note:** Staff may not issue physical cans of formula they may have.

**PROCEDURE:**

Staff:

- A. Have a conversation with the caregiver to:
  - 1. Determine if a formula exchange is needed.
  - 2. Assess if they have any unopened cans from the current benefits. If so, they would need to return these to the clinic before exchanging.
- B. Have the Competent Professional Authority (CPA) confirm the new formula for the exchange is correct.
- C. Complete the Infant to Child Standard Formula Exchange Documentation Form.
- D. Review the Infant to Child Standard Formula Exchange Documentation Form with the caregiver to ensure the collected information is correct.
- E. Have a conversation with the caregiver about the participant's nutrition needs and how to transition from formula to whole milk and table foods as needed.
- F. Require a Medical Documentation Form when the caregiver requests therapeutic formula.
  - Refer to [Volume 1, Chapter 24 - Medical Documentation for Formulas and Foods](#).
- G. Use the Infant to Child Formula Exchange Form to record the prescription in the **Prescribe Food** screen by pressing the **Medical Documentation** button:
  - 1. Enter the Effective Date as the date the exchange is occurring.
  - 2. Enter the expiration date as the Last Day to Spend for the current benefit period that has formula issued.
  - 3. Select **Child Standard Formula Exchange Documentation** from the **Medical Reason** drop down list.
  - 4. Enter "NA" in the **Diagnosis Code** field.
  - 5. Enter the staff member's name and telephone number.
  - 6. Enter the staff member's email, if available.
  - 7. Enter "Formula Exchange Documentation" in the **Non-Medical Food Prescribed** section.



- H. The CPA assigns a standard formula prescription under the **Medical Food Prescription** section based on the information from the caregiver and the Infant to Child Formula Exchange Documentation Form.
- I. In the Attach Medical Documentation section of the Food Prescription screen, scan the Formula Exchange Documentation Form into Cascades using the Scan Document button.
- J. Zero out all food and enter the amount of formula the infant received in the 11<sup>th</sup> month of age.
- K. Use the Exchange/Increase Formula screen to exchange the formula.
- L. Review Shopping List to ensure the formula exchanged properly.
- M. Document the following in the Individual Care Plan:
  - Date exchange was requested.
  - Reason for exchange.
  - Formula originally issued.
  - New formula issued.
  - Staff member who completed the formula exchange.
  - Date the exchange occurred.

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**REQUIRED GUIDANCE: Change from Infant to Child Food Benefits**

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Staff replace infant food benefits with child food benefits when they meet the following 3 criteria :

1. The infant received the infant food package **before** the first birth date.
2. The Parent Guardian or Caretaker asks for the child's food package **after** the first birth date.
3. None of the infant food package benefits were used.

Staff void and replace the **complete**, unused infant food package and issue a child food package.

**PROCEDURE:**

The CPA:

- A. Replaces an infant food package with the child's food package after the first birthday, according to the following:
  1. Make sure the child has reached the first birthday.
  2. Void the complete unused infant food package benefits.
    - a. Replace only full infant benefits.
    - b. Staff can't issue a child's food package if the Parent Guardian or Caretaker used any of the infant food package benefits.
  3. Prescribe the child's food package and issue benefits.
- B. Documents the reason for voiding and replacing food benefits in Cascades.

---

**REQUIRED GUIDANCE: Change Breastfeeding Food Package Benefits when Formula is Provided**

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When a breastfeeding participant asks for infant formula, or an increase in formula, staff complete the following:

1. Complete and document a Breastfeeding Review.
  - See [Volume 1, Chapter 15 – Breastfeeding](#) for more information.
  - Staff support and promote breastfeeding.
2. Provide the amount of formula determined during the Breastfeeding Review.
3. If the participant **has not spent** any of their benefits for the current month, void the breastfeeding package for **current and future months**, and reissue benefits for the appropriate food package.
4. If the participant **has spent** benefits for the current month, void **future** month benefits and issue future benefits for the appropriate food package. Let the participant keep the **current** breastfeeding benefits.

See [Volume 1, Chapter 23 – WIC Foods](#) for more information about providing formula to a breastfed infant.

**PROCEDURE:**

Staff:

- A. Complete a Breastfeeding Review.
  - See [Volume 1, Chapter 15 – Breastfeeding](#) for more information.
- B. Provide the appropriate amount of formula for the baby based on the Breastfeeding Review.
  1. Cascades suggests the amount of formula based on the amount entered on the infant's Health Information screen.
  2. Staff review this suggested amount and make changes as appropriate.
- C. Assess when to void breastfeeding food package benefits based on the following:

1. If the breastfeeding participant already received breastfeeding food package benefits and then comes back to the clinic and asks for infant formula for the baby, allow the breastfeeding participant to keep the current month's benefits **only if they have already spent some of the current month's benefits**. Void breastfeeding food package benefits for future months only and reissue future benefits for the appropriate food package.
  2. If the breastfeeding participant already received breastfeeding food package benefits but has **not spent** any of the current month's benefits, void the breastfeeding food package benefits for both the **current and future months**, and reissue benefits for the appropriate food package.
- D. Change the participant's food prescription to reflect the appropriate food package.
1. Cascades suggests the Partially (Mostly) Breastfeeding package for the breastfeeding participant when the infant is breastfed but also received formula from WIC in amounts that don't exceed the maximum formula allowances, as appropriate for the age of the infant as described in the "Partially (Mostly) Breastfeeding Infant" table in [Volume 1, Chapter 23 – WIC Foods](#).
  2. Cascades suggests the Partially (Some) Breastfeeding package for the breastfeeding participant when the infant is breastfed but also receives infant formula from WIC in quantities that exceed those allowed for partially (mostly) breastfed infants. WIC regulations define Breastfeeding as breastfeeding once a day on average.
- Note:** Explain that the Fully BF food package is for breastfeeding participants who provide exclusively their own breastmilk to their infant with the exception of age appropriate foods (i.e. the participant is not providing any formula to their infant from WIC or another source).
- See [Volume 1, Chapter 23 – WIC Foods](#), for more information about providing formula to a breastfed infant.

### Information:

The additional foods given to an exclusively breastfeeding participant, like fish and additional eggs are incorporated into the benefits of the food package. This makes it difficult for staff to reclaim the additional foods when benefits have been issued and some have been used. As a result, staff allow the participant to keep the current set of breastfeeding food package benefits and void only future month's benefits when the family has purchased some of the current

month's benefits. This policy standardizes clinic practice throughout the State preventing the possibility of discrimination against participants.

**Example:** An exclusively breastfeeding participant receives June and July benefits for the Fully BF food package on June 5<sup>th</sup>. The participant comes into the clinic on June 17<sup>th</sup> and asks for formula for the 3 month old baby. She has used some of her current month's benefits. The CPA completes a Breastfeeding Review and determines that the participant needs 3 cans of formula per month and will continue breastfeeding part-time. Staff provide benefits for 3 cans of formula to the infant on June 17<sup>th</sup>. Staff let the breastfeeding participant keep the June benefits for the Fully BF food package because she has already spent some of the Fully BF benefits. Staff void the July benefits for the Fully BF food package and issue the Partially (Mostly) Breastfeeding food package.

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**REQUIRED GUIDANCE: Replace WIC Benefits for Transfer WIC Participants**

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Staff can replace food benefits for WIC participants transferring into Washington from out of state.

Staff must:

1. Transfer in each participant before replacing benefits.
2. Determine which foods to provide for the current month.

**PROCEDURE:**

Staff:

- A. Transfer the participant into Cascades.
  1. Enter the participant's information from the transfer documentation.
    - See [Volume 1, Chapter 21 – Transfers/Verification of Certification \(VOC\)](#) for more information.
  2. Review and document the person's proof of ID and residency.
    - See [Volume 1, Chapter 18 – Certification](#) for information about acceptable forms of ID and residency.
  3. Have the participant or Parent Guardian read the Rights and Responsibilities form and sign electronically in Cascades. Provide a copy of the form.
    - See [Volume 1, Chapter 7 – Rights and Responsibilities](#) for more information.
- B. Replace food benefits.
  1. Only replace food benefits within valid use dates. Don't replace expired benefits.
  2. Determine the food benefits to replace by completing one of the following:
    - a. Review WIC benefits from the previous state when available.

- b. Call the 800 number on the EBT card to get the balance of foods for the current month. The participant or Parent Guardian may need to enter a PIN or password.
    - c. Call the previous clinic or state WIC office to find out which foods remain for the current month.
    - d. If the staff can't determine the remaining food benefits using one of the options above, ask the participant, or Parent Guardian which foods they purchased.
  3. Issue benefits.
    - a. Assess and adjust the Family Issuance Day (FID) as appropriate.
      - Cascades selects the participant's certification start date as the default FID.
      - Staff adjust the FID as needed to prevent over-issuance or dual participation.
    - b. Tailor the food prescription to provide the remaining foods based on the Washington WIC foods and amounts for the participant's category.
    - c. See [Volume 1, Chapter 24 – Medical Documentation for Formulas and Foods](#) when the participant transferring into Washington from another state needs food or formula requiring medical documentation.
  4. Reclaim and destroy the EBT card from the previous state.
- C. Contact the originating state to void benefits when an EBT card were left with another person in the originating state, for example a Parent Guardian, Caretaker or Proxy.
  - See the FNS Web site for state agency addresses at [USDA Food and Nutrition Service | Food and Nutrition Service](#).
- D. Explain how to use the Washington WIC Card.
- E. If the participant is transferring in from out of state, provide a WIC Shopping Guide and review WIC Approved foods.
- F. Print a VOC transfer card if needed.

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Section 4: Order and Maintain WIC Cards

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**REQUIRED GUIDANCE: Order WIC Cards**

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Staff must order WIC Cards from the DES Printing and Imaging website.

Contact the Local Program Consultant (LPC) when the clinic needs WIC Cards in emergency situations.

**PROCEDURE:**

Staff:

- A. Order WIC Cards as needed from the MyPrint (Fulfillment Center) website  
<https://prtonline.myprintdesk.net/DSF/storefront.aspx>.
  1. Keep WIC Card orders separate from other materials ordered from the MyPrint website.
  2. Order enough cards to keep an adequate supply, but not more than a 3 month supply.
  3. State WIC staff will review clinic WIC Card orders prior to the order being shipped. Cards will be shipped 2-3 days after State WIC staff review the order.
- B. Complete the order on the MyPrint website and print out the Order Confirmation page.
  1. Keep the Order Confirmation page for tracking purposes.
- C. Notify state WIC staff when:
  1. Staff don't receive the order within 2 weeks.
    - It normally takes 7 – 10 days to receive WIC Cards after ordering.
  2. The amount sent doesn't match the amount ordered.
    - Ask for state staff who review the Fulfillment Center card orders.
  3. The clinic needs an emergency supply of WIC cards.
    - Ask the Local Program Consultant (LPC).



- D. Keep the Packing Slip received with the cards for a total of one year, with six months on-site.

**Note:** Staff don't need to keep the Order Confirmation page once they receive the cards and the amount was correct.

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**REQUIRED GUIDANCE: Secure WIC Cards**

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Staff must keep WIC Cards secure:

1. During clinic hours keep cards in a location not visible or readily accessible to anyone without authority to issue WIC food benefits.
2. During non-clinic hours keep cards in a secure, locked location.

**PROCEDURE:**

Staff:

- A. Keep the main WIC Card inventory in a locked location during normal clinic hours, even when attended by authorized personnel.
- B. Take the number of cards they will reasonably use or issue for the day out of the main card inventory and document on the box's [WIC Card Daily Check-out & Inventory Log](#).
  1. Document the date, staff initials and number of WIC Cards taken on the box's [WIC Card Daily Check-out & Inventory Log](#).
    - Use a separate Daily Check-out & Inventory Log for each box of cards.
  2. Return the cards not used to the secure inventory location at the end of the day and enter the number of cards used and the number returned on the [WIC Card Daily Check-out & Inventory Log](#).
  3. Keep a running total of cards used from each box of WIC Cards.
  4. All cards that are taken out of inventory must be documented on the WIC Card Daily Check-out & Inventory Log, even if all removed cards are returned to the inventory that same day.
  5. If no cards are taken out of inventory on a given day, staff don't need to record an entry on the log for that day.
- C. Keep cards staff will use or issue for the day secure and out of sight of others.
- D. Secure WIC Cards when transporting from one clinic in the agency to another.
- E. Account for WIC Cards moved between clinics in the agency on the [WIC Card Inventory Log](#).

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**REQUIRED GUIDANCE: WIC Card Inventory**

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The coordinator must assign two staff to receive and maintain WIC card inventory. Ideally, the coordinator, clinic site supervisor, or manager maintains the inventory with another staff member.

The assigned staff must:

1. Receive and review shipments of WIC Cards received for accuracy.
2. Enter the number of boxes received in the shipment on the [WIC Card Inventory Log](#) and create a [WIC Card Daily Check-out & Inventory Log](#) for each box.
3. Review the [WIC Card Daily Check-out & Inventory Log](#) and [WIC Card Inventory Logs](#) at each clinic location at least once a month.
  - a. Notify the coordinator when there are discrepancies in the inventory if the coordinator isn't the person who completes the monthly review.
  - b. Notify the Local Program Consultant at the state WIC office when there are discrepancies in the card inventory clinic staff can't reconcile.
4. The coordinator must review the [WIC Card Inventory Logs](#) quarterly.
5. Document on the [WIC Card Inventory Logs](#) when moving cards from one clinic to another.

**PROCEDURE:**

Designated staff:

- A. Review and enter the shipments of WIC Cards received into the [WIC Card Inventory Logs](#).
  1. Compare the WIC Card order amount to the cards received.
    - a. Staff may want to randomly verify the contents of a carton of cards received by opening the box and then re-taping it closed before storing in a securely locked location.
    - b. Notify state WIC staff who review the MyPrint card orders at [WIC@doh.wa.gov](mailto:WIC@doh.wa.gov) if there are discrepancies between what was ordered and what was received.

2. Enter cards into the [WIC Card Inventory Log](#) as soon as possible after receiving.
  3. Number the boxes of WIC Cards so staff use them in order.
    - a. Number each box received through-out the year with the year and box number, for example, 2024 – Box 1, Box 2, Box 3, etc.
    - b. Open only one box at a time and use in order, if possible.
  4. Start a [WIC Card Daily Check-out & Inventory Log](#) for each individual box of WIC Cards received.
    - a. Use the [WIC Card Daily Check-out & Inventory Log](#) for each box of cards and keep with the [WIC Card Inventory Log](#) when completed (the box is empty).
- B. Conduct WIC Card inventory review at the end of each month.
1. Have two staff conduct the inventory review **or** have one staff conduct the inventory review and another sign to verify.
    - a. Complete the End of Month Inventory section of the [WIC Card Inventory Log](#) to assure WIC Cards are accounted for.
    - b. Document staff initials and notes as appropriate.
  2. Notify the coordinator if there are discrepancies.
  3. Notify the Local Program Consultant at the state WIC office when staff can't reconcile the card inventory.
- C. The coordinator reviews the [WIC Card Inventory Log](#) at least once a quarter.
- D. Document on the [WIC Card Inventory Log](#) when sending cards to another clinic in the agency.
- E. Contact the Local Program Consultant (LPC) when a clinic needs an emergency supply of WIC Cards.