

MI-WIC POLICY

Employee Conflict of Interest

9.0 Program Compliance

Effective Date: 3/1/11

9.03 Employee Conflict of Interest

PURPOSE: Local WIC agencies shall implement conflict of interest controls to prevent and detect employee fraud and abuse, and report cases of employee fraud and abuse to the MDCH/WIC Division.

Definitions: Refer to Exhibit 9.01A for definitions.

A. POLICY

1. A WIC employee who is also a WIC client shall not certify oneself, or issue food benefits to oneself. Clinic supervisors shall be responsible for certifying or issuing benefits to employees who are also WIC clients.
2. WIC agencies shall implement separation of duties within the certification process, so that one employee is not responsible for determining eligibility for all certification criteria and issuing food benefits for the same client.
3. WIC employees shall not be responsible for certifying or issuing food benefits to relatives or close friends (see definitions, Exhibit 9.01A).
4. Whenever a local agency staffing situation, whether on an emergency or ongoing basis, results in:
 - One employee determining eligibility for all certification criteria and issuing food benefits for the same client, or,
 - A WIC employee certifying or issuing benefits to a relative or close friend.

The following conflict of interest controls shall be implemented:

- a. Scan copies of all documents supporting eligibility into MI-WIC record.
 - Proof of identity at initial certification (see WIC Policy 2.03)
 - Proof of residency at every certification (see WIC Policy 2.02)
 - Proof of income at every certification (see WIC Policy 2.04)
 - Proof of pregnancy with each pregnancy (see WIC Policy 2.10)
- b. WIC Coordinator or Clinic Supervisor shall conduct an audit of 20% of affected client records within 30 days of certification.

The audit shall include:

 - Validation of each client's eligibility. In cases where no proof of identity has been provided (refer to policy 2.07), the WIC Coordinator/Clinic Supervisor shall attempt to validate the client's existence (i.e. calling shelter, migrant camp, etc.).
 - Review client signatures on EBT Cardholder Issuance Signature Forms.

- c. The audit shall be retained for 3 years and 150 days after the completed fiscal year (see Policy 1.06, Records Retention and Destruction).
5. Upon suspicion, detection, verbal, or written report of employee fraud and abuse, WIC agencies shall complete an investigation, as specified in Policy 9.02, Employee Compliance.
6. Local agencies are responsible for educating WIC employees about state and local conflict of interest policies.

B. GUIDANCE

1. MDCH/WIC Division strongly recommends rotating staff who are assigned to conduct single person clinics in local agencies.
2. Nutrition Education may be provided by WIC employees to relatives and close friends.

References:

Federal Regulations 246.2; 246.4 (a) (26); 246.4 (a) (27)
U.S. GAO Report # RCED-99-224, August 1999

Cross References:

1.06 Records Retention and Destruction
2.02 Residency
2.03 Identity
2.04 Income Determination
2.07 Declaration of No Income
2.10 Proof of Pregnancy
9.02 Employee Compliance
8.09B Michigan WIC Bridge Card Cardholder Signature Form
9.01A Definitions