

## Application Period for Northern Cycle Contracts

### Inside this issue:

Northern Cycle Contracts	1
WIC Vendor Training Sessions	1
Let WIC Decide	2
Summer EBT for Children	2
WIC Cash Value Benefit	2
Scanning Policy	3
Purchasing Infant Formula for Resale	3
WIC Termination & Disqualifications	4
Juicy Juice Changes	4
WIC POS Questions	4

Renewal Applications for Northern vendors have been reviewed and contracts were mailed to these approved vendors on May 21, 2015. Vendors who were not selected to receive a new 3-year contract were also notified in writing and placed on a waiting list for future consideration.

New Vendors selected for authorization will require a pre-authorizations site visit and will be eligible to process WIC transactions only upon receipt of a fully executed contract. A WIC representative will contact the new vendors to schedule these site visits.

Vendors who were previously authorized for WIC, and whose contract were renewed do not require a site visit.

*The Northern Cycle includes Alcona, Alger, Alpena, Antrim, Arenac, Baraga, Benzie, Charlevoix, Cheboygan, Chippewa, Clare, Crawford, Delta, Dickinson, Emmet, Gladwin, Gogebic, Grand Traverse, Houghton, Iosco, Iron, Isabella, Kalkaska, Keweenaw, Lake, Leelanau, Luce, Mackinac, Manistee, Marquette, Mason, Mecosta, Menominee, Midland, Missaukee, Montmorency, Newaygo, Oceana, Ogemaw, Ontonagon, Osceola, Oscoda, Otsego, Presque Isle, Roscommon, Schoolcraft, and Wexford.*



## WIC Vendor Training Sessions

Group training sessions for Northern Vendors will be scheduled for the summer and autumn months of 2015. At least one representative from each store is **REQUIRED** by contract to attend the training session. This includes independent vendors AND chain outlets. **Failure to attend the required training may result in termination from the WIC program.**

Training notifications will be mailed to you via UPS with the date, time, and location of the group training in your area. If you miss a scheduled training, contact the WIC office immediately to reschedule. Once the initial round of training sessions are completed, we will assess attendance to determine where and when additional sessions will be held.

In addition, trainings for Eastern, South Eastern part of the state that weren't completed last year are being scheduled at this time. Training notifications will be mailed via UPS to these vendors.

## Let the WIC System Decide

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It has come to our attention that some cashiers are using printed WIC Balance Inquiry slip's to determine whether an item is WIC approved.

The food descriptions on the WIC Balance Inquiry slip are limited as to the number of characters that can be printed on the slip. Because of this, there may be some missing descriptive information on the slip. If a WIC customer presents food items that are not described on the balance inquiry slip, the **CASHIER SHOULD SCAN THE ITEM ANYWAY**. The POS will determine if the item is allowed. If it is an allowed item, and the customer has enough in their balance to received the item, the POS will allow the transaction. If the item is, in fact not a WIC item, the cashier will see the "Not a WIC Item" message displayed on the POS device.

**Under no circumstances should cashiers make a determination if an item is allowed based on anything other than a scan of the item.** The only exception to this rule might be a determination of appropriate fresh fruits and vegetables. In this case, use the WIC food list to determine which fresh fruits and vegetables are allowed.



## Summer EBT for Children Project

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The Summer EBT for Children Project is a USDA funded collaboration between Michigan WIC and the Michigan Department of Education. Now in its fifth year, this project provides nutritious foods during the summer months to school age children that were eligible for free and reduced price school meals during the school year. Families receive an EBT card for specific foods, similar to the WIC food package. The EBT card is processed at the grocery store just like a WIC transaction is processed. For the summer of 2015 students in the following areas will receive the Summer EBT for Children electronic card: *Detroit, Grand Rapids, Kentwood, and the counties of Bay, Arenac, Clare, Gladwin, Midland, Tuscola, Alpena and Houghton*. Families can use their Summer EBT for Children card at any WIC authorized retailer in the state. Benefits will be provided from **June 1st through September 7th**.

## WIC CASH VALUE BENEFIT INCREASE FOR WOMEN

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USDA recently notified all states that the monthly cash value benefit (CVB) for fresh fruits and vegetables for women will increase from \$10 to \$11 beginning on October 1, 2015. On this date and thereafter, vendors may notice the increase in available fresh produce CVB dollars when performing a WIC transaction. Other than this \$1 increase, everything else should be business as usual. You are being made aware of this change ahead of time in case you receive questions from a WIC customer.

*Rules for selling fresh fruits and vegetables:* For independent vendors, you must enter the 4469 PLU code and the dollar amount of the sale. If you try to scan a UPC for a package of fresh fruit or vegetables, the POS will return the "Not a WIC Item" error message. For chain vendors, follow the appropriate in-store procedure at the cash register for selling WIC fresh fruits and vegetables.

As a reminder, it is a violation to use the 4469 PLU code to sell any food item other than WIC approved fresh fruits and vegetables. Also, do not keep expired, stale, dried out, spoiled, or moldy fruits and vegetables on display for sale. If, during a routine monitoring visit by a WIC representative, such items are observed, the store can be assigned 10 sanction points per visit.

## Reminder: Scanning Policy



Vendors . . . please remember, you *must scan the UPC of the items the WIC client is actually purchasing* so that the scanner may verify the item is authorized on that client's WIC EBT card.

It is a serious violation to scan any UPC not attached to the item the customer is actually purchasing.

For instance, some vendors are scanning the UPC code for only one flavor of baby food when the client actually has a variety of different flavors, each having a unique UPC code. In other instances, vendors are allowing clients to substitute whole milk for low-fat by scanning the UPC for low-fat milk and allowing the

client to take whole milk instead.

These actions are violations of several provisions of your WIC Vendor Contract regarding substitutions as well as improper scanning of UPC codes. **The WIC Program has already taken termination and disqualification action against several vendors for violating these provisions.**

## Purchasing Infant Formula for Resale to WIC Customers

Important reminder - the Michigan WIC Program requires that all WIC authorized vendors **MUST only purchase infant formula from wholesalers, distributors, and retailers licensed by the Michigan Department of Agriculture (MDA) or from infant formula manufacturers registered with the Food and Drug Administration.**

The MDA is available to answer any questions as to whether a wholesaler, distributor, or retailer is properly licensed or general questions you may have regarding licensing requirements and procedures. You may contact the MDA in a variety of ways:

Contact by phone: 1-800-292-3939

Contact by e-mail: [mda-info@michigan.gov](mailto:mda-info@michigan.gov)

Website: <http://michigan.gov/mdard>

Find a Licensed Michigan Business: [MDA Licensing, Certification and Registration](#)

If you are unable to confirm MDA licensure status or have any questions regarding this requirement, please call the WIC Vendor Relations Unit at 517-335-8937. This line will be answered by a live person from 8:00am – 5:00pm Monday through Friday.

**Also, you must retain all purchase records, receipts, and invoices for WIC approved foods for at least three (3) years.**

Requirements for inventory and purchase records can be found on Page 7, Section IV of your WIC Vendor Contract. These requirements will be strictly enforced and inventory records not meeting them will not be accepted. Accordingly, it is strongly suggested that WIC vendors provide their infant formula suppliers with a copy of these requirements.

If you have any questions about any of these policies, please call the WIC Program at 517-335-8937.

## WIC Program Terminations & Disqualifications

The following WIC vendors were recently terminated and disqualified from the WIC program due to violations of WIC program policies and procedures.

Big Apple Fruit & Deli (Detroit, MI)

Cambrey Food Store (Saginaw, MI)

Mirage Liquor Store (Detroit, MI)

Premier Express Market (Detroit, MI)

Santa Barbara Market (Detroit, MI)

Shorthorn Meats (Flint, MI)

## Juicy Juice

### Nestle Juicy Juice Changing To Harvest Hill Beverage Company

The manufacturer of Juicy Juice products will soon change from Nestlé to Harvest Hill Beverage Company. As a result, all Juicy Juice product labels will have a new look and UPC. The on-shelf transition is scheduled to begin mid-August. Once these new products are available, the Nestlé Juicy Juice UPCs will continue to be WIC approved along with the new Harvest Hill Beverage Company

## WIC Point-of Sale Questions

All questions regarding the use of WIC/EBT stand alone Point-of Sale equipment, including

*Hardware Problems*

*Transaction questions*

*Programming*

*Additional Signage*

*Changes in bank account to which your WIC reimbursements are deposited*

should be directed to **Xerox Help Desk at 1-888-529-1693**

**Store with integrated systems should contact their in-store IT person**

### MICHIGAN WIC PROGRAM

Michigan Department of Community Health  
WIC Program, Lewis Cass Bldg., 6th Floor  
320 S. Walnut  
Lansing Michigan 48913

Phone: 517-335-8937

Fax: 517-335-9514

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