

COVID-19 INFORMATION FOR MICHIGAN WIC VENDORS

April 8, 2020

Q: Am I expected to maintain Minimum Stock during the COVID crisis? What can I do to help ensure WIC clients are able to get the products they need?

A: Yes, you are required to maintain **Minimum Stock**, even during COVID-19. However, we do understand that supply chains may be affected and that customer buying patterns have changed.

Some steps you can take to ensure WIC clients are able to access the foods they need during this time include: 1) purchase stock more frequently; 2) source items from different/multiple distributors; 3) increase the variety of WIC foods you carry; and 4) carry items from the temporarily expanded Approved Product List (APL) to offer clients additional options.

Q: What should I do if my normal distributor is not able to supply me with my necessary WIC products (for example, there is low supply, or a product has been temporarily discontinued)?

A: If your normal distributor is unable to supply you with the necessary items to maintain Minimum Stock and meet the needs of WIC clients, please diversify your buying habits. This can include using multiple distributors or supplementing your stock with items bought from a larger supermarket. As always, please make sure to keep all purchase records and receipts. Please see the attached **Wholesaler List** for contact information and areas of distribution.

Q: I know that WIC recently expanded their product sizes. How do I make sure these updates are reflected in my Point-of-Sale (POS) device or integrated register system?

A: In order to ensure that your Point-of-Sale (POS) device or register reflects the most current WIC-authorized foods, please update your Approved Product List (APL) on a regular basis. For Vendors with stand-alone POS devices, this should happen automatically each evening, for larger Vendors with integrated register systems, you or your IT team will have to do this manually. For a detailed list of **APL changes**, please visit www.michigan.gov/WICVendor.

Q: How do I request the authorization of a product I believe meets the new expansion criteria?

A: If you carry a product you believe should be WIC-authorized based on our nutrition and size criteria, please fill out the **UPC Request Form** (attached) and fax it to 517-335-9206. Our team will review the product and add it to the Approved Product List if appropriate.

Q: I've noticed that many of my WIC clients are confused about the expanded product list. What can I do to help them?

A: If you have WIC clients that are confused about the new product sizes allowed, please refer them to the **WIC Connect Mobile application**. This smartphone app allows clients to see their benefit balance, scan food items to determine if they are or are not WIC-approved and locate authorized Vendors. **Shelf talkers** are another great way to indicate to clients the foods on your shelves that are WIC-approved. Please let the Vendor Relations Unit know if you need more of these materials.

Q: Will the Vendor field staff be conducting on-site monitoring visits during COVID-19?

A: WIC Vendor Relations field staff will not be conducting on-site monitoring visits during the COVID-19 crisis. However, during this time, WIC-authorized Vendors are still required to follow all Michigan WIC Program policies and guidelines.

Q: My store is due for a mandatory Vendor training. Will the webcasts still be available during this time?

A: Yes, all scheduled **WIC Vendor Webcasts** will take place as advertised. Upcoming webcasts will take place on **Tuesday, June 16th** at 2 p.m. EST and **Tuesday, September 22nd** at 2 p.m. To register, please visit our website at www.Michigan.gov/WICVendor or email us at MDHHS-WICVendor@michigan.gov for registration details.

Additionally, a **pre-recorded training video** can be found on our website at www.Michigan.gov/WICVendor for those that are interested. While watching this video does not count toward your required interactive training, it is a useful resource for learning about WIC policies and on-boarding new employees.

Q: Is the September 17th Annual WIC Vendor Conference still happening?

A: Yes, until further notice, the Annual WIC Vendor Conference will continue as planned. We will be sending out Save the Dates and registration information in the coming weeks. We will let you know if there are any changes to this as they develop.

Q: If I witness or know about a WIC-authorized Vendor or WIC client that has violated WIC Program policy, what should I do?

A: If you would like to report a complaint or allegation of suspected fraud and/or abuse committed by a WIC Vendor or client, please fill out and turn in the **WIC Vendor Complaint Form**. This form can be found on our website at www.Michigan.gov/WICVendor and as an attachment to this email.

Q: I recently heard about Manual WIC Vouchers. What are these used for and where can I get some?

A: **Manual WIC Vouchers** can be used during times of emergency (for example, when the power is out or your system is not allowing WIC purchases) to ensure WIC clients are able to get the formula they need. Manual Vouchers allow clients to receive **2 cans of formula per client per day**.

Before issuing a Manual Voucher, please call the **Conduent Vendor Help Desk** at **1-888-529-1693** to ensure the client has the benefits available. Conduent will also give the Vendor an **Authorization/Approval Number** to be entered on the Voucher. If a Vendor fails to call Conduent and the client does not have the benefits available, the Vendor **will not be reimbursed by the WIC Program**.

Vouchers must be cleared by Conduent on the POS device within **five (5) calendar days** of the transaction or the Vendor will not be reimbursed. Vendors with integrated systems must check with their third-party processor for instructions on how to clear Manual Vouchers. Please contact the Vendor Relations Unit at 517-335-8937 or via email at MDHHS-WICVendor@michigan.gov if you need additional vouchers.

Q: Are WIC clients allowed to use curbside pick-up?

A: At this time, on-line ordering and curbside pick-up are not allowed with WIC transactions, as the WIC client must manually enter their own PIN number at the time of purchase. The only exception is if the Vendor has a wireless PIN pad or POS device whereby the client could swipe their card and enter their PIN from the curb/vehicle at the time of pick-up.

If you have additional questions or concerns, please contact the Vendor Relations Unit at 517-335-8937 or by email at MDHHS-WICVendor@michigan.gov. For resources and more information about WIC and COVID-19, please visit https://www.michigan.gov/mdhhs/0,5885,7-339-71547_4910_6329-523991--,00.html.