



LA Staff Questions and Answers
Contract/Class I Formula Conversion Project Effective October 12

1. What is the Contract/Class I Formula Conversion Project?

- The Contract/Class I Formula Conversion Project will allow clients to redeem formula across standard/contract formulas, without requiring a change in WIC food package. The food packages will be called “Standard Infant Formula” with separate options for powder, concentrate, and ready-to-feed (RTF). This increased flexibility will allow a more equitable approach for WIC clients, putting their access on par with non-WIC clients who can choose any of the same standard formulas, based on preference and availability.

2. What clients will be affected by this conversion?

- All IBP and IFF infants who are on a Similac contract formula (Class I), as well as children (C1-C4) who have been prescribed a contract formula for a qualifying condition, will have their food package automatically converted on the evening of October 11. From October 11 at 7 p.m. until October 12 around 8 a.m., all families of affected clients will be unable to redeem WIC benefits.

3. Will any clients require manual food package conversion by local agency staff?

- If any clients with a Class I/contract formula containing food package fail to automatically convert on the evening of October 11, State staff will attempt to manually correct. Local agencies will be notified if additional action is needed.

4. What formulas are included in the “Standard Infant Formula” food packages?

- The standard infant formula food packages will contain all contract/Class I infant formulas per form (powder, concentrate, or RTF).
- While the USDA waivers and Abbott contract flexibilities are approved, all temporary powder infant formula choices will be able to be redeemed with the “Standard Infant Formula” food packages. Updates will be provided as the waivers and flexibilities are extended or expire.

5. How will the new formula benefits display on the client’s Shopping List?

- The formula benefit description will display on the client Shopping List as “Infant Formula” with the accompanying form (i.e., “PWD”).

6. Can clients buy ANY of the Temporary Formulas or just the ones comparable to their current formula benefits?

- Clients are able to purchase any of the temporary formulas listed on the “Infant Formula” pages of the [Temporary Choices for Powder Formula Effective October 12](#). It is strongly encouraged to follow the 3 Steps to purchasing formula. The temporary choices remain listed with the corresponding Similac contract formula to aid in staff and client understanding of nutritionally comparable products.

7. Can the Temporary Powder Formula Choices chart be translated to Spanish/Arabic?

- Spanish and Arabic translations of website content and materials are expected in the next 1-2 business days.

8. How long will these temporary choices be allowed?

- We have been notified by Abbott that they have extended rebates for:
 - Competitor brand infant formulas redeemed through November 30, 2022
 - Alternative sizes/forms of Similac products redeemed through December 31, 2022
- While it is possible these dates may be extended, your assistance in encouraging clients to follow the 3 Step process will support a successful transition when the temporary choices are eventually discontinued.



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9. Will this food package continue after the temporary choices are discontinued?

- Yes. Because all Abbott powder, concentrate and RTF contract formulas reconstitute to the same volume of 90, 26 and 32 ounces respectively, current system functionality will allow this change to continue for all formula forms for the duration of the Abbott contract, even after current formula shortage waivers (i.e., the Maximum Monthly Allowance) expire.

10. How should WIC staff provide education about selecting formula?

- Education should reinforce messaging introduced on the [Temporary Choices for Powder Formula Effective October 12](#). Families (i.e., those with new babies) may need assistance with deciding which formula to choose within the Similac product line. Staff can reference the primary, milk-based contract formula, Similac Advance (denoted under 'Start Here'), as the default choice, and other Similac products as indicated.
- **Families should further be educated to purchase formula following the 'Steps' identified in the Temporary Choices listing.** LA messaging should support purchase of Similac WIC sizes first, followed by other Similac formulas if the WIC size not available, followed by alternate brand choices as a last resort. This will help prevent clients from having to make a future formula change and will better prepare vendors and the manufacturer to meet supply needs of Similac formulas after the temporary choices are discontinued.

11. What if a client is unsure whether their baby will tolerate Similac formulas?

- Reassure clients that standard infant formulas are designed to be nutritionally similar, and their baby should not have a problem. If their baby does show symptoms of intolerance, they can contact the local WIC office for a suggestion about another Similac contract formula, as well as contact their health care provider for medical advice. It is highly encouraged that a client only redeems 1 or 2 cans at first when trialing their baby on a new formula.

12. Could the Premature or Hypoallergenic formula food packages be treated this way (can they be in one food package)?

- WIC Federal Regulations do not allow Michigan WIC to group either the name brand premature or hypoallergenic formulas into combined food packages. The assignment of these formulas requires a Special Formula/Food Request form. Name brand Premature and Hypoallergenic formulas have slightly different nutrient profiles and differing reconstituted ounces (resulting in different can maximums) that do not make them interchangeable. The one, current exception is store brand hypoallergenic formulas, as they have the same nutritional profile and can maximums.

13. When will LA staff be able to assign the new food package?

- Starting October 12, the CPA will assign a "Standard Infant Formula" food package and MI-WIC will not allow users to assign food packages with Similac contract formulas (a pop-up error with description will display).

14. Are any policies changing regarding assignment of ready-to-feed formulas?

- No, ready-to-feed formula assignment must continue to meet MI-WIC Policies 7.02, Authorized WIC Foods and 7.03, Food Package for Qualifying Conditions.
- While there is still a formula shortage, State WIC has allowed flexibility for assignment of RTF formula if that is the only formula form available to the client. LA staff must document this in the client MI-WIC record.

15. How should LA staff handle formula changes and formula returns?

- Staff will continue to accept unused returned formula in accordance with MI-WIC Policy 8.05, Returned Formula and Re-Issuance of Benefits, including for clients who will continue with a standard infant formula.



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- For unredeemed standard infant formula benefits, clients can switch to another standard infant formula without a need to change the food package or have benefits reissued.
- For best continuity of care, staff shall document in the MI-WIC record the returned formula, reason for return, and which formula the family is considering trialing next.
- We strongly encourage local agencies to request clients return unused formula prior to reissuing benefits if local agencies have staff in the office. Current waiver flexibilities continue to allow for formula benefit reissuance without a return.

16. How will clients be notified of the conversion?

- Refer to WIC E-Notice #2022-310 for the blast phone message language and schedule. Clients who have opted ONLY into receiving mailed notifications and those that had failed blast phone notifications were sent a mailing notification (refer to WIC E-Notice #2022-317 for letter notification).
- The Michigan WIC website has been updated to provide additional detail about the infant formula conversion, which includes the new [Temporary Choices for Powder Formula Effective October 12](#) client education handout.
- Local agency staff shall reinforce the changes regarding standard infant formula/food packages during client education.
- State and local agency staff should anticipate and be prepared to answer questions clients are likely to ask following the conversion.

17. How will WIC vendors be notified of the conversion?

- The State WIC vendor section is collaborating with the nutrition section to ensure WIC Vendors are appropriately notified of the Formula Conversion Project. Vendor specific communication can also be found on the Michigan WIC website under the WIC Vendors/Grocers tab in Vendor Communications, with two additional notifications planned for October 10 and 12.

Note: This includes emphasis on fact that successful redemptions of standard infant formula will be contingent upon the vendor having downloaded the latest Authorized Product Listing (APL).

18. How do I troubleshoot benefit redemption issues beginning October 12?

- Please refer to the separate 10/7/22 E-Notice attachment, LA Post-Conversion Troubleshooting Guidance.

19. What if a family that does not have formula assigned has questions about shopping on the evening of October 11?

- It is possible that due to the large volume of transactions going through the EBT processor on the night of October 11, families who have not been issued a contract/Class I formula may experience a sporadic transaction issue at checkout. These clients should try again at a later time or if possible, plan to shop another day. This messaging is consistent with the blast phone notifications to these clients.



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20. What will be seen in the food package and benefit void screens after the conversion?

- *Food Prescription Screen* - Current food prescriptions will have an End Date of 10/10/2022 with a Last Modified by FRML_CNVRSN_2022. The new “Standard Infant Formula” food package will display with an Effect Date of 10/11/2022 with a Created by FRML_CNVRSN_2022. Subsequent food packages that are automatically converted will also have a Created by FRML_CNVRSN_2022 with their corresponding old food packages disabled.

Description	Effect Date	End Date	Disable	Note	Created	Last Modified
IFF SIMILAC FOR SPIT UP POWD (4-5 MOS)	9/15/2022	10/4/2022	<input type="checkbox"/>		BRADYK2	FRML_CNVRSN_2022
IFF STANDARD INFANT FORMULA POWD (4-5 MOS)	10/5/2022	10/31/2022	<input type="checkbox"/>		FRML_CNVRSN_2022	
IFF STANDARD INFANT FORMULA POWD (6-11 MOS)	11/1/2022	4/30/2023	<input type="checkbox"/>		FRML_CNVRSN_2022	
IFF SIMILAC FOR SPIT UP POWD (6-11 MOS)	11/1/2022	4/30/2023	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		BRADYK2	FRML_CNVRSN_2022

Buttons: Packages, Remove, Customize

Display Formulary Approved Not Approved Expiration Date:

- *Benefit Void Screen* - Only remaining contract/Class I formula benefits are voided for the current month; other food package benefit quantities will remain the same. Reissuance of “Infant Formula” is displayed on a separate line, for the remaining benefit quantity for the current and future month’s benefits. If the amount of formula voided and reissued does not match, check the Benefit History screen to determine if formula benefits were voided prior to the conversion.

Benefits: Current Future Select All

Start Date	End Date						
9/15/2022	10/14/2022						
Client	Benefit Issue Number						
300876266 - Testing 6-8 PWD Formula Spit Up	1010949227						
Package Size	Food Item	Issued	Redeemed	Voided	Remain	Void All	Void Partial
OZ	INFANT CEREAL	24	0	0	24	<input type="checkbox"/>	
JAR	4 oz INFANT FRUIT OR VEGETABLES	32	0	0	32	<input type="checkbox"/>	
CAN	12.5 oz Similac For Spit Up PWD	7	0	7	0	<input type="checkbox"/>	
300876267 - Testing 6-11 PWD Formula Spit Up	1010949229						
300876265 - Testing 9-11 CVB PWD Formula Spit Up	1010949231						
300876268 - Testing 0-3 PWD Formula Spit Up	1010949223						
300876269 - Testing 4-5 PWD Formula Spit Up	1010949225						
300876265 - Testing 9-11 CVB PWD Formula Spit Up	1010949535						
300876266 - Testing 6-8 PWD Formula Spit Up	1010949537						
Package Size	Food Item	Issued	Redeemed	Voided	Remain	Void All	Void Partial
CAN	Standard Infant Formula PWD	7	0	0	7	<input type="checkbox"/>	
300876267 - Testing 6-11 PWD Formula Spit Up	1010949539						
300876269 - Testing 4-5 PWD Formula Spit Up	1010949541						
300876268 - Testing 0-3 PWD Formula Spit Up	1010949769						

21. What if I have a different question about the Formula Conversion Project?

- If you have an urgent question, please call the Consultant Du Jour at 1-800-942-1636, option 2 to speak with a Nutrition Consultant.
- If you have additional content you would like addressed on a future iteration of this Question & Answer document, please email PerryB11@michigan.gov. The State agency will update the document periodically so that all staff may receive the information.