

MI-WIC Blast Messaging Guidelines

- Messages entered in MI-WIC are sent to One Call Now every 2 hours, between the hours of 8am and 5pm.
 - **IMPORTANT NOTE:** If you are entering a message in the MI-WIC screen after 5pm **DO NOT** mark for it to be sent today, as it will not be sent after 5pm. Please mark it with a “Send Later Date” of the following day to ensure it is sent out the next morning. If you have previously entered a message after 5pm marked as “Send Today”, please know that this message did not go out. Please evaluate your message to see if it is necessary to resend.
- Messages are sent by One Call Now to clients between 8am-7pm.
- The total number of messages being processed will determine the time needed for the messages to be processed by One Call Now and received by participants. It often takes several hours after the message was entered in MI-WIC to be fully processed.
- Message content should be directly related to the WIC Program and services.
 - The Blast Messaging feature should not be used to send non-WIC related messages to WIC clients. Messages related to referral services, such as dental services, food banks, etc. are not directly related to WIC services and therefore should not be sent via a WIC Blast Message.
- Blast Messages should be used for widespread announcements only.
 - Message content should be appropriate to be sent to all clients within the designated organization. The families selected to receive text/blast messages must satisfy one of the following criteria:
 - Are in an active certification period, have been in an active certification period within the last 90 days or have a future scheduled appointment
 - Are not a C4 category that has reached their 5th birthday (provided they don't have a future appointment scheduled)
 - Do not have a termination reason of ‘Deceased’, ‘Request/Not Interested’ or ‘Moved Out of State’
 - Have text and/or voice call selected on the Family Information screen
- Messages should be formatted to meet the technical requirements of the One Call Now system.
 - Text Messages
 - Limit to 150 characters (including spaces)
 - If a message exceeds 150 characters (with spaces), it will be divided into multiple messages and charged as multiple

messages. Agencies may send messages longer than 150 characters (with spaces) if they feel it is necessary, but it is NOT recommended as this results in the WIC program and potentially the client paying additional charges per message.

- Limit special characters
 - Commas, apostrophes, slashes, dashes, dollar signs, ampersands, exclamation marks, and more are all considered special characters. When special characters are processed by One Call Now, they can result in unintended messages.
 - Hyperlinks cannot be sent through our blast message feature. If you enter a URL, it may be recognized on the client's device and displayed as link. If you are sending a URL, please ensure it is as short as possible with minimal special characters.
 - Use a URL [shortener service](#) to shorten long URLs and reduce length and limit the number of special characters.
- Voice Calls
 - Limit to 300 characters
 - Words should not contain all capital letters unless it is to be read as an acronym.
 - Example: WIC must be spelled as Wic or Wick
 - Words with multiple or creative pronunciations should be spelled phonetically.
 - Example: MIHealth should be spelled as My Health
 - Dates must be DD/MM/YYYY or written out
 - Example: March 20, 2023, or 20/03/2023
 - NO Parentheses ex: (s)
 - NO apostrophes

Troubleshooting FAQ:

What recommendations are there to shorten text messages?

- Use abbreviations where possible. For example, appointment could be abbreviated as appt.
- Shorten dates where possible, excluding the year when appropriate. For example, 01/01/2023 could be shortened to 1/1.
- Use bitly or other similar websites to shorten URLs.
- Direct clients to where they can find more information, like a phone number or website, rather than including too many details in the message.

Is there a way you can tell if the blasts you entered are going through?

- First, you can run the “Text Message Result Report” for the date in question. Be sure to select the option to include blast messages. This will give you basic information on when MI-WIC sent the message to OCN and if the family was included in the file. Unfortunately, there is a known bug in the report for the “Notification Status” column as it will always display as blank as we are not currently receiving this information from OCN.
- If the client or family in question is not included on this report, you will want to verify their notification preferences on their Precertification or Family Information screen to ensure they have selected the notification type you used. Remember, if people have not selected to receive text messages on the phone grid, they will not receive text messages through the system. You will also want to ensure the phone number is accurate, as dozens of messages do fail each time due to invalid phone numbers.
- If the client does appear on the Result report but indicates they did not receive the message, you can submit a help desk ticket through the MI-WIC Help Desk to have them help investigate the issue.