

**WEST VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF
HEALTH AND HUMAN RESOURCES**

**SPECIAL SUPPLEMENTAL NUTRITION PROGRAM
FOR WOMEN, INFANTS AND CHILDREN**

EMERGENCY OPERATIONS PLAN

WEST VIRGINIA WIC EMERGENCY OPERATIONS PLAN

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Attachments

1. Emergency Preparedness Meetings, Drills and Test Exercises
2. Daily Documentation of Disaster Problems and Resolutions
3. Summary of Disaster Problems and Special Needs
4. West Virginia Office of Emergency Services Directory (Local Agency Director only)

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POLICY

- * The West Virginia WIC Program, in the event of an emergency or major disaster affecting large numbers of participants, will take those resources necessary to:
 - 1) Provide for the safety of personnel and equipment;
 - 2) Secure records, equipment, materials and supplies;
 - 3) Restore WIC Program operations and delivery of service as soon as possible; and
 - 4) Support the emergency procedures of the West Virginia Office of Emergency Services.
- * During a disaster, the mission of the West Virginia WIC Program remains the same:

To improve the health of women, infants and children in West Virginia through the provision of nutrition and breastfeeding counseling, health monitoring and the provision of nutritious supplemental foods.

- * The WV WIC Emergency Operations Plan will be reviewed and updated as required.

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PRE-DISASTER PLANNING

- * Because disasters happen quickly, there may not be an opportunity to complete any or all pre-disaster preparations. Disasters could have a great impact on residential and business infrastructure and on the personal lives of those affected.
- * Pre-disaster planning helps WIC personnel to use alternative procedures to provide continued service during a disaster. How well a WIC clinic can continue to operate in a disaster situation depends upon:
 - 1) The extent of damage on the delivery infrastructure; and
 - 2) The extent that the Local Agency has planned and prepared for disaster situations.
- * The Local Agency Director will be responsible for the following:
 - 1) Assuring that annual pre-disaster preparation is completed;
 - 2) Maintaining communication with WIC personnel, the media and local sources of food assistance during the initial disaster alert/activation phase, during the disaster and during the restoration/recovery phase; and
 - 3) Assuring that pre-disaster procedures and restoration/recovery procedures following a disaster are followed and documented according to the **WV WIC Emergency Operations Plan**.
- * Each Local Agency WIC clinic will conduct annual pre-disaster preparation. The preparation will be documented on the attached **Emergency Preparedness Meetings, Drills and Test Exercises form** including the following:
 - 1) Staff meetings to discuss the emergency plan and individual responsibilities;
 - 2) Inspection of fire extinguishers;
 - 3) Emergency preparedness meetings, emergency drills and test exercises; and
 - 4) Plans to provide WIC services at a temporary back-up site or transfer of participants to another current WIC clinic in cases of damage to the delivery infrastructure.

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INITIAL DISASTER ALERT AND ACTIVATION

- * The extent of disaster preparation depends on the type of disaster.
 - 1) When there is advance notice that a WIC clinic may be damaged by a flood, WIC personnel will attempt to remove vehicles, computer equipment, participant charts, medical supplies and equipment to a secure location.
 - 2) When a WIC clinic is struck by lightning which causes a fire, there is no time to make advance preparation. In this case, it is important that all people inside the building leave **immediately** and call the fire department.
- * When there is advance notice that a disaster may occur, the Local Agency Director will take immediate action upon receipt of the notice.
- * The Local Agency Director will use the list of responsibilities and designated personnel on the Emergency Preparedness Meetings, Drills and Test Exercises form that was completed during a staff meeting to discuss the emergency plan as a check list for preparation.
- * The Local Agency Director will:
 - 1) Maintain contact with media and local sources of food assistance for information.
 - 2) Maintain contact with WIC personnel for notification of preparedness and problems.
- * WIC participants will be notified, as possible, that the WIC clinic may be closed until a disaster is over:
 - 1) Leave a message on the telephone answering machine and on the WIC clinic door. The message should notify the participant of an approximate date, phone number and location where they may reach WIC personnel; and
 - 2) Call participants to reschedule appointments for the estimated length of time the WIC clinic will be closed during the disaster and recovery period.
- * WIC personnel will be allowed to prepare their home and families, as considered to be necessary and approved by their supervisor.

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EMERGENCY RESPONSE

- * WIC clinic operations will be suspended until the disaster is over and it is safe to return to the site.
 - 1) Personnel will continue performing their assigned duties up to a reasonably safe time before the disaster; and
 - 2) Personnel will report for duty after the disaster as soon as the affected area is declared safe.

- * The Local Agency Director will distribute the appropriate office number for the County Office of Emergency Services Director (**see page 13 of the West Virginia Office of Emergency Services Directory**) to the personnel for each WIC clinic. This number may be used by WIC personnel or given to persons who contact WIC for assistance in emergency situations.

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RESTORATION AND RECOVERY PROCEDURES

- * When a WIC clinic area is declared a disaster area by Federal and/or State officials, the Local Agency Director or designee will prepare an initial assessment of the disaster situation within two (2) hours upon return to duty. The assessment, with the use of the attached **Daily Documentation of Disaster Problems and Resolutions form**, will include a numbered listing of problems:
 - 1) Infrastructure problems including the availability of power, water, phones, the status of vehicles, equipment, files and supplies and approximate length of time for the WIC clinic to re-open or an alternate site is able to provide services;
 - 2) Staffing problems including the reasons that some are not able to return to duty;
 - 3) Vendor problems including an estimated number closed or low on stock; and
 - 4) Participant problems including an estimated number of homes affected.

- * The initial assessment will be faxed to the State Agency Disaster Coordinator once compiled. If no immediate damage is detected in the area, the Local Agency Director or designee will send the fax indicating that the WIC clinic in a declared disaster area has no apparent initial problems.

- * Following the initial assessment, the attached **Daily Documentation of Disaster Problems and Resolutions form** will be faxed to the State Agency Disaster Coordinator once during each day that the WIC clinic is normally in operation until all problems are resolved or addressed.
 - 1) New problems may be added to the bottom of the list as they arise.
 - 2) Problems will be omitted from following lists once they are marked as resolved.
 - 3) A plan of action must be submitted for a problem that will not be resolved easily and/or briefly. Once the problem is addressed, it may be omitted from following lists.

- * The Local Agency Director will maintain communication with:
 - 1) The local Office of Emergency Services to provide assistance as needed;
 - 2) The media and local sources of food assistance for information; and
 - 3) WIC personnel for notification of problems.

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CERTIFICATION PROCEDURES

- * A temporary WIC clinic or a portion of the regular WIC clinic may need to be used during the disaster recovery period. It may be necessary for personnel to use portable anthropometric equipment. The WIC personnel and applicants/participants may need to endure less than ideal WIC clinic conditions for a short period of time while the WIC clinic is being cleaned and/or repaired.
- * Income eligibility determination may deviate from the usual WIC Program operation in disaster situations:
 - 1) During a certification, individuals who express that their income documentation was lost because of a disaster will be considered as income eligible. If individuals need to self- declare their income, they must sign a statement specifying why documentation cannot be provided (see **Policy 2.06, Section F. Income Eligibility Requirements**).
 - 2) An applicant who has a loss of income because their place of employment was completely destroyed and is likely to be out of work for an extended period of time will have income assessed based on the previous month;
 - 3) An applicant who has a temporary loss of income because a business that sustained some damage or a temporary loss of utilities will have income calculated on a twelve (12) month basis; and
- * While the temporary shelters and tent cities in which many disaster victims stay meet the definition of a “homeless facility”, residence in such facilities does not automatically make such persons eligible for WIC. Homeless applicants must qualify through the certification process to receive WIC benefits.
- * During disasters, WIC Program employees who are also WIC participants or caretakers will not be responsible for issuing eWIC benefits/cards to themselves or members of their immediate family or conducting any aspect of the eligibility process for themselves or members of their immediate family, including issuing of VOC cards, taking anthropometric measures, and certifying the eligibility of such persons.

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FOOD DELIVERY PROCEDURES

- * The WIC Program will not replace food lost in a mass disaster where community emergency feeding services are provided. WIC personnel will be aware of locations of emergency feeding services and sources of clean water to be able to refer those who contact WIC for this type of assistance.

- * In the case of a natural disaster affecting large numbers of people in a regional or State nature where emergency declarations initiate action by Federal and State public and private disaster assistance providers, participants are not required to provide proof of disaster for food benefit replacement.
 - 1) The State Agency will provide guidance on the replacement of benefits based on the situation.

- * WIC participants may require a change in food package during a disaster.
 - 1) Ready-to-feed infant formula may be issued when water sources are not safe.
 - 2) Formula in supply at the WIC clinic may be distributed to WIC participants, as necessary.
 - 3) There are no exemptions or exceptions allowed when medical documentation is required for the issuance of certain supplemental foods, including exempt infant formulas during disasters.
 - 4) A homeless food package may be issued to WIC participants with no storage and/or electricity.

- * WIC personnel will provide nutrition counseling and handouts about safety when cooking, eating and drinking following a disaster, as necessary.

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OUTREACH

- * The Local Agency operating in a disaster situation will increase outreach efforts to actively promote the WIC Program to potentially eligible individuals affected by disaster, while operating within its capacity to actually serve newly eligible persons.
 - 1) Announce the availability of WIC benefits through public information systems including the eligibility criteria, WIC clinic locations, telephone numbers and non-discrimination policy.
 - 2) Distribute WIC Program information at the local disaster assistance sites and at public locations in the areas affected by the disaster.
 - 3) Communicate with the local Office of Emergency Services to notify them that WIC is available as a source of assistance to provide nutrition information and supplemental foods to those who meet eligibility criteria.

EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS MEETINGS, DRILLS AND TEST EXERCISES

Local Agency Director: _____ WIC clinic: _____

I. Meeting to discuss emergency plan & individual responsibilities (attach attendance sheet)

Date Completed: _____

Responsibilities:	Designated Personnel:
Inspection of all WIC clinic fire extinguishers	
Conducting training drill and test exercises	
Maintain phone contact with the Director	
Maintain contact with media for information	
Advise officials of WIC staff responsibilities	
Disseminate information to WIC participants	
Ensure vehicles are serviced and operational	
Do back-ups of the database	
Secure facilities, equipment and records	
Disconnect all electrical equipment and turn off major source of electricity	
Complete/send daily fax problems/resolutions	
Complete/send summary of problems/needs	
Increase outreach efforts in disaster areas	

Attach plans to provide WIC services at a temporary back-up site or transfer of participants to another current WIC clinic in cases of fire, flood, etc.

II. Inspection of all WIC clinic fire extinguishers

Comments: _____

Signature of Inspector: _____ Date Completed: _____

III. Emergency preparedness meeting, drill and test exercises (attach attendance sheet)

Signature of Conductor: _____ Date Completed: _____

Keep completed sheet with the WIC clinic West Virginia WIC Emergency Operations Plan

FAX TRANSMITTAL

Date: _____ **To:** _____ **Fax** _____

Pages: _____ **From:** _____ **Phone #:** _____

DAILY DOCUMENTATION OF DISASTER PROBLEMS AND RESOLUTIONS

Local Agency Director: _____

WIC Clinic(s) Affected: _____

Date and Description of Disaster: _____

Location where Water is provided: _____

Location where Food is provided: _____

List all disaster problems including WIC clinic, WIC staff, vendor, and participant. Write “Resolved” and the date of resolution on the line of the problem when it is resolved. Once a problem is marked as “Resolved”, omit the problem from the following lists.

- 1. _____
- 2. _____
- 3. _____
- 4. _____
- 5. _____
- 6. _____
- 7. _____
- 8. _____
- 9. _____
- 10. _____
- 11. _____
- 12. _____

Signed: _____ Date: _____

Fax daily to the State Agency Disaster Coordinator to report ongoing problems and resolutions until all problems are resolved or addressed

SUMMARY OF DISASTER PROBLEMS AND SPECIAL NEEDS

Local Agency Director: _____ WIC clinic: _____

Date of Disaster: _____

Description of Disaster: _____

Description of WIC Clinic/Staff Problems: _____

Description of WIC Vendor Problems: _____

Description of WIC Participant Problems (list below):

<u># Affected:</u>	<u>Problem:</u>	<u>Comments:</u>
_____	eWIC Benefits replaced	_____
_____	Had destroyed eWIC Benefit Card	_____
_____	Not able to get eWIC Benefit Card	_____
_____	Formula on hand provided/amount	_____
_____	Added/changed caretaker	_____
_____	Changed appointment	_____
_____	Changed food package	_____
_____	Q&A on food safety	_____
_____	No use of electric, phones or water	_____
_____	Referral for additional help	_____
_____	Moved/transferred from area	_____
_____	Other	_____

Signed: _____

Date: _____

Send to State Agency Disaster Coordinator once problems have been resolved or addressed