

2.07 Certification of Foster Children

POLICY:

Foster children are children who are placed in the care of the State of West Virginia. West Virginia foster children who are under the age of five (5) are eligible for West Virginia WIC.

PROCEDURE:

A. Certification of Foster Children

1. At the time of application, the foster child will be screened according to WIC Program eligibility criteria (see **Policy 2.01, Certification of Participants**). The Local Agency will require each applicant to be physically present and present:
 - a. Proof of residency (see **Policy 2.04 Residency Requirements**)
 - b. Proof of identity for the foster applicant/participant and the foster parent (see **Policy 2.17 Verification of Identification of WIC Applicant/Participant and Parent, Guardian or Caretaker**)
 - c. Proof of income eligibility (see **Policy 2.06 Income Eligibility Requirements**):
 - i. A foster child will be considered a one (1) person household.
 - ii. A foster child's income is the State's payments for care of the child.
 - iii. A foster child will receive a West Virginia Medical Card (Medicaid) and will be adjunctly income eligible. Adjunct income eligibility will be documented on the **Crossroads Income Information Screen**.
 - iv. If the foster child returns to their biological parents, the infant's/child's income eligibility will then be based on their family's income; if the foster child is adopted, the infant's/child's income eligibility will then be based on the income of their adoptive family.
2. The foster parent will be informed of their Program rights and responsibilities during each certification appointment and will confirm by signing the **Participant Agreement Form (WIC-05)** (see **Policy 2.10 Notification of Participant Rights and Responsibilities**).
 - a. If the foster child is an active participant and transferring families, the foster parent must sign a **Participant Agreement Form (WIC-05)**.
3. The Nutritionist/Nutrition Associate (CPA) will determine if the foster child is at nutritional risk through a nutritional assessment (see **Policy 2.11 Nutrition Risk Criteria**).
 - a. Nutrition-risk code **903 Foster Care** is applicable if the infant/child fits the risk criteria of entering the foster care system during the previous six

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months or moving from one foster care home to another foster care home during the previous six months.

- b. The Nutritionist/Nutrition Associate (CPA) will screen for other nutritional risks if nutrition-risk code **903 Foster Care** is not applicable.

B. Participant and Guardian Certification Names

1. If the foster child is a new participant, an initial certification will be completed.
 - a. Custody documentation will need to be scanned into the child's record after he/she has been marked as foster on the **Participant Demographic screen**.
2. If the foster child is a current or previous participant, the foster child's record will be transferred into the new foster family's record (see section D.).
 - a. Custody documentation will need to be scanned into the child's record after he/she has been marked as foster on the **Participant Demographic Screen**.
3. The foster child must be entered on the **Crossroads Family Demographics Screen** under their own legal name.
 - a. The child's name will not be changed until legal documentation of a name change is presented.
4. If the foster child is a current or previous participant, and has been legally adopted, adoption documentation will need to be scanned into the child's record on the **Crossroads Income Information Screen** after the foster status is removed.

C. WIC Identification Number

1. The foster child will be moved to the new foster family's record and use the new WIC Family Identification Number.
 - a. A foster child who has previously participated in West Virginia WIC will retain their assigned West Virginia Participant Identification Number.

*Note: If the Social Security Number is provided for the infant/child WIC participant it will be documented in the **Crossroads Participant Demographics Screen**.*

2. The State Agency Help Desk will be notified when "Dual Participation" appears (see **Policy 1.11, Dual Participation**). The dual enrollment may not be resolved without first consulting Help Desk.

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D. Transferring of Records

1. A foster child who is currently participating or has participated in West Virginia WIC must have their records transferred into the new foster family's record.
2. The new foster Parent/Guardian must provide custody documentation to the WIC clinic before transferring the foster child's records.
 - a. Custody documentation will need to be scanned into the child's record after he/she has been marked as foster on the **Crossroads Income Information Screen**.
3. When a foster child returns to the original parent/guardian, the parent/guardian must provide custody documentation to the WIC clinic before transferring the foster child's record back to the original family record.
 - a. Custody documentation will need to be scanned into the child's record after he/she has been unmarked as foster on the **Crossroads Income Information Screen**.

E. eWIC Benefit Cards

1. The foster parent will be provided a separate eWIC Benefit Card for each foster child in their household.
2. A foster parent with their own biological or adopted child(ren) participating in WIC will be issued one (1) eWIC Benefit Card for all active participants who are not marked as foster children under the WIC Family Identification Number.
3. When a foster child returns to the original parent/guardian any remaining benefits on the foster child's account will remain on that account. The card associated with that account will need to be used to spend those benefits. Once the foster indicator is removed, all future benefits will be issued to the eWIC Benefit Card assigned to the original WIC Family Identification Number.

F. eWIC Benefit Issuance

1. The foster parent will be asked during each issuance of eWIC benefits about the approximate length of stay for the foster child.
 - a. A child who is placed in a home for a short duration will be issued the appropriate amount of eWIC benefits, i.e. one (1) month issuance.
 - b. A child who is placed in a home indefinitely will be provided with three (3) months of eWIC benefits during each issuance, if appropriate.
2. The foster parent will be instructed during a child's initial eWIC benefit issuance that the eWIC Benefit Card and purchased WIC foods are to be used only for the child and must be given to the child when they leave the home.
 - a. The foster parent will be instructed to label the food/formula purchased for the child with eWIC benefits for easy identification.

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3. Remaining eWIC benefits for the current month for foster children who were certified prior to transferring to the foster family will transfer with the child. eWIC benefits will be prorated, as needed, to keep the child on their current issuance. The benefit issuance date can change depending if they are transferring to an existing family that has benefits with a different issuance date.

REFERENCES:

1. WIC Regulations 7 CFR 246.7, Certification of Participants
2. FNS Instruction 803-3 WIC Program Certification: Income Eligibility