

3.09 Remotely Issuing Electronic Benefits and Mailing the Shopping List

POLICY:

Food benefits can be remotely issued to the eWIC card on a case-by-case basis, for certain appointment types and situations outlined below. Food benefits can only be issued to the eWIC card without the participant's presence in the WIC clinic for initial and subsequent certification appointments with the required documentation from the participant's healthcare provider, waiving their physical presence requirement (see **Policy 2.01 Certification of WIC Participants**).

Note: The issuing WIC staff must confirm food benefits were issued correctly to ensure benefits were not under-issued or over-issued, and/or to protect against fraud.

PROCEDURE:

A. Remotely Issuing eWIC Benefits and Mailing the Shopping List to an Individual Participant or Family

Staff may issue eWIC benefits without the participant's, parent's, guardian's, or caretaker's presence in clinic as outlined below:

1. Completion of a West Virginia (WV) WIC web-based nutrition education (JPMA WIC Smart) module (see **policy 5.05 Nutrition Education Contacts and Documentation**).
 - a. The local WIC office must receive proof of completion of the WV WIC web-based nutrition education contact (see **policy 5.05 Nutrition Education Contacts and Documentation**);
 - b. Staff must attempt to contact the participant, parent, guardian, or caretaker to verify the food package and to notify them that food benefits have been added to their eWIC benefit card. Staff must confirm contact information and the next appointment.
 - c. Staff will document completion of the nutrition education contact in Crossroads and load benefits to the eWIC benefit card. Staff will sign their full name with the notation "NE" for "Nutrition Education", as the reason for signing.
 - d. Staff will offer to mail and/or email an appointment letter and their Shopping List to the participant, parent, guardian, or caretaker.
 - i. If applicable, staff will encourage the downloading of the WIC Shopper App.
2. Completion of a one-on-one nutrition education contact via telephone (see **policy 5.05 Nutrition Education Contacts and Documentation**).
 - a. Staff will attempt to verify the food package with the participant, parent, guardian, or caretaker.

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- b. Staff will document completion of the nutrition education contact in Crossroads and load benefits to the eWIC benefit card. Staff will sign their full name with the notation “NE” for “Nutrition Education”, as the reason for signing.
 - c. Staff will offer to mail and/or email an appointment letter and their Shopping List to the participant, parent, guardian, or caretaker.
 - i. If applicable, staff will encourage the downloading of the WIC Shopper App.
 3. Minor food package changes that would not require the return of any contract infant formula, exempt infant formula or WIC-eligible nutritionals.
 - a. Food package changes must be requested by the parent, guardian, or caretaker and prescribed by a Nutritionist/Nutrition Associate (CPA).
 - b. Staff must attempt to contact the participant, parent, guardian, or caretaker to verify the food package and to notify them that food benefits have been added to their eWIC benefit card.
 - c. Staff will load benefits to the eWIC benefit card. Staff will sign their full name with the notation “RBI” for “Remote Benefit Issuance”, as the reason for signing.
 - d. Staff will offer to mail and/or email an appointment letter and their Shopping List to the participant, parent, guardian, or caretaker.
 - i. If applicable, staff will encourage the downloading of the WIC Shopper App.
 4. Other reasons that staff may issue eWIC benefits without the participant’s, parent’s, guardian’s, or caretaker’s presence in clinic include, but are not limited to:
 - Physical disability or family with children with special health care needs
 - Illness
 - Imminent childbirth
 - Quarantine, communicable disease, and/or immune disorder
 - Inclement weather conditions
 - Distance to travel, other travel challenges or transportation
 - Education requirement met and participant will not be eligible for re-certification
 - Participant unable to keep appointment which would result in missing an entire month of benefits
 - a. The local WIC office must receive proof of completion of the WV WIC web-based nutrition education (JPMA WIC Smart) contact (see **policy 5.05 Nutrition Education Contacts and Documentation**);

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- b. Staff must attempt to contact the participant, parent, guardian, or caretaker to verify the food package and to notify them that food benefits have been added to their eWIC benefit card. Staff must confirm contact information and the next appointment.
- c. Staff will document completion of the nutrition education contact on **Crossroads Nutrition Education Screen** and load benefits to the eWIC benefit card. Staff will sign their full name with the notation “NE” for “Nutrition Education”, as the reason for signing.
- d. Staff will document completion of the mid-certification appointment and the reason the appointment and/or eWIC benefit issuance were completed remotely in the **Crossroads Nutrition Care Plan**. Staff will sign their full name with the notation “RBI” for “Remote Benefit Issuance”, as the reason for signing.
- e. Staff will offer to mail and/or email an appointment letter and their Shopping List to the participant, parent, guardian, or caretaker.
 - i. If applicable, staff will encourage the downloading of the WIC Shopper App.

B. Group Electronic Benefits Issuance

- 1. In situations where it is necessary for staff to do group electronic benefits issuance, one (1) month of benefits will be issued, and the appointment will be rescheduled. Justification for group benefit issuance includes, but is not limited to:
 - a. Seasonally inclement weather or site closure;
 - b. Extreme hardship that may be encountered by the target population;
 - c. Event of a natural disaster, environmental hazard or destructive incident (i.e. gas line explosion, water main break); and
 - d. Automated system failure, internet disruption or electrical problems that prohibit the issuance of food benefits on a given day.
- 2. Staff must attempt to contact the participant, parent, guardian, or caretaker to verify the food package and to notify them that food benefits have been added to their eWIC benefit card.
- 3. Staff will load benefits to the eWIC benefit card. Staff will sign their full name with the notation “RBI” for “Remote Benefit Issuance”, as the reason for signing.
 - a. The Nutritionist/Nutrition Associate (CPA) will note the “Remote Benefit Issuance” reason in the Nutrition Care Plan.
- 4. Staff will offer to mail and/or email an appointment letter and their Shopping List to the participant, parent, guardian, or caretaker.

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- a. If applicable, staff will encourage the downloading of the WIC Shopper App.
- 5. Group food benefits issuance will be discontinued as soon as the reason for the group benefit issuance is resolved.

C. Emailing Appointment Letters and/or Shopping Lists

- 1. When emailing the appointment letter and the Shopping List, the email shall contain the confidentiality notice and the USDA Nondiscrimination Statement:

“This message, including any attachments, is for the sole use of the individual or entity named above. The message may contain confidential health and/or legally privileged information. If you are not the above-named recipient, you are hereby notified that any disclosure, copying, distribution, or action taken in reliance on the contents of this message is strictly prohibited. If you have received this message in error, please notify the sender immediately and destroy all copies of the original message”.

“This institution is an equal opportunity provider.”

- 2. Staff will verify contact information in **Crossroads** before mailing and/or emailing appointment letters or the Shopping List.

REFERENCES:

- 1. WIC Regulations 246.12, Food Delivery Systems
- 2. WIC Regulations 246.14, Program Costs