

# THE WIC'R BASKET



## WEST VIRGINIA WIC PROGRAM VENDOR NEWSLETTER

West Virginia Department of Health and Human Resources  
Bureau for Public Health, Office of Nutrition Services

Winter 2021

## New Vendor Unit Manager

On December 21, 2020, Cindy Tanner assumed the position of Vendor Manager. She has worked in state government since 2006 and has been with the WIC office since 2013. Cindy came on board during the transition to eWIC as the EBT Coordinator managing the database for the Approved Products List and troubleshooting transactional problems for participants and stores. We are very excited to have her on board as the new Vendor Manager.

## Goodbye and Congratulations

October 29, 2020 marked the last day of employment for the Vendor Unit's Operations and Training Specialist, Emma Sue (Sue) Hines. Sue had been with the WIC Program for 34 years and retired to enjoy her next chapter in life – her grandchildren and home improvement projects. Although we already miss her positive and knowledgeable presence, we are happy she is free to pursue other endeavors.

## Valley Reauthorization

The existing Vendor Agreement between authorized vendors in the Valley WIC Region will expire March 31, 2021. This area serves the following counties: Boone, Cabell, Kanawha, Lincoln, Putnam, and Wayne, and includes retail stores in West Virginia, Ohio, and Kentucky. A new Vendor Agreement must be effective April 1, 2021 for stores to continue to be authorized. One of the requirements of the Vendor Agreement is that all authorized vendors must receive federally mandated training before being authorized to participate in the West Virginia WIC Program. The State WIC Office will offer virtual training via Zoom on February 8, 2021 at 10 am, February 9, 2021 at 1 pm, February 10, 2021 at 10 am, and February 11, 2021 at 1 pm. Corporate contacts, certified trainers, and retail store managers in this region should make a reservation for one of these sessions as soon as possible by calling (304) 558-1115 or emailing [dhhrwicvu@wv.gov](mailto:dhhrwicvu@wv.gov). All applications and agreements with original signatures must also be received by the Vendor Management Unit no later than March 1, 2021.

## 2021 Annual Training

Annual Training will be conducted on Zoom and may be attended on either April 1, 2021 at 10 am or April 2, 2021 at 10 am. All stores not completing reauthorization training between October 2020 through September 2021 are required to have one representative attend. This includes stores serving the following counties: Berkeley, Braxton, Brooke, Calhoun, Clay, Fayette, Gilmer, Greenbrier, Hampshire, Hancock, Jackson, Jefferson, Logan, Marshall, Mason, McDowell, Mercer, Mineral, Mingo, Morgan, Monroe, Nicholas, Ohio, Pleasants, Pocahontas, Raleigh, Ritchie, Roane, Summers, Tyler, Webster, Wetzel, Wirt, Wood, and Wyoming. A letter with log on details will be sent to all stores required to attend. Please RSVP by Monday, March 22, 2021 by calling 304-558-1115 or emailing [dhhrwicvu@wv.gov](mailto:dhhrwicvu@wv.gov). The annual training will also be available to review after April 2021 on the West Virginia WIC Program website: <https://dhhr.wv.gov/WIC>.

## West Virginia WIC Factoids (FFY 2020)

<b>Active Participants (average per month)</b>	<b>33,836</b>
<b>Active Families (average per month)</b>	<b>22,272</b>
<b>Store Monitoring Visits</b>	
Total Reviews	29
First Failed Reviews (warning letter)	5
<b>Educational Buys</b>	
Total Buys	14
<b>Authorized Retailers (as of 9/30/20)</b>	<b>238</b>
<b>Total Reimbursements</b>	<b>\$24,542,902.91</b>
<b>Compliance Buy Investigations</b>	
Total Buys	49
Warning Letters	6

## Online Ordering

The WV WIC Program has been granted a waiver of the federal requirement that WIC transactions (including the entering of a Personal Identification Number (PIN) in EBT systems) must occur in the presence of a cashier. No WIC agencies have operationalized this yet. This waiver will allow State agencies to continue to work toward online ordering in WIC on their own, or as a part of FNS' soon-to-be-awarded Online Ordering Grant. West Virginia would like to work with any retailers interested in implementing curbside pick-up, delivery, or online ordering for WIC customers.

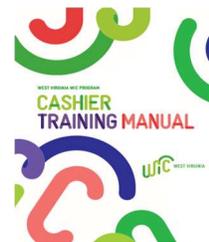
## Heidi's Headline

I want to first wish everyone a belated Happy New Year and to thank each of you for a very successful 2020 for the West Virginia WIC Program – in these unprecedented times, no less. Without your strong commitment to serve WIC customers, our successes would not have materialized. In fact, we provided nutritious food benefits to more than 56,000 women, infants, and children. The WIC Program continues to serve nearly 50% of all eligible participants in West Virginia. We should never forget this is our true goal — to provide sound nutrition counseling and nutritious supplemental foods to ensure healthy pregnancies and child development to those at risk. This is the strength of the WIC Program.

We are happy to report the 2020 West Virginia WIC Shopping Guides have been printed and delivered to our storage warehouse. Since there is limited initial inventory, your store will receive one shopping guide for the service desk while supply will be mailed later for each register. WIC clinics have begun handing them out to participants so you will start to see them this month. Electronic versions of the shopping guides are located on our website and on the WICShopper mobile app (both in English and Spanish). The layout is similar to the previous shopping guide with cover changes, making it easy to identify which guides are the most current. Please report any feedback on the content, layout, or design that you may have to help us improve on future shopping guides.



Finally, I am also excited to introduce the new Vendor Handbook and Cashier Training Manual. Revisions were long overdue since the transition to EBT and were guided by the Vendor Advisory Board. I encourage you to review both booklets. The most significant updates include revised minimum stocking requirements and a totally revamped sanction system.



The West Virginia WIC Program is recognized by many as one of the best in vendor management in the country. States will continue to look to us to lead them into the future, and because of a great team, including our retail partners, we are prepared to lead. There is no doubt 2021 will be a great year for the WV WIC Program.

## Thank You

An article in the February 2020 issue of Journal of the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics found that longer participation in WIC is associated with better diet quality in children. Children who received WIC benefits during most of the first two years of life had better diet quality at 24 months than those who discontinued WIC benefits during infancy. Because of your efforts, we can provide effective delivery of nutritious WIC approved foods to WIC participants throughout the state. Thanks for all you do to make the WV WIC Program successful.

*Thank  
you!*

In accordance with Federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, the USDA, its Agencies, offices, and employees, and institutions participating in or administering USDA programs are prohibited from discriminating based on race, color, national origin, sex, disability, age or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity in any program or activity conducted or funded by USDA.

Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication for program information (e.g. Braille, large print, audiotape, American Sign Language, etc.), should contact the Agency (State or local) where they applied for benefits. Individuals who are deaf, hard of hearing or have speech disabilities may contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339. Additionally, program information may be made available in languages other than English.

To file a program complaint of discrimination, complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form, (AD-3027) found online at [http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint\\_filing\\_cust.html](http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint_filing_cust.html), or at any USDA office, or write a letter addressed to USDA and provide in the letter all the information requested in the form. To request a copy of the complaint form, call (866) 632-9992. Submit your completed form or letter to USDA by:

MAIL TO:  
U.S. Department of Agriculture  
Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights 1  
400 Independence Avenue, SW  
Washington, D.C. 20250-9410

FAX: (202) 690-7443  
EMAIL: [program.intake@usda.gov](mailto:program.intake@usda.gov)

This institution is an equal opportunity provider.

The WIC'r Basket is published quarterly by the West Virginia WIC Program, 350 Capitol Street, Room 519, Charleston, WV 25301