

WA WIC Annual Vendor Training Requirements - 2024



WIC VENDOR TRAINING

2024 Annual Requirements

Welcome to the 2024 WIC Vendor Annual Training document. The purpose of this document is to provide an overview of vendor requirements and information for the Federal Fiscal Year 2024.

Store employees should read this information to meet WIC Nutrition Program annual training requirements. The store must keep a record of employees who read this information for Department of Health WIC staff to review upon request.

About Women, Infants, & Children (WIC)

The nutritional health of a pregnant women has a profound effect on fetal development and newborn health. Babies born to well-nourished moms get to be children better prepared to learn and grow.

The WIC program promotes healthy outcomes by prescribing supplemental nutrition to income eligible pregnant and breastfeeding women, infants, and children up to 5 years of age, offering nutrition education, breastfeeding support, health screenings and referrals, in addition to prescription-based food benefits. WIC participants receive a food prescription from a certified dietitian based on their unique nutritional needs.

WIC approved foods must meet federal and state nutritional requirements of specific nutrients including calcium, fiber, iron, protein, and vitamins A and C.

By selling WIC approved foods, your store helps participants receive the nutritional benefits they need.

2023 Washington WIC Facts

In Washington state more than **660** WIC authorized grocery stores made nutritious foods available to over **204,000** WIC participants; **147,166** infants and children and **56,860** pregnant or nursing women.

How increasing access to nutritious foods for WIC participants benefits stores:

- **\$100,322,117** was distributed to WIC vendors.
Of that, **\$29,498,803** was spent on fruits and vegetables.
- **\$382,320** was spent on infant formula.
- WIC shoppers spend an additional **\$3 to \$4** for every **\$1** in WIC dollars redeemed.



Participant and Redemption Totals Per County

County	Total WIC Participants Served	Infants & Children Served	Women Served	Total WIC \$ Redeemed	Total F&V \$ Redeemed
Adams	3,064	2,158	906	\$1,706,034	\$532,922
Asotin	539	394	145	\$243,105	\$66,152
Benton	7,103	5,160	1,943	\$3,726,397	\$1,074,865
Chelan	3,978	2,886	1,092	\$2,111,933	\$647,981

Clallam	1,778	1,288	490	\$713,901	\$197,725
Clark	10,281	7,512	2,769	\$4,950,705	\$1,536,794
Columbia	45	30	15	\$20,620	\$4,318
Cowlitz	3,988	2,934	1,054	\$1,954,736	\$551,696
Douglas	1,073	787	286	\$574,195	\$164,436
Ferry	195	145	50	\$82,098	\$26,846
Franklin	7,781	5,610	2,171	\$4,423,525	\$1,316,496
Garfield	47	35	12	\$24,190	\$5,944
Grant	6,334	4,551	1,783	\$3,593,886	\$1,040,221
Grays Harbor	2,781	2,027	754	\$1,455,091	\$380,116
Island	2,054	1,496	558	\$943,741	\$287,147
Jefferson	470	333	137	\$179,955	\$59,281
King	42,308	30,116	12,192	\$19,388,265	\$5,793,072
Kitsap	6,017	4,339	1,678	\$2,642,306	\$777,169
Kittitas	854	595	259	\$444,932	\$124,864
Klickitat	606	423	183	\$295,921	\$75,209
Lewis	2,904	2,097	807	\$1,471,205	\$407,889
Lincoln	214	160	54	\$127,072	\$35,543
Mason	1,164	846	318	\$619,404	\$173,846
Okanogan	2,055	1,500	555	\$1,069,780	\$307,732
Pacific	423	310	113	\$232,558	\$55,410
Pend Oreille	290	214	76	\$140,047	\$38,459
Pierce	24,289	17,470	6,819	\$11,409,972	\$3,258,943
San Juan	220	162	58	\$100,766	\$31,614
Skagit	4,792	3,446	1,346	\$2,345,837	\$737,899

Skamania	95	70	25	\$41,743	\$8,811
Snohomish	14,982	10,733	4,249	\$7,374,474	\$2,250,219
Spokane	17,228	12,598	4,630	\$8,099,019	\$2,343,921
Stevens	1,070	767	303	\$536,885	\$153,229
Thurston	5,606	4,101	1,505	\$2,677,366	\$756,951
Wahkiakum	54	38	16	\$24,915	\$7,221
Walla Walla	2,121	1,564	557	\$1,077,855	\$311,460
Whatcom	4,930	3,584	1,346	\$2,187,005	\$715,012
Whitman	759	552	207	\$292,424	\$86,334
Yakima	19,534	14,135	5,399	\$11,018,255	\$3,155,055
Statewide Total	204,026	147,166	56,860	\$100,322,117	\$29,498,803

WIC Food Updates

To ensure your store has the most up to date Approved Product List (APL) for WIC transactions, work with your POS provider to pull the APL on a regular basis. Whenever an item is added, changed, or removed, the [Approved Products List \(APL\)](#) is updated. The most up to date lists for Washington WIC Authorized Foods and WIC approved infant formulas can always be found in the WICShopper app or on the [WIC website](#).

An out-of-date APL is a common reason WIC approved items are refused at the register.

SET A REMINDER to ensure the newest APL is uploaded on a regular basis to keep your point of sale (POS) system up to date on WIC food changes. Contact your POS provider to help keep your APL current.



Scan for Approved Products List



Scan for Approved Infant Formulas

Contract Requirements

Vendor Selection Criteria

Vendor Selection Criteria (VSC) outlines requirements for vendors to become and remain WIC authorized. You can find VSC for grocery and pharmacy stores at [Information for WIC Vendors | Washington State Department of Health](#).

As part of the VSC, maintaining Minimum Inventory Requirements (MIR) to ensure WIC approved foods are available for participants to purchase must be always met. The [Minimum Inventory Requirements](#) can be viewed online.

WIC Approved Formula Suppliers

WIC authorized vendors are critical partners in safeguarding the health of WIC infants through oversight of infant formula purchases from approved wholesalers, distributors, and infant formula manufacturers registered with the Food and Drug Administration (FDA).

Authorized vendors must purchase infant formula from sources included on the [State WIC office's list](#). If a vendor is found out of compliance, the State WIC office must terminate the vendor agreement. Thank you for adhering to these important requirements.

Training

e-Bulletin is a quarterly newsletter emailed to all WIC contacts and [posted to the WIC Vendor webpage](#). Ensuring store employees (including cashiers, managers, bookkeepers, and inventory staff) read and initial the e-Bulletin is recommended as part of on-going training is recommended.

Interactive Vendor Training is offered online and in person, available in English and Spanish, and proven valuable for new store staff as well as those who could benefit from a refresher. It's also a contract requirement each store must meet at least once within the contract period.

Upcoming trainings are posted on the [WIC Vendor Training Information webpage](#).

Storing initialed e-Bulletins and training logs of WIC Interactive Vendor Training attendees in the WIC Training Binder and placed in an accessible area is suggested.

Store Hours & WIC Accepted Here Window Clings

Stores must be open 6 days a week, 8 hours a day at a minimum and hours must be posted. A WIC Accepted Here window cling must also be posted and visible to WIC customers.



Best Practices

Importance of Mid-Transaction Receipts

The mid-transaction receipt prints automatically when a participant slides their card and enters the PIN at the terminal.

Always present and offer it to the participant BEFORE asking them to approve the purchase on the terminal because:



- It identifies approved items which will be paid for with their benefit balance.
- Any item not listed at the bottom of the mid-transaction receipt will require payment out of pocket with another form of tender.
- This is the time to catch issues such as produce mapping errors or foods not WIC approved and remove any items from the order the participant does not wish to pay for with another form of tender.
- If changes are to be made, the participant should decline or cancel the transaction on the terminal, sending it back to the cashier for changes.
- When the purchase is accepted or approved on the terminal and the final receipt prints, the only option may be to void the entire transaction and start over, which can cause frustration for both the employee and the participant.

When store employees learn how to read the mid-transaction receipt, they may be able to troubleshoot an issue quickly, thus avoiding a potentially stressful situation for all involved while providing superior customer service!

WIC Shelf Tag Placement

Accurately placed WIC shelf tags help WIC customers have a better shopping experience and can prevent issues at the register.

As the WIC approved foods list changes, we realize WIC shelf tags can be tough to maintain.

We highly recommend stores use the WICShopper app's "Scan Barcode" feature to quickly identify WIC approved items and tag shelves accurately. Stores not utilizing the app may find the [WIC Washington Shopping Guide](#) a helpful tool for identifying WIC approved foods.



Occasionally you may encounter issues with WIC Card transactions. When a food item won't ring up as WIC approved, it may be caused by one of the following:

- The item isn't a WIC approved item or no longer meets the requirements to be an approved food due to manufacturer changes such as package size, nutritional content, type, or variety.
- The participant does not have available benefits. This can include incorrect fat content or size limits.
- The participant has exhausted all available benefits. Participants can see their benefit balance in the WICShopper app account, by requesting a balance inquiry, or on the mid-transaction receipt.
- The food items may be new in stores, and we are not aware of it. Participants and store staff who use the WICShopper app can use the "I Couldn't Buy This" tool to report the item for review.
- A single WIC EBT transaction may contain a maximum of 50 unique items as identified by their UPC or PLU. Separating large orders into two transactions should prevent this.
- The latest Approved Product List wasn't uploaded properly or is outdated. Contact your Point of Sale (POS) provider to ensure the most [current APL](#) is uploaded.
- The fresh produce PLU code is not mapped as a WIC approved item in the store's POS system. Contact your store's POS provider for produce mapping help.

PRODUCE MAPPING TIP:

Produce mapping is essential for WIC participants to buy fresh fruits and vegetables from your stores.



If new produce arrives, or existing produce with a different UPC, remember to map it right away to a PLU number or your POS system will not know it is a WIC approved item. If you have questions or need help to do this, contact your POS provider.

Note To Exceed (NTE) Variances & Adjustments

The eWIC system sets NTE rules which calculate future pricing based on purchase trends in each peer group. Analysis of NTE amounts for effectiveness, outliers, and product level reimbursements may result in adjusting NTE calculations for some products. We continue to use eWIC NTE calculations to support cost containment measures and find the system effective at adjusting based on redemption amounts and market influences.

WIC reimburses vendors up to the set NTE amount for WIC approved items at the time of purchase. If the vendor charges more for an item than the NTE amount

compared to similar vendors in their peer group, the vendor may be reimbursed less than the amount charged. Vendors may request an eWIC variance report from their third-party processor showing the difference between the amount charged and the amount reimbursed.

We understand prices may rise outside of a vendor's control causing the vendor to increase prices to support these costs. The prices for milk, eggs, and cheese are recent examples. The WIC program is permitted to make exceptions in these events and NTE rules (applied to all vendors) are updated as exceptions are made.

Stand-Beside Machines

Vendors who don't have an integrated eWIC system, here are a few reminders for your WIC stand-beside machine:

- Enter the cash value benefit (CVB) amount for fruits and vegetables last.
- Be sure your machine is connected and updated with the most recent APL.
- Report issues with connectivity or broken machines to FIS at 1-(800)-237-2169.

WIC Compliance

WIC staff regularly monitor and audit vendors to verify the WIC Vendor contract terms are being met. If any issues are identified, we may provide education or technical assistance to help the store correct issues. Some situations may require a Notice of Violation to be issued.

Expired Foods

Regularly check expiration dates of the food on your shelves. We understand how busy your stores are and how easy missing expired items with longer shelf lives can be. Evaporated milk, dried beans, and infant formula are commonly found expired on shelves.



Expired infant formula is a violation of the WIC Vendor contract and may result in a Notice of Violation.



Pro tip: Check for dust on longer lasting items. Be sure they are clean and not expired.

Accurate Shelf Pricing

Shelf prices and the prices programmed into your POS system must always be the same. If an item rings up at \$2.69 and the shelf price is \$2.39, it violates the WIC Vendor contract and will result in a Notice of Violation as an overcharge to the WIC program

Section 9.1 states “In addition to complying with procedures for food pricing set forth in the Vendor Selection Criteria, the Contractor shall sell WIC approved foods to WIC participants at the same price charged to other customers.”

Sanctions for contract violations include contract termination, disqualification from WIC and SNAP for a specified period, and/or a civil monetary penalty. Sanctions are based on the Federal and State Sanction Schedule. View the [State law governing WIC sanctions and penalties](#) online.

Reminder: Expired infant formula and food does not count toward meeting minimum inventory requirements and may result in a Notice of Violation.

View the State Sanction table in your 2023-2026 WIC Vendor Contract.

Violation	First Instance	Second Instance	Subsequent Instances
To sell or make available for sale WIC approved infant formula when spoiled; its “sell by,” “best if used by,” or other date limiting its sale or use is exceeded; or the container is defective.	Notice of Violation and claim for cost of formula	Notice of Violation, claim for cost of formula, and a \$100 fine.	Termination of Contract and a 1-year disqualification

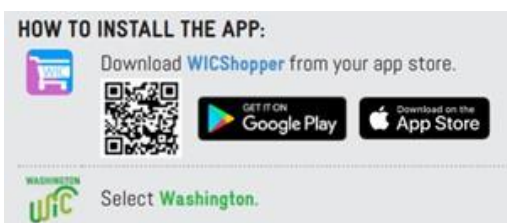
Complaints Help us Improve WIC Services

Whether received from or about a WIC customer, WIC clinic, or WIC authorized vendor, we view complaints as an opportunity to identify gaps and improve program services. We use the resulting information to update policy, materials, training, and education.



To report an incident or file a complaint, please complete the [Incident Report Form](#) on our website. Provide as much information as possible to assist the investigation.




WIC Shopper App: Beneficial to Stores



If you haven't downloaded the WIC Shopper App, you may want to consider it. It can help store staff to identify approved WIC foods by using the scan feature, submit foods for WIC approval through the "I can't buy this" feature, and help WIC customers in their shopping. It's free, easy to download, available to everyone with or without WIC Card benefits, and available in 21 different languages.

Scan any UPC barcode to see if it is a WIC approved item. If a WIC Card with benefits is **not** attached to the WIC Shopper app account, only green or red will appear.

If a WIC Card with benefits is attached to the WIC Shopper app account, one of three colors will appear:

		
<p>Green: It's a WIC approved food and benefits are available to purchase item.</p>	<p>Orange: It's a WIC approved food but no available benefits to purchase item.</p>	<p>Red: It's not a WIC approved food and may not be purchased with benefits.</p>



- Users with a WIC Card can view their available benefit balance in real time.
- Select a category to see the current list of all WIC Approved Foods in that category.
- Users have access to tools such as produce and cereal calculators, recipes, and more.
- Users can link their WIC Card to let them know if an item is allowed with their benefits.

Stay Informed

We communicate program announcements and changes as they occur. Notification is made to corporate offices and stores by email. Sharing this important information with every employee interacting with the WIC program and its participants can help prevent issues at the register and improve customer service.

Notify the WIC Vendor Management Team at WICRetailManagement@doh.wa.gov of any email address, managerial, or ownership changes at your store.

Resources

Minimum Inventory Requirements



Scan for GROCERY
Minimum Inventory
Requirements



Scan for PHARMACY
Minimum Inventory
Requirements

Approved Formula Suppliers



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Authorized vendors must purchase infant formula from sources included on the [State WIC office's list](#). If a vendor is found out of compliance, the State WIC office must terminate the vendor agreement. Thank you for adhering to these important requirements.

Supplies

Resource materials are available to order through [WIC Vendors \(my.printdesk.net\)](#) free of charge. Materials include:

- Vendor Training Guide
- Shopping Guides
- WIC Accepted Here window clings
- Shelf tags

Contact Us

Washington State Department of Health

Office of Nutrition Services, WIC Vendor Management

(800) 841-1410 Ext. 2

WICRetailManagement@doh.wa.gov

<https://www.doh.wa.gov/YouandYourFamily/WIC/WICVendors>

WIC Foods: WaWICFoods@doh.wa.gov

Complaints: www.doh.wa.gov/youandyourfamily/WIC/makeacomplaint

For all POS related issues contact your POS Provider.



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