Table of Contents

FDS-1: Food Distribution
1. Food Distribution
   Effective: May 2006
2. Identification (ID) Card
   Effective: February 2008
3. Proxies
   Effective: February 2008

FDS-2: WIC Retail Vendors
1. WIC Retail Vendors
   Effective: May 2006

FDS-3: WIC Food Centers
1. WIC Food Centers
   Effective: May 2006

FDS-4: Food Instruments
1. Printing and Issuance
   Effective: May 2006
2. Local Agency Accountability
   Effective: May 2006
3. Security of Food Instruments
   Effective: May 2006
4. Unused Food Instruments
   Effective: May 2006
5. Handling of Food Instruments with No Redeemable Value
   Effective: August 2009
6. Fruit and Vegetable Vouchers
   Effective: August 2009
7. Payment Processing for Food Instruments
   Effective: May 2006
8. Issuance by Mail
   Effective: May 2006
9. Rainchecks
   Effective: May 2006

FDS-5: Local Agency Procedures
1. Lost or Stolen Unissued Food Instruments
   Effective: May 2006
2. Lost or Stolen Issued Food Instruments
   Effective: May 2006
3. Unused/Unaccounted For Food Instruments
   Effective: May 2006
1. **Food Distribution**  
   **Effective: May 2006**

The State of Illinois maintains a uniform statewide retail food delivery system. The Department is ultimately responsible for determining the food distribution system that most efficiently and effectively serves the local needs.

WIC foods are provided to participants in Illinois via two methods: retail delivery utilizing authorized WIC vendors (food retailers) throughout the State, and WIC Food Centers in the city of Chicago. The Department, through an agreement with Catholic Charities of Chicago, operates the Food Centers.

In both methods of food distribution, vouchers for food are provided to eligible WIC participants by way of an automated computer system with a linkage to a mainframe computer system in the Department’s Springfield office. Food Instruments (retail vendors) and Food Coupons (food centers) are tailored to individual participant needs and printed on demand utilizing personal computers in all clinics. All WIC foods are provided free of charge to WIC participants.

Upon redemption by participants, Food Instruments are deposited by vendors in a local bank and are processed for payment and reconciliation. Payments of both Food Instruments and Food Coupons are processed through the Department’s contract bank. Every voucher created by the Local Agency is reconciled to obligation records uploaded to the mainframe computer and transferred electronically to the contract bank.
Each client/family or foster child must have a complete WIC ID card.

Addendum - WIC ID Card

A. General Information

The Department provides WIC Client Identification (I.D.) Cards to all Local Agencies

1) These I.D. Cards are a uniform client reminder system and a caseload management tool. The ID card is used for identification both at the WIC office and when redeeming
food instruments.

2) The front of the card reflects the name of the participant(s), the signature of the
participant or parent/guardian, the signature of the authorized proxy(ies) and the name, address, phone number and fax of the issuing Local Agency.

3) The inside of the card provides information that must be reviewed at each certification
including:
   a) participant rights and responsibilities
   b) termination notice
   c) appointment information

B. Identification (ID) Card Usage And Replacement

1) Families should be listed on one ID card.

2) A foster child is a family of one and will receive his/her own WIC ID card.

3) Only the certified client or certifying parent/caretaker and proxies identified at the current
certification may use the card to obtain or redeem food instruments. Identification must
be checked at time of issuance. (See Certification Standards, Section 4. Identity, #1
Identity Documentation)

4) Replacement card(s) can be provided when the ID card is missing, lost, damaged, full or
stolen and the client or certifying parent/caretaker presents their picture identification.

5) If no picture identification is available, then the client’s chart must be pulled to compare
the signature on file.

6) Only the client or certifying parent/caretaker may receive the duplicate ID card.
3. **Proxies**  
*Effective: February 2008*

A. Proxy means any person designated by a woman participant, or by a parent or caretaker of an infant or child participant, to obtain and transact food instruments or to obtain supplemental foods on behalf of a participant. Parents or caretakers applying on behalf of child and infant participants are not proxies. Two proxies may be authorized during the certification period. A list of proxy names should be maintained in the client's file and should be updated at certification. Proxies should be at least 18 years of age or reliable WIC participants and dependable for the duration of the certification period. Signature of designated proxies must be shown on the client's WIC Identification (ID) Card.

B. When a proxy is necessary, the following procedures must be observed prior to the receipt of Food Instruments and/or food on behalf of the WIC participant:

1) The individual who certifies is considered the parent/guardian/caretaker. Any other individual must be designated as a proxy.

2) Proxies must be identified on the WIC Client Certification Form.

**Addendum - WIC Certification Form**

**Addendum - Sample Proxy Authorization Form**

3) Proxies must sign a designated line on the participant's ID Card prior to redemption of Food Instruments.

4) Proxies have the same obligation to attend nutrition education sessions as the certified client.

5) Proxies may not sign the WIC Program Client Certification Form.

6) In the rare instance when a participant wishes to change proxies mid-certification:

   d) A WIC proxy Authorization form must be completed in person, including full signature of the participant or certifying parent, and kept on file.

   e) Updates such as these may also be noted in Cornerstone.

   f) A new WIC Identification Card may need to be issued, as proxies must sign the ID Card.
1. WIC Retail Vendors
   Effective: May 2006

A. The Vendor Relations Unit is responsible for the following activities:
   1) reviewing all vendor applications for approval;
   2) performing initial site visits as required for each prospective vendor;
   3) providing procedural vendor training;
   4) securing contracts between the Department and individual retail vendors;
   5) providing problem-solving assistance; and
   6) investigating vendor payment problems.

B. The Vendor Compliance Unit conducts compliance investigations and has the right to impose sanctions upon those vendors identified as noncompliant with the Vendor Management Act and Code.

C. All Local Agency questions and concerns regarding vendors and vendor activities are to be referred to the Department, through the “Action Line”, 1-800-843-6154 or in written form, using the “Vendor Complaint Form.

D. The Department maintains two units within the Illinois WIC Program to monitor and direct the activities of authorized WIC vendors. The Illinois WIC Vendor Management Act and Code (Ill. Admin. Code 672) exist to standardize all Vendor Management Activities. Copies are available upon request.
1. **WIC Food Centers**  
*Effective: May 2006*

In 1993, the Illinois Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children implemented a Food Distribution Center pilot program in the city of Chicago. The Food Distribution Centers provide USDA approved products to WIC participants in a clean, safe, and friendly environment. The Food Centers are constructed to accommodate WIC participants in a consumer friendly manner. Each Center provides space for supplemental nutrition and breastfeeding education, a waiting area for guests who accompany participants to the Centers, food preparation demonstrations, and childcare areas with adult supervision provided by senior citizens. The Centers modify available food choices based on cultural sensitivity by surveying community groups, utilizing local nutritionists, and varying the food available based on cultural needs in various centers.

Special food coupons are given to WIC participants for sole use at Food Distribution Centers. These food coupons are printed in orange color to differentiate them from the Food Instruments that are blue. The orange food coupons cannot be redeemed at grocery stores that provide services to WIC participants. It is the responsibility of the WIC clinic staff to inform the participants that they can only redeem the orange food coupons at WIC Food Distribution Centers and the blue food instruments at grocery stores that are certified as WIC vendors. **Only orange food coupons are to be used at WIC Food Distribution Centers and blue food instruments are to be used at certified WIC vendors.**

Local Agency WIC clinic staff should inform their clients about the locations of where they can redeem their orange food coupons. A list of all the WIC clinics currently distributing orange food coupons to certified WIC participants is included in the Addendum.

Participants receiving orange food coupons can only redeem them at WIC Food Distribution Centers. The location of the Food Distribution Centers where WIC participants who receive the orange food coupons can go to redeem their food coupons are also listed in the Addendum.

*Addendum - WIC Food and Nutrition Centers Program*
1. **Printing and Issuance**  
   **Effective: May 2006**

   A. Blank Food Instrument stock is shipped (bonded) to the Local Agency for issuance to the participant. Food Instruments are printed upon demand from the system by drawing from the participant master file the food package prescribed by the Certifying Health Professional (CHP).

   B. Uniform Food Instruments are used by all Local Agencies and comply with 7 CFR 246.

   C. Food Instruments are a single copy negotiable instrument which the participant gives to the vendor in exchange for WIC foods.

   D. All Food Instruments printed for issuance are good only for the printed issue month and must be redeemed between the "First Day to Use" and "Last Day to Use" indicated on the Food Instrument.

   E. Food Instruments are to be tailored to individual participant needs and issued in a one-month, two-month, or three-month supply.
2. Local Agency Accountability
   Effective: May 2006

ALL Food Instruments **MUST BE ACCOUNTED FOR** by the obligated Local Agency. Food Instruments are negotiable and represent checks. Local Agencies must maintain responsibility for proper use and handling. Monthly redemption reports are provided to the Department to investigate and take corrective action if any Local Agency misuses Food Instruments.
3. **Security of Food Instruments**  
*Effective: May 2006*

A. Food Instrument accountability is maintained weekly through a computerized inventory system which reconciles issued Food Instruments with shipped stock.

B. In addition, the Local Agency is responsible for:

1) Maintaining a secure, locked area (safe, limited access closet, etc.) for holding unused Food Instruments after receipt, during issuance and during transportation from one site to another. Only the Site Supervisor and one assistant should have access to the storage area.

2) Recording all unused, mutilated Food Instruments as "VOID" on the data system.

3) Stamping or marking "VOID" on unused Food Instruments and stubs.

4) Destruction of all “Voided” food instruments in a timely basis and maintaining voided stubs on file with daily Food Instrument issuance logs.

5) Accurately accounting for all Food Instruments. Contract language specifies that Local Agencies are fiscally responsible for food funds which are lost as a result of thefts, embezzlement or unexplained causes, or the misuse of Food Instruments which are voided in hand, stolen or reported to the Department as lost, and which are subsequently paid by the Department's contract bank. Deductions from vouchers will be done quarterly based on mainframe reports.

6) Food Instruments returned by a participant that have expired should be destroyed. Do not attempt to void them on the system.

7) Notifying the WIC Central Office when a clinic moves and where Food Instruments should be delivered (see Appendix for required forms).
4. *Unused Food Instruments*

*Effective: May 2006*

A. Local Agency Staff are responsible for monitoring End of Day Food Instrument Issuance Log to identify "gaps" in Food Instrument sequence numbers. The Department will monitor unused Food Instrument stock to ensure accountability.

B. The Department will monitor the security of food instruments regardless of status. Upon redemption, Food Instruments are deposited by the vendors in a local bank and are processed for payment and reconciliation.

1) Payments are processed through the WIC contract bank. Every Food Instrument created by the Local Agency is reconciled to obligation records uploaded to the mainframe computer and transferred to the contract bank.
5. **Handling of Food Instruments with No Redeemable Value**  
*Effective: August 2009*

When voiding the instrument types listed below that are not redeemable and have a maximum value of $0.00, it is **not necessary** for the local agency to have the instruments “IN HAND” to re-issue. Past policy required all instruments voided, be “in hand” prior to re-issuance. This policy only includes the re-issuance of the following food instrument examples:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Instrument Description</th>
<th>Status</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Breastmilk is Mom’s Priceless Gift</td>
<td>NON NEGOTIABLE DO NOT REDEEM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OR</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Loving Support makes Breastfeeding Work</td>
<td>NOT NEGOTIABLE DO NOT REDEEM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>or</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Your child has you and you have WIC.</td>
<td>NOT NEGOTIABLE DO NOT REDEEM</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
6. **Fruit and Vegetable Vouchers**  
*Effective: August 2009*

The Fruit and Vegetable Voucher (FVV) is a cash value voucher designed to allow any combination of authorized fresh or processed fruit or vegetable in quantities with a value up to the amount stated on the food instrument.

A. When using FVV's at the store, as with other food instrument transactions, participants may not:
   1) **Spend any of their own money for WIC Food under any circumstances.**
   2) Accept change from Food Instrument transactions.
7. **Payment Processing for Food Instruments**  
*Effective: May 2006*

A. Upon redemption, Food Instruments are deposited by the vendors in a local bank and are processed for payment and reconciliation.

B. Payments are processed through the WIC contract bank. Every Food Instrument created by the Local Agency is reconciled to obligation records uploaded to the mainframe computer and transferred to the contract bank.
8. Issuance by Mail  
**Effective: May 2006**

A. Distribution of Food Instruments to participants by mail or special pick up is allowable under special, emergency situations pursuant to approval by the Department in accordance with 7 CFR 246. Such requests must be in writing for documentation. Written requests should be sent to the WIC Central Office.

1) Prior approval must be obtained, in writing, by the Local Agency from the state of Illinois WIC Program.

2) Documentation substantiating the need for mailing or picking up Food Instruments shall be maintained in the individual participant's certification file per 7 CFR 246. Documentation shall include:
   a) The dated written request by the Local Agency for prior approval
   b) The dated approval granted by the Department
   c) The date(s) within the participant certification period covered by the mailed Food Instruments

3) Said prior approval shall be limited to a period of sixty (60) days or less.

4) Food Instruments will be mailed to currently certified participants only.

5) No Food Instruments will be mailed out of the state of Illinois.

6) All Food Instruments approved for mailing will be sent from the Local Agency via certified mail to document that the participant/proxy received the Food Instruments.

7) Precise and accurate documentation for issuance by mail or special pick up must be maintained by both the State and Local Agencies.
9. **Rainchecks**  
*Effective: May 2006*

Participants are not to exchange Food Instruments for rainchecks. Should a vendor not have all items available, the participant should either redeem the Food Instrument at another vendor or agree to redeem the Food Instrument without receipt of that particular item.
1. **Lost or Stolen Unissued Food Instruments**  
   *Effective: May 2006*

A. To effectively deal with **unissued** lost or stolen Food Instruments the following actions must be taken **IMMEDIATELY** by the Local Agency:
   1) Notify local law enforcement authorities to document the occurrence.
   2) Report to the Department within twenty-four (24) hours, by telephone, details of the occurrence and Food Instrument serial number(s).
   3) The Department will provide the necessary computer instructions to the Local Agency.
   4) Provide a copy of the police report to the Department within fifteen (15) days.

B. If a large number of Food Instruments are stolen from the Local Agency or one of its clinics, these additional steps must be taken:
   1) Provide detailed documentation of the theft, preliminary steps taken and police reports to the Department within fifteen (15) days of the occurrence.
   2) Provide a follow-up report detailing the final outcome to the Department upon resolution but not more than sixty (60) days from the date of the occurrence.

C. Food Instruments reported by participants as mutilated should be returned to the Local Agency and voided on the clinic computer. Replacement Food Instruments may be issued at the discretion of the Local Agency.
2. **Lost or Stolen Issued Food Instruments**  
   *Effective: May 2006*

Food Instruments that are lost or stolen after issuance will not be replaced. Local Agency can refer participants who report lost or stolen instruments to food pantries or other food assistance programs.
3. **Unused/Unaccounted For Food Instruments**  
   *Effective: May 2006*

1) Local Agency staff must monitor End-of-Day reports to identify gaps in Food Instrument sequence numbers. Regional Department staff will also monitor unused Food Instrument stock to ensure accountability.