**What is eWIC?**

A benefit delivery method that allows WIC participants to purchase their benefits electronically with use of an eWIC card and Personal Identification Number (PIN). This system is replacing paper vouchers with an electronic process for participants to purchase approved items in your stores in 2020.

**When will eWIC be implemented in Illinois?**

IL eWIC will be piloted beginning March 16, 2020. The pilot region includes the following counties: Adams, Brown, Calhoun, Cass, Christian, Clark, Coles, Cumberland, DeWitt, Douglas, Edgar, Effingham, Greene, Hancock, Jersey, Logan, Macon, Macoupin, Menard, Montgomery, Morgan, Moultrie, Piatt, Pike, Sangamon, Schuyler, Scott, Shelby. After the pilot period, rollouts are scheduled from May 26, 2020 through August 21, 2020. Please visit our website at [http://www.dhs.state.il.us/wicvendor/](http://www.dhs.state.il.us/wicvendor/) to obtain the scheduled statewide rollout plan.

**What are the benefits of eWIC for WIC authorized vendors?**

The benefits of eWIC are invaluable to the Illinois WIC Program. Vendors will enjoy advantages that include, but are not limited to the following:

- Vendors experience labor savings because transactions require customers to swipe a card, and no longer require the counting and processing of food instruments (FIs).
- Checkout process is more efficient because completion of FIs is not required.
- Vendors are paid faster as payments are directly deposited into their bank account through an automated clearing house (ACH).
- Less error prone, because approved foods, effective dates and benefit amounts are validated by the system, and not cashiers, at the time of the transaction.
- Many issues related to printed FIs are eliminated.

**How will the eWIC card work at checkout?**

- The eWIC card is swiped by the customer.
- Foods are scanned and approved for purchase.
- Account is checked for adequate benefit balance.
- Account is debited the appropriate quantity of WIC approved foods from the family’s eWIC card.

**Are SNAP and eWIC benefits on the same card?**

No. SNAP and eWIC cards will be separate.

**What do I need to do to be eWIC Ready?**

- Ask your current POS provider’s IT staff questions like will current equipment support eWIC?
  - If the answer is no, what would be needed to support eWIC?
    - Software Update?
    - Hardware Update?

**Questions Regarding Equipment/Software Installation**

Contact Solutran at [retailcert@solutran.com](mailto:retailcert@solutran.com)

**Other Questions?**

Contact the Illinois WIC Program at [DHS.WICVendor@illinois.gov](mailto:DHS.WICVendor@illinois.gov)

**Which company is Illinois WIC’s eWIC Service Provider?**

Illinois WIC has contracted with Solutran to serve as our eWIC Service Provider. Solutran is assisting with the conversion and ongoing service of our eWIC system.
How does eWIC ensure that participants purchase only allowed foods?

Illinois WIC maintains a UPC list called the Approved Product List (APL). All UPCs in the APL fall into a category of foods. If a participant does not have that category assigned to the card, they will not be able to purchase an item in that category.

Do I have to manage the UPC lists myself?

No. POS systems certified for eWIC download the APL file. However, in order to ensure that eWIC works correctly, store personnel must:

- ensure that the APL is downloaded on a daily basis.
- "map" or "link" all UPC's WIC allowed fresh produce to a "like" PLU that is in the APL file. For more information on Illinois WIC's expectations around Produce Mapping you may contact Solutran at RetailCert@solutran.com.

What are the different ways I can process eWIC? Do I need to have a specific kind of POS system to take WIC cards?

There are two ways to process eWIC cards:

- integrated into a POS system that is certified to transact eWIC or
- with a stand-beside terminal from Solutran.

You do not need to have a specific kind of POS system because any store can use a stand-beside terminal if their system cannot be integrated.

Do retailers have to pay transaction fees on eWIC transactions?

Yes. As with SNAP and Credit/Debit, stores with integrated POS systems, as well as those with multi-function stand-beside terminals, will be responsible for transaction fees.

When will the IL WIC Program stop processing paper food instruments and cash-value vouchers?

WIC vendors will be expected to accept paper food instruments through the end of December 2020. If the paper food instrument is valid, stores should continue to accept them as a form of payment.

Do coupons work with eWIC?

Yes, and stores are required to accept coupons and loyalty cards on WIC transactions if they typically accept them with other forms of payment.

How can I stay connected and updated with the eWIC transition?

The Illinois WIC Program is here to make the transition to eWIC as easy as possible. Should you have any questions about eWIC, please send them to the following email address: DHS.WICVendor@illinois.gov. We will answer your questions promptly. Additional guidance and FAQs can be found on the IL WIC Vendor page at http://www.dhs.state.il.us/WICVendor.