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**Performance Guidelines: Approved Foods and eWIC Food Benefits**

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Effective Date: April 1, 2018

Supersedes: January 1, 2017

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These guidelines define the types of food and formula items approved for sale and purchase by eWIC cardholders.

**I. Approved Foods**

- A. Each State WIC Office creates a list of WIC approved food items using federal guidelines as well as other variables including nutritional value, availability, size, and price.
- B. Only those specific food items approved by the State WIC Office are eligible for purchase using an eWIC benefit card. Only WIC approved food items prescribed specifically to a participant are eligible for reimbursement
- C. Foods approved by the WIC Program fall into one of several categories. Refer to the Virginia WIC Food List located at each eWIC terminal for specific categories and food items.
- D. All foods approved by the WIC Program may be further limited based on the following variables:
  - 1. Brand – some products have brand restrictions (e.g., only specified brands of frozen juices are approved).
  - 2. Size – some products have package size restrictions (e.g., only 64 ounce containers of liquid juice are approved).
  - 3. Ingredients – some products have ingredient restrictions (e.g., only whole wheat breads with no artificial sweeteners are approved).
  - 4. Cost – some products have price restrictions (e.g., only contract formula is approved)

**II. Approved Formulas**

- A. Authorized retailers are required to stock specific contract formulas at quantities identified in the Minimum Stocking Requirement guidelines.
- B. Authorized retailers are only allowed to sell formulas and medical foods included in the Approved Product List.
- C. Formulas and medical foods redeemable at retail stores are listed in the Infant Formula Flyer published by the State WIC Office.

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- D. If a eWIC cardholder requests a contract formula, special formula, or medical food approved for purchase through an authorized retailer, the retailer is expected to procure the formula within 48 hours. If an eWIC cardholder requests formula that the retailer does not have access to, the retailer should refer the eWIC cardholder to another authorized retailer.

### **III. Specific Brands**

- A. Authorized retailers may sell any brand identified in the WIC Approved Food List unless otherwise stated.
- B. Authorized retailers must sell specific brands for specific categories of food items. Questions about these categories should be directed to the store's assigned Vendor Liaison.
- C. The WIC Program requires brand designation for milk products to ensure eWIC transactions do not exceed the Not-to-Exceed value and the individual authorized retailer's reimbursement level. Additionally, the WIC Program recommends a single brand (preferably the best value brand available) be used for all milk products.
- D. Food categories (e.g. breakfast cereal) may include multiple brands. For each food category, if the brand is included in the Virginia WIC Food List, it can be purchased by the eWIC cardholder.

### **IV. Approved Product List (APL)**

- A. The APL is an electronic data file identifying food items approved for purchase with WIC benefits by food category and subcategory and by a unique product identifier, either a Universal Product Code (UPC) or Price Lookup (PLU) code. The APL is created from UPCs/PLUs and maintained by the state WIC agency, and made available to retailers for download to their point-of-sale systems via a secured FTP site.