



Indiana WIC

VENDOR UPDATE

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Indiana WIC Program

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Inside this issue:

Gerber Changes	1
New Logo and Shelf Tags	2
WIC ID Changes	2
Miscellaneous Updates	3
Edits	4

Gerber Changes Are On the Way!

Gerber is making two significant changes to their popular baby and toddler food products. First, Gerber is “thinking outside the box” with regards to their infant cereal containers, and are eliminating just that.....THE BOX! Instead of the traditional box container you are used to, expect to see a new, user-friendly design (pictured at right) on shelves beginning next month. Gerber

infant cereals in this new container ARE approved for WIC even though the current WIC food card only lists the box container as

approved. The WIC approved foods list will be updated to allow “any container” when it is reprinted.



Additionally, Gerber is rebranding its older baby/toddler formula portfolio from the current “Gerber Good Start 2” to “Gerber Graduates”. Gerber believes consumers were confused by the meaning of the “Good Start 2” branding and hopes the new “Gerber Graduates” branding helps communicate the age appropriateness of its product. An example of this new branding is shown to the right. Please be advised WIC checks will allow the purchase of both the “Good Start 2” and “Graduate” labeling for the foreseeable future. This includes the “Gentle” and “Protect” formulas in the 22-oz containers and the “Soy” formula in 24-oz containers. Expect to see all of these changes on shelves beginning next month.



Indiana WIC Has A New Logo!



Indiana WIC promotes the importance of fruits and vegetables to pregnant women, new mothers and children. We recently introduced a new logo to increase the emphasis on nutrition. The new logo, shown at left, is multi-colored and includes an apple. Indiana WIC is proud of the new logo and hopes it brings a brighter look to our program.

The logo is shown on our new shelf tags (pictured below at left) which have been supplied to all our WIC vendors. The tags have an orange background with the item listed and the new logo, and help participants identify the approved food items.



New Shelf Tags



WIC ID Change

By the end of March you will no longer see any of the old WIC ID folders (shown below) in your store.



The new WIC ID card is what participants or their proxies must show to cashiers before they may use their WIC checks. They may not use their WIC checks without showing the WIC card below. After showing the card, nothing else is needed for them to use their WIC checks.

<p>Participant, parent or guardian <i>(please print)</i></p> <p>Signature</p> <p>Proxy #1 <i>(please print)</i></p> <p>Signature</p> <p>Proxy #2 <i>(please print)</i></p> <p>Signature</p>	 <p>ATTENTION This card is to be accepted as proof of identification at all authorized WIC vendors in the State of Indiana.</p> <p>Indiana State Department of Health <i>This institution is an equal opportunity provider and employer.</i></p> <p>WWW.WIC.IN.GOV</p>
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After the WIC sale is complete and the WIC participant signs their check, compare the signature on the check to the signature on the ID card.

The transition from the old ID card to the new ID card began in January and will continue through March.



Important Updates and Changes



WIC Food Changes

The WIC program recently made a few changes in the foods WIC participants may get with their WIC checks:

Infant Fruits and Vegetables

- Infant foods have been changed from allowing only Beech Nut, to allowing any brand. Gerber, Nature's Goodness, Beech Nut and store brands are all allowed. This also means Beech Nut Stage 2 1/2 is now approved.
- Infant foods may be in any type of 4-oz container, and may be any stage. Glass or plastic jars, and plastic tubs are OK.
- Two packs of 4-oz containers are not allowed; they are considered an 8-oz item.
- WIC participants must get only fruit or vegetables. Mixtures of fruit and vegetables are fine, but things like added meat, macaroni, yogurt or rice do not qualify for WIC.

Infant Meats

- WIC participants may get any brand 2.5-oz container of baby food meat.
- Added broth or gravy is OK, but nothing else may be added.

Bread

- Pepperidge Farm Swirl Whole Wheat Cinnamon Bread with Raisins is no longer allowed.

CVVs for Fruits and Vegetables

- Ornamental or decorative pumpkins may not be purchased with WIC checks. This applies to any other fruit or vegetable as well.

Formula Name Change

Beginning January 2013, Mead Johnson has changed the name of NUTRAMIGEN AA LIPIL; the new name is PURAMINO. WIC checks will have both the old and the new names.

Rejected Checks

WIC checks have to pass an edit procedure prior to payment, which includes a reasonable price for the foods listed on the check, the correct redemption date, no alterations, a signature by the WIC client or proxy, a legible ID stamp and depositing the check prior to the state date. Occasionally WIC checks are rejected in error through no fault of the vendor. This can be the result of misreading the MICR line, encoding the price incorrectly, poor handwriting of the price, human error, etc. If a vendor has a rejected check they believe was rejected in error and wishes to appeal, they may do so by sending the check and a written explanation of why it should be paid to their local WIC agency. Any documentation available to support payment should also be included, as should a name and phone number. The local WIC agency will forward this to the State WIC Program for investigation. The state will approve or deny payment, and return the check to the appropriate store or processor.

Gerber Soothe

For the past 3 months, sales of Gerber Good Start Soothe 12.4-oz powder have surpassed the sales of both Gerber Soy and Protect for WIC participants. If your store does not currently stock Soothe 12.4-oz, you are missing potential sales. We will continue to watch redemption reports and will advise vendors if it becomes a mandatory item to stock.

Most Costly Error

It is essential that cashiers read the food message on each check, and process them one at a time. Each month we see numerous checks redeemed for infant formula instead of infant cereal or infant food in jars. This causes the check to be rejected for "excess dollar amount," and payment cannot be approved when the items sold are not listed on the check.





What About Those Edits?



Most Indiana vendors are aware the Indiana WIC program sets edits, maximum dollar amounts for WIC checks and Cash Value Vouchers. Conversely, vendors may not know how edits are set or what they may do to ensure the edits fairly and accurately reflect current prices. WIC monitors price increases through application prices, WIC price surveys, manufacturer notifications of price increases and vendor contacts. Information from vendors is critical to set accurate edits.

Edits are routinely reviewed and revised to account for manufacturer price increases and commodity price fluctuations. Usually these price increases, and less commonly price decreases, are gradual. WIC check edits are usually robust enough that gradual price increases will not trigger rejected checks. However, when a manufacturer has a substantial price increase or a series of smaller price increases over a short period of time, this can cause a spike in rejected checks. An example of this is the rather recent Gerber Formula price increase on formula required by the Indiana WIC program. This increase had the potential to cause numerous rejected checks.

Indiana WIC was notified by Gerber of the price increase months before it occurred. When the increase did occur, several vendors contacted their local offices and the State WIC office indicating they were going to need to increase their price. Indiana WIC used the information from vendors and notification from Gerber to revise edits on all affected checks. Feedback from this cooperation shows very few checks were rejected due to this price increase.

Please understand Indiana WIC tries to stay ahead of price fluctuations to prevent rejected checks. However, if after a price increase you receive or continue to receive rejected checks, contact your local WIC agency immediately so Indiana WIC can investigate the issue.

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