

## Message from Mike

Recently, Ms. Diana Limbacher, acting Administrator for the Mid Atlantic Region of USDA, met with Dr. William Hazel, the Commonwealth's Secretary of Health and Human Services. The Virginia Department of Health is under his leadership. While they discussed several topics, Ms. Limbacher had high praise for the Virginia WIC Program, especially being the first state to simultaneously roll out a new WIC Management Information System (entitled Crossroads) which included Electronic Benefit Transfer (EBT) functionality -- a major accomplishment. I will be the first to admit that there have been bumps and potholes along this journey and some still remain; however, Crossroads with EBT (also known as eWIC) is fully implemented in Virginia.

This is a great example of a public/private partnership coming together to impact the lives of literally thousands of at-risk citizens. Every day I see the rapidly increasing use of EBT cards as participants visit your stores to purchase healthy foods. Your role in the Virginia WIC Program can never be minimized and I am greatly appreciative of all that you do to make the Virginia WIC Program one of the best in country and a role model for others to emulate.

Hopefully most have seen that the WIC food package was finally approved -- and no, white potatoes were not included!! There are two things that I want to bring to your attention about the final approval: First is that the cash value voucher for children was increased from \$6 to \$8. Participants continue to fail use this benefit to its maximum, so I encourage you to develop strategies to promote this valuable asset; Second is that stores will need to have a process to accommodate a split tender when a participant uses the cash value voucher. For example, a WIC participant is seeking to purchase \$12 worth of fresh fruits and vegetables, but only has \$8 worth of benefits available. Stores must have a mechanism in place to accept the additional \$4, either in SNAP benefits or cash. This process needs to be in place by April 1, 2015.

Thanks again for all that you do and I hope you find time to enjoy a summer vacation.

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## Purchasing Milk with eWIC

One of the more noticeable changes in eWIC is how milk is prescribed. Milk is no longer prescribed by containers (gallons or quarts), but is now prescribed as a total number of gallons. Additionally, milk can now be purchased in the half gallon (64 oz.) and  $\frac{3}{4}$  gallon (96 oz.) sizes, if available, as well as the quart (32 oz.) and gallon (128 oz.) sizes. For example, a milk prescription showing "3.25" could be purchased as three gallons and one quart, six half gallons and one quart, 13 quarts, or any other combination that adds to 3.25 gallons.

eWIC did not change what types of milk are prescribed to the cardholder. Specifically, whole, low fat (2%, 1% and skim), soy, lactose free and lactose reduced milk are all



allowed, but each must be specifically prescribed as part of the cardholder's benefits. Please note that in some cases, the eWIC benefit description for lactose free milk does not fully capture what has been issued in regards to the fat content, i.e., whole or low fat milk. A limited number of characters are available when a balance inquiry receipt is printed. Due to this space limitation on the receipt, this may be an area of confusion among participants and cashiers. So if a participant attempts to purchase lactose free milk and the Universal Product Code (UPC) is not recognized as part of the cardholder's benefit package, you may want to check that the cardholder has the right type of milk (i.e., whole versus reduced fat).

## New eWIC Cashier Handbook

A new cashier handbook is in final stages of printing and will be sent to each store, along with the new Retailer Manual. Once received, these documents must be kept in your WIC Program binder and the previous version

discarded. The current versions of the Approved Food List and Formula Flyer should also be kept in the WIC Program binder, as these documents are not changing at this time.

## New eWIC Cardholder DVD

The eWIC Cardholder DVD provides an overview of important topics and concepts that will assist current participants and WIC staff in the successful transition and implementation of the eWIC Electronic Benefits Transfer (EBT) system, also referred to as "eWIC." All participants will view the DVD prior to using their eWIC card at eWIC enabled stores.

The eWIC Cardholder DVD is intended for participants, potential participants, local agency staff, and the general public and will be available on YouTube, in WIC clinics, and on our VDH website. This DVD consists of 4 modules:

- A. eWIC Basics;
- B. Keeping Your eWIC Benefit Card Safe;
- C. Using Your eWIC Benefit Card, and;
- D. Common eWIC Questions.

The DVD also gives useful nutrition tips to participants which can be used to expand discussions on healthy eating habits. As a retailer, you should be aware that this resource is made available to participants in case they come to you with questions regarding the functionality of their eWIC benefit card and purchases. It may also be used as an additional training for retailer staff, as Module C addresses conducting an eWIC transaction in an authorized store, food benefit balances, and check out processes for the participant.

The DVD can be viewed online from our "For Participants" webpage using the QR code below.



eWIC Cardholder DVD (English or Spanish):

[www.vahealth.org/DCN/General%20Info/EBT/participant.htm](http://www.vahealth.org/DCN/General%20Info/EBT/participant.htm)

## Cashier Tips and Reminders

- Process items being purchased using the eWIC Benefits card first, before processing other forms of tender (cash, credit, debit or SNAP).
- For fresh fruits and vegetables that do not have a Product Look Up (PLU), enter the generic PLU Code "44691" (unless your management gives you other instructions).
- Never manually enter a eWIC cardholder's personal account number (PAN).
- Sales tax is never charged on foods purchased using eWIC benefits.
- Do not use the multiplier key in order to prevent over charges.
- Refunds are never allowed. Items cannot be put back on eWIC cards.



# It's New - WIC Program Retailer Manual

A new Virginia WIC Program Retailer Manual will be made available to retailers after the eWIC rollout has been completed. Each retailer will receive one printed copy of the Retailer Manual and should also use the WIC Program's website to access other important administrative guidance available to retailers. Program forms used by retailers will

only be available online; these standard forms have been extracted from the retailer manual for improved navigation and include instructions for further clarification. The electronic availability of these resources will make it easier for retailers to implement updates as they become effective.

## Advantages of APL Central

Approved Product List (APL) Central is a direct UPC search and update request tool available to retailers. Using this resource, retailers can quickly submit UPCs to the State WIC Office to be considered for addition to the APL. Once a submission is sent, the retailer should then follow up with an email to [WIC\\_Retailer@vdh.virginia.gov](mailto:WIC_Retailer@vdh.virginia.gov). In the email note be sure

to include: photograph(s) of the product listed that includes manufacturer, product description, UPC and ingredients. Submissions will be reviewed for program compliance and added to the APL if approved. Starting in July 2014, the submitter will be notified via email whether the submitted UPC was approved or denied.

## New eWIC Store Decals

All retail stores that can accept eWIC Benefits Cards should display the new "eWIC Cards Accepted Here" window decal.

If you do not have a new decal, please contact the Xerox Retailer Help Desk to request one.

## Supply Requests

**\*Friendly Reminder\*** When a Supply Request form is submitted, please make sure that your store name, store address, and WIC ID are included; otherwise we will be

unable to mail you your requested information. The latest version of the Retailer Supply Request form is available from our "Training & Resources" web page or directly at:



**Retailer Supply Request Form:**

[www.vahealth.org/DCN/Vendor/Files/PDFs/Q-RetailerSupplyRequestFormAug2012.pdf](http://www.vahealth.org/DCN/Vendor/Files/PDFs/Q-RetailerSupplyRequestFormAug2012.pdf)

## eWIC Implementation Survey

A brief online survey is now available to help the WIC Program capture retailers' opinions on the state-wide eWIC roll-out process used. Please take a few moments to complete the

survey at the link below. Please give the WIC Program your thoughts and feedback by July 15, 2014.



**Virginia eWIC Rollout Survey**

[www.surveygizmo.com/s3/1549686/Virginia-eWIC-Rollout](http://www.surveygizmo.com/s3/1549686/Virginia-eWIC-Rollout)

## Correction

An incorrect Universal Product Code (UPC) was printed in the "Minimum Stocking Requirement" article found on page 4 of the February 2014 edition of the Working With WIC Retailer

Bulletin. The correct UPC for Similac Advance Concentrate formula is 0 70074 57536 0.



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## Important Links and Numbers

Training & Resources:



Click on QR Code for information

For Participants:



Click on QR Code for information

Xerox Retailer Help Desk:

**877-436-6057**

Vendor Liaison:

**804-864-7800** and ask to speak to a Vendor Liaison