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Virginia WIC Retailer Bulletin

1 message

Virginia Department of Health | Wic Retailers <alex.acharya@vdh.virginia.gov>
Reply-To: Virginia Department of Health | Wic Retailers <alex.acharya@vdh.virginia.gov>
To: Allan.Astley@vdh.virginia.gov

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Virginia WIC Retailer Bulletin | November 2018

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[About Our New Director](#)

On September 25, 2018, Paula Garrett was promoted to Director of the Division of Community Nutrition.

Paula had been Acting Division Director and will continue to work closely with Community Health Services and the local health districts providing leadership to both the Women, Infants and Children (WIC) and the Child and Adult Care Food Programs (CACFP).

Earlier in her career, Paula served as a WIC Nutrition Liaison, conducting compliance reviews of local WIC agencies. She also spent time as a WIC Nutritionist Assistant in Chickahominy Health District. Paula began her career as a nutritionist intern with USDA, developing training manuals for CACFP. She is a registered dietician and received her MS from Virginia State University and BS from Hampton University.

Paula is a 2015 graduate of Leadership Metro Richmond and is an active member of the National Hampton Alumni Association. In addition to duties as Acting Division Director, Paula will continue to serve as the WIC Program Manager until the position is filled.

[Annual Training Update](#)

All of our authorized stores completed mandatory training on time, and the Virginia WIC program has been reported to USDA as being fully compliant. Thank you for your support for another year.

[Food Application Contact Form](#)

The [Online Food Application Contact Webform](#) is now available for food manufacturers and distributors to submit contact information to the Virginia WIC Program. The information collected will be used to announce the upcoming new food application period and other important announcements. Food manufacturers/distributors shall use this online form to submit their new contacts or any updates to the Virginia WIC Program.

[Approved Product List Downloadable Spread Sheet](#)

Retailers can download a current Virginia WIC Program Approved Product List (APL), which is updated daily on our web site. You may use this link to go directly to the APL file:

<http://www.vdh.virginia.gov/content/uploads/sites/44/2017/02/VAAPL.xlsx>

The Virginia WIC APL is an Excel® spreadsheet and contains all 13,000+ WIC allowed items. The product information is made available so store owners, employees, manufactures and wholesalers can perform visual research of the Virginia WIC approved foods and formula. Key information in the APL spreadsheet include 12-digit UPC, Product, Category, Subcategory Descriptions, Unit of Measure (UOM), Quantity and Size.

Please download this file and use it if you have questions about whether an item is WIC eligible.

[New Store Application Web Form](#)

Due to the demise of the Retail Store Management System in late July 2018, a **temporary** Web Form was created to allow new retailers to apply for WIC until the new Crossroads Vendor Portal is delivered in Spring of 2019. Because this application is a Web Form and not an automated system, it is lacking many of the edit and validation features of the old system, providing only the minimum essential features needed to initiate a store application. Please bear with us until the new Vendor Portal is available. The [New Store Application Webform](#) is also available from our Become a WIC Retailer page.

[Formula Audits](#)

Thirty-eight stores were chosen for a WIC Inventory Audit. The audits involved physical inventory counts

and review of purchase invoices for the selected audit items. All audits were completed prior to September 30, 2018. Thirty-two of the stores audited passed their audits. The remaining six stores failed their audit due to incomplete purchase records.

All 38 stores should have received a certified letter containing their audit results. Stores that did not pass their audit received information regarding any sanctions that were levied due to the audit findings. If your store was audited and has not received a letter, please contact Robert Altermatt (Robert.Altermatt@vdh.Virginia.gov).

[Adding New UPCs and Removing Old UPCs](#)

The Virginia WIC Program maintains an Approved Product List (APL) that contains a comprehensive list of WIC authorized food items by the individual UPC code. WIC Retailers and food manufactures/suppliers are required to notify the Virginia WIC Program of any changes in UPCs or product information in a timely manner so that the APL file can be updated as required.

WIC retailers and food manufacturers/suppliers must use the UPC Update Request Form to submit requests to add new UPCs or remove old UPCs that are no longer available for WIC participants. The [UPC Update Request form](#) and [instructions](#) can also be found on our Resources webpage:

When submitting the form, the following information must be included: product labels/images showing brand name, UPC, ingredient list, package size and the 12-digit UPC including a last check digit. Please submit the completed Form and supporting documents to Brian Tun (brian.tun@vdh.virginia.gov).

Please note that all submissions must be WIC-approved foods identified in the current WIC Approved Food List or Infant Formula Flyer. The UPC Update Request Form may not be used for new food requests that are not approved in the current WIC Approved Food List or Formula Flyer.

[What to do When Things Go Wrong...Incident Reporting](#)

We encourage authorized retailers to report any *incidents/problems (related to eWIC cardholders), by completing the [Retailer Incident/Complaint form WIC #387](#) and [instructions](#) which are downloadable from our [Resources](#) webpage. Keeping us informed of these incidents as they happen allows us to address them in a timely manner and perhaps reduce repeat occurrences.

Incidents to report include whenever a WIC Participant:

- tried to purchase ineligible food items with eWIC food benefits. Include in your complaint the details, e.g. brands, food items, and particular any UPCs.*
- returned or tried to return WIC food items for ineligible exchange, store credit, or cash.

- tried to purchase excess Cash Value Benefits, and/or did not understand the additional payment requirement.
- did not understand how to use eWIC benefit card (e.g., PIN, eligible or available food items, spend dates, etc.).
- was abusive and/or rude to store personnel while redeeming eWIC food benefits.

The Vendor Liaison assigned to the store location will process the complaint and may follow-up with you or your staff for additional details to help with providing the resolution and/or corrective action needed.

The WIC Program strives to ensure that complaints are resolved in a manner that improves the services provided to all participants and supports our retailers.

For incidents of a more serious or urgent nature, and to ensure prompt customer service, please call your assigned WIC Vendor Liaison or the State WIC Office at 804-864-7800.

*Note -- Problems with Universal Product Codes (UPC) not scanning should be submitted using [UPC Update Form](#) also available on the Resources webpage.

[Cashier Training Video Update](#)

The 2018 Cashier Training Video has been updated to reflect the 2018 Food List and is now available! This video is a great tool to assist in training cashiers on the WIC program. To order your video as either MP4 files on a USB drive, or a playable DVD, complete the [Retailer Supply Request Webform](#). For immediate access to the YouTube version of these videos, use the links under the "Training" section of the [WIC "Resources" webpage](#). Please contact Jennifer Trower(Jennifer.Trower@vdh.virginia.gov) if you have any questions.

[Website Improvements Coming Soon](#)

Overdue updates to our Retailer Website are coming soon! This will include a more organized "resources" page so you should be able to find forms and requirements more easily. We are also realigning the site to be more useful to retailers who are thinking of applying, including the main requirements of WIC and how to prepare for the preauthorization visit. You are already an authorized retailer, so we would like your feedback on this site once it becomes available. Would it have helped you when you were thinking of applying? What did we miss? We will send out a notification when it is available so you can give us your feedback. Please contact Amy Romero (amy.romero@vdh.virginia.gov) if you have any questions.

[Store Issues - We Need Your Help](#)

We hear from many stores that participants do not always know what foods to look for. Thank you for helping them. The WIC Approved Food List is the best resource and we encourage you to share them

with your WIC customers. If your supply runs low, additional copies can be ordered using the online [Retailer Supply Request Webform](#).

We are putting together a FAQ-style sheet for participants to help them with the most common issues shoppers have. This is where you come in. Please email WIC_retailer@vdh.virginia.gov and let us know some of the most common questions your WIC shoppers have. While you are emailing us, please also let us know anything else that you would like us to know regarding WIC participants and their shopping. If you have ideas about how to make the program better in any other way, tell us that too!

[Next Retailer Advisory Meeting](#)

The next Retailer Advisory eMeeting is scheduled for Thursday, January 17, 2019 at 1:30 PM (1:20 PM Roll Call). Invitations are being sent via email, but if you did not get one and want to be added to our invitation list, please send an email request to WIC_Retailer@vdh.virginia.gov. The meetings are scheduled quarterly and generally last less than an hour (sometimes less than 30 minutes), and provide an opportunity for State WIC employees to have two-way, direct communication with our Retailer customers. Minutes from previous meetings are available at the top of our [WIC "Resources" webpage](#).

[Important Links](#)

- [WIC Homepage](#)
- [WIC Retailer Homepage](#)
- [WIC Retailer Resources](#)
- [2018 Approved Food List](#)
- [2018 Approved Product List At A Glance](#)
- [Current Approved Product List](#)
- [Contact Us \(list of assigned Vendor Liaisons\)](#)
- [Commonwealth of Virginia WIC Regulations](#)
- Retailer Incident/Complaint form WIC #387
 - [Instructions](#)
 - [Form](#)
- Retailer Supply Request Form
 - [Web Form](#)
 - [Paper Form](#)
- UPC Update Form
 - [Instructions](#)
 - [Form](#)

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Our mailing address is:
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Division of Community Nutrition | WIC

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- (1) mail: U.S. Department of Agriculture
Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights
[1400 Independence Avenue, SW](#)
Washington, D.C. 20250-9410;
- (2) fax: (202) 690-7442; or
- (3) email: program.intake@usda.gov.

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