

Retailer Advisory Meeting Minutes

Date: October 17, 2019

Time: 2:00 PM

Location: Conference call/Room 817, VDH

Attendees: Paula Garrett, Alex Acharya, Megan Nason, Bob Altermatt, Jennifer Trower, Brian Tun, and Amy Romero. Stores represented on the call: Albertsons, Americana, Megamart, Damon, Food Lion, Ingles, K-VA-T, Reid's Supermarket, Price Less Foods, Harris Teeter, Wal-Mart, Wegmans, and Weis.

Facilitator and Recorder: Amy Romero

- The meeting began at 2:00pm
- Paula Garrett (WIC Director) provided an update for the WIC division
 - Budget outlook: WIC is funded via a continuing resolution into November. The deadline for a budget is November 21.
 - The WIC program increased the number of participants by 3500 simply by looking at best practices. There should be a greater up-tick with the process improvement connection and collaboration with SNAP.
 - We have a partnership with Benefits Data Trust (BDT) and the Department of Social Services for a pilot program. Anyone that is a participant with SNAP is being cross referenced against our participants and those participants are contacted encouraging them to apply for WIC. Increasing participation will help increase sales at retailers.
 - Another partnership with social services includes a system to provide an opportunity to apply for other programs when applying for another program such as SNAP, TANF, and Medicaid.
- Megan Nason (Acting WIC Program Manager) provided an update for the WIC Program
 - The food list for 2020 is on schedule. We still expect to go to print in early 2020, and mail to retailers in the spring of 2020. It will look very similar to the 2018 food list, just with minor updates as well as a color change for the cover to make it easier to determine the current one for retailers. Future size changes may be coming, but it's not been decided yet.
 - Questions or concerns about the food list can be sent to Megan: Megan.nason@vdh.virginia.gov
- Miscellaneous (open to all)
 - Do you currently use the cashier handbook? We're about to revise it, so we want to hear from you about how you use it, what you think it should be, and anything else that can help us ensure it's a useful tool. Email Alex with thoughts: alex.acharya@vdh.virginia.gov

- Alex Acharya, (WIC Vendor Compliance Manager) provided an update for the vendor team
 - The annual training went well, and the vendor team thanks you for your assistance in getting it completed in a timely manner.
 - Upcoming training in early 2020 includes train the trainer and reauthorization training. Details will be coming. The vendor team is open to hearing ideas for ensuring reauthorization training is as efficient for store personnel as possible. As a reminder, the federal requirement is that the training be “interactive”. All stores must have a representative for an interactive training. It was suggested we rely on live webinars or possibly include a blog option, but we want to hear any other ideas you may have.
 - Technology is an area we want to hear from retailers about. Aside from the new participant shopping app coming soon, what other technology have you seen or heard about that may help us, (or you!) in relation to the WIC program?
- Benefits: Updates on increased participation
- Concerns: Ongoing budget concerns
- **The Date for the Next Meeting is January 23, 2020 at 2:00pm**