

# Retailer Advisory Meeting Minutes

**Date: October 22, 2020**

**Time: 2:00 PM**

**Location: Conference call**

Attendees: Paula Garrett, Megan Nason, Alex Acharya, Bob Altermatt, Brian Tun, Jennifer Trower, and Amy Romero. Stores represented on the call: Ahold, DECA, Food Lion, Giant, Global Foods, Harris Teeter, Ingles, Lowes, Martins, Publix, Reid's, Todos, Weis, and Wegmans. Virginia Retail Federation and MDI was also on the call.

Facilitator: Amy Romero

Recorder: Bob Altermatt

- The meeting began at 2:00pm
- **Paula Garrett** (WIC Director) provided an update for the WIC division
  - Waivers are extended into the new fiscal year.
  - Funding will remain level to slightly higher as our participation has increased. Expect continuing resolution to remain in place post-election.
  - Studies in progress regarding online shopping for WIC participants, recommendations due 9/2021.
- **Megan Nason** (Program Manager) provided an update for the program
  - WIC program is continuing remote services through February 20, 2021.
  - Participant survey results show good experiences overall with shopping. They also show that the app will be useful to participants. More survey results and details will be included in future communications.
- **Alex Acharya** (WIC Vendor Compliance Manager) provided an update for the vendor team
  - 2020 Reauthorization: All steps are complete and signed agreements have been sent to retailers. Reauthorization survey results were largely positive. Please send any feedback regarding training or the process so we can consider for next time. One major chain said that the video file was too large to download for offline use.
  - Call for bulletin topics. If you have any topics you'd like us to cover in the upcoming bulletin, please let us know.
  - Any POS issues, retailers are welcome to call us, but they will receive faster help directly from the POS provider. For stand beside units, call Conduent help desk at
- **Miscellaneous**, open to all
  - A large retailer suggested a partnership with the WIC program to help provide participants nutrition information and dietary foods assistance. Alex will follow up to see what this would entail and if it is possible.
  - Email us at [WIC\\_retailer@vdh.virginia.gov](mailto:WIC_retailer@vdh.virginia.gov) if you have any questions you didn't get to ask – or if you need to be added to our email list to receive information about the RAM calls in the future.
  - Remember the retailer webpage is here: [www.virginiawicretailers.com](http://www.virginiawicretailers.com)
- **The Date for the Next Meeting is January 21, 2021 at 2:00pm**

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### Temporary Eggs Waiver Due to COVID-19

Due to the COVID-19 crisis, eggs have been reported to be one of the most difficult to locate at the grocery stores. USDA has given us the green light to allow additional sizes of eggs at this time. We will allow one dozen medium, large, extra-large and jumbo sizes of white or brown, regular or organic eggs to be temporarily added until further notice.

**BUY:**

- Medium, Large, Extra-Large or Jumbo size eggs
- White or Brown
- Regular or Organic

**DON'T BUY:**

- Cage Free
- Free Range
- Fat/Cholesterol Altering Eggs (Eggland's Best)

Complete an [UPC Request Form](#) and submit your new item to [brian.tun@vdh.virginia.gov](mailto:brian.tun@vdh.virginia.gov) along with a product image attached.

### Temporary Milk Waiver Due to COVID-19

The Virginia WIC Program has learned that a significant number of WIC retailers are having trouble in maintaining certain inventory of WIC eligible milk products for participants due to the COVID-19 crisis. As a result, USDA has approved the temporary waiver for milk products.

If the prescribed milk product is unavailable for purchase, WIC participants can buy other milk products as shown below:

- If WIC participants are prescribed Whole Milk, retailers are allowed to sell regular, lactose-free whole milk or UHT whole
- If WIC participants are prescribed Low-Fat/Fat-Free Milk, retailers are allowed to sell skim (fat free), 1%, 2% regular, lactose-free or UHT milk.

This temporary milk waiver is effective March 31, 2020 until further notice. Store cashiers should scan all milk items first to see if they can go through instead of telling a WIC participant that they are not WIC approved.

No additional UPC submissions are required at this time. Should you have any questions, please email: [brian.tun@vdh.virginia.gov](mailto:brian.tun@vdh.virginia.gov).