

# Retailer Advisory Meeting Minutes

**Date: April 21, 2022**

**Time: 2:00 PM**

**Location: Conference call**

State WIC Office Attendees: Paula Garrett, Megan Nason, Alex Acharya, Brian Tun, Jennifer Trower, and Amy Romero.

Facilitator: Amy Romero

Recorder: Jennifer Trower

- The meeting began at 2:00pm
- **Paula Garrett** (WIC Director) provided an update for the WIC Division
  - Dr. Colin Greene was officially appointed as the state health commissioner
  - Participation is 10% over pre-pandemic numbers; 120,000-122,000 for the last 2.5 years
  - The federal budget has been approved, we are awaiting the regional allocation
  - The public health emergency declaration was extended through Oct 14, which means current waivers continue through that date. This includes participants not coming to the clinics in person
    - WIC Shopper app is expected to be released early summer (end of June/beginning of July)
    - Budget includes CVB increase (fresh, froze, and canned fruits and vegetables). The increase is to \$24/mo for children, \$43/mo for pregnant and postpartum women, and \$47/mo for breastfeeding women
- **Megan Nason** (Program Manager) provided an update for the program
  - The extended waivers also include the milk and egg waivers
  - Abbott formula recall:
    - Sturgis still not open so there will be reduced production for some time
    - We recently expanded the allowable substitutions (additional can sizes, etc). The new list is available here: <https://www.vdh.virginia.gov/content/uploads/sites/42/2022/04/VA-WIC-Formula-Subs-April-2022.pdf>
    - Check [www.virginiawic.com](http://www.virginiawic.com) anytime to find the most up to date information
    - Substitutions will be available at least until May 31
    - The participants' prescription will still say the original formula, but the system is set up to allow any of the correct substitutes, so please try to process any formula that the participant brings to the register. Do not deny based on what their printout shows.
  - The new food list is under review and wrapping up this week. We will send to print right after, but there are delays in supplies and productions, so we believe it will be late spring or early summer when they are finished. Electronic versions will be available as always. Once we set an "effective as of" date, we will send to retailers
    - Questions from the call:
      - Will participants receive information about substitutes? Yes, they will receive the new update ASAP to replace what they already received
      - Will the system flag if an item will not work as a substitute? Yes
- **Alex Acharya** (Vendor Team Manager) provided an update for the vendor team
  - Emphasized the need to train cashiers to always scan any item before denying, even if you believe it is not WIC approved. Let the APL which is updated daily do the work for you

- WIC customers must be treated the same; so if you do not require a receipt for the formula recall exchanges for other customers, this must be the same for WIC customers, for example
- Regarding CVB mentioned earlier, even though this is called “Cash value benefits” no cash is ever exchanged or refunded for WIC. This is just a maximum dollar amount allowed on their card
- Reminder to use [www.virginiawicretailers.com](http://www.virginiawicretailers.com) to find updates about any news in the notices/updates section as well as your usual resources such as the food list, supply orders, etc
  
- **Miscellaneous**, open to all
  - Questions from the call:
    - Can retailers use the app to scan items? We have this question in to the developer awaiting an answer
    - Where can we find the list of formula substitutions? [www.virginiawic.com](http://www.virginiawic.com)
    - How do we submit a food item for addition to the approved list? Email Brian Tun – [brian.tun@vdh.virginia.gov](mailto:brian.tun@vdh.virginia.gov)
  
- **The Date for the Next Meeting is July 21, 2022 at 2:00pm**