



Virginia WIC Retailer Advisory Meeting Minutes

Date: July 20, 2023

Time: 2:00 PM

Location: webex

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

Facilitator: Amy Romero

Recorder: Jennifer Trower

- The meeting began at 2:00pm
- **Paula Garrett** (Division Director) provided an update for the Division
 - Local Agency clinics fully reopening August 10, 2023
 - There have been significant changes in the cost of food along with an increase of participants, we had to ask USDA for additional food funds
 - Thank you to the retailers for ensuring participants continue to have access
- **Megan Nason** (Program Manager) provided an update for the WIC Program
 - **Participant Survey:** The annual participant survey has opened and Virginia WIC is participating in a multi-state approach this year. The survey will be live from July 5, 2023 through September 5, 2023 and will be provided through an online platform. Participants will be asked questions on a variety of topics including the WIC shopping experience. After the survey closes, data will be analyzed by an outside vendor and compared with other WIC state agencies
 - **Reopening:** The August deadline for reopening is quickly approaching and we are excited to welcome back our participants to in-person services
 - **Waivers:** COVID-19 related waivers will be expiring on August 9, 2023. As of August 10, 2023: participants will no longer be able to purchase the certain egg and milk options
 - **Organic eggs will no longer be allowed.** (Please refer to the Virginia WIC Food List 2022 for currently approved egg options.)
 - **Milk substitutions will no longer be allowed. The following updates will be required for milk prescriptions:**
 - 2% milk will only be allowed for participants with an approved WIC-395 from a healthcare provider who are also receiving a formula/nutritional from WIC
 - UHT milk will only be allowed for participants who are issued the convenience food package.

- **Food List 2024:** Food applications have closed for the next Virginia WIC Food List and the project is on track for release in spring of 2024 (with the addition of an updated formula flyer). Additionally, the WIC mobile app has made progress with the security update work with anticipated release of fall 2023
- **Alex Acharya** (Vendor Team Manager) provided an update for the vendor team
 - Fraud alert – we were made aware of a scam where a cardholder says they have a ‘cash card’ and asks the cashier to use the cash button and disperse cash and they will be reimbursed. This is not allowed; remember no cash ever goes from the WIC program to a participant
 - Let us know of additional emails any store would like to add for WIC communications
 - VA WIC is in the middle of 2023 reauthorization which happens every 3 years. Thank all retailers for their assistance
 - The next step is the retailer agreement which will be released shortly
 - There is a make-up session for independent stores (without WIC trainers) on July 26, 2023
 - We are conducting monitoring visits, but will resume monitoring with possible administrative action August 10, 2023
 - Reminder to please review WIC shelf labels and reach out to WIC state staff for assistance.
- The Date for the next meeting is October 19, 2023 at 2:00pm