

Virginia WIC Retailer Advisory Meeting Minutes

Date: April 16, 2026

Time: 2:00 PM EST

Location: Webex

State WIC Office Attendees: Paula Garrett, Ernest Flemings, Bob Altermatt, Brian Tun, Jennifer Trower, Ephraim Ewing

Facilitator: Amy Romero

- The meeting started at 2:00pm

Paula Garrett (Program Director) provided an update for the Division and WIC program

- The administration is proposing reduced funding for CVB (fruits and vegetables) but the NWA (National WIC Association) has been mobilizing and working on senator and congressional communications
- The Food list and food package have been delayed until around summer due to being in negotiations with a new contractor holder for eWIC transactions.
 - New food package will include more culturally diverse foods
- The shopping app has been approved and as a reminder will include the ability to scan items to determine eligibility, balance inquiries, and GPS locators for stores and local WIC agencies

Bob Altermatt (Vendor Team Manager) provided an update for the vendor team

- Delay on food list means delay on minimum stocking requirement changes. After they do take effect, there will be a several month grace period when we are out for compliance visits
- Reauthorization training will be later this year; reminder that new agreements need to be signed and training is required. Certified Corporate Trainers are required to conduct the training and sign off that training was completed by each store. WIC will provide the spreadsheets to record the information for large chain stores.
- Train the Trainer Workshop with Ephraim will be on May 20 & May 21, deadline to enroll is Monday April 20. Larger retailers who have their own trainers certified will be able to train their stores for reauthorization
- We've received complaints about stores saying they will not or are unable to provide account balance information to WIC participants. All POS systems can provide WIC account balance information (aka Balance Inquiry). Please make sure staff are properly trained to do a balance inquiry.

Miscellaneous

- We will provide training and resources regarding the new food list and minimum stocking requirement changes
- We understand that all the new foods coming onboard will mean a lot of work at the store level regarding labeling. We'll be sure to send out a list of all new UPCs as soon as it's available
- With the new foods coming on and being taken off, it will be important to SCAN all items instead of assuming an item is not WIC. There will be unusual items that will work! Ensure all cashiers scan every item and never decide on eligibility by just looking at it

The Date for the next meeting is July 16, 2026 at 2:00pm EST.