

Section 5.2: Certification Procedures

Certification Procedures

5/2023

References: 7CFR 246.7, 246.12

Policy: Staff must follow prescribed procedures during the certification process.

Purpose: To accurately assess and enroll all eligible applicants for WIC services.

Procedures

1. Maintain Separation of Duties in the certification process.
 - One employee cannot determine both income eligibility and medical/nutrition risk in the certification process for the same participant. See [Section 1.18: Separation of Duties to Assure Program Integrity](#).
 - WIC staff shall not complete any part of the certification or issue food benefits to oneself, one's children or grandchildren, relatives or close friends. See [Section 1.19: Avoid Conflict of Interest to Assure Program Integrity](#).
2. At the certification appointment, the CPA must assess the applicant's eligibility in each of the following areas:
 - Category (Woman, Infant, Child)
 - Minnesota residency
 - Identity
 - Income
 - Health and nutritional risk
3. When the applicant is determined to meet the category, residency, identity and income requirements at certification, the CPA must:
 - Obtain anthropometric measurements and bloodwork as required.
 - Provide a health and nutrition assessment.
 - Provide nutrition education appropriate to the participant's nutritional need and interests.

SECTION 5.2 CERTIFICATION PROCEDURES

- Discuss available food choices with the participant/parent/guardian (PPG) and determine an appropriate food prescription based on nutrition needs and preferences.
 - Provide referrals as appropriate.
 - Sign the signature pad as confirmation that the participant was determined eligible.
4. The CPA or other appropriate staff must:
- Review the [Rights & Responsibilities](#) with the participant and obtain a signature from the participant to acknowledge agreement. See Guidance for signature options.
 - Issue food benefits as designated by the CPA.
 - Explain the food benefits and how to shop for WIC foods (see [Section 7.2: Allowed WIC Foods](#)).
 - Assure that participants have the following information, which may be provided as written materials or by demonstrating how to access them through electronic means, such as with the WIC app:
 - Welcome to WIC Handbook ([Exhibit 5-FF](#))
 - [WIC Shopping Guide](#)
 - List of WIC approved vendors in their area. Refer to the [WIC Grocery Stores](#) search function to identify vendors
 - How to use the MN WIC app
5. A proxy may stand in for the participant/parent/guardian (PPG) at a certification, if the PPG is not able to be present.
- By designating the proxy to represent them and sending the proxy to the WIC clinic in his/her place, the PPG has given implied consent for WIC staff to share information with the proxy as appropriate for the type of appointment or interaction being conducted.
 - The PPG may designate up to two proxies to represent them at the WIC clinic.
 - The proxy must be a competent person, at least 16 years old.
 - See [Section 8.3: Issuing WIC Cards](#) for information about proxies and the WIC Card.
6. All information about the participant is private data. A signed release from the participant, or a court order, is required to release information to anyone other than the parent/participant/guardian. See [Section 1.7: Data Privacy](#) for more information.

Guidance

One document can be used as proof for multiple areas of eligibility including identity, residency, and income. For example, a current pay stub or Phone/Online Medical Assistance verification could potentially serve as proof of identity, income, and residency if it includes all those areas and is up-to-date.

SECTION 5.2 CERTIFICATION PROCEDURES

If staff are unable to collect a participant signature at the certification on the signature pad, use one of the following options to obtain the signature. Scan the form into the Information System:

- Obtain an electronic signature using the [Participant Signature Form](#) or by another electronic signature platform such as DocuSign.
- Use the Exhibit 5-B: Registers for Manual Signatures.

Manual Certification Forms

Manual Certification forms can be used to record information required to complete a certification when the Information System is unavailable, for example during a power failure or internet outage. Manual Certification forms include:

- [Exhibit 5-II1 Manual Certification – Infants and Children](#)
- [Exhibit 5-II2 Manual Certification - Women](#)
- [Exhibit 5-II3 Manual Certification – Proof of Eligibility](#)

Completed forms include private data and must be secured. Once Information System access is restored, enter the certification information as soon as possible so the participant can access their benefits. Manual Certification forms need to be immediately disposed of in a confidential manner.

- Refer to [Section 1.17: Emergency Actions](#) for considerations during an emergency, such as a prolonged power outage.

Reference – Complete Listing of Hyperlinks

[Section 1.18: Separation of Duties to Assure Program Integrity](#)

(https://www.health.state.mn.us/docs/people/wic/localagency/program/mom/chsctns/ch1/sctn1_18.pdf)

[Section 1.19: Avoid Conflict of Interested to Assure Program Integrity](#)

(https://www.health.state.mn.us/docs/people/wic/localagency/program/mom/chsctns/ch1/sctn1_19.pdf)

[Rights & Responsibilities](#) (<https://www.health.state.mn.us/people/wic/rights.html>)

[Section 7.2: Allowed WIC Foods](#)

(https://www.health.state.mn.us/docs/people/wic/localagency/program/mom/chsctns/ch7/sctn7_2.pdf)

[Exhibit 5-FF](#) (<https://www.health.state.mn.us/docs/people/wic/ewic/welcometowic.pdf>)

[WIC Shopping Guide](#)

(<http://www.health.state.mn.us/docs/people/wic/vendor/fpchng/shopguide.pdf>)

[WIC Grocery Stores](#) (<https://www.health.state.mn.us/forms/cfh/wicstores/>)

SECTION 5.2 CERTIFICATION PROCEDURES

Section 8.3: Issuing WIC Cards

(https://www.health.state.mn.us/docs/people/wic/localagency/program/mom/chsctns/ch8/sctn8_3.pdf)

Section 1.7: Data Privacy

(https://www.health.state.mn.us/docs/people/wic/localagency/program/mom/chsctns/ch1/sctn1_7.pdf)

Participant Signature Form (<https://redcap.health.state.mn.us/redcap/surveys/?s=TD4P4PEJPT>)

5-B Registers for Manual Signatures (WORD)

(www.health.state.mn.us/docs/people/wic/localagency/program/mom/exhbts/ex5/5b.docx)

Exhibit 5-II1 Manual Certification – Infants and Children

(<https://www.health.state.mn.us/docs/people/wic/localagency/program/mom/exhbts/ex5/5ii1.pdf>)

Exhibit 5-II2 Manual Certification - Women

(<https://www.health.state.mn.us/docs/people/wic/localagency/program/mom/exhbts/ex5/5ii2.pdf>)

Exhibit 5-II3 Manual Certification – Proof of Eligibility

(<https://www.health.state.mn.us/docs/people/wic/localagency/program/mom/exhbts/ex5/5ii3.pdf>)

Section 1.17: Emergency Actions

(https://www.health.state.mn.us/docs/people/wic/localagency/program/mom/chsctns/ch1/sctn1_17.pdf)

Minnesota Department of Health - WIC Program 625 Robert St N, PO BOX 64975, ST PAUL MN 55164-0975; 1-800-657-3942, health.wic@state.mn.us, www.health.state.mn.us. To obtain this information in a different format, call: 1-800-657-3942.

This institution is an equal opportunity provider.