

## 1100. Purpose of Vendor Training

All vendor training is designed to provide information on the WIC Program, prevent vendor errors and noncompliance, and to improve Program service. All vendors must attend mandatory training prior to initial authorization and mandatory annual interactive training sessions during the 3-year authorization period. The State Agency will also schedule corrective action training for noncompliant or problematic authorized vendors on an as-needed basis and offers technical assistance to supplement formal training opportunities

### What are the State Agency's Responsibilities?

- Provide interactive training prior to a vendor's authorization ("pre-authorization training")
- Designate the date, time, and location of the interactive trainings and the audience (managers, cashiers, etc.) for whom the training is directed
- Document the content of and vendor participation in all forms of vendor training
- Provide vendors with at least one alternative date on which to attend interactive trainings
- Provide Annual Training to at least one representative of each vendor
- Determine the method of vendor training used, regardless of reason for training
- Terminate any vendor that does not attend training, as scheduled

### What are the Vendor's Responsibilities?

- Attend vendor trainings, as scheduled by the State Agency
- Train cashiers and other staff on Program requirements

DC WIC employs a "train the trainer" model. Every authorized vendor is required to designate at least one person to serve as the designated trainer. The designated trainer shall train all cashiers and other staff involved with WIC transactions on Program requirements. The vendor or its designated trainer will promptly inform employees of changes in the WIC Program, including changes to the Authorized Foods List.

### How does the State Agency Document the Content of and Vendor Participation in Vendor Trainings?

All vendors are required to sign in during in-person trainings, attendance will be taken for virtual trainings, and all vendor training materials will be posted to the DC WIC website [www.dcwic.org](http://www.dcwic.org) under Vendors > Trainings for reference.

### What are Acceptable Methods of Training?

Examples of acceptable methods of vendor training include:

- Off-site classroom-style train the trainer or manager training
- On-site cashier training
- Training videos
- Training newsletters
- Virtual web-conference style trainings

See table 11.1, below, for a quick reference on State Agency verse Vendor training responsibilities.

### 1101. Pre-Authorization Training for New Stores

The State Agency will meet with the representatives responsible for managing a store's operations no earlier than two (2) weeks prior to the store's authorization date. Topics covered during authorization training include:

- Description of the WIC Program
- Review of respective vendor and State Agency responsibilities
- Information on currently approved DC WIC food items
- Minimum Stocking Requirements
- Explanation of procedures for processing CVCs and WIC checks
- Review of vendor monitoring visits and procedures
- Explanation of vendor violations
- Explanation of the vendor sanction system
- Explanation of fair hearing procedures
- The authorized list of infant formula distributors, retailers, and wholesalers for obtaining WIC infant formula
- Policy regarding use of incentive items
- Check revalidation procedures
- Vendor complaint process

At the time of pre-authorization training, the State Agency will provide access to the following:

- DC WIC Vendor Manual (will be emailed to the store manager)
- DC WIC Formula Guide
- Accompanying quizzes (See section 1104)

The State Agency will conduct follow-up trainings every six months (twice) during the first year of operations for a newly authorized vendor. Trainings will address problems that have been identified or areas in which a new vendor desires further instruction or clarification.

### 1102. Training of Currently Authorized Vendors:

On-site training and technical assistance for vendors and cashiers is provided during vendor monitoring visits, educational buys, or as needed. In addition, the State Agency will use the following measures to assure that vendors are knowledgeable and competent in handling CVC and WIC check transactions:

- Results from compliance buys and educational visits
- Results from announced and unannounced monitoring visits
- Desk audits from monthly overcharges and check error reports

The following lists the level of training provided during the three-year vendor contract period:

1. **Annual mandatory training** sessions are conducted for all vendors at the beginning of each fiscal year (October). All store attendees are required to sign-in and indicate their job position to verify attendance. These trainings typically take place at the State Agency office. The following topics are covered during training and monitoring visits:

- Description of the WIC Program
- Review of respective vendor and State Agency responsibilities
- Information on currently approved WIC food items

- Minimum stocking requirements
- Explanation of vendor violations
- Explanation of the vendor sanction system
- Explanation of fair hearing procedures
- Procedures for processing redemption of CVC and WIC checks
- Obtaining infant formula from sources **only** included in the State Agency's list of approved suppliers
- Obtaining State Agency approval for incentive items provided to WIC participants
- Vendor claims / revalidations procedures
- Vendor complaint process
- Changes to program requirements since last annual training
- WIC State Agency Initiatives

The following are used to evaluate the effectiveness of vendor training and monitoring:

- Evaluation forms with training materials
- Pre/post-tests regarding vendor policies, procedures, and practices
- Statistical indicators, such as a reduction in check errors
- Informal feedback from vendors, local agencies, and participants

**2. Reauthorization training** may be conducted in combination with site visits to individual stores, or as group training for store managers. This training will take place in lieu of that year's Annual Training in the month of October. The State Agency will determine which approach would be best to meet the needs of the WIC Program. During re-authorization training the following will be discussed:

- Vendor's performance and any problem areas  
(if training is conducted in the store)
- Changes to the authorized foods list
- New or revised WIC policies and procedures
- New program emphasis or projects affecting vendors
- Corrective action results
- Minimum stocking requirements
- Vendor sanction system
- Vendor complaint process
- Revalidation procedures
- CVC and WIC check transactions
- Changes to program requirements since the last training
- DC WIC State Agency initiatives

**1103. Consequences for Missing a Training Session**

What happens if a vendor fails to attend a training session?

If it is a...	... Then the State Agency will...
Pre-authorization training Or Mandatory annual training Or Corrective action training	Allow the vendor to attend training on an alternative date
An alternative date for Pre-authorization training	Deny the vendor WIC authorization for failure to meet vendor eligibility criteria
An alternative date for Mandatory annual training	Terminate the vendor for failure to remain in compliance with the Vendor Agreement
An alternative date for Corrective action training	Terminate the vendor for failure to remain in compliance with the Vendor Agreement

**1104. Mandatory Cashier Training:**

State Agency staff will conduct mandatory cashier trainings if a store exhibits chronic problems with:

- CVC or WIC check transactions (for example: increased number of check errors / rejections)
- High turnover of cashiers
- Designation as a high-risk store for two consecutive quarters within a fiscal year

Prior to being authorized for a new contract period, stores that have been designated high risk for three or more quarters (out of eight quarters) will be required to receive cashier training for all staff responsible for handling CVC and WIC checks.

**1105. Assessments:**

Currently, only cashiers who receive individual corrective-action training from store managers, or store-wide cashier training from the State Agency, are subject to training assessments. Assessments are open-book style. Trainees are encouraged to fill out paper versions of the assessments during training before taking the quiz on-line at [www.dcwic.org](http://www.dcwic.org) under Vendor > Trainings.

- **Quiz 1:** WIC Foods and Standard Contract Infant Formulas
  - To be administered to all store personnel responsible for processing DC WIC Checks
  - This quiz will reinforce information regarding WIC Foods and Formulas
  - See Form 9 – Quiz 1
- **Quiz 2:** Processing WIC Checks / Customer Service
  - To be administered to all store personnel responsible for processing DC WIC checks
  - This quiz will reinforce information on providing excellent customer service to WIC Participants, and test understanding of processing WIC transactions
  - See Form 10 – Quiz 2

The online quiz scores will immediately be routed to the State Agency. The passing score for each quiz is 85%. Store managers must keep a log of cashier's scores. Cashiers who do not pass each quiz will have seven (7) days in which to take the quiz(es) again and must receive a passing score.

Table 11.1 Training Quick Reference

State Agency Provided Training	Vendor’s Responsibility Training
<p><u>Annual Training:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• October</li> <li>• Mandatory</li> </ul> <p><u>Reauthorization Training:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• October of first year in authorization cycle</li> <li>• Mandatory</li> </ul> <p><u>As-needed trainings:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pre-authorization training                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Before a new store may start to accept WIC checks</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Follow-up training                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ 6 months after pre-authorization training</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Cashier trainings                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ When a store has been designated high-risk 3 (or more) of 8 quarters</li> <li>○ State Agency will hold mandatory training for all store cashiers</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p><u>New-hire training for cashiers:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cashiers should be trained on WIC program policies and procedures during their onboarding staff training</li> </ul> <p><u>As-needed trainings:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Training all store personnel who interact with WIC customers after store manager or responsible trainer receives training on updated policies and procedures                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Includes communications from State Agency such as memos, quarterly newsletters, “office hours”, etc.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Training individual cashiers who have been identified as needing additional training through monitoring visits and/or participant complaints</li> </ul>

