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Soy Formula Change

Starting January 29, 2019, WIC will begin issuing Similac Soy Isomil 12.4 ounce as the standard soy formula. Stores will no longer be required to carry Gerber Good Start Soy.



UPC: 070074559643

Formula Distributors & Stocking Requirements

WIC retailers may only purchase infant formula from a WIC approved infant formula distributor. There is a list of approved distributors available on the WIC website. The Montana WIC Program requires all authorized WIC stores to carry a minimum stock of WIC foods in addition to infant formula. Please visit the WIC website for the full list of WIC stocking requirements and call if you have any questions about your store's stocking requirements.

New Montana WIC Branding

The Montana WIC Program has changed its logo to use new branding from the National WIC Association. The branding is designed to be consistent across other State WIC Programs and provide a fresh new look that is encouraging for families participating in WIC. Watch for outreach materials consistent with the new branding in 2019.

Purpose of the Program

WIC is the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children. With funding from the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) the program offers families nutrition education, breastfeeding promotion and support, referrals to other health and social programs, and benefits to buy healthy foods and infant formula.

WIC's Spending Impact in November 2018

- **9,349 families went shopping with their eWIC cards**
- **There were 31,667 successful purchase transactions**
- **187 different grocery stores accepted WIC benefits**
- **Statewide WIC spending totaled \$857,637.63**

State Authorized Supplemental Foods

WIC Nutritionists approve specific foods that WIC customers can buy based federally defined nutritional qualities, product availability and demand and cost. The Authorized Food List details the allowed brands, sizes and types of those foods to help customers and retailers know what each cardholder can purchase. Here are a few reminders about Montana's authorized foods:

- ♥ Fruits & vegetables – Allowed in combinations of fresh, frozen, or canned fruits and vegetables up to the dollar amount available on the card. No nuts, herbs, spices or salsa, and no added sugar, salts, or oils.
- ♥ Baby food – Allowed in specific package sizes of meat and fruit & vegetable varieties, no pouches or squeezes. Authorized brands include Gerber, Beech Nut and Pic Select Fresh.
- ♥ Milk – Must be purchased in the fat content specified on the benefit. WIC customers may choose to purchase milk in different sizes (gal, ½ gal, quart, canned) and different forms (fluid, evaporated, dry/powdered). They may also choose to purchase cow's milk, goat milk, or lactose free cow's milk. Soy beverage is not milk and will be specified on the benefit.
- ♥ Yogurt – Must match the fat content defined on the benefit, in quart size only, for plain or vanilla. Refer to the food list for authorized brands.

Always refer to the Montana WIC Authorized Food List for specific guidance on each food type.

eWIC Transactions

eWIC transactions are based on real-time communication between the store's Point of Sale system (POS) and Montana WIC's EBT processor. Here is a quick review of the process:

- ♥ When the customer brings their WIC and non-WIC items up to the checkout they tell the cashier they have an eWIC card, and upon instruction swipe the card and enters their PIN.
- ♥ The Store's POS sends that information to the EBT processor, which validates the store, the card, and the PIN, and may return an available balance if requested.
- ♥ The cashier scans the items, and the POS validates those items against WIC's Approved Product List (downloaded nightly to the POS), and the cardholder's available balance. The cardholder is asked to approve the purchase on the pin pad.
- ♥ The POS sends the purchase information to the EBT processor, which reduces the cardholder's balance based on the items purchased, and sends the remaining balance information back to the POS. The cashier prints the receipt and the purchase is complete.



Please remember that the eWIC card is always the first form of payment accepted, and to provide beginning and ending balance receipts to WIC customers if requested.

What if an item doesn't ring up as WIC?

There are many reasons this can occur. eWIC transactions match the item's UPC/PLU with the UPC/PLU on the Approved Product List. If the codes don't match, it will not go through, and this cannot be overridden. The item may not be WIC approved, or it may not be approved for that cardholder, or it may not yet be on the Approved Product List. Please send WIC any UPC you would like considered, and WIC nutritionists will review the information. You can send the UPC information through a form on the Montana WIC website, or through the WIC Shopper app for mobile devices, or just give us a call.

Retailer Sanction System

As per federal regulations and the WIC Retailer Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), WIC authorized retailers are held accountable for a range of program violations and issued corresponding sanctions. Please review the Montana WIC State Plan (available online) for a description of Class A, B, C, and D violations and the sanctions that accompany them. Please reach out to the WIC Program if you have any questions about violations and sanctions.

WIC Customer Concerns

WIC customer complaints can be directed to the State Office or to your Local Agency Retail Contact (LARC). We take all complaints and concerns seriously. To report to the State, please fill out the "WIC Program Complaint Form" and send it to the State Office (available online or through the State Office). To find out who your LARC is, or if you have questions, call Kevin Moore (406) 444-5530.

Policies regarding Incentive Items

WIC Authorized retailers may not use incentive items to get WIC customers to shop at your store. An example of an incentive item promotion is, "Use your WIC benefits here and get free soda."

WIC customers can participate in any promotion that is available to other shoppers if the promotion happens to be for a WIC approved item. An example is 'buy one get one free' for all store customers. If the product happens to be a WIC approved item, WIC participants are entitled to receive the free item and not have it reduced from their benefit balance. If you have any questions, please call the WIC Program and we may have to reach out to your POS provider to ensure this is working correctly.

The important concept to remember with incentive items and promotions is they must be available to all customers and cannot be available to only WIC customers.

Where Can You Find More Information?

Visit Montana WIC's Retailer website for many retailer resources:

www.dphhs.mt.gov/publichealth/WIC/Retailers

Retailers can contact their Local WIC Agency for concerns regarding participants and food items.

Contact **Kevin Moore** (406) 444-5530 for any eWIC transaction or program questions.

Contact **Glade Roos** (406) 444-2841 with questions about your contract or stocking requirements.

Thank you for your partnership with the Montana WIC Program.

This institution is an equal opportunity provider.



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