

Section III: State Agency Procedure Manual

IX: State Food Delivery

C. Formula Recall Procedures

Purpose

To help guide the state agency processes during a formula recall and possible subsequent formula shortage.

Policy

In the event of a formula recall, the state agency will minimize the negative impact of program disruptions to WIC operations and services and ensure the availability of authorized supplemental foods to the extent feasible.

1. Formula Recall Process

- In the event of a formula recall, state office staff will confirm the recall
 - o There are not requirements that the formula company must follow when informing the state WIC office.
 - o Historically the state office has been informed through social media, local agencies, or news reports.
- State staff will contact the recalled formula company's representative to confirm that a specific formula has been recalled and other pertinent information: This could include:
 - o Lot numbers, batch numbers, dates of purchase, can size and variety.
 - o How the formula should be returned.
 - The company typically puts the instructions for returning the formula on their website. They typically give an address to send the returned formula to.
 - o What to do if the recalled formula has been consumed.
 - The company typically gives a number to contact or to contact your medical provider if you have consumed the formula.
- The State WIC Director will delegate the following duties to state staff:
 - o Notify local agencies initially.
 - o Write interim guidance for the local agencies.
 - o Notify the WIC vendors initially.
 - o Research formula substitutions that could be provided.
 - For contract formulas a waiver from USDA may be available.
 - For specialty formulas a comparable option may be available on the WIC formulary.
 - o Messages to share with participants on:
 - Public facing website
 - WIC shopper app
 - Local agency and state agency social media pages
 - o A point of contact for questions from the local agencies will be designated.
 - In some situations, hosting daily informal update calls with the local agencies is appropriate
 - o A point of contact to answer calls from the public will be designated.

2. Coordination and Communication

- Communication plan
 - FNS
 - The regional office will be notified of alternate operating procedures
 - Participants
 - Any participant receiving formula will be notified via text message or other direct means based on available technology
 - Local Agencies
 - Notifications and updates will be provided by email, newsletters, and conference calls as appropriate.
 - Vendors
 - Email alerting WIC Vendors should be sent.
 - Vendor initial email should include:
 - Notify them of what the recall was.
 - Give them specifics on what has been recalled.
 - Remind them that due to their Vendor agreement, they should treat WIC participants the same as other customers.
 - Vendor initial email recipients should include:
 - Corporate vendor representatives
 - All active and authorized vendors
 - Calls from stores are expected.
 - Communicate instructions to the stores about what other formulas the participants could purchase and when to contact their WIC office to change their benefits.

3. Food Management

- To ensure that participants have alternate infant formula and exempt formula options during a formula recall, a list of similar alternate formulas will be used.
- In the instance of a formula recall, alternate can sizes and non-contract formula will be issued as needed.
 - State office staff may order non-contract formula from manufacturers or other vendors for direct distribution as needed
 - UPCs for alternative formulas will be activated in the MIS