

Oregon eWIC



eWIC Status Update
December 11, 2015



The holidays may mean shopping – try the WICShopper app!

Have you downloaded the free app yet? You don't need an eWIC card to download and use the app to find out if a food is WIC authorized and to check out the recipes.

“No way is WIC that cool!” was what one participant said. A WIC staff person commented that WIC was the only program “Keeping up.” Partners are almost more excited to hear about the app, than they are about eWIC!

Spread the word – WIC is the cool program. We have an app.



What do vendors want you to know about eWIC shopping?

Without the help of our WIC vendors, eWIC just wouldn't be the success that it is. They have been working tirelessly to get their computers, cash registers and cashiers up to speed on the biggest WIC change since WIC started 41 years ago.

Vendors would like us to know:

- Be patient! Cashiers are just as new to eWIC as participants are. You never know when this is the first eWIC transaction they have done.



- ✦ Always use the eWIC card first, before any other form of payment.
- ✦ To make sure what you expected is paid for with WIC, do a mid-transaction review before you use any other payment type.
- ✦ Cashiers **don't** get a message in their cash register telling them why something didn't ring up. They might help a participant trouble shoot the reason, but they **can't override** their system.
- ✦ Cashiers are used to SNAP transactions and may assume that eWIC works the same.
 - Unused eWIC benefits don't roll over to the next month like SNAP benefits do.
 - Cashiers may say that there is not enough money on the card to cover the purchase, but in WIC words what they mean is there may not be enough food benefit balance.

Why don't some foods scan as WIC foods?

There are lots of reasons why a food might not scan as a WIC food. You will hear many stories from WIC participants when they first start shopping with their eWIC card and will have to be a detective to figure out why something didn't ring up the way they thought it should. Here are a few common situations.



- ✦ They didn't have adequate balance for the food they tried to buy (e.g. wanted to buy a gallon of milk, and only had a half gallon left.)
- ✦ They tried to buy a size that is not WIC eligible (e.g. they had 10oz of cereal left and wanted to buy a 9oz box of Cheerios – minimum size limit is 12oz.)
- ✦ They tried to buy a food that is not authorized (e.g. 64oz plastic bottle of Welches grape juice, Jif Naturals peanut butter, Westsoy rather than Westsoy Plus.) We often hear “but I have always bought this.” These foods have never been eligible, but the participant didn't know it because they were mistakenly allowed to purchase them in the past.
- ✦ They try to buy an authorized WIC food, but it has not been issued to them (e.g. they want to buy 12oz frozen juice but are only issued 64oz bottled). Buying juices with eWIC is different. For instance with 64oz bottled juice, for the same ounce equivalent the frozen option is 16oz frozen orange juice.
- ✦ If you look at the food list and the participant's benefit balance and think that perhaps the food just hasn't been added to the authorized list

yet, the UPC can be submitted for possible authorization. The store can do this, you can do this, or the participant can send a picture of the UPC to wic.upc@state.or.us. The food would have to be reviewed for appropriateness and then added to the APL. If it is authorized, it may take a week or longer before it is available for purchase at the store. Not everything will be authorized. For example, 100% Naturals Beechnut baby food did not meet the cost requirements, so it was not added to the authorized food list.

Upcoming Important eWIC Dates and Activities

How many weeks until your agency rolls out eWIC? Are you ready?

Pilot stats to date (12 weeks)

91% of families are converted

55% of families are asking for 2nd cards



- [“Lessons Learned in Pilot” webinar is posted](#) and ready for review.
- December 16, 2015 (8:30 a.m. to 9:30 a.m.) - eWIC Technical assistance call
 - o Get your questions answered
 - o Conference Call phone number: 1-888-278-0296, Access Code: 115588
 - o The next call is scheduled for 1/20/2016
- January to March 2016 - Statewide eWIC Implementation (See [the roll out schedule](#))
- January 11, 2016 – TWIST release with eWIC improvements
- January 20, 2016 (8:30 a.m. to 9:30 a.m.) - eWIC Technical assistance call
- February 17, 2016 (8:30 a.m. to 9:30 a.m.) - eWIC Technical assistance call
- March 7, 2016 – Last Oregon agency converts to eWIC
- March 16, 2016 (8:30 a.m. to 9:30 a.m.) - eWIC Technical assistance call
- June 2016 – Final WIC vouchers in Oregon! (Hopefully sooner)

Thank you for all you do to serve Oregon WIC families!

