



VENDOR VIEWS

LA WIC's Authorized Vendor Newsletter



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UPDATED VENDOR GUIDE (REVISED 02/2021)

LA WIC recently made changes to its policies which were effective as of February 1, 2021. Those changes are reflected in the Louisiana WIC Vendor Guide ("Vendor Guide") revised 02/2021 (which replaces the Vendor Guide revised 10/2020).

A memo was emailed to all Vendors on February 1, 2021 highlighting the changes in the updated Vendor Guide. If you have not yet done so, please carefully review the [February 1 memo](#) and the [Vendor Guide revised 02/2021](#). Both documents can be found on the [LA WIC Authorized Vendor Hub](#).

WIC TRANSACTION TIPS & REMINDERS FOR CASHIERS

Below is a list of tips and reminders to help your cashiers assist WIC Participants conduct successful WIC Transactions. Following these steps will help eliminate common WIC Transaction violations that could potentially lead to Vendor sanction violations.

When conducting a WIC Transaction, cashiers must **ALWAYS**:

- Scan all items (WIC and non-WIC) selected by the Participant for purchase.
- Ask the Participant to insert their eWIC Card and enter their PIN before any other form of payment.
- Provide the Participant copies of all printed WIC Transaction receipts (Beginning Balance, Utilization, and Ending Balance).
- Ask the Participant to review the Utilization receipt and confirm that they agree to the Transaction before they “Accept” or “Update” their WIC Benefits on the PIN pad or terminal.
- Once the Participant’s eWIC card has been updated, allow them to use other forms of payment for any remaining balance owed (if applicable).
- Provide the Participant with all items deducted from the Participant’s WIC Benefits.

When conducting a WIC Transaction, cashiers must **REMEMBER**:

- To refer to the Approved Food List (WIC-23) and the EBT Transaction Procedures (WIC-33), both of which must be located at each register, if they have questions about WIC Transactions.
- Each WIC Participant has a specific food prescription and not every WIC Approved Food Item on the Approved Foods List (WIC-23) is approved for every Participant.
- Milk, cheese, and eggs are Least Expensive Brand (LEB) items, which means that Participants may only purchase the Least Expensive Brand that the store carries for these items. Please refer to Vendor Views Issue #2 for a further explanation of the LEB policy.

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- To practice discretion and provide the same courtesies to Participants as to all customers.
- To return lost eWIC Cards to the store manager to be returned to LA WIC.

When conducting a WIC Transaction, cashiers must **NEVER**:

- Ask the Participant to provide any form of ID.
- Ask the Participant any question(s) in an attempt to “prove” their eligibility.
- Enter the eWIC Card PIN on behalf of the Participant.
- “Accept” or “Update” WIC Benefits on behalf of the Participant.
- Perform overrides for WIC Approved Food Items (except for fruits and vegetables, as needed).

A full list of instructions for processing WIC Transactions can be found on the EBT Transaction Procedures (WIC-33), which is required to be posted at each register at all times. All new hires are required to review the WIC-33 EBT Transaction Procedures and sign the WIC EBT Transaction Procedure Training Log (WIC-33L).

Click here or visit the LA WIC Authorized Vendor Hub for examples of LA WIC Transaction Receipts and an explanation of how to interpret the information printed on each one. This information will help your cashiers answer questions from Participants regarding their WIC Benefits.

Please reach out to your WIC Program Monitor if your store would like to request additional cashier training.

UPCOMING DATES:

April 2 - State Offices Closed

Please keep in mind that LA WIC Vendor Operations staff continue to work remotely during the pandemic. As such, email remains our most reliable form of communication.

LA WIC VENDOR ADVISORY COMMITTEE

LA WIC recently created a Vendor Advisory Committee (“VAC”), a collection of Vendor representatives tasked with meeting quarterly to provide input on, and suggest improvements to, LA WIC Vendor Operations. The agenda from the first VAC meeting of 2021, conducted on March 11, can be found by [clicking here](#) or visiting the [LA WIC Authorized Vendor Hub](#). Below is a list of 2021 VAC members and their affiliations:

2021 LA WIC Vendor Advisory Committee Members

Name	Affiliation	Name	Affiliation
Scott Anderson	Associated Grocers	Jessica Elliott	LA Retailers Assc.
Kellie Ballard	Mac's Fresh Market	Winnie Fortner	Rouses
Angie Davis	Walmart	Tim Messa	LA WIC (chair)
Chelsi Drosche	Brookshire Grocery	Carrie Thibodeaux	Rouses

Thank you to our 2021 VAC members for serving in such an important role!

INVOICE REQUIREMENTS FOR INVENTORY AUDITS

Vendors selected for an Inventory Audit Investigation are required to submit invoices to LA WIC to help determine documented inventory levels of WIC Approved Food Items for a specific period of time. The latest version of the [Vendor Guide](#) (revised 02/2021, page 42) details requirements for invoices to be deemed acceptable for the purpose of documenting inventory on hand during an Inventory Audit.

In order to be deemed acceptable, invoices must be dated within the period requested, be for the Vendor being investigated, and be from an inventory record showing all WIC purchases from permitted wholesalers, that contains the following information:

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- the Vendor's name,
- the date of purchase,
- the wholesaler's name,
- invoice number, and
- the WIC item size, quantity, and brand of each specific WIC Approved Food purchased.

Additionally, invoices for infant formula must only be from an LA WIC approved wholesaler who appears on the [Infant Formula Supplier List](#).



Any invoices submitted by a Vendor not meeting these criteria will be excluded from the beginning inventory calculation and could lead to required recoupment from the Vendor and/or sanctions. [Click here](#) or visit the [LA WIC Authorized Vendor Hub](#) for examples of acceptable and unacceptable invoices.

BOOKMARK THE VENDOR HUB!

The [LA WIC Authorized Vendor Hub](#) is the place to go for everything Vendors need to excel in LA WIC. To make sure you can always find the Vendor Hub when you need it, we recommend bookmarking the page in your internet browser for easy access. Simply visit <http://ldh.la.gov/wicvendor> and press CTRL+D on your keyboard to create a new bookmark. You'll never have to go searching for the link again!



POS/CLAIM POINT OF CONTACT QUESTIONNAIRE

The goal of LA WIC is to reimburse our Vendors for all valid WIC Transactions. In order to do this, claims and claim disputes must be received in a timely manner. To help ensure that communications regarding claims and/or POS concerns are sent to the appropriate persons, please [click here](#) and submit the Vendor POS/Claim Point of Contact Questionnaire no later than April 8, 2021.

Please save this link and use it to provide any future updates. The link can also be found under the LA WIC Authorized Vendor Essential Documents and Links section of the [LA WIC Authorized Vendor Hub](#).

Please note that Vendors are responsible for ensuring that claims are processed and paid as expected. Vendors who wish to dispute WIC EBT Transactions must complete an [EBT Transaction Dispute Form](#) and return the completed form to LA WIC with all required information within 60 calendar days of the date of the Transaction being disputed.



REMINDER ABOUT HIGHBOND NOTIFICATIONS

LA WIC has begun in-store Routine Monitoring Reviews and Compliance Investigations for Federal Fiscal Year 2021. As a reminder, in an effort to improve communication with Vendors, LA WIC will be using a software program called HighBond to send and receive information from Vendors via email. Moving forward, some emails will be sent from notifications@highbond.com on behalf of LAWICVendor@la.gov (see the preview below). You may need to check your spam filter to ensure you receive these notifications from LA WIC. [Click here](#) or visit the [LA WIC Authorized Vendor Hub](#) for complete instructions.



HighBond Notifications <notifications@highbond.com> on behalf of Louisiana WIC Program

<LAWICVendor@la.gov>

Recipient Name

Monday, July 27, 2020 10:55 AM

JOIN OUR MAILING LIST

This newsletter will automatically be sent to the official corporate email address your store has on file with LA WIC, but you can [click here](#) to register additional email addresses to receive this newsletter directly.

CONTACT US

Phone: (504) 568-8229

Fax: (225) 376-4674

Email: LAWICVendor@la.gov

LA WIC Authorized Vendor Hub:

<http://ldh.la.gov/wicvendor>

(Open the link and press CTRL+D to bookmark the page on your internet browser)

WE WANT YOUR FEEDBACK!

What did you like about this newsletter? What didn't you like? What topics would you like to see covered in future issues? Please [click here](#) to let us know how we're doing by filling out a short survey.

This institution is an equal opportunity provider.