



VENDOR VIEWS

LA WIC's Authorized Vendor Newsletter



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EBT CLAIM FILE SUBMISSION PROCESS REVIEW

The EBT transaction claim file submission process allows Authorized WIC Vendors (Vendors) to be reimbursed for WIC sales that take place in their store. After a WIC sale is completed in the store lane, that sale is automatically stored, or "bundled," in a claim file by the store's POS system and automatically submitted to the State for electronic payment.

The claim file is normally submitted at a pre-determined time each day, directly by the store's POS system, to the State's claims server. The State's claims server performs certain automatic edits and verifications on the claim file to ensure its validity and integrity.

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Next, the State's server forwards payment directly to the Vendor's bank account through the Louisiana contracted EBT processor/bank. Final payment is typically completed within 3-5 business days.

For each submitted claim file, the Vendor's POS system also downloads the auto-reconciliation file (ARF). This tells the Vendor what they will be paid for the claim, if any part of the claim was not paid and/or the reason for any nonpayment.

A Vendor may dispute the payment resulting from late submission of transaction batch files and/or submission of malformed transactions by submitting the EBT Transaction Dispute Form found on the LA WIC Authorized Vendor Hub. Transaction disputes must be received within 60 calendar days of the date of the transaction in question. Each claim must be submitted on a separate transaction dispute form along with all supporting documentation, including a copy of the auto-reconciliation file or electronic receipts for the claim.



To help avoid problems with the claim file submission process:

- Ensure that your POS system submits claim files daily.
- Check the auto-reconciliation file daily to determine if the claim file was submitted successfully.
- Ensure all claim files for each month have been submitted by the 15th of the following month to avoid going through the transaction dispute process.
- Ensure any transaction disputes are sent within 60 calendar days of the date of the transaction in question.

For more information, please see pages 33-34 of the LA WIC Vendor Guide.

INFANT FORMULA SUPPLIER LIST REMINDER

LA WIC recently updated its Infant Formula Supplier List. The new Supplier List can be found on the LA WIC Authorized Vendor Hub.

The Supplier List includes only infant formula manufacturers registered with the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) and Suppliers that sell LA WIC's current contract-brand infant formula. As a Vendor, your store must purchase infant formula only from suppliers that appear on the Supplier List. If at any time your store purchases infant formula from a source that is NOT on the Supplier List, your store will be subject to sanction.

To remain in compliance and avoid sanction, please review the most recent Supplier List and verify that your store purchases infant formula only from those source(s) that appear within the listing.

Vendors may submit a request to add a Supplier to the Supplier List by completing the Infant Formula Supplier Request Form and returning it to LAWICVendor@la.gov.

UPCOMING DATES:

May 31 - State Offices Closed

July 1 - July 31 - Trade Area 2

Reauthorization Application Period

July 5 - 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.



TEMPORARY INCREASE IN CASH-VALUE BENEFIT

The American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 (ARPA) was signed into law in March. ARPA provides \$490 million to support a temporary increase to the WIC Cash-Value Benefit for Fruit and Vegetable purchases (CVB), up to a monthly maximum of \$35 per WIC Participant (the normal monthly CVB is \$9 or \$11 per WIC Participant). LA WIC will increase CVB purchase amounts for eligible WIC Participants to \$35 per month for June to September, 2021.

Vendors should follow these next steps:

1. Review with store personnel and cashiers the memo emailed to Vendors on April 13.
 - At this time, there are no changes to LA WIC's Minimum Stock Requirements.
2. Ensure your store's fresh produce (including bagged and packaged fresh produce) is properly mapped to the appropriate Price Look-Up Code (PLU).
 - Fresh produce must be mapped to the appropriate PLU by the Vendor.
 - LA WIC will NOT process UPC Request Forms for fresh, bagged, or packaged fresh fruit and vegetables.
3. Request updates to the Authorized Product List (APL) for frozen or canned fruits/vegetables, if needed.
 - Please review the current APL prior to making an update request.
 - Follow the process outlined in Procedure to add an UPC to the APL.
 - Complete and return the UPC Addition Request Form.



LA WIC MOBILE APPS

LA WIC has two free mobile apps available to assist in the WIC shopping experience: *WICShopper* and *Bnft*. Both apps feature a store locator, a barcode scanner that identifies WIC Approved Food Items, and a submission tool to request items be added to the WIC Approved Food List.

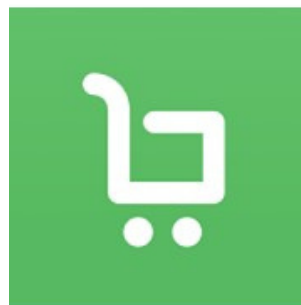
WICShopper can be used by anyone, including non-WIC Participants. The app's barcode scanner can be used by store employees to help identify WIC Approved Food Items in the store. This could be useful when helping a WIC Participant shop for WIC Food Items, conducting minimum stock checks on WIC Food Items, or in a number of other scenarios. We encourage any store employee who helps with WIC customer service or stocking to download *WICShopper* and use it to easily identify WIC Approved Food Items.

Bnft is only available to current WIC Participants and has additional functionality that allows WIC Participants to view their WIC Benefit list in "real time," along with their WIC purchase transaction history and their Benefits for future months. *Bnft* allows WIC families to keep track of their WIC Benefits quickly and easily without having to rely on WIC Clinic staff or balance receipts printed at a store. We encourage your store employees, when speaking to WIC Participants about their Benefits, to suggest that the *Bnft* app may help them track their WIC Benefits more easily.

Both apps are available for free download on [Google Play](#) and [Apple App Store](#).



WICShopper



Bnft

REAUTHORIZATION UPCOMING FOR REGIONS 6-8

Vendor Agreements for Vendors located in Trade Area 2 (Regions 6, 7 and 8) will expire on September 30, 2021. In order to continue to transact WIC Benefits after September 30, Vendors in Trade Area 2 will be required to apply for Reauthorization in July.

In early June, LA WIC will email a memo to affected Vendors that will include more specific information regarding the Reauthorization process.

Please [click here](#) to determine your Region/Trade Area.

VENDOR INITIAL AUTHORIZATION APPLICATION PERIOD

LA WIC will no longer process Vendor Applications for Initial Authorization immediately prior to and during the annual Vendor Reauthorization period, June 1st to October 1st, unless the vendor applicant would serve a participant access need.

Stores that would like to apply for WIC Initial Authorization and believe they would serve a participant access need should complete and submit the [LA WIC Vendor Initial Authorization Application Request form](#). Upon receipt of the form, LA WIC will conduct a participant access determination. If the vendor applicant would serve a participant access need, LA WIC will supply the vendor applicant with the Initial Authorization Application for submission. If not, LA WIC will notify the vendor applicant that they may submit an Application for Initial Authorization from October 2nd to May 31st.



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.



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