

Section 8.5: Replacing WIC Cards

10/2024

References: 7CFR 246.12 (bb)

Policy: Replace WIC Cards in a timely manner when reported lost, stolen, damaged, or unusable (L/S/D/U).

Purpose: To ensure WIC participants have a functioning WIC Card to access their benefits.

Procedures

Only an Authorized or Alternative representative may report a L/S/D/U card to the Local Agency. However, *anyone* aware of the Primary Card Holder's (PCH) date-of-birth and household zip code can report it through the Minnesota eWIC Customer Service Line.

1. Respond as soon as possible to the report of a L/S/D/U WIC card. Local Agencies must replace the Card **within 5 business days of being notified**. See Guidance below.
2. **Verify identity** of the person making the report to ensure they are a designated Authorized or Alternate Representative listed in the participant record. See Guidance below.

Verbal verification of identity: If proof of identification is unavailable, WIC staff may verbally verify that the person is authorized to obtain a WIC card replacement; to do this, WIC staff must:

- a. Confirm the person's identity by cross-referencing their name with that of an adult participant, authorized representative, or proxy listed in participant record, and
- b. Request validation of at least two of the following details:
 - o The PCH's date-of-birth,
 - o The zip code of the household's mailing address, and/or
 - o The names of household members participating in WIC.

If it is determined (or suspected) that the person is not authorized to obtain a card replacement, inform them that a new card cannot be issued. Advise them to have the Authorized or Alternate Representative/Proxy contact the WIC office for a replacement card.

Replace the WIC card

1. Verify the identity of the person requesting a replacement card to ensure they are an authorized or alternative representative listed in the participant record (see above for verifying identity).
2. Replace the WIC card within 5 business days of original report of L/S/D/U card. The card:

SECTION 8.5: REPLACING WIC CARDS

- May be replaced *only by* WIC staff. Cards cannot be replaced by Minnesota eWIC Customer Service.
 - Must be replaced as many times as needed for the household to access their WIC benefits.
 - May be mailed, if preferred by the participant. See *Mailing the WIC card* below.
3. Set the person issued the card as the PCH in the WIC Information System. It can be changed later, if requested by the family.
 4. Ensure the PCH signs the signature pad to acknowledge receipt of the WIC card. See steps below for Mailing the WIC card, as necessary.

The previous PIN automatically transfers to the replacement card for immediate use. If needed, the PCH may call the Minnesota eWIC Customer Service Line to set a new PIN.

If a WIC card is deactivated before its replacement (this should be rare), a new PIN must be set. See below for Deactivating the WIC Card.

Deactivating the L/S/D/U WIC Card

Only deactivate the WIC card if it is reported in possession of someone who should not have access to the benefits **and** immediate card replacement is not an option.

This makes the card immediately unusable. The PIN will not automatically transfer to the new card once assigned.

1. Verify the identity of the person requesting to deactivate the card to ensure they are an authorized or alternative representative listed in the participant record (see above for verifying identity).
2. Deactivate the WIC card only when necessary to remove household access.
 - **WIC staff:** Deactivate the WIC card in the Information System.
 - **Card holder:** Participants may deactivate the WIC card any time by calling the Minnesota eWIC Customer Service Line.

Note: WIC staff *are not notified* by the eWIC service provider when a card is deactivated by the card holder, but it is indicated in the participant's record.

3. Follow steps above to *Replace WIC Card*, as necessary. See Guidance below.

Food Benefits on Replacement Card

- Unredeemed food benefits for the current and future months will remain with the household and be accessible with the replacement card.
- Food benefits that expire before a new card is provided will not transfer to the replacement card. The participant will have access to benefits that are current as of the date the new card is received.

Mailing the WIC Card

1. Verify the mailing address.
2. Inform the family that mailing the card might delay their access to food benefits.
3. Inform the PCH that their PIN automatically transfers to the replacement Card, so they can access their food benefits as soon as they receive the Card in the mail.
4. Initial the signature pad and indicate “mailed” in place of the PCH’s signature.
5. Include the following on the envelope:
 - a) Local Agency’s return address.
 - b) “Return Service Requested” in black ink directly below the return address.
6. Mail first class with adequate postage.

If the Card is returned undelivered, create an alert documenting that the card was returned and contact the family to follow up. Do not re-mail the Card until the address is verified.

Guidance

- **Replacing Cards within 5 business days:** For participants to access their benefits they need a functioning WIC Card. Local Agencies must establish policies and procedures, and staff accordingly, so that cards reported L/S/D/U are replaced as soon as possible. The expectation is that most Cards will be replaced within 5 business days of a Local Agency being notified. If a situation occurs such that the Card is not replaced within 5 business days, staff must document an explanation in a Note.
- See Exhibit 5-C: [Identification Requirements by WIC Contact](#) for acceptable forms of parent/guardian or proxy identification.
- The WIC card *cannot* be deactivated through the Web Portal.

Reference – Complete Listing of Hyperlinks

[Exhibit 5-C Identification Requirements by WIC Contact](#)

(<https://www.health.state.mn.us/docs/people/wic/localagency/program/mom/exhbts/ex5/5c.pdf>)

Minnesota Department of Health - WIC Program 625 Robert St N, PO BOX 64975, ST PAUL MN 55164-0975; 1-800-657-3942, health.wic@state.mn.us, www.health.state.mn.us. To obtain this information in a different format, call: 1-800-657-3942

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