

## Pharmacy Training

### Introduction to Pharmacy Training

Welcome to the Minnesota WIC training module for pharmacies. If you have been required to complete this training because you have applied for WIC authorization, please complete the short quiz at the end of the module. If you do not complete the quiz, you will not get credit for completing the training module.

### Training Outline

In this module, we'll give an overview of WIC, introduce WIC formulas, give guidance on how to order and transact formula for WIC customers, and some general information about program rules and requirements.

### WIC Program Overview

First, let's talk about what the WIC Program is.

### What is WIC?

WIC is a public health nutrition program that focuses on the prevention of diseases that are caused by or impacted by less healthy eating. WIC serves pregnant, breastfeeding, and postpartum people and children birth to age 5. Residency and income guidelines apply to WIC participation. You must live in the county in which you get WIC services and meet an income guideline in order to qualify for participation in WIC.

### Program Benefits

WIC provides nutrition education and information on healthy eating and feeding practices, breastfeeding guidance and support, and referrals to other programs. WIC also supplies supplemental healthy foods on a WIC benefit card. Some of those foods include formula for participants. Participants may shop for those formulas in authorized WIC pharmacies.

### WIC Food Benefit Basics

WIC food and formula benefits are issued on a WIC card. Participants may then use their benefit cards at authorized WIC vendors, which include grocery stores and pharmacies. Allowed foods and formula are maintained by the Minnesota WIC Approved Product List, or APL. This is a list of all WIC allowed items that is downloaded into register systems, so the POS knows what is available on the card. The POS enforces the foods and formula that are on the card, so there is no guesswork when determining what foods are available for purchase for a WIC customer. Pharmacy vendors can ONLY sell formula to WIC customers - not other foods that might be listed on the card. Pharmacy APLs are for formula only, and foods outside of formula will not deduct from the card, so no mistakes can be made.

## Formula Basics

WIC promotes breastfeeding as the healthiest way to feed babies, but some participants receive formula for their infants or themselves when needed. No substitutions or returns are allowed with WIC purchases.

## Introduction to WIC Formulas

Now, let's talk about some of the more common WIC formulas.

## Introduction to WIC Formulas

WIC issues "standard" formulas which include powder Enfamil Infant, Gentlease, Reguline, AR, and Similac Soy Isomil. These formulas are also in standard sizes - 12.4-12.9oz cans. Other types and sizes of formula may be allowed on WIC cards, depending on the needs of the family. The formula the family has been issued is the only formula they may purchase with the WIC card. Only formula is allowed to be purchased with WIC cards at pharmacies.

## Medical/Specialized Formulas

Doctor's may prescribe a different type of formula, and the participant brings that documentation to the WIC clinic when getting formula issued on the card. Once the documentation is in place, the participant can shop for the formula that may be located on the shelf at the pharmacy, or it may need to be ordered by the pharmacist. Pharmacies must order medical formula for participants if it is available through the normal supply chain.

## Ordering Medical Formulas

If you need to order formula for a WIC customer, WIC supplies some guidance on our website, but you should follow any guidance provided by your corporate office or store manager when ordering formula for a WIC customer. If you are unsure of what type of formula is available on the WIC card, you can perform a balance inquiry on the card, which is a receipt or a screen on the PIN pad that shows the type of formula and the number of containers that were issued. If you aren't sure how to perform a balance inquiry, ask your corporate office or manager. When you have determined the formula type and number of containers, you should check the Minnesota WIC APL for the size and UPC of the formula.

## Ordering and Transacting Medical Formulas

Let's go through the process of ordering and transacting formula at the pharmacy.

## Conduct a Balance Inquiry

The first thing you can do is perform a balance inquiry which is a function of the POS where the benefits are displayed on a receipt or on the PIN pad. The WIC customer may also have the My Minnesota WIC app, which will also show what type of formula and the number of cans available for purchase on the card.

### **Review and Confirm**

Here is an example of the receipt that prints when a balance inquiry is performed. You can review and confirm the formula type and size on the receipt. Some POS systems may show this information on the PIN pad.

### **Review the Pharmacy Guide**

The Pharmacy Guide for Ordering Medical Formulas is a tool on the website that instructs on how to order formula. You should also consult your corporate office or store manager to determine if there are other steps you should take when ordering formula for a WIC customer.

### **Use the Approved Product List to Find the Item**

Visit the Minnesota WIC Website to look up the UPC of the correct formula on the Approved Product List. Because the APL can change, the best practice is to download a new copy each time you need to look up a UPC, rather than save a copy. Once you have verified the correct formula, place the order.

### **Customer Swipes the WIC Card**

The customer will swipe the WIC card on the card reader.

### **Customer Enters the PIN**

The customer then enters the PIN. If the customer has trouble with the PIN, they may call the number on the back of the card for assistance. After four attempts, the WIC card will lock, and the formula may not be able to be transacted until after the card is unlocked, which can take extra time. The customer may need to come back at a later time once the card is unlocked.

### **Provide Midpoint Receipt**

After the PIN is entered, a receipt called the midpoint or confirmation receipt will print or display on the PIN pad. This will show the formula and number of cans being purchased. The customer should be given this receipt or view the items on the PIN pad.

### **Customer Reviews Midpoint and Accepts Charges**

The midpoint receipt and confirmation step is a critical part of the WIC transaction because it shows what benefits are available and what WIC will pay for. If something looks incorrect, or if there is an unexpected remaining balance, the customer can decline the charges. If everything looks correct, the customer will initiate approval on the PIN pad. There may be a function on your POS that requires you to approve the transaction after the midpoint prints.

## Finalize Transaction and Provide Receipts

If there had been a remaining balance for other items or additional cans of formula that were not being paid for by WIC, the customer would pay for those items after accepting the WIC charges. In this situation, she's only getting the WIC medical formula. You can now finalize the transaction and provide the customer with all of the receipts printed by the POS system. These receipts are important because they show what was purchased with the WIC card and what benefits are remaining. The customer may want to hold on to the receipt for future purchases, if there are cans remaining on the WIC card.

## If a Transaction Can't be Completed

We'll begin to wrap up with a few tips and requirements, starting with what to do if a transaction can't be completed. First, run a balance inquiry to make sure the customer has available benefits and that the item being purchased is what's listed on the slip. This can be done by using the customer's My Minnesota WIC App if they've registered their WIC card to it, or by looking up the UPC of the item in question on the APL and comparing the item description to what's listed on the benefit balance. Also look for differences in fiber or calorie content, which may signify the item being rung up is not what the customer should be getting. You can also contact Minnesota WIC for help. The email address you can send questions to is [health.wicvendor@state.mn.us](mailto:health.wicvendor@state.mn.us). Once in a while, the issue may be that the UPC is in our APL file but hasn't been set up in the pharmacy's POS system, so that is another thing to check. It may also be helpful to try another register.

## Pharmacy Requirements – Breaking Cases

Minnesota WIC has another important requirement around breaking cases. WIC issues infant formula in accordance with federal regulations, but unfortunately those quantities do not often match up with case quantities. For example, a child might be prescribed 107 individual containers Ready to Use Compleat Pediatric. There are (24) 8.45oz containers in a case. The pharmacist will need to order 5 cases of this formula to provide the customer with the 4 cases and 11 individual containers on the benefits. Breaking cases is a requirement. It may result in having some left over formula from time to time. However, WIC only provides supplemental amounts of formula. Most families will need to purchase additional quantities. If you let them know you have extra containers on hand, they may purchase the rest of them with another form of payment throughout the month. Additionally, many children will be on the same formula for a few months, so a broken case could be used to redeem the next month's benefits. Another positive aspect of having a broken case is that you can provide customers with a partial amount of the formula they need when you place the order, to help get them through until the rest of the formula comes in.

## Pricing

The WIC Program sets maximum prices that formula can be sold at based on WIC rules. These prices are reviewed regularly and adjusted when needed. Your retail price may be higher than the maximum price, but when you ring up the formula, it will be paid at the WIC maximum price. To see the maximum prices for Minnesota WIC formulas, you can visit our website.

## Pharmacy General Information

Good customer service is always appreciated. Substitutions, IOUs, or returns are not allowed on WIC purchases. WIC customer information is private. Do not share information about a WIC customer. That information is confidential.

## Questions About Medical Formulas?

If you have questions about WIC, Medical Formulas, or the information presented in this module, please reach out to the Minnesota state WIC office by calling 651-201-4404 or by emailing [health.wicvendor@state.mn.us](mailto:health.wicvendor@state.mn.us). WIC purchases. WIC customer information is private. Do not share information about a WIC customer. That information is confidential.

## Thank you!

Thank you for taking the time to view this module. If you have been required to complete this module, get credit for doing so by clicking the button on this screen to go to a short quiz and training verification. If you were not required to complete the module, you do not need to complete the quiz and may exit now.