

Subject: Eligibility Requirement

Item: Homeless Individuals

PURPOSE:

To ensure eligible homeless applicants/participants are provided with the appropriate WIC program benefits.

POLICY:

Applicants who meet WIC eligibility requirements, and who reside in a homeless facility, must be considered eligible for the WIC program and be treated equally with all other eligible applicants. The local agency (LA) must attempt to verify that the homeless facility meets federal requirements and must request that the homeless facility notify the LA if it ceases to meet any of these requirements.

PROCEDURE(S):

- I. Temporary Accommodations other than Shelters or Homeless Facilities
 - A. Use standard certification procedures for eligible applicants who lack a fixed and regular nighttime residence, or whose living situation is described below:
 1. A short-term living accommodation not more than 365 days in the residence of another individual, sometimes known as “doubling up” or “couch surfing”.
 2. A public or private place not designed for a regular sleeping accommodation, such as cars or campgrounds.
- II. Shelters, Institutions, Transitional Housing, and Homeless Facilities
 - A. Verify compliance with federal requirements for homeless facilities only if applicants are residing in a facility as described below:
 1. A supervised publicly or privately operated facility designed to provide temporary living accommodations.
 2. An institution that provides a temporary residence for individuals intended to be institutionalized.
 - B. The federal requirements for homeless facilities are:
 1. The facility must not accrue financial or in-kind benefit from a person’s participation in the WIC program.
 2. Foods provided by the WIC program must be for individual use, and not used in communal food service.
 3. The facility will not restrict the participant’s use of WIC services, such as eating supplemental foods, receiving nutrition education, and breastfeeding support.

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- C. The LA must verify that the documentation for the facility's compliance is not over three years old.

III. Shelters and Homeless Facilities in Compliance

When a facility is determined to be in compliance with federal requirements, LA staff must:

- A. Certify applicants for the full certification period.
- B. Contact the facility every three years to verify it is still in compliance.
- C. The LA must also ask the facility to notify them if the facility ceases to meet these requirements.

IV. Shelters and Homeless Facilities With Compliance Unknown

- A. If no existing documentation is available, screen and certify the applicant for the full certification period for which the individual is eligible.
- B. Following certification, contact the facility either by telephone or in writing to verify that the facility meets federal requirements. LA staff can but are not required to use Appendix 210-15-A1, *Homeless Facility Memo and Response Form*.
- C. The LA must document the contact with the facility. The documentation must:
 - 1. Include the name and address of the facility.
 - 2. Include the date and the name of the person representing the facility.
 - 3. Indicate whether the facility is in compliance with all federal requirements.
 - 4. The record of contact must be kept in a designated log for three years.
- D. If the homeless facility does not respond to LA contact or provide the LA with the necessary information to determine compliance, the LA must:
 - 1. Continue to certify applicants living at that facility.
 - 2. Document the attempted contact and keep the record in a designated log for three years.
 - 3. Contact the facility in three years to attempt to establish their compliance.

V. Shelters and Homeless Facilities Not in Compliance

When a facility is determined to be noncompliant with federal requirements, the LA must:

- A. Continue issuing food benefits and services to any residents of the facility who are already certified, through the end of their certification period.
- B. Inform already certified participants that their WIC food benefits will cease after their current certification period if they continue to reside in a noncompliant facility.
- C. Refer them to alternate facilities that are in compliance with federal requirements.

CERTIFICATION

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- D. Do not issue food benefits at certification and recertification to any residents of the facility, except infants. Infants shall continue to be eligible for all of their food benefits regardless of their residence.
- E. Attempt to certify applicants for other WIC services, such as nutrition education, breastfeeding promotion and support, and health care referral services.
- F. If there is a no alternate shelter inside the LA's service area, the LA may continue to issue food benefits to residents of the noncompliant facility.

AUTHORITY:

[7 C.F.R. §246.7\(m\) Certification of persons in homeless facilities and institutions](#)

CROSS-REFERENCE:

Appendix 210-15-A1, *Homeless Facility Memo and Response Form*

Appendix 980-170 Self Declaration Statement for Proof of Income/Address/Identification

WPPM 210-03 Determination of Income Eligibility

WPPM 210-06 Proof of Address

WPPM 270-20 Proof of Identity