

Subject: Food Package Assignment and Tailoring**Item: Food Package Tailoring**

PURPOSE:

To establish procedures for the proper assessment, assignment, and tailoring of authorized foods provided by the California Department of Public Health/Women, Infants and Children Division (CDPH/WIC).

POLICY:

- I. A Certified Professional Authority (CPA) must assess, assign, and tailor food packages to participants when appropriate to accommodate each participant's eligibility category, personal food or dietary preferences, and nutritional needs.

PROCEDURE(S):

- I. Food Package Assignment
 - A. CPA must assign a food package to each WIC participant and verify that the food package is appropriate in the WIC Web Information System Exchange (WIC WISE) prior to issuing benefits.
- II. Food Package Tailoring – General
 - A. CPA has the option to tailor (i.e. modify/substitute) foods in the participant's food package based on a complete nutritional assessment. The CPA must:
 1. Collaborate with the participant when tailoring the food package. The tailoring must be based on, but not limited to, the following:
 - a. Medical/nutritional needs.
 - b. Dietary preference due to cultural, religious, and/or lifestyle preference.
 - c. Household and food storage conditions (e.g., lack of refrigeration, homelessness).
 2. Make no assumptions about food preferences based on participant appearance, category, or cultural/ethnic affiliation.
 3. Issue the full maximum monthly allowance of food benefits to participants. Issuing less than the full amount is only appropriate under the following situations and requires documenting the reason in the Comments field on the "Food Prescription" screen (or the pop-up box that appears if an item belonging to a food group max category is under-issued):
 - a. Medically or nutritionally warranted (e.g. removal of a food item due to an allergy/intolerance or another nutrition-related medical condition.)

Subject: Food Package Assignment and Tailoring**Item: Food Package Tailoring**

- i. Overweight and obesity are not medically or nutritionally warranted reasons to provide less than the maximum monthly allowance.
- b. Dietary or lifestyle preference (e.g., cannot use or prefers not to use the maximum amount; requests a combination of soy/dairy foods that is unavailable in an amount that would allow maximum issuance).
- c. Combo-feeding infants receiving formula. Refer to section IV. below for more information.

III. Food Package Tailoring – Dairy/Tofu

- A. WIC WISE defaults to liquid cow's milk, yogurt, and cheese as the standard dairy options for all child and pregnant/postpartum food packages.
- B. The CPA can tailor the food package to include tofu, soy beverage, and the following types/forms of dairy for children and pregnant/postpartum participants:
 1. Lactose reduced milk.
 2. Evaporated milk.
 3. Powdered milk – only for pregnant/postpartum participants and children older than 2 years old.
 4. Reduced fat milk (2% fat) – only for children 12-23 months with the appropriate risk.
 - a. The CPA may issue 2% milk only to children 12-23 months at risk for obesity, indicated by the assignment of Nutrition Risk 115 (High Weight for Length) in WIC WISE.
 - b. The family representative/caretaker may choose to receive the standard whole milk option for the child; issuance of 2% milk is not mandatory.
 5. Tofu and soy beverage.
 - a. The CPA may issue tofu and soy beverage to pregnant/postpartum participants and children who:
 - i. Are identified as lactose intolerant or allergic to cow's milk; or
 - ii. State a preference for soy products based on choice, including but not limited to cultural, religious, and/or lifestyle choices.
 - b. To issue soy products, the CPA must:
 - i. Evaluate the need or desire for soy products based on a nutritional assessment.

Subject: Food Package Assignment and Tailoring**Item: Food Package Tailoring**

- ii. Educate the family representative/participant on potential nutritional gaps which could occur when consuming soy products versus dairy products.
- iii. Document that the participant received education on soy in the Comments field on the “Food Prescription” screen.

IV. Food Package Tailoring – Formula

- A. The CPA must assign the appropriate type of infant formula to meet the specific needs of the formula-feeding infant.
- B. For a partially breastfeeding infant, the CPA must individually tailor the amount of infant formula based on the assessed needs of the breastfeeding infant. The CPA must ensure that the minimum amount of formula is provided to meet the infant’s needs and protect the mother’s milk supply.
- C. The CPA must obtain a prescription (Rx) if the following is requested:
 1. Therapeutic formula. Refer to WPPM 390-10 and 390-20.
 2. Increased formula when WIC infant food is restricted beyond six months of age. Refer to WPPM 390-10.
- D. Infants with Lactose Intolerance or Milk Allergy
 1. As appropriate, the CPA must issue either the authorized contract soy formula or prescribed therapeutic formula to infants diagnosed by a health care provider (HCP) with lactose intolerance or milk allergy. Issuance of therapeutic formula requires a HCP prescription (Refer to WPPMs 390-10 and 390-20).

V. Food Package Tailoring – Fruits and Vegetables

- A. Cash Value Benefit (CVB) for Children and Pregnant/Postpartum Participants
 1. The CPA must issue the full default dollar amount of the CVB, except when a child participant is receiving jarred infant fruits and vegetables from WIC for a qualifying medical condition.
 - B. Cash Value Benefit (CVB) for Infants
 1. The CPA may issue the CVB for fresh fruits and vegetables to infants on or after their 9-month birthdate. Participants can choose to receive the CVB in lieu of a portion of their jarred infant fruits and vegetables.
 2. The CPA must perform a nutrition assessment to determine infant readiness.
 - a. For infants 5–7 months of age, the CPA must use the mid-certification appointment to fulfill the nutrition assessment requirement. The CPA must
-

Subject: Food Package Assignment and Tailoring**Item: Food Package Tailoring**

- assess infant readiness by asking the “Nutrition” screen questions on food intake frequency, current food intake, and food textures (Questions 8-10).
- b. For infants 8–11 months of age who did not complete the mid-certification appointment, the CPA must provide a modified nutrition assessment using the “Nutrition” screen questions on food intake frequency, current food intake, and food textures (Questions 8-10).
3. The CPA must provide appropriate education to ensure that participants who will receive the CVB meet their nutritional needs in a safe and effective manner.
 - a. The CVB education must address the following topics:
 - i. Safe food preparation.
 - ii. Safe food storage.
 - iii. Feeding practices.
 - b. The CPA may fulfill the education requirement by reviewing one of the existing CDPH/WIC materials with the family representative/caretaker:
 - i. Baby Food for Me.
 - ii. Feed Me! 6-12 Months.
 - iii. Let’s Eat! Magazine.
 4. The CPA must document the infant CVB nutrition education in WIC WISE.
 - a. For infants 5-7 months old who completed the mid-certification, document in the Care Plan Follow-Up Note per normal procedure as part of the mid-certification.
 - b. For Infants 8-11 months who did not complete a mid-certification and were assessed using the modified assessment, document “Infant CVB Assessment and Education” on the “Nutrition Education” screen.
 5. The CPA must build out the infant’s food packages appropriately to reflect the CVB choice made by the family representative/caretaker.
- C. Jarred Infant Fruits and Vegetables for Children Ages One to Five.
1. The CPA must issue jarred infant fruits and vegetables to children one to five years of age when the family representative/caretaker provides a prescription (Rx) with a qualifying medical diagnosis (e.g. prematurity, dysphagia, developmental delays). It is not required for the Rx to specify the amount of jarred foods needed per day. Refer to WPPM 390-10 for Rx instructions.
-

Subject: Food Package Assignment and Tailoring

Item: Food Package Tailoring

2. The CPA must scan all Rx information and relevant medical documentation into WIC WISE.

AUTHORITY:

[7 CFR §246.10](#)

[USDA Food Package Policy and Guidance March 2018](#)

CROSS REFERENCE:

WPPM Section 390-10 Provision of Therapeutic Formulas and WIC-Eligible Nutritionals

WPPM Section 390-20 Coordinating with Medi-Cal and Other Health Plans

WIC Authorized Food List Shopping Guide

Food Package Job Aid