

Subject: Food Benefits Receipt and Distribution**Item: Remote Issuance of Food Benefits**

PURPOSE:

To guide local agencies (LA) in the remote issuance of food benefits.

POLICY:

- I. Remote Issuance of Food Benefits
 - A. Food benefit issuance should be coordinated with regularly scheduled WIC appointments for nutrition education, breastfeeding support, and other health services whenever possible. Food benefits should not be automatically issued remotely.
- II. LAs can issue food benefits remotely under the following conditions:
 - A. Each participant in the family must be current in their Nutritional Education Contacts (NEC), or have sufficient time remaining in the certification period to complete their required NECs.
 - B. Participant must not be in a 30-day short certification period. All program-required documents (e.g. documentation of income, residency, ID, or pregnancy) must have been submitted to the LA prior to remote issuance of food benefits.
 - C. Only if/when applicable, a caretaker is not available to attend the appointment.
 - D. Participant must meet specific hardship circumstances described below. All other circumstances not listed require CDPH/WIC approval prior to remote issuance of benefits.
 1. A local weather/flood/fire/disaster “alert,” “warning,” or “advisory” has been declared by the National Weather Service (NWS), California Office of Emergency Services (Cal OES), or a county-based alert system. All other circumstances due to weather conditions without a NWS alert must be approved by CDPH/WIC prior to the remote issuance of food benefits.
 2. WIC WISE downtime.
 3. Imminent childbirth or recent postpartum.
 4. Lack of transportation.
 5. A local emergency situation that has been declared during which the area population has been advised to stay indoors by local authorities and/or the Emergency Broadcast System (e.g., a natural gas leak, poor air quality, etc.).
 6. Medically diagnosed illness, such as confinement to bed rest.
 7. Online nutrition education contact offered and documented.

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8. Nutrition education contact offered via phone and documented.
 9. Medically documented physical disability preventing travel or a family member with medically documented special health care needs.
 10. Quarantine due to a potentially severe communicable disease (e.g., flu, chicken pox, etc.), and/or an immune disorder.
 11. Site emergency resulting in closure.
 12. Changed issued benefits – family representative/caretaker not present.
- E. A participant's request for remote food benefit issuance is allowable, however, all requirements in Policy II. A.-C. above must be met.

PROCEDURES:

- I. Prior to remote issuance of food benefits, LA staff must:
 - A. Ensure that each participant in the family is current in their NECs, or have sufficient time remaining in their certification period to complete their required NECs.
 - B. Verify that participant is not in a 30-day short certification period by confirming that all program-required documents (e.g. documentation of income, residency, ID, or pregnancy) have been submitted to the LA prior to remote issuance of food benefits.
 - C. Contact the participant/family representative to confirm the appropriate food package for each participant.
 - D. Schedule the next appointment.
 - II. When issuing food benefits remotely, LA staff:
 - A. Must check the "Remote Benefit Issuance" checkbox in WIC WISE and select the appropriate reason from the dropdown menu.
 - B. Can issue up to three months of food benefits, as long as the requirements for triple issuance have been met. (Refer to WPPM 330-10).
 - III. Program Integrity – CDPH/WIC Oversight
 - A. CDPH/WIC will review the following indicators at least quarterly for all LAs:
 1. The percentage of food benefits remotely issued by a LA compared to the average percentage remotely issued statewide.
 2. The differences between a LAs redemption rates for remotely issued food benefits and those issued in-person.
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- B. CDPH/WIC will monitor for outliers and discrepancies in procedures and provide technical assistance to identified LAs as needed.
- C. LAs that do not adhere to the procedures outlined in this policy will be required to complete the CDPH/WIC Remote Issuance Monitoring Log until correct remote issuance practices are achieved and maintained.
- D. LAs that are unable to achieve and maintain correct remote issuance practices may be denied CDPH/WIC approval to remotely issue food benefits.

AUTHORITY:

[7 CFR §246.12\(r\)\(2\) Signature Requirement](#)

[7 CFR §246.12\(r\)\(4\) Food instrument and cash-value voucher pick-up](#)

[22 CCR §40749\(c\) Participant use of food instruments](#)

CROSS REFERENCE:

WPPM 330-10 Single/Double/Triple Issuance