KANSAS WIC POLICY MEMORANDUM
KANSAS-WIC-P-2020-04

TO: Parent and Sub-Agencies
FROM: Dave Thomason
Nutrition & WIC Services Director
DATE: March 23, 2020
RE: CRT 03.09.00 State of Emergency Remote Certification

KDHE WIC - Essential Staff Available

NOTE: There will be a KDHE Press Release issued tomorrow regarding the waiver of physical presence. We wanted to give you all a chance to read this new information and develop an implementation plan. We will send the press release to you by email. We will also include a local version of the press release for your use.

CRT 03.09.00 State of Emergency Remote Certification
The USDA has approved a waiver of the physical presence requirement in WIC regulations. This waiver applies to areas in which WIC clinics have been closed to the public or in areas that are under a current stay at home order. The physical presence waiver will also be used for those persons who are under quarantine, whether voluntary or involuntary. Using telephone, computer and other technology, local clinic staff may now assess and certify applicants for eligibility. All appointments for current and new clients may be conducted without physical presence. Clinics may also issue food benefits remotely to those determined eligible.

Thoroughly read the attached policy CRT 03.09.00 State of Emergency Remote Certification. At this time, it is uncertain when the policy will be posted to the Kansas WIC website.

Key aspects of the policy include:
- Proofs and other required documents: Procedures for obtaining electronically.
- Anthropometric measures: The system has been changed to display as “Optional” on the certification guide. Please be sure to enter birth measures for all new infants and children so that risk factors such as LBW will still assign.
- Hemoglobin measures: To save time in getting out a new KWIC release, instead of changing KWIC to display as “Optional” on the Certification Guide, we are using existing functionality to simply defer the hemoglobin measure. Therefore, the Certification Guide will still indicate “Needed” according to existing rules. As the policy indicates, on the Blood Measures screen, click “Add” and in the “Reason Bloodwork is Missing” dropdown, select “Deferred up to 90 days – not physically present”. Save and continue to finish certification. Prior versions of the Q & A document instructed staff to track missing clients that would later need measures. This is no longer needed. We plan to have CQuest provide a report of clients missing blood and anthropometric measures.
- Other assessment and nutrition education: Complete as possible. Diet questionnaires are not required.
Complete Certification window: Be sure to mark if the client is not physically present.

Issue Benefits window: Whenever you are issuing benefits remotely, always check the “Not Present” box.

eWIC cards and Program Information: Cards and program information may be issued to clients through a controlled physical pick up, such as a drive-through process or cards and information may be mailed directly to participants. Local clinics will determine the most appropriate way to issue materials based on staffing and logistical resources.

As time goes on, we will provide more guidance about other possible waivers. The State Agency will communicate any additional program requirements that receive waiver authority as they are received from the USDA. An updated Q & A document will be emailed later today to reflect this new policy and other new information.

We express our appreciation to each and every staff person working in WIC clinics around the state. You are amazing! As you continue to serve WIC clients, please take appropriate measures to care for yourselves and your family.

**ACTION REQUIRED:** Please closely read and implement policy CRT 03.09.00 State of Emergency Remote Certification. Share information with appropriate staff.

**KDHE WIC Essential Staff Available** (Revised version of what was emailed by Lisa Medrow on March 19.)

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, only certain staff at the SA are available from Monday, March 23 through Friday, April 3. During this time these staff, who may be working from home, are available during their normal office hours to handle **priority needs only**. We understand that each clinic will need to adhere to your Health Department’s orders during this ever-changing time and you will need to use your best judgement to follow those orders within the parameters of WIC policies. Your lead may not be able to provide additional guidance and we trust you will do your very best during these unusual circumstances. Please email Patrice Thomsen of your clinic’s status if you are shutting down, etc.

If you have a **priority need** that must be addressed by the WIC office, please contact the appropriate person listed below for your particular issue by sending them an email:

**Patrice Thomsen**  
Nutrition Services Coordinator  
M-F 9am-5:30pm

**Julie Norman**  
Nutrition Education Coordinator (for handling Direct Ship Formula requests only)  
M-F 8:30am-5pm

**Amber Pelan**  
Administrative Services Coordinator  
M-F 8am-4:30pm

**Lisa Long**  
Vendor Manager (for handling emergency vendor issues only)  
T-F 7am-5:30pm

**Patrice.thomsen@ks.gov**  
**Julie.norman@ks.gov**  
**amber.pelan@ks.gov**  
**Lisa.long@ks.gov**  
**dave.thomason@ks.gov**  
**lisa.long@ks.gov**  
**Julie.norman@ks.gov**

**ACTION REQUIRED:** Communicate this information to all staff.
Subject: State of Emergency Remote Certification

Effective Date: March 23, 2020

Policy: In event of a declaration of a state of emergency due to a pandemic, which limits the frequency of in-person interactions and a directive to practice social distancing to prevent exposure. A waiver of physical presence should be made and remote certifications for applicants shall be conducted. Certifications include: Initial Certification, Mid-Certification, and Re-Certification. See policy CRT: 03.03.00 Certification and Recertification Appointments

Ideally, the certification will include a clerk and CPA, but in the event of limited staff availability the certification shall be completed by a CPA. The certification may be completed via phone call or secure interactive video chat. Staff must use an interpreter, if bi-lingual staff aren’t available for an applicant that has Limited English Proficiency.

Use all applicable procedures below to complete the certification process for a presumed eligible pregnant woman and an applicant possessing a VOC. NOTE: The KWIC Certification Guide will be slightly different for a presumed eligible pregnant woman and an applicant(s) utilizing a VOC. Please see policy CRT: 03.05.00 Presumptive Eligibility Appointments for Pregnant Woman & CRT: 10.03.00 WIC Out-of-State Verification of Certification (VOC) Documentation Acceptance, for additional information and guidance.

Procedure(s):

1. Use the KWIC Appointment Book to document and schedule all WIC appointments, if possible.
   a. Follow processing standards when scheduling certification appointments for new clients and previous clients who have had a break in services, indicated by a KWIC Status of Terminated. Refer to Policy, CRT: 02.00.00 Processing Standards. If an agency is unable to adhere to processing standards, due to pandemic conditions, please document this as ‘other’ and add a note in KWIC when prompted for a reason the appointment is being scheduled outside of processing standards.
   b. Ask the applicant if they will need any special accommodations, such as an interpreter.

2. Provide the applicant a brief description of the program and the certification process. Inform the applicant of what information will be needed to complete the certification and that the information provided to the agency is confidential.

KWIC Certification Guide:

1. Document all required information in KWIC by following the WIC Certification Guide.
   a. Race and Ethnicity
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b. Dual Participation
c. Income Eligibility
d. Proof of Income, Residency, identity, and caregiver identity
e. Rights and Responsibilities
f. Anthropometric Measurements, may be deferred. Enter, if able.
g. Blood Measurements, may be deferred. Enter, if able
h. Health Interview
i. Assess Risk Factors
j. Nutrition Education
k. Client Goals
l. Referrals
m. Voter Registration
n. Notes, as needed

2. Assess the applicant’s financial eligibility
   a. To remotely assess financial eligibility for a client, please consider adjunctive eligibility first. Refer to policy, CRT: 06.01.01 Adjunctive Eligibility, for applicable programs and how to record this in KWIC.
   b. If the applicant is not adjunctively eligible, conduct traditional income screening. Refer to policy, CRT: 06.02.01 Determining Household Income, for guidance.

3. To document required proof of income, identity, caregiver identity, and residency the client can show the proof via a secure interactive video chat or submit the proof via email, photo text message, or fax.
   a. If an applicant is unable to supply proofs electronically, self-declared can be utilized.
   b. If self-declared is used, the local agency must verify proofs during the next in-office appointment.

4. Complete Rights and Responsibilities
   a. Send a copy of the Rights & Responsibilities (R & R) via email or text
      i. Ask applicant to use “Markup” on their phone to sign the R & R, then email or text you the signed copy.
      ii. Ask client to print, sign, take a picture of it, and email or text to you.
   b. Ask the applicant if they have access, by phone or on a computer to read the Rights and Responsibilities form on the Kansas WIC website, have access to a Client Program Book, or LA staff can read the R & R form to the client.
      i. When the client has reviewed the R & R form or staff have read its entire contents, select “Manual Signature”, print form, and keep in a file folder for the client to sign at their next in-office appointment.
      ii. Make a note that a remote certification was completed and that the R & R was verbally agreed to and the applicant will need to sign the printed form at their next in-office appointment.

5. Obtain Anthropometric Measurements, if possible (i.e. If taken from a medical professional within the past 60 days)
   a. Enter birth measures for new infants and children.
   b. There is no need to track measures that were deferred for an applicant.
6. Obtain Blood Measurements, if possible. There is no need to track measures that were deferred for an applicant.
   a. To defer, open the blood measures screen. Click “Add” and in the Reason Bloodwork is Missing dropdown and select “Deferred up to 90 days – not physically present. Save and continue to finish certification.
7. Complete Health Interview and overall nutrition assessment.
   a. In place of using the client diet questionnaires, staff will use a set of questions relevant to disaster situations that will also count as the nutrition education for certifications and mid-certifications. Staff are not required to have clients complete the standard diet questionnaires or ask clients via phone all of the questions on the standard diet questionnaires. It is recommended, though, that staff refer to a set of the standard diet questionnaires for asking probing questions during the conversation. Depending on the individual(s) situation, staff may need to ask questions such as the following, for all clients.
      i. Do you have emergency food supplies on hand?
         1. If yes, for about how many days?
         2. If no, how do you plan to get food?
      ii. If you need more food, how do you plan to get it? (able to get to a store, someone is bringing food to you, we don’t have a way to get food)
      iii. Are your utilities working? (electricity, gas, other)
      iv. Do you have a safe water supply?
      v. Do you have a working refrigerator?
      vi. Do you have a way to cook/heat food?
      vii. Do you have any medical/dental conditions?
         1. If yes, was the condition diagnosed by a physician/dentist?
         2. If yes, do you have enough medication?
   b. Questions to ask **Pregnant women** (at a minimum)
      i. Do you have any medical/dental conditions that you had before you became pregnant, such as diabetes, hypertension? If yes, was the condition diagnosed by a physician/dentist?
      ii. Do you have any medical/dental conditions related to your current or previous pregnancies, such as preeclampsia, gestational diabetes, hypertension? If yes, was the condition diagnosed by a physician/dentist?
      iii. ATOD questions from KWIC.
   c. Questions to ask all **Post-Partum women** (at a minimum)
      i. Did you have any problems with your pregnancy that just ended, such as gestational diabetes, hypertension, C section, preterm delivery, LBW infant, etc.? If medical condition, was it diagnosed by a physician/dentist?
      ii. ATOD questions from KWIC
      iii. For your new infant, have you breastfed at any time? If yes, how is breastfeeding going?
   d. Questions to ask **Breastfeeding Woman more than 6 months Post-Partum** (at a minimum)
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i. Are you still breastfeeding? If yes, how is it going?

e. Questions to ask for **Infants** (at a minimum)
   i. How is your infant tolerating breastmilk/formula?
   ii. If infant is on formula, what type of formula? If powder, how are you mixing? (If there are any water issues, can issue RTF.)
   iii. Is your infant having any difficulties with eating?
   iv. Are there any medical conditions? If yes, were these diagnosed by a physician?

f. Questions to ask for a **Child** (at a minimum)
   i. Is your child having any difficulties with eating?
   ii. Are there any medical conditions? If yes, were these diagnosed by a physician?

8. **Assign Risk Factors.**
   a. For infants less than 6 months old, remember to use Infant Born to a WIC Eligible Woman, as appropriate.
   b. If no Risk Factors have been identified, document on the Risk Factor screen one of the following (excludes infants under 4 months old):
      i. Assumed Risk for Women and Children over Two Years, OR
      ii. Assumed Risk for Infants and Children Between 4 and 24 Months,

9. **Provide/document appropriate nutrition education and client goals, which may unique to the pandemic declaration.**

10. **Provide Community Referrals**
    a. Local Agencies should create or modify their current referral list to include all pandemic services available in the community, such as the local Red Cross, shelters, food pantries, or any food assistance that is available. This list should also include appropriate medical services that may be needed during a pandemic.

11. **Complete Voter Registration**
    a. Ask the applicant if they would like to register to vote, if no, document their decision in KWIC.
    b. If they applicant would like to register to vote, document their answer in KWIC and provide them with the following website to register: [https://sos.kansas.gov/elections/registration-voting/](https://sos.kansas.gov/elections/registration-voting/). Through this website, applicants can register to vote online or print and then mail the registration application to their County Election Office.
    c. Please retain a copy of the Kansas Voter Declaration on file for the applicant to sign at their next in-office appointment. After the applicant signs the form, please retain on file at the LA for two calendar years, as indicated in policy, **ADM: 06.00.00 Voter Registration**.

12. **Add any important notes about the remote certification & document any forms that will need to be signed by the applicant at their next in-office appointment.**

13. **Select “Complete WIC Certification” to complete the new certification.**
    a. Indicate that the client is not physically present and save.
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Issue eWIC Card:

1. Swipe the eWIC card through the card reader. If you don’t have access to a card reader, you can manually enter the 16-digit number.
   a. DO NOT set the client’s PIN number for them, they can do this later. When prompted to set the PIN, select cancel.
   b. Client’s can set their PIN by using the following options:
      i. Interactive Voice Response System by calling 1-844-892-2934 or visiting www.ebtEdge.com
2. Select “Print Unsigned Copy”, print, and save for client to sign at their next in-office appointment.
   a. In KWIC, mark in the notices caution field on the client’s record “card not e-signed”
   b. Upon capturing signature at their next in-office appointment, file the signed copy in the “card not e-signed” file.
   c. Please review policy, FCI: 04.00.00 eWIC Card and Benefit Issuance, for additional guidance for cards that do not have an electronic signature.
3. Local Agency staff may either mail or set up a time/date for the client or proxy for the client to pick up the eWIC card.
   a. If the client opts to have the card mailed, please inform them that it could take at least 5-7 days for them to receive the card. Follow instructions in policy FCI: 07.04.00 Mailing eWIC Cards, which included sending the Mailed Card Letter from KWIC.

Prescribe and Issue Food Benefits:

1. Educate the client/caregiver about WIC foods and how they contribute to a healthy diet.
2. Inform the client/caregiver that WIC foods are for the certified client and won’t meet all the nutritional needs of the client, as WIC is a supplemental food program.
3. Prescribe and issue food benefits for the appropriate number of months
   a. Be sure to click the “not present” box under the client’s name, prior to issuing benefits.
   b. Please review policy, FCI: 04.08.00 Issuing Food Benefits without Caregiver/Adult Client Present, for additional information and guidance.

eWIC Client/Caregiver Education:

1. eWIC education shall be provided to all client(s)/caregiver(s) in the following circumstances:
   a. During the first certification appointment,
   b. After any major break in service from the Kansas WIC Program,
   c. When a violation of any program requirements is committed; and
   d. As needed/requested by client(s)
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2. eWIC education video for clients/caregivers is available in English and Spanish in the following locations:
   a. WICShopper app:
      Just click on “Help” and scroll down
   b. Kansas WIC website:
      Click on “Information for Families” and select “eWIC for Families”.
      http://www.kansaswic.org/families/eWIC_for_families.htm
   c. Clients can view it on YouTube:
      English: https://youtu.be/PZUfj7ywaGE
      Spanish: https://youtu.be/UkxwP7uHfVQ

3. Document eWIC education/training on the “basic contact” window in KWIC.

4. Encourage all WIC clients/caregivers to consider downloading the WICShopper app on their mobile devices.
   a. LA staff shall also provide education on the use of the app.

Concluding the certification appointment:

1. Let the client/caregiver know when their next appointment will be and if they will need to supply any missing documentation.
2. What to bring to the next appointment or if it will/can be completed remotely.
3. Thank the client/caregiver for participating in WIC and offer the Local Agency phone number for questions.