KANSAS WIC INFORMATION MEMORANDUM
KANSAS-WIC-I-2023-10

TO: Parent and Sub-Agencies

FROM: Kelly Vickers
Nutrition & WIC Services Interim Director

DATE: July 21, 2023

REMINdERS:
July 26, 2023 New wichealth Lesson Webinar at 1:30 pm CST (register)
July 28, 2023 wichealth’s July Coffee Talk at 12:30 pm CST (register)
Aug 01, 2023 All Vendor Training Due
Aug 20, 2023 July Affidavits Due
Aug 31, 2023 Introduction to the Breastfeeding Peer Counselor Program Webinar at 1:00 pm CST (register)

RE: New Staff and Updated Phone Numbers
Time Studies/Time Sheets Reminder
Seeking Members for WIC Modernization Workgroup
Hybrid Operations Policy Draft and Plans
WEBINAR: Introduction to the Peer Counselor Program

VENDOR ITEMS:
KWIC Vendor Update
Wal-Mart Training & Shelf Labels
State Agency Out of Stock Vendor Items
LA Questions Regarding Monitoring & Training
Vendor & Cashier Training Links

New Staff and Updated Phone Numbers
We are pleased to announce the addition of state staff members Roman Gonzales as Administrative Specialist and Chelsea Miller as a Vendor Manager. Also, Linda Speirs has a new phone number. Her number is (785) 925-6436.

Chelsea’s bio: Thank you for offering me the great opportunity to work for KDHE. I hope to be an asset in contributing in making the organization even more successful. It is a pleasure being part of such a great team. I look forward to working with other staff to ensure the quality of care we can for the community. I have a love and desire to help people and the community and KDHE provides many ways to be able to do just that. Here is a little bit about my background.
I worked for the Kansas Department of Corrections on and off for several years. I then knew it was time for a change, and I applied for KDHE and was offered the position. I graduated from Silver Lake JR/SR Highschool in 2017. I attended KCKCC on a full ride scholarship for softball and studied criminal justice and psychology. I love going to the shooting range, fishing, but most importantly spending time with my dad and my family. My dream goal is being able to give back to my parents for everything they have done for me.

Roman’s bio: Roman Gonzales is the new administrative specialist here at Nutrition and WIC services. Roman has just moved Topeka from Boston, MA where he was going to school at the world renowned Berklee College of Music. While in Boston, he has had the opportunity to work in a variety of different industries and disciplines. Most recently he was an administrative specialist at Brandeis university’s health center, alongside his role as an active musician. He enjoys spending time with family, comic books, and all things creative.

**ACTION REQUIRED:** Please share with all staff.

**Time Studies/Time Sheets Reminder**

According to Policy [ADM 02.03.03 Local Agency Time and Effort Reporting](#) and the LA Contract, time studies or time sheets should be submitted for all salaried/hourly/contracted employees funded in total or in part by WIC funds. Time studies/sheets should contain a minimum of one month per quarter, show ACTUAL time being paid, and coincide with the affidavit for that month. They should also be signed by the WIC Coordinator.

Some of the LA WIC Time Study forms we have received are missing information, not signed or do not have accurate Totals or Percentages at the bottom. Please make sure that your agency’s time studies are accurate before sending them to the State Agency (SA).

**ACTION REQUIRED:** Notify WIC staff, as well as other Health Department or County staff who are involved with providing time studies/sheets to the WIC Program. Ensure the accuracy and completeness of the time studies/sheets, including signatures, before sending them to the SA. All time studies not previously submitted, should be sent to KDHE.KSWICFiscal@ks.gov.

**Seeking Members for WIC Modernization Workgroup**

We are seeking 8–12 local agency members for a WIC modernization workgroup. The intention of this workgroup is to provide insight and guidance to the State agency as Kansas WIC explores new technology and solutions to carry our program into the modern era. Meeting times and frequency have not yet been determined but would likely not be more than once a month or scheduled as needed. State staff may also ask workgroup members for feedback through email in between meetings.

**ACTION REQUIRED:** WIC staff from any position are invited to apply. If interested, please send a brief paragraph about why you’re interested in joining to [Kelly Vickers](#) by July 28, 2023. Applicants will be notified if they were chosen for the workgroup or not by August 15, 2023.
Hybrid Operations Policy Draft and Plans

This is a repeat of a mass email that was sent to local agencies by Danica Pelzel on 7/12/23.

I apologize for the delay in correspondence about the State agency’s policies and plans related to the new modernization remote waivers. As a reminder, the old pandemic waivers end August 9, 2023. The new modernization waivers will be in effect until September 30, 2026. During the next few years, USDA-Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) plans to continue working toward modernization efforts and will provide additional guidance to State agencies. In the meantime, FNS has tasked State agencies who opt into the new modernization waivers with developing policies to support the delivery of hybrid operations.

As previously shared, Kansas WIC has opted into these new modernization waivers. Many Kansas WIC policies need to be updated to align with the delivery of hybrid operations. Since updating the policies will take time, the Kansas WIC State agency has decided to implement a temporary policy for hybrid operations that supersedes other Kansas WIC policies with related content. This policy will be in effect on August 9, 2023. We do not expect local agencies to be implementing everything in the policy perfectly by August 9, but we do expect local agencies to be having discussions about working toward implementation. This temporary hybrid operations policy will be a living document that we expect to change over the next few years as the State and local agencies learn best practices together. We hope to work together as a team and encourage local agencies to submit feedback throughout this process. A comment box will remain open during the next year and longer if deemed necessary. Please submit questions and comments through this feedback box rather than emailing State staff. This will help us track all the feedback we receive and act on or provide timely responses to the feedback. Optional name and email fields are included if you would like a response from State staff.

We have spent time reviewing the responses we received from the survey and comment box that we sent out to local agencies (RESULTS: New Remote Waivers Questions 1–8, New Remote Waivers Questions 9–10, Comment Box). We have considered all of this feedback as we’ve developed a hybrid operations policy draft and plans for supporting local agencies in offering hybrid operations.

We have attached the policy draft for local agencies to review and provide feedback on. The text in red are areas of the policy that we’re still working on and may change before August 9. Please remember that this document is a draft, and some of the black text may change before August 9 as well.

In addition to the policy, we are planning on completing the following within the next year (some by August 9):

- Updating the Special Issuance Authorization form to include blanks for anthropometric and hematological data
- Creating a form for providers to fill in anthropometric and hematological data
- Creating new appointment types in KWIC for remote appointments and measurement checks
- Communicating to clients the importance of measurements through handouts, the program booklet, and the WIC Shopper app
- Sharing a FAQs document with local agencies to address their common questions and concerns
- Sharing KWIC reports with local agencies that list clients missing measurements
• Start fostering relationships with the Kansas Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics, the Kansas Medical Society, and other potential healthcare partners (communicating WIC measurement requirements, discussing data sharing, etc.)
• Create a webpage on the KDHE website that lists local agencies that offer remote appointments
• Provide more written guidance and webinars to local agencies on different topics related to providing hybrid operations (watch for a future email where your local agency can volunteer to contribute to a webinar)

Our multistate consortium is already planning updates to KWIC to address deferred measurements. This will likely be updated within the next couple of years.

We are also researching secure data exchange between providers and KWIC to share anthropometric and hematological data electronically. This will likely not be available for at least another 3 years.

We are also considering a statewide outreach campaign to promote WIC allowing remote certifications—focusing on how WIC is meeting families where they’re at, providing virtual appointments for busy families, and connecting with families the way they prefer to connect.

**ACTION REQUIRED:** Share with WIC staff who may not receive I & P memos. Review the policy draft. If you have questions or comments, please submit through this feedback box rather than emailing State staff.

**WEBINAR: An Introduction to the Breastfeeding Peer Counselor Program**
All WIC staff are invited to attend a webinar on **August 31 from 1-2 pm**. In the webinar, learn about the WIC breastfeeding peer counselor program, peer counselor presence and impact in Kansas, and application requirements. A recording of the webinar will be uploaded to the peer counselor page of the WIC website following the webinar. The webinar will be followed by a Part 2 consisting of a panel of current peer counselors and supervisors, date to be determined.

**ACTION REQUIRED:** Register today. Please share with all WIC staff.

**KWIC Vendor Manager Update**
With the most recent updates to KWIC we are aware that many LA Vendor Managers are having problems accessing the VM screen. Here is the link that will push those updates through and provide you access.

**ACTION REQUIRED:** Share with all authorized LA Vendor Management staff.

**Wal-Mart Training and Shelf Labels**
As part of the onboarding for all Wal-Mart employees they do have built in specifics to WIC. Every employee is required to pass and complete this training. This training does not by-pass the face-to-face training required during contracting years. We are currently working with our
corporate WIC contact regarding the training that all stores are required to complete during non-contracting years. During our review of this training, we did learn that Wal-Mart does have a WIC indicator on the barcode for ALL WIC approved items. The W above the barcode is the indicator. While we appreciate this and hope that it makes checking out easier for our clients, we are not considering this as a WIC approved shelf label.

**ACTION REQUIRED:** Please share with all LA Vendor Management staff.

**State Agency Out of Stock Vendor Items**
The State Agency is currently out of stock on Vendor Materials. We are updating the Vendor Food Cards and the Shelf Labels. We are unsure of a date to have these back in stock, but when they become available, we will add it to the I-Memo.

**ACTION REQUIRED:** Please share with the LA Vendor Management Staff.

**LA Questions Regarding Monitoring**
There have been quite a few questions coming in regarding what is required for vendors that are not in a re-contracting year as well as how to enter monitoring & pricing information into KWIC. If you have any questions regarding this please reach out to kdhe.vendorwic@ks.gov and we will be happy to provide assistance and help walk you through this process.

**ACTION REQUIRED:** Please share with all LA Vendor Management staff.

**Vendor & Cashier Training Links**
The links on the state agency website have been fixed. You can now find the most recent Cashier Training Manual and Vendor Training Manual under the Vendor link. We are working on updating these for 2023. When these are updated, it will be included in a future I-Memo.

**ACTION REQUIRED:** Please share with all LA Vendor Management staff as well as local vendors.

If you have any questions regarding this memo, please contact the state staff member assigned to your agency.

**Items included below and/or provided as separate documents:**

DRAFT Hybrid WIC Operations Policy