

Vermont WIC
Annual Grocer Training
Effective October 2021

MODULE 5 Monitoring and Compliance



1. Overview



1. Overview

Periodic Monitoring

- WIC periodically monitors authorized retailers to ensure compliance with federal laws and state agreement, including:
 - Unannounced store visits and “compliance buys”
 - Investigate complaints
 - Closer monitoring of High Risk stores
 - Secret shoppers
 - Training and/or follow-up contacts
 - Educational buys

2. Violations and Sanctions



2. Violations and Sanctions

Violation and Sanctions Overview

- Violations of the WIC agreement are assigned points by degree of severity.
 - Stores can be suspended or disqualified
 - Penalties affect both WIC and SNAP participation
- Store has appeal rights if state applies sanctions
 - See Grocer Handbook

Vermont WIC Violations

- Vermont WIC Violations and Sanctions are reviewed annually, and grocers are notified of changes.
- Each violation results in points being given to the Grocer. Fewer than 6 points - no disqualification.
- More than 6 points results in disqualification for different periods of time.
- There must be a pattern of the exact same offense before disqualifications occur unless it is a federal violation.
- Grocers will always receive written warning of violations, sanctions, or disqualification.

State Violations and Sanctions

Level I

- We currently have 11 Category I state violations which accrue 2 points which are retained for 12 months. Examples are:
 - Failure to provide promotional specials or accept coupons
 - Failure to provide security during the redemption process
 - Allowing untrained personnel to process eWIC
 - Issuance of a raincheck
 - Failure to provide receipts that meet EBT Operating Rules
 - Failure to offer WIC customers the same courtesies offered to others

State Violations and Sanctions

Level II

- There are 7 Category II Violations which accrue 3 points and are retained for 18 months. Examples are:
 - Contacting participants in an attempt to have them return to the store to fix a grocer error
 - Charging participants a fee for processing WIC cards
 - Accepting the return of items purchased with an eWIC card for cash or credit towards other non-wic purchases
 - Asking participants for identification
 - Requiring cash purchases in order to redeem WIC benefits.

State Violations and Sanctions

Level III

- Category III Violations shall accrue 12 points per violation and be retained for 18 months. They are:
 - Failure to allow on-site monitoring
 - Failure to pay claims

2. Violations and Sanctions

Common Violation Examples

- Failure to provide promotional specials or accept manufacturer coupons or store coupons for WIC purchases
- Failure to make staff available for training in program rules and procedures
- Allowing untrained personnel to accept and process WIC transactions
- Failure to clearly indicate the retail price of all WIC approved items
- Use of the Quantity key in eWIC transactions (no points for this violation)
- Allowing exchange of infant formula or any other food for another brand or kind of food

3. Report Changes



3. Report Changes

You Must Notify WIC When:

- Ownership changes or store closes
 - Notify WIC at least 30 days in advance
- Name or address changes
 - Notify WIC at least 30 days in advance
- Store Manager or WIC contact changes

Contact Information

Phone: 802-863-7333 Email: WIC@vermont.gov