

ITCA WIC Program Vendor Selection Criteria

Vendors requesting authorization for participation in the ITCA WIC Program must meet all of the authorization criteria listed at initial authorization and throughout the contract term, including changes to the criteria that occur during the contract period. Failure to meet any of the Selection Criteria will result in denial of a vendor's application or termination of the contract.

Must be a full line grocery store and carry at a minimum:

- Cereal-5 or more varieties with 5 or more units of each variety
- Bread- 4 or more varieties of bread or tortillas with 5 or more units of each variety
- Dairy-5 or more varieties with 5 or more units of each variety, it can be a combination of milk, cheese and yogurt
- Fruit- 7 or more varieties with 7 units of each variety
- Vegetables- 7 or more varieties with 7 units of each variety
- Meat- 4 or more varieties with 5 units of each variety

**Note: Participant access stores and stores located on reservation lands of federally recognized Tribes are exempt from this requirement.*

Must be a viable business

The vendor must be a viable business, open for at least one year prior to submitting a vendor application for authorization.

**Note: Participant access stores and stores located on reservations lands of federally recognized Tribes are exempt from this requirement.*

Must be EBT Capable

For initial authorization, the vendor must be able to demonstrate that their POS can accept WIC EBT Purchases, obtain a benefit balance, and complete a WIC transaction accurately and securely, and exchange updated files with the ITCA WIC Program. Internet access is required.

**Note: Participant access stores and stores located on reservation lands of federally recognized Tribes may receive support from the ITCA WIC Program to become EBT capable.*

Minimum Stock Requirements

Minimum inventory must be maintained by the vendor, at all times throughout the contract period. Vendors must submit the ITCA WIC Program Food Item Declaration Form to declare their brands of milk, eggs and cheese WIC customers must purchase. The ITCA WIC Program Food Items Declaration form will remain in effect until the end of the contract period or a new form is received and accepted. Vendor must stock the brands, types and/or package sizes of foods listed on the Arizona WIC Programs

Approved Food List according to the guidelines below and including contracted infant formulas in accordance with the minimum stock requirements.

Hours of Business

The vendor must be open for business at least 8 hours per day, 5 days per week.

Competitive Price Evaluation

To ensure prices charged by a vendor are competitive with other vendors, an applicant's enrollment price survey on 5 main food items will be compared to the current NTE prices within their peer group. If the applicant's prices are not more than 25 percent of the current NTE prices for the five main food items, then the applicant will be considered. If the calculated amount exceeds the allowable reimbursement level, the vendor may be denied. The price evaluation also serves as a means to ensure competitive prices during the contract period.

Accessibility to WIC Clients

The store is located in a neighborhood where WIC clients live.

History of Compliance

ITCA will consider a vendor's prior history of compliance with WIC policies and regulations in the past 3 years including those of other WIC programs including Navajo Nation and Arizona WIC programs. The vendor or owner shall not have been sanctioned or disqualified from participating in SNAP (previously Food Stamps Program), WIC or any other Food and Nutrition Service program in the past 3 years.

Volume of WIC Business

The Vendor must average at least \$250.00 in eWIC transactions per month on an annual basis.

SNAP Authorized

The vendor/applicant must be SNAP authorized.

Sanitation

The vendor/applicant shall be in compliance with all state, federal, municipal and local sanitation standards. Store shall be clean and free of rodents, insects and other pests. Vendor shall keep freezer and refrigeration equipment that store WIC authorized foods at the required safe temperatures. The vendor shall also maintain and display a current Health Code Operating Permit (Exceptions may be made for stores on tribal lands). The Vendor must also notify ITCA immediately and in writing should the current Health Code Operating Permit and any required license or certificate be denied, suspended or revoked. If ITCA becomes aware that the Vendor has failed to maintain sanitation or food safety standards, it may notify the proper regulatory office.

Conflict of Interest

There shall be no conflict of interest between the vendor and ITCA or its local agencies. A conflict of interest relates to the standard of ethical conduct that no officer or employee shall have any interest, financial or otherwise, direct or indirect, or engage in any business transaction or professional activity or incur any obligation of any nature which is in conflict with the discharge of a person's duties. If ITCA determines that a conflict of interest exists between the Vendor and ITCA or ITCA's local agencies, ITCA may terminate the vendor contract.

Business Integrity

ITCA shall deny applications for authorization if the vendor/applicant or its current owners, officers, or managers have been convicted of or had a civil judgment entered against them for any activity indicating a lack of business integrity. Activities indicating a lack of business integrity include, but are not limited to, fraud, antitrust violations, embezzlement, theft, forgery, bribery, falsification or destruction of records, making false statements, receiving stolen property, making false claims, or obstruction of justice.

Current SNAP Disqualification or Civil Money Penalty for Hardship

The state agency may not authorize a vendor applicant that:

- Is currently disqualified from SNAP.
- Has been assessed a SNAP civil money penalty based on hardship.
- Is in an imposed disqualification period that has not yet expired.

However, if the denial for authorization results in inadequate client access, the state agency may consider the applicant under special circumstances.

Wholesaler List/Infant Formula

The vendor must only purchase formula from the list of infant formula wholesalers, distributors and retailers and infant formula manufacturers provided by ITCA.

Incentive Items

For-profit vendors that derive or are expected to derive more than 50% of their annual food sales revenue from the sale of supplemental foods obtained from WIC transactions (includes all WIC programs) are not allowed to provide incentive items or other free merchandise. Vendors are not allowed to offer incentive items to WIC clients that are not offered to non-WIC customers. Services obtained at no cost to the A-50 vendor or of nominal value are allowable incentive items. For-profit goods or services offered by the A-50-vendor to WIC clients at fair market value based on comparable for-profit goods or services of other businesses are not incentive items subject to approval or prohibition, except that such goods or services must not constitute a conflict of interest or result in a liability for the WIC Program. Anything made available in a public area as a complimentary gift which may be consumed or taken without charge is a prohibited incentive item.

WIC Only Vendors

For-profit vendors/vendor applicants that derive or are expected to derive more than 50% of their annual food sales revenue from the sale of supplemental foods obtained from WIC transactions (includes all WIC programs) will be terminated/denied from authorization unless the vendor is needed to ensure client access. Newly authorized vendors will be monitored 6 months after authorization to ensure that they are not above 50 % Vendors.

ACH Payments

Vendors must have a bank account used for depositing WIC checks and accept ACH payments.

Equal Treatment

The vendor must offer WIC customers the same courtesies that are offered to other, non-WIC customers. Vendors may not exclude WIC customers from in-store promotions, this includes: disallowing the use of coupons or other vendor discounts in WIC transactions that are allowed in non-WIC transactions. The vendor may not treat WIC customers differently by offering them incentive items, vendor discounts, coupons or other promotions that are not offered to non-WIC customers.

Split Payment

The vendor must have a register that can accommodate a split tender when completing a WIC fruit and vegetable check transaction.