



**WISCONSIN DEPARTMENT**  
*of* **HEALTH SERVICES**

# **eWIC and Program Integrity – Managing Information for Effectiveness in Inventory Audits**



Ross Bradley  
Senior Auditor – WI DHS OIG  
September 19, 2019

# eWIC – What is it?



- **Card used by participant for WIC EBT (Electronic Benefits Transfer)**
- **Replaces paper WIC checks**
- **Works like a debit system**

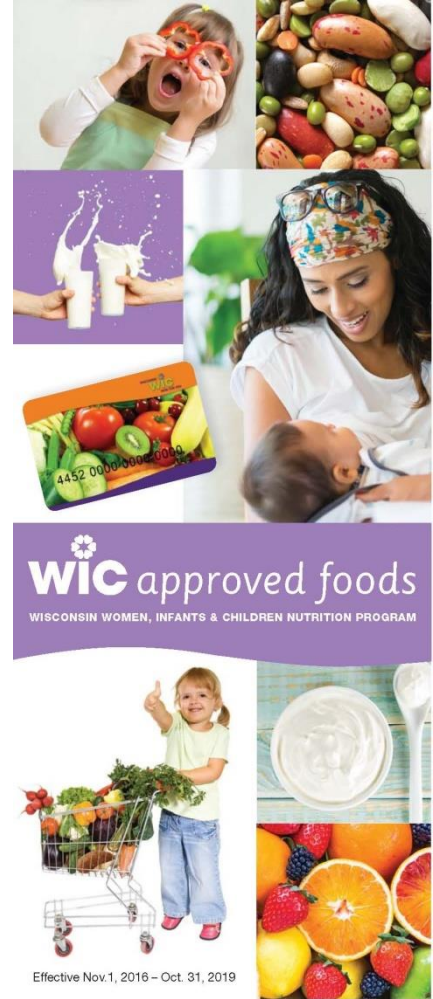
# Benefit for participants



- Added security & protection
- Ease of use/management

# eWIC

- Same rules apply – no substitutions
- Non-approved items will not scan
- Vendors required to scan actual item



# Wait, won't eWIC stop fraud?

- Yes and no
  - It's a tool, not its own solution
- Provides additional barriers
  - But people will ALWAYS find new ways to exploit things
- Inventory audits now more important than ever

# Why Audits?

- Wisconsin WIC
  - Concentrated areas with potential high amounts of WIC fraud
- Hired two auditors, one compliance manager
  - Audits have been more effective than compliance buys
  - Issues with compliance buys

# What information does it provide for agencies?

- Just about everything!
  - Vendor
  - Transaction Date & Time
  - Family & Account
  - Product UPC & description (brand, size, name)
  - Selling price
  - Amount/Quantity Sold



# How is that useful for inventory audits? Before:

- Data analysis
  - Effectively identify risk indicators
    - High risk vendors, federal requirement
    - Better to focus audits
    - Identify trends & flags
      - Participant traffic
      - Unusual characteristics
      - Patterns
  - Pair with store visit





# Before (cont.)

- Expand scope and range
- Expand outside typical areas
  - WI – Other than larger urban areas
  - Don't need to solely go after “low hanging fruit”

# How is that useful for inventory audits? During:

- Extract and organize/categorize redemptions
- Effectively determine scope and range
  - Manage and audit greater amounts and time periods
- Execute audit in a timely fashion



# How is that useful for inventory audits? After:

- Compare information quickly
- Identify patterns in redemption and invoice data
- Appeal process – barriers to explanations
  - Simply showing shortage often not good enough – administrative hearings will demand more
- You really are an investigator now
  - Get that information to tell a story

# Seems like a lot to handle...

- It is a lot, but it makes things easier, not tougher – / *promise!*

# Right, but *how*?

- Software already available can make it very easy
  - MS Access
    - Reports
    - Queries
  - MS Excel
    - *Pivot* Tables(!)



# Examples/Exercise







SO  
WHAT?

# Results

- Effective deterrent
  - Overall intent is to provide nutrition
  - As we develop new techniques, so will the bad actors
  - Stay ahead, make barriers – ensure that goals are met
    - “Breaking up” scanning
- Make audits into an effective *management* tool, not a “crime fighting” one



# Next Steps

- Learn and develop new ways to use and manage
- Use what you have
  - Your audit results give you new information to use; continue to refine and develop
  - Constraints
  - Can be simple and done without “fancy” tools
- Make it your own
  - Each program is different and has its own set of challenges
  - *You know your program, you can make it work for you*

# Questions?

[rosst.bradley@wi.gov](mailto:rosst.bradley@wi.gov)

608.266.9537 – desk

608.843.2369 – cell