

State of New Mexico WIC Program Disaster Plan

2019 Novel Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19)

***Clinic Version (Tier II): Providing Expedited Services During Clinic
Closures***



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Background

A new coronavirus is causing an outbreak of pneumonia. The virus was first identified in December 2019, among people who visited a seafood and animal market in Wuhan City, China. Health authorities have confirmed that the virus is able to spread from person to person. Cases have been identified in the United States.

The New Mexico Department of Health, Public Health Division is closely monitoring this outbreak in collaboration with other national, state and local partners. This is a rapidly evolving situation and the New Mexico WIC Program is in constant communication as we await updates and guidance from the department.

In the case of this Public Health Emergency, the New Mexico Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) program will implement these procedures if WIC services have been or need to be disrupted. The state agency (SA) will focus on providing support to WIC Clinics and Contract Agencies affected by this emergency.

WIC is a federally funded program that serves a specific population with special nutritional needs. WIC is not designed or funded to meet the basic nutritional needs of disaster victims who would not otherwise be eligible under the program. Unlike the distribution of commodities or the emergency issuance of food stamps, there is no legislatively mandated role for WIC in disaster relief, nor is there legislative authority for using WIC food funds for purposes other than providing allowable food benefits to categorically eligible participants. WIC must operate in disaster situations within its current program context and funding. For these reasons, WIC is not to be considered a first line of defense in responding to nutritional needs of disaster victims, including the provision of infant formula.

During this period of emergency, every reasonable effort will be made to continue issuance of food benefits to participants.

Tier II Definition

Tier II is defined as follows: Clinics have closed to the public and services are provided through outdoor express lanes. This method will help to expedite services and reduce exposure for both staff and the applicants/participants. The physical presence requirement is waived for applicants/participants, but an endorser or proxy must be present to complete the appointment.

Best Practices for Preventing Illness

Best practice for preventing illness and the spread of the virus, please refer to

1. <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/protect/prevent.html>
2. <https://cv.nmhealth.org/>
3. In addition, after any contact with an applicants/participants EBT card, ID, etc., staff must immediately wash their hands, and wipe down all surfaces that may have been touched, card readers, signature pads, copy machine, etc.

WIC State and Clinic Protocol

State Agency Responsibilities:

1. The SA will develop a plan for continuation of WIC services to the best of their ability.
2. The SA will assess all inventory, including EBT Cards, statewide.
3. The SA will coordinate communications and services with other state and federal programs, and all WIC business partners.
4. The SA will communicate with vendors to assure clear messaging regarding WIC service continuance. The SA will request immediate contact from vendors if they experience any disruption in normal business operations that directly impact WIC Families, (i.e. cannot meet minimum stocking requirements or have a change in business hours). SA will document any vendor correspondence.
5. The SA will work with the Drop Ship vendor regarding possible deliveries of special formula to a participant's home or an acceptable physical address, or special instructions for delivery to clinics.
6. The SA will work with the New Mexico Department of Health Media & Social Media Manager to issue press release(s) and update all social media sites as needed.
7. The SA will update the New Mexico WIC website as necessary.
8. The SA will utilize Mass Text in NMSOL to communicate ongoing changes and/or updates with WIC families (i.e. Scheduling accommodations, clinic closures, etc.).
9. The SA will partner with Department of Health Leadership and Regional Directors to communicate planned operations during clinic closures.

Region/Clinic Responsibilities:

1. All New Mexico regional clinics will follow all procedures listed in this document.
2. Clinics will communicate with the public (i.e. post all signage) according Department of Health and WIC State Office direction.
3. Clinics will post signage giving directives to UPS/USPS etc. for deliveries.
4. Clinics will assess all inventory including EBT Cards, gloves, caviwipes, etc. and order as necessary.
5. Clinics will review proper handwashing techniques and appropriate way for glove removal.
6. Clinic staff will refer applicants/participants to any available food assistance and/or HSD for Emergency Food Assistance or Expedited SNAP benefits.
https://www.hsd.state.nm.us/LookingForAssistance/Emergency_Food_Assistance.aspx
7. Clinics will defer all other WIC duties (i.e. Vendor Monitoring, Outreach, etc.) until or unless otherwise directed. The primary focus is feeding WIC families.
8. Program Managers will notify the NM WIC Director if they encounter any barriers to providing WIC services from local governments.

Safety and Security Protocol

Additional precautions are implemented to ensure the protection and safety of WIC staff and WIC families. Clinic services will be provided as follows:

1. Signage will indicate that the building is closed to the public, but the WIC office will continue services. The sign must include clear directives for applicants/participants to call and let staff know they are 'in the designated express lane'.
2. When speaking to the applicant/participant on the phone, staff will inquire if they are experiencing symptoms of respiratory infection (i.e. cough, sore throat, fever). If the applicant/participant indicates 'yes', staff will ask to reschedule or assign a proxy to come to the appointment. If 'no', staff will ask the applicant/participant to have their EBT card and ID ready.
3. Staff will utilize the TIER II Checklist for Screening Applicants/Participants to answer NMSOL required questions to process the appointment.
4. Prior to exiting the clinic and approaching participant vehicles, staff must put on unused gloves.
5. When approaching participant vehicles, staff will use precautionary measures to ensure personal safety.
6. To the best extent possible, staff will maintain the greatest distance between them and the applicant/participant.
7. Staff will collect the applicant/participants' EBT card (if available) and ID and inform the participant to remain in their vehicle, and that they will return with their cards as soon as possible.
8. Staff will return to the clinic and process the appointment according to the Procedures for Processing Affected Disaster Applicants/Participants as outlined in this document.
9. Using the same safety precautions outlined above, staff will return the participants EBT card, ID, Shopping List, and HCSS brochure to the vehicle.
10. Upon re-entry to the clinic, staff will remove gloves and immediately wash their hands according to best practices. Staff will ensure that all surfaces that were touched are wiped down (i.e. signature pad, card reader, copy machine, etc.)

Procedures for Processing Affected Disaster Applicants/Participants

The following policies and procedures will be implemented to expedite services and ensure continuity of care.

New Certifications or Recertifications (Follow this process in order)

NOTE: *Staff must clean card and ID with Caviwipes prior to entering the card into the card reader. Staff must read the card to open the Family record.*

Staff will utilize the Disaster Mode function in NMSOL to expedite processing of certifications/recertifications. Assigning Disaster Mode on the Family page in NMSOL allows applicants/participants to be provisionally certified for 120 days with only a risk code and food package selected. Other documentation for a certification/recertification such as anthropometrics, blood work, health history, VENA, are deferred during the Disaster Mode certification appointment.

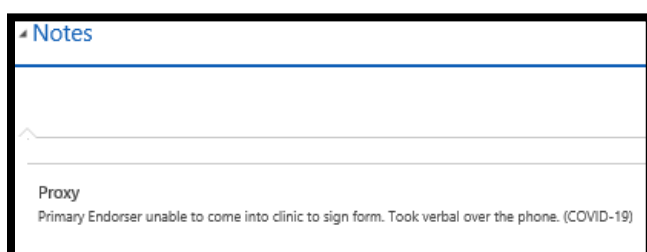
Note: All NMSOL (*) required fields will still need to be entered on each page in order to move forward with the abbreviated certification.

Endorsers/Proxies:

Staff must ensure that the correct endorser is selected on the Family page prior to obtaining signatures on any documents.

When WIC participants are unable to attend appointments or redeem benefits because they or another family member are under quarantine (voluntary or involuntary), they may designate a proxy to attend appointments or redeem WIC benefits on their behalf. Staff will make every effort to ensure all appropriate proxy documentation is captured. If it is not possible to obtain proxy documentation, staff are permitted to take verbal permission via phone from the primary endorser on file. All proxy assignments must be entered as an Endorser on the Family page, and documentation must be entered in the Notes field on the Endorser page.

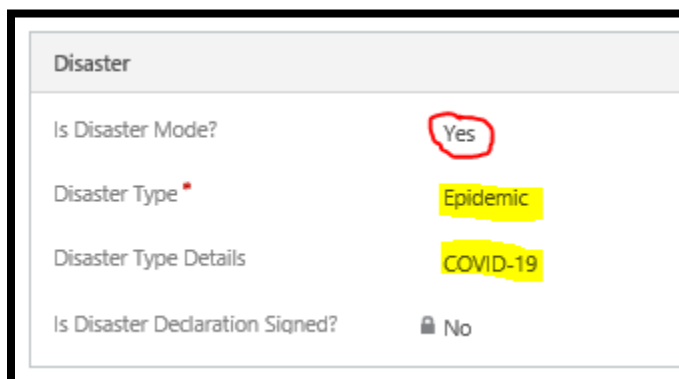
Example:



A screenshot of the 'Notes' field on the Endorser page. The field is titled 'Notes' in blue. Below the title, there is a text area containing the following text: 'Proxy Primary Endorser unable to come into clinic to sign form. Took verbal over the phone. (COVID-19)'.

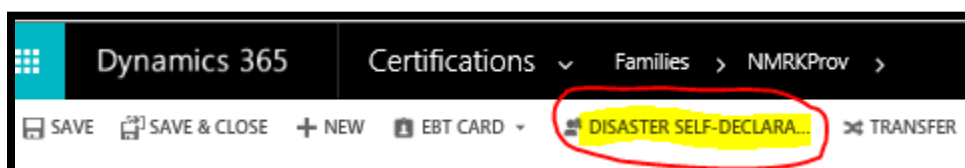
Disaster Mode (Family):

Upon selecting Disaster Mode (on the Family Page), staff will document the following:



A screenshot of the 'Disaster' form. The form has a title bar 'Disaster'. Below the title bar, there are four questions with corresponding answers: 'Is Disaster Mode?' with the answer 'Yes' (circled in red), 'Disaster Type' with the answer 'Epidemic' (highlighted in yellow), 'Disaster Type Details' with the answer 'COVID-19' (highlighted in yellow), and 'Is Disaster Declaration Signed?' with the answer 'No'.

After the page is saved, staff must navigate to the Disaster Self-Declaration form.



A screenshot of the Dynamics 365 navigation bar. The bar shows the following items: 'Dynamics 365', 'Certifications' (with a dropdown arrow), 'Families' (with a right arrow), 'NMRKProv' (with a right arrow), 'SAVE', 'SAVE & CLOSE', '+ NEW', 'EBT CARD' (with a dropdown arrow), 'DISASTER SELF-DECLARA...' (highlighted in yellow and circled in red), and 'TRANSFER'.

Most questions will be answered 'No'. Question # 4 should be set to 'Yes' for all certifications/recertifications during this situation, regardless if family has benefits in hand.

My/my child's food benefits had not been received for the current month.

YES

Back Continue

4 / 9

On the 1st signature line for the participant, staff will write 'Verified ID' in place of the participant signature.

The 2nd required signature is for WIC staff. Staff will sign as normal.

WIC Self-Declaration Form for Disaster Victims

Clinic Information:
 Name: Santa Fe Southside WIC Office
 Address: 2538 Camino Entrada Suites 204-205 Santa Fe
 Santa Fe NM 87507
 Phone No: 505-476-2602 N/A

Mark the statements that describe your situation:

☐ My/my child's food benefits were received and lost in the disaster.
☐ My/my child's food benefits were received and cashed and WIC food was lost in the disaster.
☐ My/my child's food benefits were received and cashed and WIC food was left behind.
☒ My/my child's food benefits had not been received for the current month.
☐ I am/my child is a victim of disaster and has no acceptable proof of identification for myself/my child.
☐ I am/my child is a victim of disaster and has no acceptable proof of residency for myself/my child.
☐ I am/my child is a victim of disaster and homeless and unable to provide proof of income.

Reason for disaster:
 Disaster Type: Epidemic
 Disaster Type Details: COVID-19

Participant's Affected
 1. RK NMRK TEST FFHH
 2. Test NMRK Disaster

By signing this form, I affirm that I/my child am not applying for services at any other WIC program during this crisis and am not staying in a shelter that is providing food/formula.

Verified ID

2020-03-14 18:38:25

Applicant/Participant/Parent or Guardian Signature Date

WIC Official Signature Title Date

Navigate to Document Management on the Family page to ensure the Document Status is 'Signed'.

Document Management			
Document Name	Document Status ↑	Document Link	Created On ↑
Disaster Self Declaration For...	Signed	https://biattrafficmgr03.fnsmis.com/I/8HyEY...	3/12/2020 6:55 AM

Or verify in the Disaster Mode section on the Family page:

Disaster	
Is Disaster Mode?	Yes
Disaster Type *	Epidemic
Disaster Type Details	COVID-19
Is Disaster Declaration Signed?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes

Income/Residency:

Staff will document monthly household income in the Notes field on the Family page. If the participant is adjunct eligible, staff will also enter adjunct eligibility type (SNAP, Medicaid, etc.) and Program Enrollment Number (PEN). Staff will verify and note that the applicant/participants physical and mailing address has been updated.

Notes
POSTS
<div> <div></div> <div> Income/Residency - COVID -19 Monthly Income = \$1500.00 Adjunct = Medicaid - PEN 555222111 or N/A Residency= Updated Address </div> </div>

The Certifying Authority must then complete all required fields in the Family and Participant pages as necessary to complete the certification.

Participant Type:

Certifying Authority must change 'Participant Type' to 'Disaster' on each applicant/participant being certified/recertified.

Participant Category	
Participant Category *	Pregnant
Participant Type *	Disaster
Participant Profile	Pregnant-Pregnant
Miscarriage	<input type="checkbox"/>

NOTE: If appointment type is 'Recertification', staff will click 'Start-Recertification' after changing Participant Type.

Risk Code:

Certifying Authority must manually enter the following Risk Code according to Participant Profile if no other Risk Codes are auto assigned:

- Pregnant: **RC 401:** Failure to Meet Dietary Guidelines for Americans
- Breastfeeding/Nursing: **RC 401:** Failure to Meet Dietary Guidelines for Americans
- Postpartum: **RC 401:** Failure to Meet Dietary Guidelines for Americans
- Child 12-23 Months: **RC 428:** Dietary Risk Associated with Complementary Feeding Practices
- Child 24-59 Months: **RC 401:** Failure to Meet Dietary Guidelines for Americans
- Infant: **RC 428:** Dietary Risk Associated with Complementary Feeding Practices

When the risk code is manually assigned for disaster certifications, the Certifying Authority will document the following in the Notes section of the Participant Risk Code page:

*Disaster Cert
COVID-19*

PARTICIPANT RISK CODE		Owner: Santa Fe Southside WIC Office
401		
General		
Participant *	Testing NMRKProv	NOTES Enter a note Disaster Cert COVID-19 You - Just now
Assigned Method *	Manual	
Risk Code *	401	
Risk Code Expires		

Standard Food Package:

The Certifying Authority must assess and customize the food package for each applicant/participant according to current NM WIC policy. The State Office will send out additional guidance if the situation changes and additional food package customizations are recommended.

Referrals:

Staff will continue to provide applicants/participants with the Healthcare and Social Service Programs brochure (documented in the Participant page Referrals section as General (HCSS)). Other referrals may be provided as appropriate for each family.

Counseling:

Staff will inquire (by phone prior to collecting card) and provide nutrition counseling as requested by the applicant/participant. Health History Questionnaires/VENA are not required to complete disaster certification.

Completing the Certification:

NOTE: Within the term of the disaster situation, an Eligibility Interviewer may certify any participant category, regardless of priority or risk level. However, if the applicant/participant requires or requests a higher level of care, staff will refer to a Nutritionist.

After the Disaster certification requirements are met, the Certifying Authority must certify the participant/applicant and complete the Rights & Responsibilities document in NMSOL prior to benefits issuance. Staff will write 'Verified ID' in place of the participant signatures on both signature lines. Staff will indicate that the participants information is not to be shared (ensuring 'No' is indicated on both questions).

NOTE: The Certification Ribbon will show 'Pending' status for Income, Identity, Residency, Anthropometric, Blood work, and Health History. Staff should ensure that WIC Status is 'Pending' and WIC Status Reason is 'Certified Pending Signature' before returning the Family page for Rights and Responsibilities and benefits.

The screenshot displays the NMSOL Certification Ribbon with the following sections and data:

- Initial Application:** Application Date: 4/23/2019 9:26 AM
- Manage Certification (Active f...):**
 - Income Eligibility Sta.: Pending
 - Race Status: COMPLETED
 - Identity Status: Pending
- Health Assessment:**
 - Residency Status: Pending
 - Anthropometric Stat.: Pending
 - Blood Work Status: Pending
- Prescribe Food Package:**
- Complete Certification:**
 - Health History Status: Pending
 - Participant Category: Child
 - Participant Priority: 5

At the bottom, it shows "Certification Process (Active for 329 days, 6 hours)" and a "Next Stage" button.

Copy ID:

Staff will make a photo copy of each applicant/participant/proxy ID. By the end of each business day, staff will scan and upload the photocopy into the Notes section on the Family page.

The screenshot shows the "Notes" section with a "POSTS" tab selected. A post titled "ID - Disaster" is visible, containing the text "ID for family COVID-19" and a link "ID - NMRK Test Disaster Family.docx". The post is attributed to "You" and is dated "Just now".

Benefit Issuance/Scheduling:

Staff will issue the maximum benefit periods allowable within the certification period (up to 4 months). Staff will encourage participants to complete online nutrition education. Staff will defer all required

nutrition education contacts during this disaster timeframe. The next appointment for all participants certified in 'Disaster Mode' will be set as 'Provisional Follow-up'.

NOTE: If 4 months is allowable and there are no current month benefits on the card, staff must issue and write 3 months to the card. Then, staff must create a new issuance with 1 additional month and write to card a second time.

Staff will refer to the Disaster Recovery procedures in this document for follow up scheduling as NM WIC returns to normal operations.

NOTE: After Benefits Issuance, participant Status will show 'Active' and Status Reason will show 'Provisional'.

Participants							
Full Name	Participant Category	Date of Birth ↑	Certification End Date	Gender	Is Foster Child	Status ↑	Status Reason
Jane NMMSCovidTraining1	Pregnant	8/13/1985	7/14/2020	Female	No	Active	Provisional

Modifying Benefits In-Hand Recertifications/Adding New Certifications to Existing Families:

NOTE: Always issue the maximum allowable benefits months (up to a maximum of 4 months). The steps listed below will be used when benefits must be modified for the current month and issued for future months.

1. After certifying/recertifying all applicants/participants, and the R&R is signed, navigate to the Family Page Disaster section.
2. Change Is Disaster Mode? to No.

Disaster	
Is Disaster Mode?	No
Disaster Type
Disaster Type Details
Is Disaster Declaration Signed?	Yes

NOTE: The Is Disaster Declaration Signed? field will stay 'Yes'. This is expected and will not cause any problems.

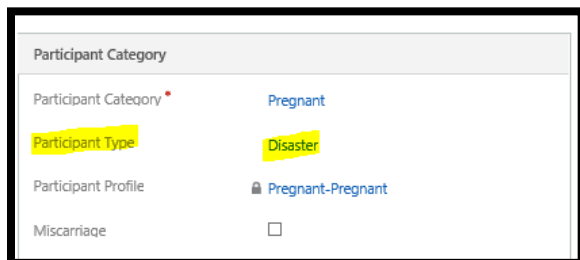
3. Save.
4. Navigate to Family Benefit Issuance.
5. Modify the current month, and Issue future months using standard functionality.

NOTE: The Disaster Mode Section on the Family Page will return to 'No' after benefits have been written to the card. This is expected system functionality and no further action by staff is needed.

All Other Appointments (Group Ed, Midcert, Midpoint, All Counseling, etc.)

NOTE: *Staff must clean card and ID with Caviwipes prior to entering the card into the card reader. Staff must read the card to open the Family record.*

For every participant who is served during this disaster situation, WIC Staff will change the 'Participant Type' to 'Disaster' on the Participant page.



The screenshot shows a web form titled "Participant Category". It contains several fields: "Participant Category" with a red asterisk and the value "Pregnant"; "Participant Type" with a yellow highlight and the value "Disaster"; "Participant Profile" with a lock icon and the value "Pregnant-Pregnant"; and "Miscarriage" with an empty checkbox.

Benefits Issuance

NOTE: If 4 months is allowable and there are no current month benefits on the card, staff must issue and write 3 months to the card. Then, staff must create a new issuance with 1 additional month and write to card a second time.

Group Education:

When participants come into the clinic for a Group Education appointment (class), staff will issue the maximum benefit periods allowable within the certification period (up to 4 months). Staff will provide individual counseling as needed or requested by the family/participant (by phone prior to collecting card). When individual counseling is not provided, staff will encourage participants to complete online Nutrition Education classes.

Lactation Counseling:

To continue supporting breastfeeding/nursing families, and to limit unnecessary exposure, staff will attempt to contact participants prior to Lactation Counseling appointments and complete counseling over the phone.

Other Counseling:

Staff will attempt to contact participants by phone prior to the appointment, and provide nutrition counseling as requested by the participant. Staff will encourage and remind participant to complete online Nutrition Education classes.

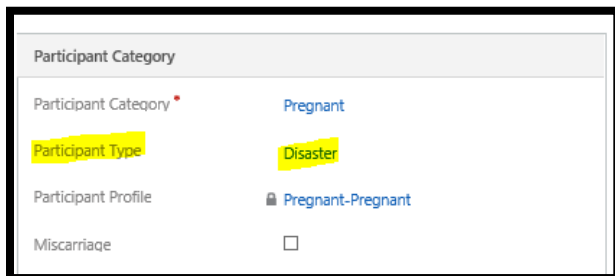
Midcert/Midpoint:

Midcert and Midpoint appointments including collection of Anthropometric and Blood Work data will be deferred until NM WIC returns to normal operations. Staff will inquire and provide nutrition counseling over the phone as requested by the participant.

Other Clinic Services

NOTE: *Staff must clean the EBT card and ID with Caviwipes prior to inserting the card into the card reader. Staff must insert and read the EBT card to open every Family record.*

For every participant who is served during this disaster situation, WIC Staff will change the 'Participant Type' to 'Disaster' on the Participant page.



The screenshot shows a web form titled 'Participant Category'. It contains several fields: 'Participant Category' with a red asterisk, 'Participant Type' (highlighted in yellow), 'Participant Profile' with a lock icon, and 'Miscarriage' with an unchecked checkbox. The 'Participant Type' dropdown menu is open, showing 'Pregnant' and 'Disaster' (highlighted in yellow). The 'Participant Profile' dropdown menu is also open, showing 'Pregnant-Pregnant'.

Prescriptions:

Staff will follow current WIC policy related to prescription formula. Every effort should be made to obtain the prescription form (i.e. via fax). Staff may offer families the option of asking providers to upload prescriptions to the 'Contact Us' section of the New Mexico WIC website (nmwic.org). The State Office will deliver any received prescription forms to appropriate clinics. If regions are having difficulty with prescription approvals, they must contact the State Office for assistance. In addition, if participants are having difficulty obtaining prescription forms from their primary care physicians, staff may call the State Office for assistance.

Drop Ship:

Staff will create the maximum allowable issuances according to benefit issuance guidelines above and write to card, creating the maximum number of drop ship orders for the family. Staff will continue to 'Release' orders according to current Drop Ship policy. **Note:** All prescription guidelines must be followed.

Breast Pumps:

Participants that need a breast pump during the time of disaster, will ONLY be issued a Single-User or Manual breast pump. Staff must remind participants that all breast pumps are for individual use only. Staff will perform the issue function for each breast pump and will write 'Verified ID' in place of the participant signature. Staff will print the Release Form and include it with the pump. **Note:** Additional guidance and updates on Multi-User breast pumps will be sent by email to WIC staff from the State Breastfeeding Manager.

Documentation and Reporting

These saved views will be used during disaster recovery to follow up for certification completion and scheduling.

State Agency Responsibilities:

The following views will be used during disaster recovery to follow up for certification completion and scheduling.

State Agency Responsibilities:

Key staff will run the following views daily and save in the State Office Shared Drive:

- 'Participants Certified in Disaster Mode'
- 'Participants with Participant Type Disaster'

Region/Clinic Responsibilities:

Program Managers will run the following views weekly (Monday Morning) and will save in the following location: WIC Shared Documentation > Disaster > COVID-19 > [Region Folder]

- 'Participants Certified in Disaster Mode'
 - Save as '[Region 'View Name' Date]
- 'Participants with Participant Type Disaster'
 - Save as '[Region 'View Name' Date]

Disaster Recovery (Return to Normal Operations)

State Agency Responsibilities:

1. The SA will work with the MIS Vendor to return the default of benefits issuance from 120 days to 90 days.
2. The SA will work with the MIS Vendor to return the default 'Disaster Mode' certification period from 120 days to 90 days.
3. The SA will assess all inventory, including EBT Cards, statewide.
4. The SA will coordinate communications and services with other state and federal programs, and all WIC business partners.
5. The SA will inform the Drop Ship vendor regarding return to normal business operations.
6. The SA will work with the New Mexico Department of Health Media & Social Media Manager to issue a press release and update all social media sites as necessary.
7. The SA will update the New Mexico WIC website as necessary.
8. The SA will utilize Mass Text in NMSOL to communicate return to normal business operations as necessary.
9. Key staff will run the following views weekly and save in the State Office Shared Drive:
 - 'Participants Certified in Disaster Mode'
 - 'Participants with Participant Type Disaster'

Region Responsibilities:

Program Managers, upon direction of the WIC State Office, will run the following views once and will save in the following location: WIC Shared Documentation > Disaster > COVID-19 > Disaster Recovery > [Region Folder].

- 'Participants Certified in Disaster Mode'
 - Save as '[Region 'View Name' Date]
- 'Participants with Participant Type Disaster'
 - Save as '[Region 'View Name' Date]

Clinic Responsibilities:

1. As participants come in for scheduled appointments, staff will change the 'Participant Type' from Disaster to either Standard, Migrant, Military, or Homeless as necessary. **Note:** Staff will not change the Participant Type from Disaster until the participant is physically in the clinic.
2. When participants return to the clinic for their 'Provisional Follow-up' appointment within the 120-day Disaster certification period, staff do not have to click 'Start-Recertification' to extend the certification, but all 'normal' certification requirements that were waived during disaster mode must be entered.
3. For non-certification appointments, staff will perform and enter any Anthropometric or Bloodwork data that was deferred during the disaster period.
4. All clinics will return to normal operations including nutrition education classes, completing certification requirements, and scheduling according to NM WIC policy.

References

- Guide to Coordinating WIC Services During Disasters (2017)
- WIC Policy Memorandum 2007-5: WIC Program Response to a Human Pandemic
- WIC Policy Memorandum 2003-4: Allowable Costs of Bioterrorism Preparedness (referenced in above document)
- WIC Program Questions and Answers on Human Pandemics
- Executive Order 2020-004
<https://www.governor.state.nm.us/about-the-governor/executive-orders/>
- <http://www.newmexico.gov/>