



## The WIC Card



# Communication to Participants

- Developed a tear off announcing “shopping gets a little easier.”
- Given to participants and circulated in the community for 3 months prior to rollout.



# Education for Participants - Video

- Video – showed video at the last appointment, prior to issuing the WIC Card. Most programs continued to play the video through the first 3 months of rollout.
- All programs received English and Spanish versions and a portable DVR player, if needed.
- Also posted to the DPH website.
- Can be viewed on YouTube:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=K0AG8tbqzUI>



# Education for Participants – Brochure

- Printed and drop-shipped to each local program prior to “go live.”
- Given to participants when the WIC Card was issued
- Explained how to use the WIC Card and contained FAQ’s.
- Translated into several languages.
- Posted to the DPH website.
- <http://www.mass.gov/eohhs/docs/dph/wic/the-wic-card-brochure.pdf>



# Participants - Brochure

## GOOD FOOD *and* A WHOLE LOT MORE!

### Common Questions about your Card

#### What is a PIN (Personal Identification Number)?

A PIN is a four-digit secret number that, along with the card, allows access to your WIC benefits. When choosing a PIN, choose four numbers that are easy for you to remember, but hard for someone else to figure out (for example, your parent's or child's birthday).

- DO NOT write your PIN on your card.
- DO NOT give your PIN to anyone that you do not want to use your card. If someone knows your PIN and uses your card to get your food benefits without your permission, those benefits will not be replaced.

#### What if I forget my PIN or want to change it?

You must visit your local WIC office to change your PIN.

#### What if I enter the wrong PIN?

DO NOT try to guess your PIN. If the correct PIN is not entered, on the third try your PIN will be locked. This is done as a protection from someone guessing your PIN and getting your food benefits. There are three ways to unlock your card:

- call your local program
- call the 800 number on the back of your card
- wait until midnight and your account will automatically unlock

#### What should I do if my card is lost or stolen?

Call your local WIC Program right away! They will stop anyone from using your food benefits and help you get a new card.

#### What if my card doesn't work?

Call your local WIC program or the number on the back of your card.

#### When will I have my benefits?

Current food benefits loaded at the WIC office will be available immediately. Food benefits for upcoming months will be deposited onto your WIC card at 12:00 midnight on the beginning date and will expire at 12:00 midnight on the ending date.

#### What should I do with my card after my benefits are used?

SAVE YOUR WIC CARD! Even when all your WIC foods have been purchased, your card is re-usable. Your next set of benefits will be purchased with the same WIC card.

#### What happens if I can't do my own shopping and need someone else to shop for me?

You may have someone else shop for you if you wish. You can give them your WIC Card and PIN. Just make sure this is someone you can trust!

#### What happens if all the WIC foods are not purchased? Will these benefits roll over to the next month?

No, benefits that are not used will expire on the ending date.



1-800-WIC-1007



WIC Nutrition Program • Nutrition Division  
MA Department of Public Health  
[www.mass.gov/wic](http://www.mass.gov/wic) • TDD/TTY: 617-624-5992



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## MASSACHUSETTS WIC NUTRITION PROGRAM



# The WIC Card

# Participants - Brochure

## The new WIC Card is a faster, easier and more convenient way to shop!

WIC has moved from the old paper check system to a new electronic benefits card. Now, WIC purchases will be as fast and easy as making a purchase with a debit or credit card. All of the foods for your whole family will be together on one card.

## Checking Your Account Balance

You can check your account balance two ways:

- Check your last store receipt
- Go to the Customer Service Desk at your grocery store, where you can slide your card into a POS machine to get your balance

## Shopping with your WIC Card

- Buy what you need. You do not have to buy all your foods at one time!
- Have your card ready at check out.
- Before scanning any of your foods, tell the cashier you are using a WIC Card.
- When the cashier tells you, slide your WIC Card in the Point of Sale (POS) machine or hand your WIC Card to the cashier.
- Enter your PIN and press the enter button on the keypad.
- The cashier will scan your foods.
- The amount of approved food items and dollar amount of fruits and vegetables you purchase will be deducted from your WIC account.
- The cashier will give you a receipt which shows your remaining benefit balance and the date benefits expire. Save this receipt for future reference.
- It's important to always remember to swipe your WIC card before any other forms of payment. Any remaining balance can be paid with either cash, EBT, SNAP, or other form of payment accepted by the store.

## Reading Your Receipt

Your cash register receipt will list the WIC food items you bought and the remaining WIC food benefits and expiration date. Here is an example:

STORE NAME ADDRESS			
STORE ID:	WICW006		
TERM ID:	WIC006001		
CLERK ID:	999		
DATE & TIME:	07/01/2014 10:10AM		
SEQ NUMBER:	034		
CARD:	*****0007		
AUTH CODE:	123499		
WIC PURCHASE			
QTY	UNITS	DESCRIPTION	PRICE
18.00	oz	Cheerios 18 oz.	4.99
2.50	\$\$\$	Fruits + Veg	2.50
<hr/>			
TOTAL ITEMS SOLD = 2			
\$ 2.50 - Fruits & Veggies			
<hr/>			
PURCHASE SUBTOTAL			7.49
DISCOUNT APPLIED			0.00
APPROVED PURCHASE TOTAL			7.49
<hr/>			
BALANCE DUE - 0.00			
BENEFITS EXPIRE ON 7-28-14			
QTY	UNITS	DESCRIPTION	
1.00	pkg	16oz Pkg Cheese	
1.00	doz	Dozen Large Eggs	
18.00	oz	Ounces Cereal	
4.00	can	15.5oz Canned Beans	
1.00	pkg	Bread/Rice/Tortillas	
3.00	gal	Gallon 1% Fat Free Milk	
1.00	qt	Qts 1% Fat Free Milk	
2.00	cont	64oz Bottle 100% Juice	
3.50	\$\$\$	Fruits + Veg	
****CARD HOLDER COPY****			
****PLEASE SAVE THIS RECEIPT****			

Keep your receipt to know the balance and the dates to buy your WIC foods.

## Take Care of Your WIC Card

- Keep your PIN confidential.
- Don't write your PIN on your card.
- Keep your WIC Card in your wallet or purse.
- Do NOT give your PIN to anyone that you don't trust.
- Do NOT bend your card.
- Keep your card out of direct sunlight and avoid places such as a car's dashboard.
- Keep your card safe and clean.
- Keep your card away from items such as magnets, cell phones, TVs, and microwaves.

Since your family's WIC food benefits will be deposited onto your card, keep your card and bring it with you each time you come to your WIC appointments.



Remember to bring your WIC Card with you each time you go to your WIC appointments!

# Education for Staff

- All local agency required to attend training, regardless of position.
- Half-day training for staff who didn't typically issue benefits; i.e. nutritionists.
- Full-day training for program assistants.
  - Trained on the “happy path”
  - Trained on more complicated situations – adding new member to a household, food package changes, reissuing E-benefits to a family with existing checks, food package change for a household with E-benefits who transfers to a non-E program.
  - Training materials contained one page flow sheets for the common and complex scenarios.



# Education for Staff

Six talking points were developed for local agency staff to help participants understand the features of the WIC Card system:

- Select a PIN that is easy to remember.
- Buy only **WIC Approved Foods** listed on the **Food Guide** in the quantities listed on the Shopping List.
- Pay close attention to the highlighted benefit period(s), especially the **First Use Date**, on the Shopping List.
  - Purchase all benefits before the end of the benefit period, **Last Use Date**.
  - Benefits expire at midnight and **do not** roll over.







**South End WIC Program**  
**1601 Washington Street**  
**Boston, MA 02118**  
**617-425-2070**

**Household Id: 12345678**

**Benefit Period: 3/9/2015 – 4/8/2015**

**Quantity Food Subcategory**

2	16 oz Pkg cheese
2	Dozen large eggs
72	Ounces Cereal
3	18oz Peanut Butter/Dry beans
3	16oz Bread/Whole Grains
18	Fruits & Vegetables Cash Value
7	Gallon 1%/Fat Free Milk
4	64oz Bottle(s) 100% Fruit Juice

**Benefit Period: 4/9/2015 – 5/8/2015**

**Quantity Food Subcategory**

2	16 oz Pkg cheese
2	Dozen large eggs
72	Ounces Cereal
3	18oz Peanut Butter/Dry beans
3	16oz Bread/Whole Grains
18	Fruits & Vegetables Cash Value
7	Gallon 1%/Fat Free Milk
4	64oz Bottle(s) 100% Fruit Juice

# Education for Staff

Talking points continue:

- Purchases can now be made on an as-needed basis.
  - No longer have to buy everything at one time.
  - Foods are aggregated for all household members.
- Keep store receipts or obtain balance inquiry in order to know the remaining balance.
- Call the 800 number on the back of the WIC Card for questions/concerns.



# Communication with Local Program Staff

- Monthly calls became bi-weekly calls, became weekly calls.
- Began with pilot programs only. Eventually included all sites.
- Readiness checklist given to pilot programs and eventually all local programs.
- Reviewed on every call.



# WIC Card Readiness Activity Timeline

## ✓ WIC Card Readiness Activity Timeline

To achieve a successful WIC Card implementation, several aspects of service delivery need to be addressed before roll out. Planning ahead for how a participant will move through the process of receiving benefits in local programs will help assure that staff and other resources are utilized in the most effective manner possible. Careful consideration of how clinics flow and understanding of the changes the WIC Card requires will result in new policies and procedures that support the success of the WIC Card.

Please utilize the WIC Card Readiness Activity Timeline, in preparation for October 1<sup>st</sup> rollout.

### June

- Discuss appointment scheduling plans with your local program staff for the October 1<sup>st</sup> rollout date.
- Make adjustments to your program's appointment schedule to allow for staff planning, tasks, and attending required trainings prior to the WIC Card October 1<sup>st</sup> rollout.
- Assess the impact of changes associated with individual appointments and group education sessions on clinic flow for scheduling during October 1<sup>st</sup> rollout.
- Schedule appointments with extended times to accommodate all the requirements with the transition to the WIC Card system. Some programs might find it helpful to block out Nutritionist time each morning to allow creating prescriptions to participants that are scheduled for appointments.
- Coordinate with TLC to schedule training.
- Determine where and how you will show the Introduction to the WIC Card DVD to participants. Ensure you have the appropriate number of DVD's and DVD or other players.
- Determine how your local program will capture current prescription information for each participant.
  - Options include:
    - Print the prescription history screen and save in chart
    - Note the participant's current/future prescriptions in the care plan or as a comment
    - Devise checklist/menu-type options for participants on standard prescriptions to use during roll-out
- Ensure that the prescription information for participants seen in group education appointments prior to roll-out is being captured.
- Ensure that local program's self-produced materials/forms that mention WIC checks have been revised to reflect the new WIC Card or a plan for updating the local program's materials/forms has been made.

# WIC Card Readiness Activity Timeline

## ✓ WIC Card Readiness Activity Timeline

### July

- Coordinate with Operations Manager to determine the amount of check stock and MICR toner cartridges needed through rollout.
- Plan for storage and security of WIC Cards at the main site before receiving the inventory and distributing to each site.
- Each site should plan for storage and security of WIC Cards before receiving inventory.
- Begin capturing current prescription information for each participant using the decided upon method.

### August

- Assign appropriate WIC Card responsibilities to each staff position.
- Maintain separation of duties on staff assignments.
- Identify who will be responsible for tasks associated with benefit issuance.
- Determine where each step of benefit issuance will happen.
- Identify the most efficient flow possible for each situation in each clinic setting

### September

- Confirm that all staff have completed appropriate training.
- Discuss how you plan to implement the following new policies and procedures at your local program:

- ✓ Benefits Issued Due to Hardship
- ✓ Foster Children Benefits
- ✓ Replacement of Food Benefits & Exceptions
- ✓ Replacement WIC Card
- ✓ Role of Help Desk v. Operations Desk
- ✓ Shoppers
- ✓ WIC Card Inventory
- ✓ WIC Card Ordering

# Communication with State Agency

- Weekly meetings
  - Contractor/Developers
  - Individual meetings with key units at the State office - Operations, Vendor, Helpdesk.
  - Weekly All Hands on Deck Meeting - reviewed progress made over the past week with each unit and expectations for the upcoming week.
  - No surprises! Staff encouraged to bring issues forward as soon as they become known, not to wait for the weekly meeting.

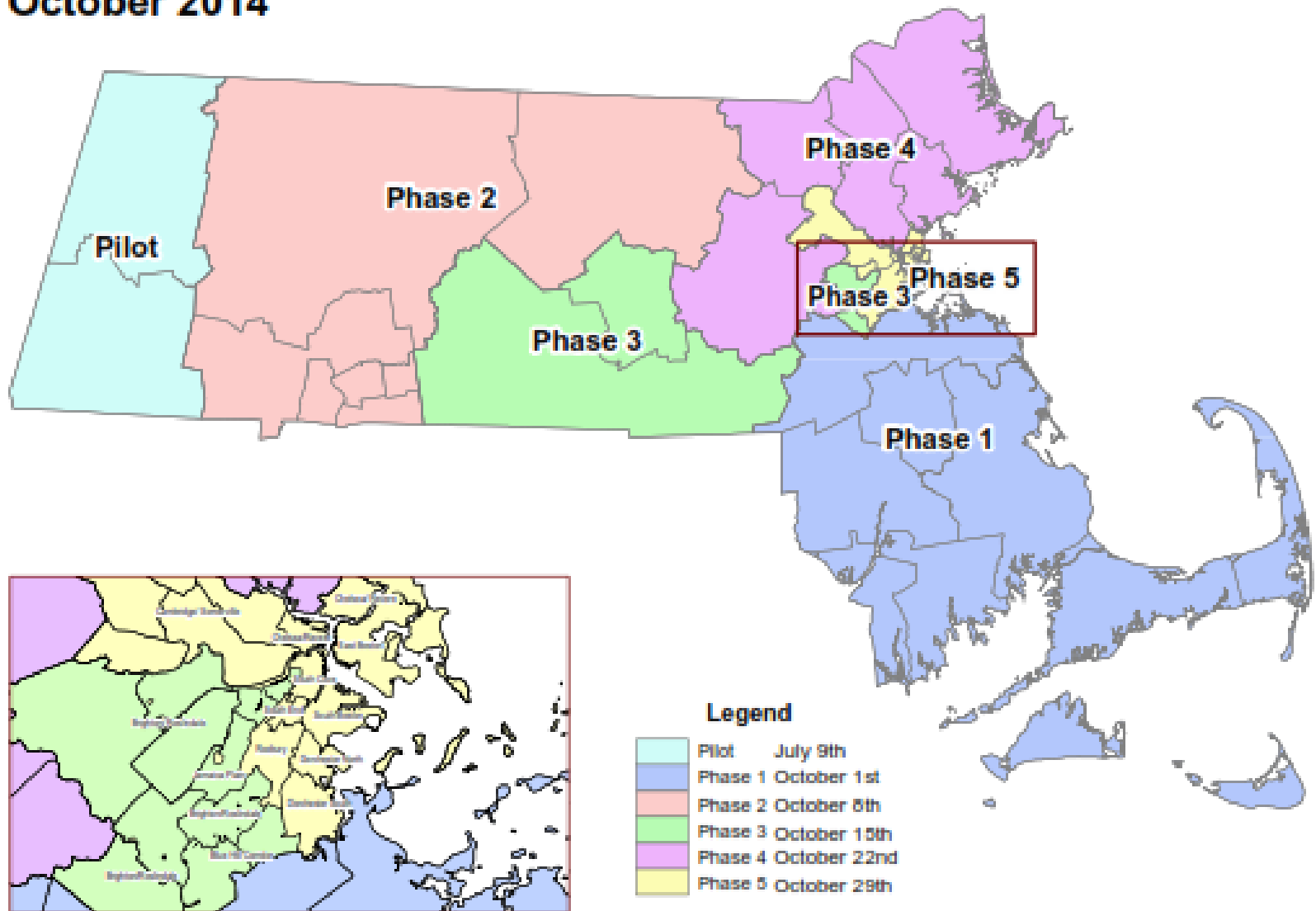


# Pilot/Rollout

- Pilot – Western Massachusetts, July 2014
  - 2 local programs, 3 sites, 20 vendors, 2,600 participants
- Statewide Rollout in 5 phases during the month of October 2014
  - 33 local program, 117 sites, 970 vendors, 122,500 participants



# Phases of Massachusetts WIC Card Roll Out October 2014





# Lessons Learned

## Invalid PIN

- The WIC customer's PIN will lock if the correct PIN is not entered on the ninth try.
- The participant can call their local WIC program or the 800 number on the back of their card to get their account unlocked.
- If the WIC customer forgets their PIN they must visit their local WIC Program to change it.
- Local programs have "Post it Notes" available for participants to write down their PIN number.



# MA WIC Program – Mobile App-WIC Shopper

## Mobile App-WIC Shopper now available!

The app has many exciting features and allows WIC customers to:

- View their current WIC benefit balance on their smartphone, allowing them to know with certainty what they can purchase.
- Scan product UPC codes while they shop to check if the item is WIC approved (i.e. on the Approved Products Listing) **and** if it is available within their own benefits.
- Locate WIC approved retailers in MA.

There currently over 40,000 participants using the mobile app-WIC shopper.

Help desk calls have decreased significantly and participant feedback has been positive!



# Keys to a Successful Rollout

- Teams of state staff visited most rollout area retailers and WIC programs the day prior to rollout to answer questions, check equipment and assess readiness.
- Local programs were sent a list of stores in their service area that were not ready so that participants could be informed.
- State staff were on site at each local program on “go live” day to assist in benefit issuance, answer questions, listen for issues that could be shared.
- Daily touch point meeting around mid-day of each “go live” day to report progress, relay issues or concerns.



# Keys to a Successful Project

- Team concept with one goal.
- Everyone was responsible for their piece.
- Open and frequent communication.
- Hire a project manager
  - Project managers organized all meetings – stakeholders, vendors, individual units, entire team.
  - Took notes, reminded us of deadlines.
- The statewide rollout period should be as fast as possible to minimize the time period 2 systems are operating.



**Thank you!**

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Massachusetts WIC Program

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