

Specific Goals and Objectives
Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for
Women, Infants, and Children (WIC)
State Plan FFY 2007

Food Issuance and Redemption Services

Continue implementation of the Vendor Cost Containment plan, policy, and system changes with refinements as necessary. Process claim recoupments, issue summary adjustment reports to vendors, and respond to disputes. Continue on-going tasks of identifying and properly classifying stores as Predominantly-WIC or Traditional WIC.

Modify state rules to synchronize them with the Vendor Cost Containment Plan and Policy as implemented in FY06.

Throughout the year, analyze claims pricing data to identify strategies to ameliorate the unintended negative impact of Vendor Cost Containment implementation on WIC-authorized foods in terms of the number and types of brands/sizes that can be purchased.

Continue transition efforts to convert Texas counties from the paper voucher system to Electronic Benefits Transfer (EBT). Transition efforts will include: continue to operate dual claims payment systems for paper versus EBT; process reimbursements to vendors for EBT system hardware/software installations; provide on-site vendor training approximately 2-weeks before go live date in rollout path for EBT; and proactively initiate daily function to monitor connectivity of all post implementation EBT store outlets for evidence that they have dropped off claims and picked up Hot Card and Authorized Product Files.

Hold quarterly meetings with Local Agency Vendor Liaison personnel.

Hold regional meetings with vendors to discuss Vendor Cost Containment and EBT Rollout.

Information Systems

WIC Information Network (WIN) Evolution Project

Continue the first phase of the WIN Evolution Project, a project to enhance and optimize client service delivery. Begin planning and needs assessment to implement a model WIC information system to:

- Improve program effectiveness;
- Strengthen controls and accountability;
- Increase operational efficiency;
- Enhance fraud detection;
- Enhance claims acceptance capabilities to include multiple file formats and encryption schemes used in the commercial grocer processing environment

- Meet Federal reporting requirements;
- Meet the FRED-E requirements for systems with EBT; and
- Enable service providers to provide quality services to more potentially eligible low-income families during the critical times of development of the unborn child and the very young child when proper nutrition and linkages to health care are most needed.

Electronic Benefits Transfer (EBT)

Continue the EBT pilot operations in El Paso, Grayson, and Collin Counties as well as west Texas and Panhandle areas. Do full testing of the major commercial retailer systems including Safeway (IBM SA) and Target.

- Continue to monitor effectiveness and efficiency of the piloted EBT system in the El Paso, Grayson, and Collin County and west Texas and Panhandle areas
- Continue work related to commercial retailer systems for use in potential statewide rollout

Continue planning for full statewide rollout subject to USDA approval of the El Paso pilot experience and constraints.

- Coordinate expansion plans with USDA and all stakeholder groups if statewide expansion is approved by USDA

Plan and initiate development for Phase II of Texas WIC EBT to include:

- Transition EBT system into full compliance with ANSI standards, as modified
- Development and deployment of a Java-based smart card to replace the current WIC EBT smart card that has reached the end of its life cycle and is no longer available
- Enhance EBT system to comply with USDA security recommendations including the separation of credit and debit keys
- Continue close coordination with the State of New Mexico to ensure the states can jointly take advantage of developmental activities in both states
- Coordinate and ensure WIC Phase II system is compatible with on-going planning and design for a State of Texas Integrated Benefits Card
- Enhance interoperability capability of system by bringing it into full compliance with interoperability standards (State and Federal)

Enhance the State's ability to manage EBT claims in the commercial business environment

- Identify and implement an interim contractor to serve as an acquirer/pre-processor for EBT claims until the WIN Evolution Project is completed

Organization, Staffing, Funding, and Management Services

Continue to lead the Nutrition Services Section consistent with Department of State Health Services (DSHS) and HHSC direction. Successfully direct and assess the evaluation of business

functions and implement improvements to effect change management in response to evolving needs of DSHS.

Coordinate all activities related to the 80th legislative session in accordance with department protocol and requirements.

Ensure timely and appropriate implementation of policy and operational changes to comply with any policy or regulations USDA issues.

Closely monitor funding, expenditures and food inflation and ensure effective controls are in place in the event funding is cut in order to continue to serve as many clients as possible.

Nutrition Education and Clinical Services

Conduct a self-evaluation of current nutrition assessment practices and develop a Value Enhanced Nutrition Assessment (VENA) implementation plan.

Assess the capacity of the WIC Information Network (WIN) to measure health outcomes and making recommendations for modification to enhance the system's capacity.

Plan, implement, and evaluate staff development initiatives, including development of the VENA plan.

Continue ongoing development and evaluation of culturally competent client education.

Continue EBT statewide rollout into the next geographic area(s) by:

- Tracking local agency readiness;
- Providing policy and procedure training for local agency staff;
- Assisting local agency staff during "go live" phase; and
- Providing follow-up assistance.

Augment the use of WIC data for program management.

Coordinate, develop and award the Infant Formula Rebate RFB.

Complete the Texas WIC Disaster Plan.

Continue to recruit and expand WIC staff state-wide for inclusion in the WIC Worksite Wellness program.

Continue to work with the University of Texas to evaluate and plan effective nutrition education strategies.

Continue to evaluate and plan marketing and outreach strategies to provide WIC services to eligible Texas residents.

