

4TEXAS DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH (TDH)
BUREAU OF NUTRITION SERVICES
WIC EBT NEWSLETTER #3
April 2002

This is the third issue of a monthly newsletter intended to provide members of the Texas Interagency Task Force on Electronic Benefits Transfer (EBT) with a status report on the WIC Program's development of a WIC EBT system as well as information on issues as they arise related to the development project.

Prior issues of the newsletter are posted on the Bureau of Nutrition Services web site at: <http://www.tdh.state.tx.us/wichd/ebt/ebtnewsarc.htm> The prior issues will provide the reader with background on the project and milestones achieved prior to this update.

APRIL 2002 ACTIVITY

Integrated Store System: Contract terms and conditions between Lowes Food Stores and TDH have been finalized and the contract should be fully executed in early May. In anticipation of the contract being signed, Lowes selected vendor, Cash Register Services, has already commenced work on the integrated store solution.

Meeting with El Paso Grocers: On April 16th, WIC staff traveled to El Paso to meet with representatives from five grocers in the area to solicit input on grocer reports created to date for the WIC Stand Beside Store System. Both WIC EBT and WIC Vendor Operations staff attended the meeting. The grocers who attended represented 18 outlets ranging from small independents to large grocery chain locations. WIC staff presented ten new reports reflecting reporting information which grocers operating in an EBT environment are expected to need. All of the reports were well received by the grocers with only minor suggestions for changes to one report. In addition, the grocers asked for three additional reports and WIC staff is currently in the process of designing these additional reports.

Satellite System for Data Transfer from Clinics: Contract negotiations continue with a company to provide satellite service to WIC clinics for the transmission of WIC client data to the state office. The transmission of such data via satellite will render client data in near real time mode facilitating the accomplishment of policy agreements between the Department of Human Services and the Department of Health for transiting Food Stamp Program clients onto a single card with WIC clients.

Cost Allocation between TDH and the Department of Human Services (DHS): Meetings began in April between TDH WIC and DHS Lonestar staff to develop a cost allocation methodology for assignment costs to the appropriate agency for EBT integration of WIC with Food Stamps/TANF on a hybrid Lone Star card. These discussions are on going.

Hypercom ICE 6000 Terminal: Delivery to the state of the new smart card terminal program is on schedule as reported in the last newsletter. The terminal application is

expected to be delivered to the State on May 22nd. Receipt of the Hypercom 6000 terminal application will initiate integration and testing activities at the Texas Department of Health and the New Mexico Department of Health leading to the New Mexico pilot this summer.

Pilot Dates: The New Mexico pilot is still targeted for July 2002 with the El Paso, Texas pilot to follow six months later. Once initiated, the Texas pilot will run for a full twelve months.