

4 DATA

The Data section of this document describes the data stores, data code tables, transaction files, and data elements proposed for the State agency Information System (IS) described in this document. Data stores are groups of data elements that have a common focus and relate to a common entity. These entities represent the persons, places, things, and events that pertain to the WIC Program, and the data elements represent the characteristics of the entities. For example, the Participant data store relates to the entity "WIC Participants" is comprised of participant-related data elements such as the participant's name, address, and proxies. Hereafter, when the term "data store" is used in this document, it is synonymous with the term "code table" in a relational database. Data code tables are a subset of data stores, but they are not modified as frequently as other data stores and are often referenced as "code" tables.

Section 4.1 identifies each of the data stores, describes the purpose of the data store, and lists all the data elements contained in the data store. The data elements used as record keys to uniquely identify the records in each data store are indicated by an asterisk (*). For some data stores, there is a combination of data elements that uniquely identify a record. For these stores, multiple elements are designated with an asterisk. The data elements that are used as foreign record keys are indicated by two asterisks (**). A foreign key is the identifier of a data store to which the foreign key refers. It is used to establish a relationship between the data store containing the foreign key and the data store to which the foreign key refers.

For example, to uniquely identify a participant in a nutrition education class, the record will include the Participant Identification Number (Participant data store) and the Education/Training Offer Class Code (Education/Training Offer data store). Because the class information is maintained in the Education/Training Offer Class data store, this data element would be the primary key (*). To identify the participant in the class, the Participant Identification Number would be used. Because this data element resides in the Participant data store, it would be the secondary key (**).

Section 4.2 identifies each of the data code tables in much the same way as Section 4.1. Sample data are listed to provide a clearer understanding of the function of the table. The samples offered are illustrative, although not exhaustive. State agencies should carefully review each of the data code tables to determine the complete list of acceptable data values for their State IS.

Data elements are characteristics of data entities for which the WIC Program needs information. Examples of data elements include Participant Identification Number, Food Instrument Printed Date, Vendor Name, Participant Blood Pressure, Food Group, and State Food Grant. Data elements for the State agency IS system are described in Section 4.3. Each data element is defined briefly. Section 4.3 also indicates for each data element its format type (alphanumeric, numeric, or date type), edit or validation processes needed to ensure data accuracy, and the data stores and data code tables that contain the data element.

Numerical data that are calculated for reports or screens but not stored in the WIC information system are not included in this section. In certain cases, calculated data may be stored for historical purposes. Such data may be useful for trend analysis and therefore are included in a data warehouse. When such data are stored, they are included in the description of relevant data stores. Because data stores are related, one data element may appear in multiple data stores. For example, the Participant Identification Number data element is a key element within the Participant and the Participant Health data stores. If the Participant Identification Number is not included in each of these data stores, the system will not relate the participant health data to a particular participant.