

## Mailing Checks

- I. Checks may be mailed to participants on an individual basis for approved reasons. Mailing of WIC checks to participants on a local agency or clinic wide basis may only be done if approved by the State agency. Local agencies should utilize the mailing of checks only when circumstances would otherwise prohibit participants from picking up their benefits.
- II. Procedures for mailing checks on an agency or clinic wide basis are as follows:
  - a. Written approval from the Utah State WIC Office must be received before a local agency implements the mailing of WIC checks on an agency or clinic wide basis.
  - b. Mass mailings can only be done for one month at a time. Schedule participants for a nutrition education class/FI pickup for the following month.
- III. Mailing of WIC checks is permitted on an individual basis for the following conditions:
  - a. Illness (temporary; otherwise, a proxy should be designated).
  - b. Imminent childbirth
  - c. Inclement weather conditions as determined by the WIC Director or Clinic Supervisor.
  - d. Distance to travel. If the distance from the participant's residence to the WIC clinic is more than 25 miles away and the person would otherwise be unable to regularly participate in the Program due to distance, unimproved roads, or seasonal inclement weather conditions.
  - e. Inability to get to the WIC clinic during business hours. Participants should be highly encouraged to make every effort to obtain their checks in person from the clinic during normal business or extended hours. Appointments are made in advance; therefore, clients or their proxies have time to arrange to pick up the checks in person. The clinic supervisor will be responsible for the decision regarding this circumstance.
  - f. Clinic equipment failure. Computer, printer or electrical malfunction that interferes with the normal production or issuance of checks at the clinic site. If equipment has failed in any way, the clinic must immediately notify the Help Desk or other IT professionals responsible for the clinic's equipment.

- IV. Whenever checks are mailed on an individual basis the following points should be taken into consideration:
- a. Whenever possible, a proxy or additional endorser should be designated by those participants who anticipate difficulty in personally picking up checks during a certification period.
  - b. WIC checks should not be mailed if the participant is due for nutrition education, breastfeeding counseling or recertification.
  - c. The reason for mailing WIC checks must be documented in the comments.
  - d. When a participant requests that checks be mailed, issue only that month's checks. No more than three month's worth of checks will be mailed to any participant during a certification period.
  - e. The mailing of checks will be discontinued if the participant's hardship is resolved.
  - f. All WIC checks must be mailed by Certified Mail. The clinic will receive a return receipt as acknowledgment that the checks were received. If the checks are not deliverable as addressed, they should be returned to the appropriate clinic.
  - g. The local agency may elect not to mail checks to those participants defined by the agency as, "High Risk."
  - h. USDA recommends that, wherever feasible, participants personally obtain their WIC checks from the WIC clinic to ensure that nutrition education and health services are integrated and are frequently available to participants. A system must be established by each local agency to help ensure that potential abuse is avoided concerning the mailing of checks. The local agency must assure the State WIC Office that nutrition education and appropriate health services are provided to participants during the months that checks are mailed.