

Vendor Monitoring

- I. The purpose of vendor monitoring and follow-up is to ensure high quality service to participants and to ensure compliance with Federal regulations and the Utah WIC Vendor Agreement.
 - a. Both the State and local agency can conduct vendor monitoring or follow-up. Routine monitoring will generally be delegated to the local agency vendor management staff.
 - b. Vendors selected for routine monitoring will be determined by the State Agency. The State Agency plans to select approximately 10% of all vendors in each county for routine monitoring each year. For counties with very few vendors, at least one vendor per county will be selected for routine monitoring.
 - c. Vendors will be selected for routine monitoring based on the length of time since the previous monitoring and based on whether there were violations found at the previous routine monitoring.
 - d. The local agencies will be informed at the beginning of each fiscal year of the routine sample vendors selected for their area that they will need to monitor during that year.
 - e. If any of the vendors on the routine sample leaves the WIC Program or are disqualified and they have not been monitored during that fiscal year, that vendor must be replaced with another vendor. Please contact the State Agency if this occurs.
 - f. The local agency staff is not permitted to conduct vendor monitoring unless directed to do so by the State Agency. If the local agency staff thinks there is a concern that needs to be addressed, the state vendor coordinator should be notified prior to visiting the store to investigate the problem or discuss the issue with management.
- II. Routine Monitoring Procedures.
 - a. Monitoring forms for this type of visit include the following: the Vendor Monitoring Instrument, Vendor Inventory Requirement Verification Form, and the Food Price Reporting List.

- b. The local agency vendor coordinator should contact the vendor in advance to arrange for a mutually agreeable time to perform the on-site monitoring. Assure the vendor there are not any specific problems; they have been randomly selected out of all the vendors in the State to be monitored.
- c. Make sure that you bring your county or health department picture ID with you when visiting a WIC vendor. You should always identify yourself to the store manager or supervisor before proceeding with the monitoring or follow-up visit.
- d. Walk through the store, checking on the quantity and variety of WIC foods. Conduct a price survey using the Food Price Reporting List and Vendor Inventory Requirement Verification Form. If the price of a WIC food commodity is found to be excessive, or if inadequate stock is identified, go back to the manager and discuss the situation at this time.
- e. The local vendor coordinator in examining for store cleanliness is not providing an environmental health inspection, rather only documenting any observations while evaluating for appropriate inventory requirements and documenting prices. Any food safety concerns should be forwarded to the local environmental health, licensing, or applicable agency for follow-up.
- f. Fill out applicable sections of the Vendor Monitoring Instrument. Ask to speak with the manager in order to complete the form. If the manager is unavailable, talk with the assistant manager, or head cashier. Also be sure to talk with other cashiers. Ask them if they are having any problems or have any questions.
- g. After discussing any specific problems, go through the Vendor Monitoring Instrument with the manager. It is recommended that this be reviewed with one additional person e.g. the front end manager or trainer. Note any other potential problems. You must document your discussion of any problems and/or violations discovered during the visit on the WIC Vendor Monitoring Instrument.
- h. Determine if a follow-up visit will be required and schedule this with the manager if needed.

- i. Ensure the store has adequate supplies of WIC training materials, videos, Authorized Food booklets, business reply cards, and a WIC window sticker.
 - j. After discussion and any training are completed, obtain the store representative's signature at the bottom of page 2 of the Vendor Monitoring Instrument.
 - k. The completed Vendor Monitoring Instrument, Vendor Inventory Requirement Verification Form, and the Food Price Reporting List are required to be submitted to the State Vendor Coordinator through SharePoint.
 - i. The local agency vendor coordinator will retain copies of all documents electronically in SharePoint. Vendor monitoring documentation that is not received by the State Agency due date will be considered a finding during the local agency's management evaluation.
- III. Vendor Monitoring Follow-up Procedures.
- a. When a vendor problem was identified during the monitoring visit as needing a follow-up visit or specific training, the local agency will utilize a Local Agency Vendor Follow-up form and/or the Vendor Training Report to document the follow-up visit. This will verify that the vendor has been adequately trained and/or corrected any problems.
 - b. Make sure the vendor understands that if WIC Program violations continue, their store may be identified for compliance purchases that may lead to State Agency violation points, sanctions, or suspension/disqualification. If the vendor is suspended or disqualified from WIC because of fraud or program abuse, they could be also suspended or disqualified from the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP/Food Stamps) as well.
 - c. Before leaving the follow-up visit, make sure you have documented all concerns and discussions of any problem areas along with possible violations as applicable.
 - d. These forms shall be submitted to the State Agency within thirty (30) days through SharePoint.