

Tailoring Food Packages

- I. Food Package Tailoring (allowed for an individual only and not for groups of individuals).
- II. The full maximum monthly allowances of all supplemental foods or the full nutritional benefit (FNB) in all food packages must be made available to participants. Issuing less than the maximum monthly allowances of supplemental foods to an individual WIC participant is only appropriate when:
 - a. Medically or nutritionally warranted (i.e., to eliminate a food due to a food allergy);
 - b. A participant refuses or cannot use the maximum monthly allowances; or
 - c. The quantities necessary to supplement another programs' contribution to fill a FAFAF would be less than the maximum monthly allowances.
- III. The goal of the food package tailoring guidelines is to ensure that all participants receive the Utah WIC food package that best meets their individual nutritional needs. The tailoring guidelines will enable local agency nutritionists to prescribe food packages that directly correspond to the nutrition counseling given. In the VISION system, model food packages are found in the Model Food Package drop-down list on the Food Package screen. There are many food packages available within each food package group. Take the time to review the numerous combinations available before food package issuance occurs and tailor, if necessary.
- IV. Food packages prescribed shall help meet the individual nutritional and dietary needs of participants.
- V. Food packages are to be prescribed and changed only by the CPA. No changes may be made without the CPA's approval.
- VI. Document the self-reported medical and/or nutritional reason(s) for tailoring or making changes to the food package in the participant's record. This documentation must be done in the comments text row below the food package grid in the Food Package screen. It can also be added in the care plan or in the Details text row next to the Self-Reported check box.
- VII. Assignment of, and changes in, food packages shall reflect changing individual nutrient and food consumption patterns. Foods not used by the participant may be tailored out of the package or quantities can be reduced to reflect need. It is not cost effective to provide food in greater quantities than are required to meet an individual's nutritional needs or to provide more food than an individual can consume.

- VIII. Foods can only be added or removed within a full package. Foods added or removed will automatically be added or removed within the 2/3 and 1/3 food package grids.
- IX. The system will automatically prorate a formula/food item when the item is added to a model food package. The system will not automatically prorate a formula/food item that currently exists in the model food package when the amount of that formula/food item is adjusted. It is important to check the 2/3 and 1/3 package grids when tailoring, particularly when increasing or decreasing formula, to ensure the amounts in these packages are correct and to make adjustments, if needed.
- X. Tailoring may be advised when food benefit issuance to the participant may give them more than they can consume i.e., in cases where a family may have access to milk or eggs.
- XI. WIC is not a food storage program. The food items provided should be used in their diets daily to help meet their nutritional needs.
- XII. When tailoring the milk portion of the food package, use the following procedure:
- a. Whole milk or fat reduced (2%) milk may be issued to 1-year-old children for whom overweight or obesity is a concern. Only milk products with no more than 1% milk fat are allowed for children 2 through 4 years of age and women unless they obtain a FAFAF for whole milk and are also receiving an exempt formula or WIC-eligible nutritionals. For children 2 through 4 years of age and women in Food Packages IV-VII, reduced fat (2%) is authorized under the CPA's discretion who must document the medical or nutritional reason for issuance.
 - b. Milk alternatives include: Yogurt, lactose-free milks, acidophilus milk, UHT, nonfat dry (powdered) milk, evaporated milk, goat's milk, buttermilk, and soy-based beverages. (See "Foods that are Authorized" for criteria for issuing soy-based beverages for children.) Cheese can be substituted for milk at a rate of 1 pound of cheese per 3 quarts of milk. For most food packages, 1 pound of cheese can be substituted for milk without a FAFAF. In substituting 1 pound of cheese for 3 quarts of milk, the remaining 1 quart (or dangling quart) must be issued. One pound of cheese is the maximum allowed cheese substitution, even with medical documentation, more cheese is not allowed. No more than a total of 4 quarts of milk may be substituted.
 - c. When substituting cheese for milk, certain milk containers may be applicable to the full package but not the prorated packages and vice versa. The additional milk container needed will have to be added to the full package and marked with a "0" as the item quantity in the grids in which that container

does not apply. When marked as zero, the item will not load to the e-WIC Card.

- XIII. Women and children with special dietary needs may only be issued supplemental foods with a FAFAF. Information from the Formula and Food Authorization Form must be documented by selecting the Documentation link and filling out the appropriate information in the pop-up box. Tailoring documentation must also be provided in the comment box below the food package grid. When beginning to tailor a food package that is based on a FAFAF, check the Special Diet checkbox and open the food package drop down. Select the model food package that is closest to the needed or medically ordered formula and foods. Then, make any minor changes within the food package grid.
- XIV. Procedure for Milk/cheese/yogurt substitutions.
- a. One pound of cheese may be substituted for 3 quarts of milk for any one person.
 - b. Cheese, beyond established substitution rate, even with medical documentation, is not allowed.
 - c. One quart of yogurt may be substituted for 1 quart of milk for women and children. No more than 1 quart of yogurt is authorized per participant.
 - d. Cheese may be issued every month at CPA discretion.
- XV. Procedure for using frozen and single strength juices.
- a. 12 oz canned frozen juice or 64 oz container juice is allowed. Maximum amount is offered in each category.
 - b. Tomato or vegetable juice is only available in 64-ounce containers.
 - c. This is appropriate for reduced calorie and carbohydrate-restricted diets (gestational diabetes, IDDM).
 - d. The reason for individual tailoring must be documented by the CPA.
- XVI. Procedure for beans, peas and lentils and peanut butter.
- a. When determined by the state office that cost savings are necessary, the local agencies will be informed by the Program Manager to issue beans, peas and lentils every month.

- XVII. At the local level, tailoring for groups of individuals cannot be performed. Individual tailoring for economic reasons; i.e., to save program costs, also cannot be performed in the local WIC clinics.
- XVIII. Some special requested food items may be considered for individuals with special nutritional needs. Issue a standard special food letter or complete and fax a rare exception food letter to the State WIC office to submit a food item for approval. Food items must meet federal nutrition WIC guidelines and state cost requirements in order to be approved. Food letters should only be issued to participants with a medical or nutritional need. Document the reason for issuance.
- XIX. Food packages are available for homeless participants, participants with storage or refrigeration problems, and for individuals with anemia.
- XX. Food Package Tailoring may occur at the following times:
- a. At certification and recertification for all participants.
 - b. At any time that a prescriptive authority documents the need for a change.
 - c. At the request of the participant.
 - d. At the discretion of the RD or CPA. (Changes may include decreasing or eliminating food that the participant is not consuming).
 - e. When an exempt formula or WIC-eligible nutritional is prescribed, the food package must be selected based on the amount of formula indicated on the FAFAF.
- XXI. Food Package Tailoring for Special Needs. Tailoring food packages for homeless participants or participants with limited resources:
- a. WIC participants who have limited facilities, or who have lost their normal place of residence due to loss of income, disaster or eviction, or who are escaping from domestic violence, may be temporarily relocated to emergency shelters, motels, hotels, or makeshift abodes within their WIC service area. Due to the nature of these shelters, cooking facilities, refrigeration and acceptable storage areas for food may not be available. For WIC participants living in temporary shelters, special consideration must be given to issuing supplemental food packages.
 - b. WIC benefits should be issued monthly for all homeless individuals who are residing in a shelter or have been issued a homeless package.

- c. The types of supplemental foods prescribed must take into account the cooking and storage facilities available to the participant while living in a temporary shelter.
- d. Although the aim of any food package prescription is to provide those supplemental foods to best meet the participant's nutritional needs, some modifications in both the types and the amounts of food may be required.
- e. The CPA should determine the following each month before the package is issued:
 - i. Availability of refrigeration for foods and prepared formula.
 - ii. Availability of cooking facilities.
 - iii. Availability of food storage facilities.
 - iv. Availability of eating utensils.
 - v. Availability of the number and size of bottles for infant formula.
 - vi. Availability of bottle washing and sterilization facilities.
 - vii. The parent/guardians' competence in special preparation, storage, and feeding of WIC foods (especially those foods that are perishable).
- f. Specific education concerning use and storage of foods should be provided.
- g. Substitutions for one dozen eggs (not currently functioning in VISION system):
 - i. 64 ounces of canned beans
 - ii. 18 ounces of peanut butter
 - iii. 15 ounces of fish

XXII. Procedures for tailoring:

- a. Food Package I, Infants Birth through 5 months.
 - i. Breastfeeding should be encouraged as the easiest, most nutritious and safest way to feed the infant, given the possibility that refrigeration and facilities for the proper sterilization of bottles may be lacking. For infants receiving formula, powdered formula should be issued if appropriate and available.
 - ii. The mother must be instructed on proper sterilization techniques of bottles and nipples, and how to prepare one bottle of formula at a time for circumstances of limited refrigeration. The use of bottles with disposable plastic liners may be recommended. Special education must be provided to the parent/guardian to discard all formula remaining in the bottle at the end of each feeding due to the potential for the rapid growth of harmful pathogens.

- iii. In the event that both refrigeration and the means to sterilize bottles and water are lacking, ready-to-feed formula should be issued in the appropriate container size.
 - iv. Powdered formula should not be issued to premature infants (<37 weeks gestation) unless the guardian signs the consent form or the health care provider specifies powdered formula on a FAFAF. Infants with a compromised immune system can contract the *Enterobacter Sakazakii* bacteria from powdered formula. Concentrate (or RTF, if concentrate is not available), should be issued to the premature infant through the first year of life.
- b. Food Package II, Infants 6 through 11 months.
- i. In addition to infant formula, infants are eligible to receive iron-fortified infant cereal and infant food fruits and vegetables beginning at 6 months of age. Fully-breastfed infants also receive infant meats. Cereal is available in 8 ounce boxes. Infant food fruits and vegetables are available in 4 oz jars, infant food meats in 2.5 oz jars.
 - ii. Partially breastfed and fully formula fed infants, 9 through 11 months, may receive a \$4.00 vegetable and fruit benefit plus 64 ounces of infant food fruits and vegetables; fully breastfed infants may receive an \$8.00 vegetable and fruit benefit plus 128 ounces of infant food fruits and vegetables. This may be provided only after a thorough nutrition assessment by the CPA indicating this option is the choice of the guardian. The difference can be paid if the total for fruit and vegetable purchases is greater than the maximum amount of the vegetable and fruit benefit. The guardian may also choose to receive the maximum allowance of jarred foods.
 - iii. Since the 4 to 12 month old infant does not require the continued use of sterilized bottles or water, all infants previously issued ready-to-feed formula should be reassessed at their mid-certification and changed over to a powdered infant formula package, if appropriate. In cases where unsanitary water supplies exist, continue to issue ready-to-feed formula. 32 oz RTF is the preferred container size for cost containment.
- c. Food Package III.
- i. Participants with qualifying conditions.
 - ii. Partially breastfed and fully formula fed infants, 9 through 11 months, may receive a \$4.00 vegetable and fruit benefit plus 64 ounces of infant food fruits and vegetables; fully breastfed infants may receive an \$8.00 vegetable and fruit benefit plus 128 ounces of infant food fruits and vegetables. This may be provided only after a thorough nutrition assessment by the CPA indicating this option is the choice of the guardian. The difference can be paid if

the total for fruit and vegetable purchases is greater than the maximum amount of the vegetable and fruit benefit. The guardian may also choose to receive the maximum allowance of jarred foods.

- iii. Powdered formula should be issued whenever possible. Participants may also receive supplemental foods, if prescribed. The amount and type of WIC foods issued depends on participant category.
- iv. Jarred infant food fruits and vegetables may be issued to children in lieu of the \$9.00 vegetable and fruit benefit when medically ordered (Formula and Food Authorization Form) by a state licensed prescriptive authority. The quantity of jarred infant food fruits and vegetables is based on the substitution ratio of 144 ounces of jarred infant food for the \$9.00 vegetable and fruit benefit. Qualifying medical conditions, such as prematurity, developmental delays, and dysphasia (swallowing disorders) may necessitate a medical order for jarred infant food. CPA discretion to issue jarred infant food is not allowed.

XXIII. Food Package Guidance.

- a. Economical Buying Practices.
 - i. Buy and use dry milk powder for use in cooking.
 - ii. Learn to cook with legumes (dry or canned beans, peas and lentils) rather than more expensive sources of protein such as meats. Complement the legumes with grain products or dairy products to make a complete protein.
 - iii. Buy powdered formula. (Reconstituted maximums are higher for powder than other forms).
 - iv. Buy milk instead of cheese.
 - v. Buy milk and juice in the largest available container that is practical for the participant's use (i.e., gallons of milk rather than half gallons).
 - vi. Buy hot cereal instead of cold cereal.

XXIV. Handling Leftover Foods.

- a. The WIC food package should not be tailored at the expense of the participant's nutritional status.
- b. If the CPA feels it is necessary for the participant to consume the full amount of foods prescribed, the first course of action would be to explore, with the participant, ways to increase her/his intake of the leftover food of a particular item that was prescribed (e.g., infant cereal, adult cereal, milk, cheese).

- c. Each month discuss the participant's previous food issuance to determine if they are receiving an excessive amount. Approach this in a manner that will not make the participant afraid that WIC is trying to take food away from them each month.
- d. Emphasize that WIC foods are to be consumed within a one month period and if substantial amounts are leftover, the food package can be tailored to meet the participant's individual needs.
- e. When counseling the participant whose food package was decreased because of leftover food, please reassure the participant that if her need changes, the food package can be increased again.

XXV. Poor refrigeration, Storage, and/or Cooking Facilities.

- a. If proper refrigeration is lacking, eggs and fluid or evaporated milk must be excluded from the food package.
- b. Dry powdered or UHT milk should be issued. Give instructions on how to use the powdered milk and the importance of preparing one glass at a time.
- c. Cereal and juice should still be provided in this food package in the amounts previously specified. Individual 5.5/6-ounce single strength cans of juice are the most appropriate size to issue those without adequate refrigeration. Maximum issuance for the 5.5/6-ounce can is:
 - i. FP III varies by category
 - ii. 21 cans for FP IV
 - iii. 24 cans for FP V and VII
 - iv. 16 cans for FP VI
- d. Juice should be stored in clean glass or plastic containers and consumed as soon as possible.
- e. If a participant is receiving Food Package VII, issue 1 lb cheese and 6 single-serving cans (5 ounce) of tuna.
- f. If cooking facilities are not available, peanut butter or canned beans should be recommended instead of dry beans and eggs. The recommended substitutes for 1 pound of dried beans are:
 - i. 18 ounces peanut butter, or
 - ii. 4 - 16 ounce canned beans