

WIC Vendor Advisory Council (WVAC) Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, October 28, 2008

Time: 2:00-4:00

Location: DOT Conf. Rm A

Attendance: Dennis Banks, Kevin Krusz, Kimberly Boulette, Rosa Jacinto, Janet Rankin, Pat Sullivan, Kathy Minicucci, George Casab, Adam Osmond, Joanne Yandow, Jannett Haughton

Recorder: Harriet Dennis

TOPIC	DISCUSSION
ITEM #1 Introduction	Kim Boulette, WIC Vendor Specialist for the Connecticut WIC Program, opened the meeting and welcomed everyone to the WVAC Meeting. Members then introduced themselves to the new comers providing their name and the organization that they represent.
ITEM #2 New Legislation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ The WIC Program prepared a response due to this topic being mentioned at the end of the last meeting. The group was asked if anyone was ready to lead a discussion on this topic and all declined. This topic will be postponed until it is requested as a formal agenda item.
ITEM #3 New Food Packages Implementation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ The Connecticut WIC New Food Packages Committee is developing the food item selection criteria to assure that the foods are available, acceptable and affordable. Training materials, new minimum inventory requirements and a new WIC Approved Food List will be available for vendors, participants, and WIC staff in Spring, 2009. Beginning in July 2009, new food packages will be issued to families to better meet the needs of WIC participants. Items to be approved in Connecticut WIC Program would be fresh, frozen, and canned fruits and vegetables. Whole wheat and whole grain breads. Baby foods fruits and vegetables for all infants and baby food meat for exclusively breastfed infants.▪ Participants will receive with their regular WIC checks new Cash Value Checks for up to \$6, \$8 and \$10 of fruits and vegetables. This check will allow participants to pay the amount over the value of the check. Combining checks in one purchase on WIC approved items will be allowed with these checks only.
TOPIC	DISCUSSION
Item #4 Minimum Inventory Requirements for July, 2009	<p>A draft of the minimum inventory requirements was presented and feedback was requested from the council members.</p> <p>The WIC Program inquired on how milk was ordered and delivered. Information was provided that 9 half gallons of milk come in a crate and stores can order many different types in one order. A concern was raised regarding women only being allowed concentrated juice because of the maximum amounts prescribed and how items are packaged. The WIC Program will revisit this issue to see what items can be purchased, while still offering a participant close to the full benefit.</p> <p>The least expensive brand is allowed for certain items and this rule will now be applied to cereal as well. If there are multiple brands of the same cereal available in the store, the least expensive brand will need to be purchased.</p> <p>The group discussed the stocking requirements for baby foods and how many jars would be allowed on each check. We need to be conscious of the</p>

	<p>number of checks were printing for each participant per month and we agreed that the 32 jars allowed could be split across 3 checks.</p> <p>A minimum dollar amount of \$25 worth of fruits and \$25 worth of vegetables was discussed and agreed upon. We are surveying vendors for the current availability of fresh fruits and vegetables and would like at least one variety to be fresh. This was agreeable to everyone.</p> <p>To see what breads we will offer, the group referred to the list of specific food items and brands that we are adding which was distributed during the meeting. Breads are ordered individually (similar to milk), so WIC authorized vendors stores will need obtain a bread distributor who provides these specific types in order to meet the requirements.</p> <p>In drafting the new minimum inventory requirements, several documents were obtained by other states and we considered that Connecticut has had one of the lowest minimum inventories in our region. The group was asked that if they have locations in other states, has it been a problem to manage different inventory levels and authorized products in each store. The response was “no”, they have everything electronically and they program in the approved items for each particular state.</p> <p>Kevin asked about the best way to train vendors on the new food packages. Several people agreed that training single people from each store was needed and Rosa would find out from her group what they preferred. Kevin offered to do evening trainings, provide a video or a DVD. Some also stated that a Powerpoint presentation on CD would be very effective for them to implement in their current training programs and maybe website links.</p>
TOPIC	DISCUSSION
<p>Item#5 Open Discussion/Suggestions for future agenda items</p>	<p>The representative from Nestle wanted to know if there were any complaints regarding their products or their availability. The members representing the local agencies reported that no complaints have been received and participants seem to be doing fine without the stores being mandated to carry Good Start Soy infant formula.</p> <p>Gerber baby food fruits and vegetables in 4 oz jars are being distributed in New York, so if vendors use distributor in that state, these products may already be available to them.</p> <p>Janet reported that the Big Y corporate office was not notified that price stock surveys went out and therefore, were not aware of when they were due back so they could follow up with their stores.</p>
TOPIC	DISCUSSION
<p>Item #6 Next Meeting</p>	<p>Tuesday, January 27, 2009 2-4pm Location Department of Transportation (DOT) Meeting adjourned</p>