

Applicant Categories and Certification Periods

- I. All participants will be certified according to their category.
 - a. **Pregnant** women are certified for the duration of the pregnancy and to the end of the calendar month in which they reach six weeks after the end of the pregnancy.
 - i. Proof of pregnancy is generally not required, but may be required if clinic staff has reasonable doubt that the applicant/participant is pregnant.
 - ii. Gestational mothers (surrogates) who apply for WIC should be advised to seek legal advice about their WIC status.
 - b. Postpartum women (**Not Breastfeeding**) are certified to the end of the calendar month in which they reach six months after the end of the pregnancy or after termination of a pregnancy (including miscarriages and abortions).
 - c. **Breastfeeding** women are certified until the end of the calendar month in which they reach one year postpartum, or until the woman stops breastfeeding, whichever occurs first.
 - d. **Infants** at 6 months of age or less are certified for the duration of their first year up to the end of the calendar month in which they reach their first birthday. Infants 7 months of age and older will be certified for six months.
 - e. **Children** are certified at entry into WIC and at one year intervals. Children can be certified until they turn 5 years of age. For children who certified at age 4, their certification period expires at the end of the calendar month in which they reach their 5th birthday.
- II. Non-birth mothers who are breastfeeding infants are eligible for WIC certification (women who are breastfeeding an infant(s) that they did not give birth to). They may be certified to participate in the WIC Program as breastfeeding women and may receive benefits and breastfeeding aids until the infant is one year of age.
 - a. This includes; wet nurses, adoptive mothers, and foster mothers.
 - b. This does not include women who donate breast milk.
 - c. The breastfeeding non-birth mother must meet all other eligibility requirements.
 - d. Only one woman can be certified as breastfeeding a single infant.

- e. The postpartum birth mother who meets eligibility criteria is eligible to receive postpartum benefits even if her infant is being breastfed by a certified non-birth mother.

III. Shortening or extending certifications.

- a. The certification period may be shortened or extended by local clinics for no more than a period of up to one month. This may be done anytime during the certification period.
- b. The following situations are appropriate for shortening or extending a certification period:
 - i. Aligning certification schedules of family members,
 - ii. Difficulty with scheduling appointment,
 - iii. Inclement weather,
 - iv. Illness of participant, or
 - v. Transportation problems.
- c. The certification may not be extended for a participant who is categorically ineligible.
- d. Whenever a clinic changes the certification interval (shortens or extends), the reason must be documented.

IV. For out of state transfers, enter certification and termination dates into the computer as printed on the VOC. Termination dates must be extended to the end of the month to convert to static month (see Transfers).

V. Participants can be certified during the last month of their current certification period without it affecting the new certification and termination dates.