

## Lost Cards

- I. All e-WIC cards reported lost, stolen or damaged will be replaced.
- II. Participants must report lost cards to their local WIC clinic or State WIC Office promptly after thoroughly searching for the card.
  - a. It is recommended that participants contact the store where the card was last used to see if the card may have been found at the store.
  - b. It is highly recommended that participants report stolen cards to the police.
  - c. Local WIC clinics and the State WIC Office must accept and respond to calls from participants reporting lost/stolen/damaged cards during business hours. Participant messages left during non-business hours must be responded to within one business day.
  - d. Cards which have been reported lost/stolen are considered “hot cards” and are immediately deactivated in the VISION system by local or state staff.
- III. Replacement timeframes:
  - a. If this is the family’s first incidence of a lost card during the last 12 months, the card may be replaced as early as the same day it is reported lost.
    - i. If the participant states that there are no current month benefits remaining on the card being replaced, it can be replaced immediately.
    - ii. If there are current month benefits on the card to be replaced, there will be a three business day waiting period before benefits can be transferred to the new card in order to allow the VISION system to receive the redemption files.
    - iii. If the participant chooses to forfeit current month benefits that may remain on their previous card, it can be replaced immediately with only future month benefits.
  - b. For second or subsequent incidences of a lost card within a 12 month period, the card will be replaced after a three business day waiting period after it is reported lost. For cases of personal misfortune, this restriction does not apply. (See V below.)
  - c. In any circumstance, an appointment within three business days must be offered to the participant to replace the card.
- IV. When the local agency is made aware that an e-WIC card is being held by a known individual who is not authorized to redeem benefits (including a person who does not have custody of the WIC participant), the local agency may

immediately replace the card for the authorized guardian after hot carding the original card. The local agency will contact the unauthorized individual requesting that the card be returned to the clinic. If contact is not successful, a letter should be sent to the individual.

V. Personal Misfortune. In personal misfortune incidents where the household might be affected by some destructive incident such as domestic violence, theft, gas line explosion, water main break, house fire, etc., the clinic may replace lost/stolen/destroyed cards for future month's benefits without a waiting period.

- a. Documentation must be provided in the form of a police, fire, insurance or other third party report. The WIC participant may self-declare their incidence of domestic violence and provide a written statement documenting the incident.
- b. In the case of mass disasters where emergency feeding services are typically available, the clinic is directed to contact the State Agency for instructions.

VI. Steps for hot carding and replacing cards:

- a. Clinics must document cards as lost or stolen on their Daily or Monthly Card Logs as well as in VISION.
- b. When a card is reported as lost, stolen, or damaged in VISION, it will be recorded in the household's audit trail as a hot card.
- c. VISION will notify the EBT settlement host that the card is hot, which will then place the card on the hot card list (HCL).
- d. The HCL is picked up by WIC authorized vendors each day or at a minimum of every 48 hours.
  - i. If a card is on the HCL and a participant tries to shop with it, the card will be locked by the store's system and no purchase can be made.
  - ii. The grocery store will not be paid for the WIC transaction if it failed to pick up the HCL after the 48 hour requirement.
- e. The card replacement must be initiated in VISION and benefits transferred within three business days by the clinic or the Help Desk.
- f. An E-WIC Card Replacement Form must be completed for all card replacements and must be signed by the participant prior to receiving their new card.
  - i. Scan the document into the participant's file,
  - ii. give the white copy to the participant, and

- iii. send the yellow copy to the State Office.
  - g. Cards that are found after they had been reported as lost or stolen must be returned by the clinic to the State Office by the end of each month. These cards must be logged as being returned in VISION, on the Daily Card Log, and on the Monthly Card Log.
  - h. If an e-WIC card that had been reported as lost/stolen is used to make a WIC purchase by the participant
    - i. a determination must be made if the purchase benefits on the old/hot carded card were not deducted from the benefits transferred to the new card.
    - ii. If the purchased benefits were transferred to the new card, the participant/parent/caretaker/proxy would be able to over redeem benefits.
  - i. Discuss with the guardian/proxy:
    - i. The necessity of safeguarding e-WIC cards.
    - ii. Remind them that if they later find the lost card it can no longer be used and has been deactivated.
    - iii. If the family reports a second or subsequent incidence of a lost card during the next 12-month period, a three business day waiting period to replace the card will apply.
- VII. Benefits not used for the previous month cannot be restored to the card.
- VIII. E-WIC cards may only be used by authorized persons. Providing the card PIN number and card use by any person other than a person listed as a guardian, additional guardian or proxy in the WIC VISION system is not allowed and may be considered a participant violation. (See Participant Violations.)