

# Alabama WIC Program

## Cashier: eWIC Essentials

### What is eWIC?

eWIC is an electronic issuance system for WIC. Benefits are automatically added onto a card, similar to a debit card.

### Are SNAP and eWIC benefits on the same card?

No, SNAP benefits and eWIC benefits are on separate cards. SNAP cards have a specific dollar amount, and eWIC cards will have specific WIC approved food items that the customer can purchase.

### How does eWIC work?

- ✓ WIC benefits are issued to the eWIC card at the local WIC clinic. The WIC customer's benefit balance includes all benefits that are available for purchase on their eWIC card. eWIC benefits have a start and end date.
- ✓ Foods are scanned at the cash register.
- ✓ The eWIC card is swiped by the customer and they enter their Personal Identification Number (PIN) to purchase WIC approved foods available in their benefit balance.
- ✓ Your cash register system will verify that the items are Alabama WIC approved and available in the benefit balance.
- ✓ WIC customer approves the transaction and pays any remaining balance. In a multi-tender transaction always scan the eWIC card first, then SNAP, and finally any other forms of payment.

Store management will train you on how to conduct the eWIC transaction on your specific cash register system.



### How will the cashier verify the identity of the WIC customer?

In order to make an eWIC purchase, a WIC customer needs their eWIC card and four-digit PIN. Only the WIC customer can enter their PIN. **NO** additional identification is required.

### Why an item is not ringing up WIC approved?

It will be up to the cashier to help troubleshoot why an item is not ringing up or transaction is not going through. The cashier should help the WIC customer with the best solution.

There are six primary reasons an item may not ring up or through as WIC approved:

1. The item is not Alabama WIC approved.
2. The item is WIC approved but not in the Approved Product List (APL) and needs to be submitted to the State WIC Office.
3. The WIC customer has not been issued the WIC approved item.
4. The WIC customer has the benefit but does not have enough of the benefit available to make the purchase.
5. Fresh fruit and vegetables are not mapped (linked).
6. eWIC transaction exceeds 50 unique WIC approved food items (both UPCs and PLUs). WIC approved food items above 50 unique UPCs/PLUs will need to be separated into a separate transaction.

Understanding these reasons will help you assist WIC customers in using their eWIC card. Always be polite and courteous when assisting WIC customers.

### **Can cashiers override an item if it does not scan as WIC approved?**

There are no overrides with eWIC. The APL is the authority on what items are Alabama WIC approved.

### **How does a WIC customer know what they are allowed to purchase?**

A shopping list is provided to the participant by the WIC clinic or their receipt from the last eWIC transaction lists their remaining balance.

Upon request of the WIC customer you are federally required to perform a balance inquiry for the WIC customer.

### **Will there still be an Alabama WIC Approved Foods Brochure?**

Yes, even though the APL controls what products customers can buy, the Alabama WIC Approved Foods Brochure is still an essential tool because it lists allowable types, brands, and sizes of products. It should be used to troubleshoot when foods do not ring up as WIC approved and to help customers find the right foods.

### **Does the participant have to separate their WIC foods?**

At the majority of Alabama authorized WIC vendors, the WIC customer does not have to separate their WIC food items and non-WIC items in smaller quantities. The cash register system will identify the WIC items using the product's UPC or PLU code and deduct them from the WIC customer's benefit balance.

WIC approved food items will need to be separated into separate transactions if the transaction exceeds 50 unique WIC approved UPCs/PLUs.

### **Do WIC customers have to buy all of their WIC food in one trip with eWIC?**

No, WIC customers can purchase as much (or as little) as they would like in a shopping trip.

### **If an eWIC card is not swiping can a cashier manually enter the card number?**

Yes, if the card is not swiping for some reason, you can enter the card number manually. Manual entry is only allowed if the card is presented by the WIC customer.

### **What happens if a WIC customer forgets their PIN?**

If a WIC customer incorrectly enters their PIN three times, their card will lock and will not unlock until midnight. The WIC customer can also call the number on the back of their eWIC card.

### **Can eWIC be used at self-checkout?**

Yes, eWIC can be used at self-checkout for stores who have gained approval. For a list of WIC vendors approved for self-checkout, visit the WIC website listed below. Currently, eWIC cannot be used for home delivery, curbside pickup, or any type of mobile payment.



### **Question about eWIC?**

The Alabama WIC Program is here to help. Should you have any questions, please contact the Vendor Management staff.

### **State WIC Office:**

Telephone: 334-206-5673

Fax: 334-206-2914

1-888-WIC-HOPE

(1-888-942-4673)

### **eWIC Updates**

Additional information about eWIC can be found by visiting the Alabama eWIC page at:

<http://www.alabamapublichealth.gov/wic/ewic-vendors.html>

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