

RI WIC Program Vendor Advisory Council Meeting
Tuesday September 28th, 2004

Minutes to Meeting

Attendees:

Becky Bessette - WIC Program, Mary Lacascio - Stop & Shop, Anita San Antonio – RI Food Dealer’s Association, Ray Lorenzo – Shaw’s, Vincent San Antonio – RI Food Dealer’s Association, Lana Amodei – Carcieri’s, Carmen Crespo – WIC Program

An update on the WIC Reauthorization Legislation of the Child Nutrition Act of 1966 was provided, focusing on the impact on the vendor community. Topics included:

- Developing procedures for accepting and processing vendor applications outside the established time frames,
- The state agency will inform vendors of a violation that requires a pattern of occurrences prior to penalty or sanction,
- The state agency will maintain a list of infant formula wholesalers, distributors, and retailers licensed by the state; infant formula manufacturers registered by the FDA, and ensure that vendors only purchase infant formula from these lists.
- States will develop vendor peer groups and distinct competitive price criteria for cost containment purposes,
- Vendors may not provide incentive items to WIC shoppers unless they prove that the incentive items were obtained by the vendor at no cost.

There was a discussion of competitive and maximum prices for WIC purchases and the recent impact of milk and egg prices on WIC and vendors. The milk increases were described as Global (sudden and significant) vs. the incremental increases usually seen in wholesale food prices. Keeping the State WIC Office informed of these sudden changes in pricing will help in determining adjustment to WIC competitive prices.

RI WIC is considering revising its vendor peer group criteria to consider the gross volume of food sales (vs. the current consideration to the # of cash registers).

RI WIC is preparing to move to the newly authorized ACH process of crediting select checks (vs. the current process of rejecting select checks at the bank, and having vendors re-submitting for reprocessing).

The WIC Secret Shopper Program continues. Most stores flunk, as cashiers are not checking the signatures against the ID folder. The State Office will be following up to ensure stores are responding to this concern.

Next meeting is set for January 11th, 2005, 9:00 am at the RI Food Dealer’s Association.