

## New Hampshire WIC Policy & Procedure Manual

### Chapter 8 CERTIFICATION, ELIGIBILITY & COORDINATION OF SERVICES

#### E. Certification Periods

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##### Certification Periods

**Purpose** To certify applicants or participants for the appropriate certification period based on their category.

**Policy** Program benefits will be based upon the participant's category and corresponding certification period.

<b>Category</b>	<b>Certification period</b>
Pregnant woman	For the duration of her pregnancy, and up to the last day of the month in which the infant becomes six weeks old or the pregnancy ends (for example, if the infant is born June 4, six weeks after birth would be July 16, and certification would end July 31).
Postpartum woman	Up to the last day of the sixth month after the baby is born or the pregnancy ends.
Breastfeeding woman*	Up to the last day of the month in which her infant turns 1 year old, or until the woman ceases breastfeeding, whichever occurs first.
Infant*	Infants under 6 months of age may be certified up to the last day of the month in which the infant turns 1 year old, provided the quality and accessibility of health care services are not diminished. Infants older than 6 months old are certified for 6 months. At the time of their first birthday, their category and priority are automatically converted by the computer system to the appropriate child category and priority if the certification period has not expired.  Breastfed infants are certified and enrolled even when not actually receiving supplemental WIC foods. At the time of certification, they must be enrolled if openings exist for their priority. If the breastfed infant's mother participates, the infant is considered participating as a breastfed infant for that cycle.
Child*	Up to the last day of the 12 <sup>th</sup> month from the Eligibility Begin Date, while maintaining categorical eligibility rules, such as a child who turns 5 years old.

**Authority** CFR 246.7(g)

**Procedure** StarLINC will automatically calculate the certification period based on the category selected.

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\*Extended certification periods for infants, breastfeeding women and children require a mid-certification contact (see Mid-Certification policy Ch.8.E), in order to provide the required follow up assessment and education, as well as quarterly nutrition education contacts.

The WIC certification Eligibility End Date will be calculated based on the participant category, as defined above.

Extended WIC certification periods are authorized for:

Infants under six months of age are certified up to the last day of the month in which the infant turns one year old. Infants who are between 6-12 months of age at time of certification may be certified for a full 6 month period, past the child's 1 year birthday, provided the quality and accessibility of health care services is not diminished.

Breastfeeding women are certified up to the last day of the month in which her infant turns one year old, or until the woman ceases breastfeeding, whichever occurs first. Breastfeeding women who continue to breastfeed at least once a day may continue to receive WIC nutrition and breastfeeding services up to infants first birthday, but may not receive a WIC food package, if their infant is receiving formula in excess of a Mostly Breastfed Infant food package.

Children are certified for one year. Children who turn 5 years old within their one year certification period will be terminated from the program on the last day of the month of their birthday.

Staff shall not schedule a recertification earlier than 30 days in advance of or up to 30 days after the end of an active certification.

- Exceptions** Certification periods may be shortened or lengthened for the following:
- Scheduling difficulty and appointment coordination for family members on WIC (not to exceed 30 days +/- the end of the current certification);
  - Failure to produce the necessary certification documents (up to 30 days and only for one certification period); or
  - Persons on strike or furlough.