

New Hampshire WIC Policy & Procedure Manual

Chapter 8. CERTIFICATION, ELIGIBILITY & COORDINATION OF SERVICES

A. Eligibility Determination & Documentation

Physical Presence

Purpose The local agency shall provide an in-person appointment for all new applicants/certifications and have at least one (1) in-person appointment annually (may be re-cert or mid-cert appointment based on obtaining required measurements) in order to provide quality services, maintain program integrity, and prevent fraud.

Policy All WIC participants and applicants shall be physically present for a new certification and either the subsequent re-certification or mid-cert appointment as determined by need for previously waived anthropometric measurements or bloodwork measurements not obtained at the last cert/re-cert or mid-cert appt or the designation of High Risk / Professional discretion high risk follow-up (HR/PDHR) requiring physical presence. Under certain circumstances the local agency may exempt the participant from the physical presence requirement if being physically present would pose an unreasonable barrier to services.

Authority **CFR 246.7(o)(1)**
American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 (P.L. [117-2](#); ARPA) Section 1106 USDA/FNS Memo February 1, 2023 "Additional WIC Flexibilities to Support Outreach, Innovation, and Modernization Efforts through ARPA Nationwide Waivers – Supporting Remote WIC Operations"

Procedure Determine if participant meets a condition for a remote appointment.

Agency must offer an in-person appointment, may not only offer a remote appointment.

Documentation of the reason for physical presence exemption shall be recorded in StarLINC upon completing WIC certification. StarLINC will prompt the user to enter Physically Present: Yes or No, if No is selected, an approved reason shall be entered.

A remote appointment may be provided, for new certifications or appointments in need of measurements from a previous (re)certification or mid-cert where measurement were waived but not obtained, in rare circumstances and at the discretion of the Local Agency Director, Assistant Director, or Program Supervisor approval.

If a participant claims a hardship, it is legitimate to inquire regarding the options of using a second payee, proxy or attending another clinic, depending on the circumstance. If a participant has a "hardship" at every appointment, it is acceptable to re-educate the participant regarding their responsibility to attend clinics in order to provide the full

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benefits of the WIC nutrition program.

Exception

1. Disabilities: The local agency may grant an exception to applicants who are qualified individuals with disabilities and are unable to be physically present at the WIC clinic because of their disabilities or applicants whose parents or caretakers are individuals with disabilities that meet this standard.

Examples of such situations include:

- A medical condition that necessitates the use of medical equipment that is not easily transportable;
- A medical condition that requires confinement to bed rest; and
- A "serious illness" that may be exacerbated by coming in to the WIC clinic. (Please use professional discretion when allowing this exemption. Examples may include but are not limited to Chicken Pox, Conjunctivitis, Hand, Foot & Mouth disease, Flu.)

2. Working Parent: The local agency may exempt from the physical presence requirement an infant or child who was present at his/her initial WIC certification *and* was present at a WIC certification or recertification determination within the 1-year period ending on the date of the most recent certification or recertification determination *and* is under the care of one or more working parents or one or more primary working caretakers whose working status presents a barrier to bringing the infant or child in to the WIC clinic. The child shall be present for the next recertification appointment. Documented measurements (within +/- 60 days of the WIC appointment) shall be requested for the WIC appointment in order to complete the certification without the child or infant present.

Best Practice

The local agency shall require all applicants to be physically present at all appointments in order to maintain program integrity and prevent fraud.

Obtain required anthropometric measurements w/in the +/- 60 days and/or bloodwork measurements +/- 90 days (when needed) of the remote certification/mid-cert appointment so that a complete assessment, education, food package assignment and appropriate follow-up appointments may be conducted and provided.