

140.10 Food Delivery and Data System

Overview

Introduction

Food delivery and data systems includes goals and objectives for:

- Improvements to vendor activities, and
- Enhancing data quality and integrity.

This policy presents the plan for the current fiscal year, and a status report of activities for the previous fiscal year.

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FY'21 Data System Action Plan

Objective:

Consider the possibility of providing a state wide solution for WIC participant appointment reminders integrated with the Focus MIS.

Purpose Statement:

While a few local agencies have implemented appointment reminders for WIC participant appointments, the majority do not have a solution. Over the past two years, local agency partners have asked the state office to explore options. A statewide solution would provide a standardized approach to benefit all Iowa WIC participants.

Action Steps:

- Determine if there is a State Master Contract offering appointment reminder services.
- Determine what type of procurement process is necessary.
- Execute procurement process.
- Secure contract for services.

Lead Staff:

Brandy Benedict, WIC Operations Director,
Jenni Rowley, DBA,
Connie Glover, Applications Support,
Charles Lorinser, RD, LD

Evaluation Plan:

Completion of this action plan will be determined based on the execution of a procurement process.

Resources Required:

The resources required include WIC Appointment Reminder Project team members, assistance from the Bureau of Finance in the procurement process, and contractors who provide the services sought.

FY'21 Vendor Action Plan

Objective:

Review current foods list and compile feedback from WIC participants inquiring for additional food offerings.

Purpose Statement:

To increase participant's choices and access to more nutritious WIC foods in WIC grocery stores across the state.

Action Steps:

By July 2020:

- Gather and combine feedback from participants and agencies on possible food additions.
- Meet with the food delivery team and make the final decision on new authorized items.
- Email/ Mail product requests from manufactures and retailers.
- WIC sub-categories built and begin entering product UPC information into the MIS system.
- Creation of food flier lay out with new products and send approved flier to print.
- Create shopping tips and education for WIC participants and WIC local agencies.
- Draft and send letter to all retailers with updated approved foods and educational information.
- Addition to the quarterly vendor newsletter to include education and UPC form to retailers.
- Notify JMPA (WIC shopper app) and make appropriate updates.
- Distribution of flyers to retailers and agencies.
- Activate and monitor addition of new approved WIC foods.

By July 2021:

- Document process for future food additions.

Throughout FY20 and 21

- Monitor redemption of new WIC foods and make adjustments to foods with any additional WIC qualifying food items.
- Report any change to WIC team in trends that show any impact on the WIC food budget.

Evaluation Plan:

Throughout FY21 use reporting features from MIS and EBT systems to monitor overall redemption in units and dollars. Analyze WIC participants benefit utilization by each of the categories the new WIC foods are added. With the goal of closing the gap between benefits issued vs. benefits redeemed.

Resources Required:

Food Delivery team, MIS/EBT system, printing and mailing materials

Lead Staff:

Kenny Kane

Results for FY'20 Data System Action Plan

Objective:

By September 30, 2020, business continuity assessment will be conducted with drafting of a business continuity plan specific to the technology systems of WIC will begin.

Purpose Statement:

There is not a comprehensive business continuity plan/disaster recovery plan (BCP/DRP) specific to the WIC management information system and EBT host system and processes. The WIC Technical Operations team needs a single source to reference to respond to a major outage or disaster. Further, the BCP should include annual testing of the plan and any backup systems or processes. This is a significant undertaking, as the systems involve multiple support and host contractors as well as Department staff, with BCP efforts requiring coordination with all of these parties.

Action steps:

The following activities are planned to meet this objective:

- By December 31, 2019, identify technology systems to include in BCP by December 31, 2019
- By March 31, 2020, determine what is possible within our scope of control by March 31, 2020
- By March 31, 2020, define levels of testing.
- By June 30, 2020, identify gaps in DR or BCP.
- By June 30, 2020, determine the scope of the BCP.
- By September 30, 2020, draft BCP.

Lead Staff:

Brandy L Benedict, MBA

Evaluation:

Completion of this action plan will be determined based on the creation of a draft BCP.

The WIC Technical Operations Business Continuity Plan (BCP) exists in draft, and includes the Focus MIS system and the interface between the Focus system and the eWIC Service Host's system (WIC Direct). The systems included and scope of the BCP was determined prior to December 31, 2019. Levels of BCP testing can be defined for the UAT environment only until

the Production environment is transitioned to the IDPH AWS environment. This transition does not yet have a date and resources assigned. The COVID-19 response has introduced a constraint on resources for this work, and for further testing of the BCP during the months of March through September 2020.

Resources Required:

The resources required include WIC Tech Ops staff, access to system documentation and contractors who support the systems involved, and BCP templates.

Results for FY'20 Vendor Action Plan

Objective

By September 30, 2020 enhance the local agency procedures and execution of Educational Buys across the state.

Purpose Statement

Starting in October 2018, local agencies have been given the opportunity to complete Educational Buys. Educational Buys are an attempt by WIC staff to complete a WIC transaction at an approved Iowa WIC vendor using an eWIC card. Educational buys are used to familiarize staff with purchasing processes, measure training effectiveness, identify transaction issues, and develop corrective action plans for the program. Local agencies will be required to complete these buys starting in October 2019. The state office will use information gathered and feedback from the local agencies completing the Educational Buys to modify the current processes to improve local agency staff's knowledge of vendor related issues and improve participant education and their shopping experience.

Action Steps

The following activities are planned to meet the objective

- By October 31, 2019, results will be summarized from the FFY 19 Local Agency Educational Buys that took place.
- By November 31, 2019 the summary results will be analyzed, policy will be assessed, and process adjustments will be determined if needed.
- By January 31, 2020, communicate findings to WIC staff.
- By April 2020, begin making any needed policy changes.
- By September 30, 2020, implement policy and process changes and communicate changes to local agencies

Lead Staff

Kenny Kane

Evaluation

Completion of the action steps as scheduled.

All action steps have been completed. It was determined that the new educational buy process would continue as part of our regular WIC policies and procedures going forward. Findings from the WIC local agencies were positive in the understanding of how transactions work at WIC retailers and found as a helpful training tool for new and current staff as well as WIC participants.

Resources Required

Staff time to complete the action steps.