

## Section 3.2: Processing Standards-Timeframes for Scheduling Certification Appointments

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**References:** 7 CFR 246.7 (f)(2)

**Policy:** Offer applicants a certification appointment to determine eligibility for WIC services within the timeframes specified below.

**Purpose:** To provide WIC services as soon as possible to eligible applicants in nutritional need.

- Applicants are defined as:
  - All persons who have never received WIC services;
  - All pregnant women: including those who are new to WIC, those who have a current WIC postpartum record, and those who have a previous record in the WIC Information System;
  - Any WIC participant whose certification period has ended (his/her last certification end date is prior to the current date).
- Following are the timeframes, or Processing Standards for scheduling appointments:
  - For applicants who request an appointment and who are at special nutritional risk (pregnant women, infants less than six months of age, and migrant families), offer them an appointment within 10 calendar days.
  - For other applicants, offer them an appointment within 20 calendar days.
  - For pregnant women who miss their first WIC appointment, contact them to reschedule the appointment.
  - For participants transferring to Minnesota from out-of-state whose VOC (Verification of Certification) indicates that they are not in a current certification period, schedule a certification appointment as soon as possible (see [Section 3.3: Transferring Participants](#)).

### Procedures

- Applicants who appear to meet eligibility criteria must be offered an appointment within the 10 and 20 day timeframes (Processing Standards) listed above. If the Local Agency cannot meet the scheduling guidelines specified in this policy, the WIC Coordinator should take steps to resolve the situation, including contacting the State WIC Consultant to discuss the situation.

## SECTION 3.2: PROCESSING STANDARDS-TIMEFRAMES FOR SCHEDULING CERTIFICATIONS

- The date of the first appointment offered relative to the Initial Contact date determines whether the timeframes for Processing Standards are being met. These should be documented in the WIC Information System.
  - Document the Initial Contact date. This is the date the applicant first contacted the WIC office to request an appointment.
  - Document the date of the first appointment offered. The first appointment offered date may be different than the actual date of the scheduled appointment.
    - If no appointments are available, use the comment field in the WIC Information System to document the reason an appointment could not be offered when the applicant contacted the WIC office.
    - Complete the date of the first appointment offered in the WIC Information System when an appointment is available and can be offered to the applicant/participant. This may need to be documented in the Comment field.

### Guidance

- Offer a new appointment as soon as possible when an applicant asks to reschedule an appointment.
- Provide an appointment as soon as possible for all applicants requesting WIC services within the 10 and 20 calendar day timeframe.
- Use the scheduling feature in the WIC Information System to increase efficiencies and utilize the full reporting functions.
- Local Agencies are encouraged to:
  - Offer a variety of flexible scheduling options including:
    - Same-day or next day appointments;
    - Walk-in appointments as time allows;
    - Early morning, lunchtime or late day appointments;
    - Prescheduled appointments in the future.
  - Set aside appointment times convenient for pregnant women, young infants, and migrant families to meet the timeframes for processing applicants.
  - Overbook the schedule based on the agency's "no-show" rate.
- Contact your State WIC Consultant to discuss other ideas.

## Reference – Complete Listing of Hyperlinks

### Section 3.3: Transferring Participants

([https://www.health.state.mn.us/docs/people/wic/localagency/program/mom/chsctns/ch3/sctn3\\_3.pdf](https://www.health.state.mn.us/docs/people/wic/localagency/program/mom/chsctns/ch3/sctn3_3.pdf))

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