

Vendor Focus Group Summary

- There is a double standard. People have it in their mind that they can't go over. The majority of the customers on WIC also have EBT. Try to explain to them that they can go over and the remaining balance can go on the EBT card. It may be an embarrassment issue if they go over and don't have the cash to pay the difference.
- Maybe they're scared to get more than the dollar amount on the voucher. Let them know its okay to go over the dollar amount!
- Scales should likely be calibrated in the stores and one store thought they'd possibly purchase a digital scale.
- One cashier hears that they don't know what they can or can't get and some don't know that they can get canned goods. This cashier will go get them something but the WIC participant doesn't want to hold up a line so they don't go over then. They think making the voucher look more like a coupon would be better.
- Another vendor also talked about the WIC participants not wanting to hold up the line to go get more fruits and veggies.
- One vendor talked about educating the participants about the importance of eating fruits and vegetables and wishes the dollar amount on the voucher could increase.
- Training includes 6-8 hours of workbook training and then training with another cashier. There is always a front end manager on staff to ask questions.
 - If they hear a complaint about a certain cashier they would then retrain that cashier. They would like feedback if they aren't treating someone right.
- No vendors were aware of the WIC Vendor Training DVD that was recently made available.
- Vendors state that they don't have many disputed issues with WIC participants and foods being allowed through their UPC system.
- WIC participants aren't aware of what is allowed – they think they can get red or gold potatoes, just not "white" (russet)
- Why 1 participant didn't want to get all of her voucher....she didn't care. "Majority of what I see, they get real close to what they want and don't want to hold up the line."
- It comes down to the participant taking responsibility for the voucher.

- Other ideas:
 - Mentor or someone available to help them shop the first couple of times or buddy system to match different WIC clients up as shopping mentors to learn how to shop with WIC vouchers.
 - Do mini clinics in the store – take the WIC food guide and shop the store with clients, maybe group format and do a store tour first. Help clients realize how great of a resource the food guide is for them when shopping.
 - Maybe the WIC client could circle the items they want to get in the food guide – have their list ready before they get to the store. Cross off brands that are not available at the store. Or mark cereal box size on the food guide that they like to get.
 - Set up a display with food items clients could shop through at WIC clinic or staff can show them what to look for. Mark food guide to be store or county specific as to what items are available here.
 - We could take the food guide and tour the store with new clerks to show what is available.
 - Mock grocery aisle at WIC clinic
 - Tell them to bring 1-2 bananas to top off their fruit and vegetable voucher to make sure they go over the full amount.

- What can WIC do?
 - Make sure to let vendors know if a participant has a problem