

Texas WIC Health and Human Services Commission

Effective August 1, 2017

Policy No. CS:24.0 (T)

Certification Periods

Purpose

To identify the length of time program participants are eligible for WIC benefits.

Authority

7 CFR Part 246.7; 25 TAC §31.25

Policy

WIC benefits will be provided to participants in accordance with the timeframes defined by federal regulations for each category.

Definition

Certification expiration date is the last day of the certification period and the last day the participant shall receive benefits.

Procedures

- I. Begin certification periods on the date the applicant is determined eligible for benefits.
- II. A pregnant woman shall be certified to receive benefits for the duration of her pregnancy, and up till the last day of the month that the infant turns 6 weeks or the pregnancy ends.

EXAMPLE: Expected delivery date: 06/04/yy
 Date infant is six weeks old: 07/16/yy
 Certification expiration date: 07/31/yy

The benefits issued between delivery and six weeks postpartum may be issued before or at the time of the postpartum screening.

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- III. A postpartum woman who is not breastfeeding shall be certified up to the last day of the sixth month after the baby is born or the pregnancy ends.

EXAMPLE: Delivery date: 06/04/yy
 Date infant is 6 months old: 12/04/yy
 Certification expiration date: 12/31/yy

- IV. A breastfeeding woman (fully, partial or some breastfeeding) shall be certified for up to the last day of the month in which the infant turns 1 year old, or until woman ceases breastfeeding, whichever occurs first. See Policy CS: 01.0 for definition of breastfeeding woman.

EXAMPLE: Delivery date: 06/04/yy
 Date infant is 1 year old: 06/04/yy
 Certification expiration date: 06/30/yy

- A. If a woman discontinues breastfeeding before six months postpartum category, risk conditions (if applicable) and food package code shall be changed in the MIS so she may participate as a postpartum woman. If her eligibility was based solely on breastfeeding risk conditions, risk code 501, Regression, may be applicable based on her pregnancy risk conditions. If risk code 501 is not applicable, staff shall assign risk code 401, Failure to Meet Dietary Guidelines for Americans, and the woman shall be issued postpartum benefits.

- B. If a woman discontinues breastfeeding after six months postpartum, she is no longer categorically eligible. **Staff shall void any remaining benefits** for which she is no longer eligible to receive and shall be terminated (see CS:23.0) in the MIS.

- V. A child, up to age 5, shall be certified for a 12-month period ending on the last day of the twelfth month.

EXAMPLE:

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Certification action date: 12/14/yy
Certification expiration date: 11/30/yy

For a child turning five years of age, their eligibility will expire at the end of the month in which the child reaches his/her fifth birthday.

EXAMPLE: Child's fifth birthday
Child's fifth birthday: 03/19/yy
Certification expiration date: 03/31/yy

If a child is certified in the month of his/her fifth birthday, the certification must occur before the birth date in order for the child to be eligible for benefits. This includes initial and subsequent certifications.

EXAMPLE: Child certification in fifth birthday month
Child's fifth birthday: 03/19/yy
Certification expiration date: 03/31/yy

VI. An infant, younger than six months at the time of initial enrollment, shall be certified up to his/ her first birthday. Certification shall expire on the day prior to the infant's first birthday.

EXAMPLE: Date of birth: 11/22/yy
Certification expiration date: 11/21/yy

VII. An infant, six months or older at the time of initial enrollment, shall be certified for a six-month period ending on the last day of the sixth month.

EXAMPLE: Date of birth: 11/22/yy
Certification action date: 07/11/yy
Certification expiration date: 12/31/yy