
Subject: Exceptions to Being Physically Present

Effective Date: October 1, 2012

Revised from: October 1, 2011

Policy: All persons to be certified in the WIC program must be physically present at each certification appointment unless a Competent Professional Authority has approved an exception. These exceptions include applicants with disabilities that make it difficult to appear at the WIC clinic. Examples of such situations include:

- Medical conditions that necessitate the use of medical equipment that is not easily transportable;
- Medical conditions that require confinement to bed rest; and
- Serious illnesses that may be exacerbated by coming to the WIC clinic.

Any parent/WIC Caregiver/Alternate Caregiver who is not able to be physically present for the certification of an infant or child may send the infant or child to the appointment with another adult, preferably someone involved with the care of the child. A parent/WIC Caregiver/Alternate Caregiver must sign the Rights and Responsibilities before an infant or child can be certified. (Refer to [CRT 03.02.00 Client's Rights and Responsibilities](#) and [CRT 03.08.00 Definition of Caregiver](#).) **The person receiving program education in place of the parent/WIC Caregiver/Alternate Caregiver at certification must also sign the Rights and Responsibilities.**

Reference: CFR §246.7(p)

Procedure:

1. A Competent Professional Authority (CPA) must approve the exception allowing the applicant/client to be absent. Usually the Caregiver will request an approval for the applicant/client to be absent when setting up the appointment, but circumstances may cause the request to be made another time. The reason for the exception must be documented in the client's KWIC record.
2. At the certification appointment, the question on the WIC Certification screen "Is the client physically present?" should be answered for all clients. For clients with an approved exception, the reason must be documented in the "If not, describe reason" field.
3. Certification must be completed according to normal policy with documentation of identity, income, residency, risk eligibility, etc. Medical data may be obtained from health care providers outside the WIC agency, but must be taken not more than 60 days before the certification appointment. The applicant's WIC categorical status on the certification date must agree with the categorical status on the data of the medical data. (See [CRT 07.01.00 Determine Nutritional Risk – Anthropometric](#) and [CRT 07.02.01 Determine Nutritional Risk – Hematological Test for Anemia](#).)

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4. Clinic staff are encouraged to schedule a subsequent appointment for a high risk or second contact when the client can be physically present. Staff should consider factors such as condition severity, duration, and degree of nutrition counseling by other medical providers.
5. A person who is hospitalized may be certified under this policy, but checks will not be issued until the applicant/client is discharged from the hospital.
6. If a Caregiver comes to an infant's or child's certification appointment without the infant/child and there is no reason to approve an exception to the physical presence requirement, the appointment must be rescheduled. As time permits, staff may collect information the caregiver has brought such as income, residency, and identity proofs.
7. If the applicant is a pregnant, breastfeeding, or postpartum woman and cannot come into the office due to a reason that meets the policy criteria (e.g., bedrest due to a difficult pregnancy or a disability that prevents her from coming to the clinic), paperwork can be completed by mail or other means and the certification may be conducted by telephone. Staff can contact the State Agency for permission to mail one month of checks. (See [FCI 04.07.00 Mailing WIC Checks](#).) Arrangements should be made for an Alternate Caregiver to pick up future checks and the Proxy form provided and Proxy policy explained in case the Alternate Caregiver becomes unavailable. (See [FCI 04.02.00 Proxies and Proxy Cards](#).)
8. Any parent/ WIC Caregiver/Alternate Caregiver who is not able to be physically present for the certification of an infant or child may send the infant or child to the appointment with another adult, preferably someone involved with the care of the child.
 - a. A parent/ WIC Caregiver/Alternate Caregiver must sign the Rights and Responsibilities before an infant or child can be certified. **The person receiving program education at certification must also sign the Rights and Responsibilities.** (See [CRT 03.02.00 Client's Rights and Responsibilities](#).)
 - b. No approval is needed for the parent/ WIC Caregiver/Alternate Caregiver to be absent, although it is helpful for staff to know who is bringing the infant/child.
 - c. When making appointments, staff should remind the parent/ WIC Caregiver/Alternate Caregiver that if another adult will be bringing the infant or child, the Rights and Responsibilities form is to be signed by a parent/ WIC Caregiver/Alternate Caregiver prior to the appointment. The parent/ WIC Caregiver/Alternate Caregiver should have the choice of having the Rights and Responsibilities/Food Record mailed or sending someone to get the forms so the Rights and Responsibilities can be signed and brought to the certification appointment.
 - d. Staff may only issue checks if the substitute is the Proxy. (See [FCI 04.02.00 Proxies and Proxy Cards](#).)