



2 INCOME/CATEGORICAL ELIGIBILITY

Effective: 12/1/95

2.10 Timeframes for Certification

Revised: 8/6/07

POLICY: The participant type: pregnant woman (P), breastfeeding woman (B), non-breastfeeding woman (N), infant (I) or child (C) determines the length of the certification period. **Food instruments (FI) may be issued only for the certification period and with a first date to use before the certification expiration date. Refer to Policy 4.30 Food Instrument Issuance Overview and Timeframes for policy regarding issuance and tailoring of FIs within the certification periods.**

PROCEDURE:

A. TIMEFRAMES FOR CERTIFICATION PERIODS

1. **Pregnant women (Type P)** are categorically eligible for the duration of their pregnancy and up to six weeks after the actual delivery date. Pregnant women are certified once during their pregnancy.
2. **Postpartum non-breastfeeding women (Type N)** are categorically eligible for benefits for up to six months from the actual delivery date. Postpartum women must be recertified by six weeks after delivery.
3. **Breastfeeding women (Type B)** are categorically eligible until their infant's first birthday or until they stop breastfeeding, whichever comes first. A breastfeeding woman should be recertified by six weeks postpartum. It is recommended to schedule both the mother and baby to be certified at the same time, preferably within 1 week postpartum.
4. **Infants (Type I)** are categorically eligible (as an Infant) until their first birthday. Infants certified before six months of age are eligible to receive program benefits until their first birthday. Infants certified for the first time after six months of age are certified for a period of six months. An infant may be certified as a child (Type C) within 15 days of their first birthday.
5. **Children (Type C)** are categorically eligible until their fifth birthday and must be certified at intervals of approximately six months. A certification period extends six months from the certification date.
6. **Transfers** are served until their certification period expires. Refer to Policy 2.6 D.3. regarding certification periods of other states and the WIC Overseas Program.

B. SCHEDULING RECERTIFICATION APPOINTMENTS

Recertification appointments may be scheduled to occur 30 days before or after the certification period ends for infants and children. Breastfeeding and postpartum



women have a 6 week period within which they must become recertified from the pregnancy participant type (P). Exceptions include:

1. **Early (Re)certification:** The recertification date may be more than one month early, perhaps 2 or 3 months. For example, it may be advantageous to get individuals in a family on the same certification schedule, such as when an infant is born into the family, or to enhance coordination of services such as HealthCheck or Prenatal Care Coordination.
 - a) If the participant is found ineligible at the recertification appointment (other than over income), they should be notified of the determination and should receive the food benefits to complete the previous certification period.
 - b) If the participant is over income at the early recertification appointment, give a WIC Program Notice of Ineligibility (DPH40085) letter with 15 days notice and issue one partial food package. (Participants should be aware of this potential consequence with early certification.) The exception to this is when a woman delivers and comes early, (e.g., 2 weeks postpartum) for the postpartum/breastfeeding recertification and is found ineligible, (e.g., over income). She must be terminated immediately and not given FIs even though she has not completed the 6 week postpartum period.
 - c) If the participant already has benefits from the previous certification, it is not necessarily appropriate to issue another package on the recertification date. See Catch-Up FI Issuance.
2. **Late (Re)certification:** Recertification appointments may take place beyond 30 days of the expiration of the certification period for a variety of reasons, such as full schedule or missed appointments. Participants who receive multi-month issuance are given an appointment 2 to 3 months in advance but the appointment is to take place within 1 month of the certification expiration date. The new certification period begins on the date of actual recertification and Catch-up Issuance would be used to tailor the benefits if the FDU remains the same.
 - a) If the State WIC Office has approved a waiting list and if recertification appointments cannot be scheduled to take place within 30 days from the expiration of the certification date, participants should be placed on the waiting list.
 - b) If the project cancels a clinic for inclement weather and cannot reschedule the certification appointments within one week, contact the State WIC Director for instructions on how to handle those participants missing their recertification appointment.