

**WEST VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF  
HEALTH AND HUMAN RESOURCES**

**SPECIAL SUPPLEMENTAL NUTRITION PROGRAM  
FOR WOMEN, INFANTS AND CHILDREN**

**EMERGENCY OPERATIONS PLAN**

# WEST VIRGINIA WIC EMERGENCY OPERATIONS PLAN

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b><u>Section</u></b>	<b><u>Page</u></b>
1. Policy.....	1
2. Pre-Disaster Planning.....	2
3. Initial Disaster Alert and Activation.....	3
4. Emergency Response.....	4
5. Restoration and Recovery Procedures.....	5
6. Certification Procedures.....	6
7. Food Delivery Procedures.....	7
8. Outreach Procedures.....	8

### **Attachments**

1. Emergency Preparedness Meetings, Drills and Test Exercises
2. Daily Documentation of Disaster Problems and Resolutions
3. Summary of Disaster Problems and Special Needs
4. West Virginia Office of Emergency Services Directory (Local Agency Director only)

# WEST VIRGINIA WIC EMERGENCY OPERATIONS PLAN

## POLICY

- \* The West Virginia WIC Program, in the event of an emergency or major disaster affecting large numbers of participants, will take those resources necessary to:
  - 1) Provide for the safety of personnel and equipment;
  - 2) Secure records, equipment, materials and supplies;
  - 3) Restore WIC Program operations and delivery of service as soon as possible; and
  - 4) Support the emergency procedures of the West Virginia Office of Emergency Services.
- \* During a disaster, the mission of the West Virginia WIC Program remains the same:

*To improve the health of women, infants and children in West Virginia through the provision of nutrition and breastfeeding counseling, health monitoring and the provision of nutritious supplemental foods.*

- \* The WV WIC Emergency Operations Plan will be reviewed and updated as required.

# WEST VIRGINIA WIC EMERGENCY OPERATIONS PLAN

## PRE-DISASTER PLANNING

- \* Because disasters happen quickly, there may not be an opportunity to complete any or all pre-disaster preparations. Disasters could have a great impact on residential and business infrastructure and on the personal lives of those affected.
- \* Pre-disaster planning helps WIC personnel to use alternative procedures to provide continued service during a disaster. How well a WIC clinic can continue to operate in a disaster situation depends upon:
  - 1) The extent of damage on the delivery infrastructure; and
  - 2) The extent that the Local Agency has planned and prepared for disaster situations.
- \* The Local Agency Director will be responsible for the following:
  - 1) Assuring that annual pre-disaster preparation is completed;
  - 2) Maintaining communication with WIC personnel, the media and local sources of food assistance during the initial disaster alert/activation phase, during the disaster and during the restoration/recovery phase; and
  - 3) Assuring that pre-disaster procedures and restoration/recovery procedures following a disaster are followed and documented according to the **WV WIC Emergency Operations Plan**.
- \* Each Local Agency WIC clinic will conduct annual pre-disaster preparation. The preparation will be documented on the attached **Emergency Preparedness Meetings, Drills and Test Exercises form** including the following:
  - 1) Staff meetings to discuss the emergency plan and individual responsibilities;
  - 2) Inspection of fire extinguishers;
  - 3) Emergency preparedness meetings, emergency drills and test exercises; and
  - 4) Plans to provide WIC services at a temporary back-up site or transfer of participants to another current WIC clinic in cases of damage to the delivery infrastructure.

# WEST VIRGINIA WIC EMERGENCY OPERATIONS PLAN

## INITIAL DISASTER ALERT AND ACTIVATION

- \* The extent of disaster preparation depends on the type of disaster.
  - 1) When there is advance notice that a WIC clinic may be damaged by a flood, WIC personnel will attempt to remove vehicles, computer equipment, participant charts, medical supplies and equipment to a secure location.
  - 2) When a WIC clinic is struck by lightning which causes a fire, there is no time to make advance preparation. In this case, it is important that all people inside the building leave **immediately** and call the fire department.
- \* When there is advance notice that a disaster may occur, the Local Agency Director will take immediate action upon receipt of the notice.
- \* The Local Agency Director will use the list of responsibilities and designated personnel on the Emergency Preparedness Meetings, Drills and Test Exercises form that was completed during a staff meeting to discuss the emergency plan as a check list for preparation.
- \* The Local Agency Director will:
  - 1) Maintain contact with media and local sources of food assistance for information.
  - 2) Maintain contact with WIC personnel for notification of preparedness and problems.
- \* WIC participants will be notified, as possible, that the WIC clinic may be closed until a disaster is over:
  - 1) Leave a message on the telephone answering machine and on the WIC clinic door. The message should notify the participant of an approximate date, phone number and location where they may reach WIC personnel; and
  - 2) Call participants to reschedule appointments for the estimated length of time the WIC clinic will be closed during the disaster and recovery period.
- \* WIC personnel will be allowed to prepare their home and families, as considered to be necessary and approved by their supervisor.

# WEST VIRGINIA WIC EMERGENCY OPERATIONS PLAN

## EMERGENCY RESPONSE

- \* WIC clinic operations will be suspended until the disaster is over and it is safe to return to the site.
  - 1) Personnel will continue performing their assigned duties up to a reasonably safe time before the disaster; and
  - 2) Personnel will report for duty after the disaster as soon as the affected area is declared safe.
  
- \* The Local Agency Director will distribute the appropriate office number for the County Office of Emergency Services Director (**see page 13 of the West Virginia Office of Emergency Services Directory**) to the personnel for each WIC clinic. This number may be used by WIC personnel or given to persons who contact WIC for assistance in emergency situations.

# WEST VIRGINIA WIC EMERGENCY OPERATIONS PLAN

## RESTORATION AND RECOVERY PROCEDURES

- \* When a WIC clinic area is declared a disaster area by Federal and/or State officials, the Local Agency Director or designee will prepare an initial assessment of the disaster situation within two (2) hours upon return to duty. The assessment, with the use of the attached **Daily Documentation of Disaster Problems and Resolutions form**, will include a numbered listing of problems:
  - 1) Infrastructure problems including the availability of power, water, phones, the status of vehicles, equipment, files and supplies and approximate length of time for the WIC clinic to re-open or an alternate site is able to provide services;
  - 2) Staffing problems including the reasons that some are not able to return to duty;
  - 3) Vendor problems including an estimated number closed or low on stock; and
  - 4) Participant problems including an estimated number of homes affected.
  
- \* The initial assessment will be faxed to the State Agency Disaster Coordinator once compiled. If no immediate damage is detected in the area, the Local Agency Director or designee will send the fax indicating that the WIC clinic in a declared disaster area has no apparent initial problems.
  
- \* Following the initial assessment, the attached **Daily Documentation of Disaster Problems and Resolutions form** will be faxed to the State Agency Disaster Coordinator once during each day that the WIC clinic is normally in operation until all problems are resolved or addressed.
  - 1) New problems may be added to the bottom of the list as they arise.
  - 2) Problems will be omitted from following lists once they are marked as resolved.
  - 3) A plan of action must be submitted for a problem that will not be resolved easily and/or briefly. Once the problem is addressed, it may be omitted from following lists.
  
- \* The Local Agency Director will maintain communication with:
  - 1) The local Office of Emergency Services to provide assistance as needed;
  - 2) The media and local sources of food assistance for information; and
  - 3) WIC personnel for notification of problems.

# WEST VIRGINIA WIC EMERGENCY OPERATIONS PLAN

## CERTIFICATION PROCEDURES

- \* A temporary WIC clinic or a portion of the regular WIC clinic may need to be used during the disaster recovery period. It may be necessary for personnel to use portable anthropometric equipment. The WIC personnel and applicants/participants may need to endure less than ideal WIC clinic conditions for a short period of time while the WIC clinic is being cleaned and/or repaired.
- \* Income eligibility determination may deviate from the usual WIC Program operation in disaster situations:
  - 1) During subsequent certification, participants who express that their income documentation was lost because of a disaster will be considered as income eligible. It must take place within a reasonable time period (approximately one month) following a disaster during which they have not had time to acquire documentation. The documentation will be verbally verified as similar to that documented during the previous certification;
  - 2) An applicant who has a loss of income because their place of employment was completely destroyed and is likely to be out of work for an extended period of time will have income assessed based on the previous month;
  - 3) An applicant who has a temporary loss of income because a business that sustained some damage or a temporary loss of utilities will have income calculated on a twelve (12) month basis; and
  - 4) An applicant who has not been on WIC in the past or is not currently an active WIC participant will provide documentation for income eligibility. Such persons who do not have documentation will be referred to other sources of assistance.
- \* While the temporary shelters and tent cities in which many disaster victims stay meet the definition of a “homeless facility”, residence in such facilities does not automatically make such persons eligible for WIC. Homeless applicants must qualify through the certification process to receive WIC benefits.
- \* During disasters, WIC Program participants or proxies will not be responsible for issuing food instruments or WIC Identification Folders to themselves or members of their immediate family or conducting any aspect of the eligibility process for themselves or members of their immediate family, including issuing of VOC cards, taking anthropometric measures, and certifying the eligibility of such persons.

# WEST VIRGINIA WIC EMERGENCY OPERATIONS PLAN

## FOOD DELIVERY PROCEDURES

- \* The WIC Program will not replace food lost in a mass disaster where community emergency feeding services are provided. WIC personnel will be aware of locations of emergency feeding services and sources of clean water to be able to refer those who contact WIC for this type of assistance.
- \* In the case of a natural disaster affecting large numbers of people in a regional or State nature where emergency declarations initiate action by Federal and State public and private disaster assistance providers, participants are not required to provide proof of disaster for food instrument replacement.
  - 1) Food instruments may be replaced once the State Agency verifies that the original food instruments were not redeemed. A Lost and Stolen Food Instrument Report will be completed for each payee who reports food instruments as damaged. A copy of the completed report including replacement numbers, date of replacement and payee signature will be sent to the State Agency.
  - 2) Identification will be verified when WIC Identification Folders are destroyed. Because there is a possibility that all identification has been destroyed, verbal identification, such as social security number or children's birth dates will be verified.
  - 3) Upon food instrument issuance, participants will be notified that area grocery stores may not be open to accept the food instruments, or may not have sufficient stock to provide the full food package.
- \* WIC participants may require a change in food package during a disaster.
  - 1) Ready-to-feed infant formula may be issued when water sources are not safe.
  - 2) Formula in supply at the WIC clinic may be distributed to WIC participants, as necessary.
  - 3) A homeless food package may be issued to WIC participants with no storage and/or electricity.
- \* WIC personnel will provide nutrition counseling and handouts about safety when cooking, eating and drinking following a disaster, as necessary.

# WEST VIRGINIA WIC EMERGENCY OPERATIONS PLAN

## OUTREACH

- \* The Local Agency operating in a disaster situation will increase outreach efforts to actively promote the WIC Program to potentially eligible individuals affected by disaster, while operating within its capacity to actually serve newly eligible persons.
  - 1) Announce the availability of WIC benefits through public information systems including the eligibility criteria, WIC clinic locations, telephone numbers and non-discrimination policy.
  - 2) Distribute WIC Program information at the local disaster assistance sites and at public locations in the areas affected by the disaster.
  - 3) Communicate with the local Office of Emergency Services to notify them that WIC is available as a source of assistance to provide nutrition information and supplemental foods to those who meet eligibility criteria.

**EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS MEETINGS, DRILLS AND TEST EXERCISES**

Local Agency Director: \_\_\_\_\_ WIC clinic: \_\_\_\_\_

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**I. Meeting to discuss emergency plan & individual responsibilities (attach attendance sheet)**

Date Completed: \_\_\_\_\_

<b>Responsibilities:</b>	<b>Designated Personnel:</b>
Inspection of all WIC clinic fire extinguishers	
Conducting training drill and test exercises	
Maintain phone contact with the Director	
Maintain contact with media for information	
Advise officials of WIC staff responsibilities	
Disseminate information to WIC participants	
Ensure vehicles are serviced and operational	
Do back-ups of the database	
Secure facilities, equipment and records	
Disconnect all electrical equipment and turn off major source of electricity	
Complete/send daily fax problems/resolutions	
Complete/send summary of problems/needs	
Increase outreach efforts in disaster areas	

**Attach plans to provide WIC services at a temporary back-up site or transfer of participants to another current WIC clinic in cases of fire, flood, etc.**

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**II. Inspection of all WIC clinic fire extinguishers**

Comments: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of Inspector: \_\_\_\_\_ Date Completed: \_\_\_\_\_

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**III. Emergency preparedness meeting, drill and test exercises (attach attendance sheet)**

Signature of Conductor: \_\_\_\_\_ Date Completed: \_\_\_\_\_

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**Keep completed sheet with the WIC clinic West Virginia WIC Emergency Operations Plan**

**FAX TRANSMITTAL**

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_ **To:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Fax #:** \_\_\_\_\_

**# Pages:** \_\_\_\_\_ **From:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Phone #:** \_\_\_\_\_

**DAILY DOCUMENTATION OF DISASTER PROBLEMS AND RESOLUTIONS**

Local Agency Director: \_\_\_\_\_

WIC Clinic(s) Affected: \_\_\_\_\_

Date and Description of Disaster: \_\_\_\_\_

Location where Water is provided: \_\_\_\_\_

Location where Food is provided: \_\_\_\_\_

**List all disaster problems including WIC clinic, WIC staff, vendor, and participant. Write “Resolved” and the date of resolution on the line of the problem when it is resolved. Once a problem is marked as “Resolved”, omit the problem from the following lists.**

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_

4. \_\_\_\_\_

5. \_\_\_\_\_

6. \_\_\_\_\_

7. \_\_\_\_\_

8. \_\_\_\_\_

9. \_\_\_\_\_

10. \_\_\_\_\_

11. \_\_\_\_\_

12. \_\_\_\_\_

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Fax daily to the State Agency Disaster Coordinator to report ongoing problems and resolutions until all problems are resolved or addressed**

**SUMMARY OF DISASTER PROBLEMS AND SPECIAL NEEDS**

Local Agency Director: \_\_\_\_\_ WIC clinic: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Disaster: \_\_\_\_\_

Description of Disaster: \_\_\_\_\_

Description of WIC Clinic/Staff Problems: \_\_\_\_\_

Description of WIC Vendor Problems: \_\_\_\_\_

Description of WIC Participant Problems (list below):

<u># Affected:</u>	<u>Problem:</u>	<u>Comments:</u>
_____	Destroyed drafts replaced	_____
_____	Had destroyed drafts	_____
_____	Not able to get drafts	_____
_____	Formula on hand provided/amount	_____
_____	Added/changed proxy	_____
_____	Changed appointment	_____
_____	Changed food package	_____
_____	Q&A on food safety	_____
_____	No use of electric, phones or water	_____
_____	Referral for additional help	_____
_____	Moved/transferred from area	_____
_____	Other	_____

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Send to State Agency Disaster Coordinator once problems have been resolved or addressed**