

Texas WIC Health and Human Services Commission

Effective June 1, 2018

Policy CS: 26.0 (T)

Issuance and Disposition of Replacement Texas WIC Cards

Purpose

To limit interruption of services to the WIC participant due to the loss, theft, damage, or failure of the Texas WIC Card.

Authority

State Policy

Policy

The local agency (LA) clinic sites shall issue replacement Texas WIC Cards when card is reported lost, stolen, or damaged.

Definitions

Disabled (Locked) Card - a Texas WIC Card which has been locked in the MIS due to being lost, stolen, or damaged

Administrative Lock – A type of lock on the WIC card that is effective the first day of the following month

Expedited Benefits – the reissuance of current month's benefits by the LA following a lock of card. This process allows the MIS to override the required three calendar days waiting period

Hot Card List (vendor list of locked cards) - indicates that a Texas WIC Card has been permanently disabled (locked) due to being lost, stolen, or damaged or administratively disabled due to a family transfer to a non-EBT clinic, partial family transfer, or dual participation. Texas WIC Card is blocked for use at vendors while it is on the Hot Card List.

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Procedures

- I. When a participant or parent/guardian reports that his/her Texas WIC Card has been lost or stolen:
 - A. Either the SA or LA can disable (lock) the card.
 1. When the participant calls the SA to report a lost or stolen card:
 - a. The SA will place an immediate lock on the card and, if current benefits are on the card, staff will inform the participant or parent/guardian that it will take three calendar days for a replacement card.
 - b. The SA will instruct the participant to call the LA and schedule an appointment for a replacement card.
 2. When the participant contacts the LA (in person or over the phone) to report lost/stolen/damaged card, the LA shall:
 - a. Place an immediate lock on the card.
 - b. If benefits were issued for the current month, schedule an appointment for a replacement card on or after the third calendar day.
 - c. If current benefits were not issued on the card, participant does not need to wait three calendar days for a replacement card. LA staff shall provide a replacement card immediately with current and/or future months' benefits.
 - B. When the participant comes to appointment (on or after third calendar day) to get replacement card:
 1. The LA staff shall confirm the card has been locked within the MIS.
 2. The participant or parent/guardian shall present appropriate identification as stated in Policy CS:05.
 3. LA will issue new card, have participant sign the back of the card, and select and confirm the personal identification number (PIN).
 4. LA will replace in full current and future unredeemed benefits (regardless of the number of days remaining in the month).
 5. Benefits for past months will not be loaded on the card.

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6. If the card was lost, stolen, or damaged at the end of the month, remaining benefits for the month may be lost due to the time element of three calendar days for the replacement process.
 - C. If a family member (e.g., a newborn) is certified during the locked period:
 1. Issue a replacement card on the day of the certification with benefits for this individual.
 2. Schedule an appointment in 3 calendar days for the participant or parent/guardian to return to load the other family member's replacement benefits on the card.
- II. Damaged Cards
- A. When a participant reports by phone or in person a card is damaged:
 1. Staff shall place an immediate lock on the card in the MIS.
 2. Participant shall be instructed to return to the clinic on or after 3 calendar days for the replacement card.
 3. LA shall issue a new card.
 4. Replacement benefits, if available at the time the replacement card is issued, will be automatically loaded on the replacement card when it is issued.
 - B. The damaged card does not need to be returned to clinic. When a damaged card is returned to the clinic, staff shall destroy the card per parent agency destruction policies.
- III. Disposition of Unusable Texas WIC cards
- A. When a Texas WIC Card fails during or after benefit issuance and the **participant has not left the clinic**, staff will immediately place a lock on the damaged card and reissue benefits on a new card. Staff shall select "damaged" as the reason in the MIS.
 - B. Staff shall destroy the card according to LA/parent agency protocol, after identifying the reason for destruction within the MIS.
- IV. Locked/Unlocked cards
- A. A locked card can be unlocked at the clinic. In a situation where it is determined that the card should be unlocked (card reported lost,
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then found) staff may unlock within the MIS and card can be reused by the same recipient. Staff shall give the participant the option of either:

1. Waiting **4 calendar days** after the card is reported found and unlocked by LA/SA to ensure the card is removed from the Hot Card List (vendor list of locked cards). If the participant attempts to redeem benefits with the found (unlocked) card before the 4 calendar days, the card may be automatically re-locked by the vendor system for an additional 3 days.
 2. OR participant can come into the clinic after the **3 calendar days** have passed from the initial lost-stolen report and get a replacement card. The "found" card shall be destroyed by participant or clinic.
 3. Clinic/State Agency staff will use the reason "*found card*" in MIS to unlock the card.
- B. Administratively locked cards due to one or more family members transferring:
1. The losing clinic will be alerted by the MIS.
 2. Losing LA shall be responsible for notifying the family with the Texas WIC Card, by phone and/or mail, that their Texas WIC Card will not work the first day of the following month unless they return to the clinic with the card before that date to have the appropriate benefits removed from the card.
 3. Once the benefits have been removed, the card can be reactivated for issuance and redemption.
 4. If only the transferring participant exists on the Texas WIC Card, the card shall not be reactivated.
- V. Expedited benefits
- A. A process that can be used in rare situations to override the three calendar day waiting period
- B. Reasons for expediting benefits:
1. Current months' benefits remain on the card and there are less than three calendar days remaining in the month

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2. Clinic closures for an extended period of time that creates an undue hardship to WIC families in need of food benefits (satellite clinics with limited hours, holidays, inclement weather)
3. A participant is removed from a foster home and placed in another foster home

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