



MARYLAND Department of Health

Larry Hogan, Governor · Boyd K. Rutherford, Lt. Governor · Robert R. Neall, Secretary

IMPORTANT NOTICE

August 27, 2018

Dear WIC Vendor:

We are writing to remind you about two important items related to eWIC in Maryland; UPC and PLU mapping, and the need to keep your systems in synch with the Maryland WIC Authorized Product List (APL).

UPC and PLU Mapping

We continue to receive many questions regarding UPC and PLU mapping. Before we went live with eWIC, multiple meetings were held with retailers which included discussions on the mapping requirements for eWIC. The term "mapping" or "mapped" is for fresh produce and refers to the store's point-of-sale system recognizing the item as being WIC approved, and providing Maryland WIC/Solutran with the IFPS (International Federation for Produce Standards) PLU for that item. If a store uses a store generated PLU, the item needs to be mapped to the IFPS PLU so it is recognized as a WIC approved item by the Maryland WIC/Solutran system.

UPCs that start with a 2, 4, or 9 are store generated (created) UPCs. These are not unique UPC numbers and must be mapped within the store point-of-sale system to a specific IFPS PLU, or the generic fresh produce PLU of 4469. We cannot put store generated UPCs in the APL because they are not unique UPCs and do not represent the same product among stores.

Farmers have their own UPCs. Most farmers use unique UPCs purchased from GS1 US, but a unique farmer UPC may be blueberries this year and apples next year. There's no guarantee on consistent use of UPCs by farmers. We can make the assumption that the farmer UPCs will be consistently used for fresh produce, but there is risk in making this assumption and including these in the APL. This would add a vast number of UPCs that may only be used for a short time and quickly become irrelevant. Therefore, Farmer UPCs must also be mapped to the appropriate IFPS PLU, or the generic fresh produce PLU of 4469.

Maryland WIC APL Updates

UPCs and PLUs are added and removed from the Maryland WIC APL often. We have found that stores have been updating their APL to include newly added UPCs but have not been deleting those that have been removed. This has been causing transactions to be rejected and confusing staff and customers at the register. It is imperative that your APL manager remove UPCs and PLUs from your internal system as being WIC approved, that have been removed from the Maryland WIC APL.

We are relying on all Maryland stores, corporations, programmers, managers, etc. to know about mapping and the importance of keeping WIC approved products up-to-date in your systems. We have spoken to and will continue to communicate with store corporate office personnel about mapping since it is mostly performed at the corporate level. Please also ensure that all store personnel are familiar with the mapping of fresh produce and know who to contact in your organization if a fresh produce item is not scanning as WIC approved.

If you have any questions, please contact Maura Shea at 410-767-5258 or maura.shea@maryland.gov. Thank you for your continued support of the Maryland WIC Program.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jennifer Wilson". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Jennifer Wilson, MEd, RD, LDN
Director
Maryland WIC Program

cc: WIC Local Agencies