

February - March 2015 Update

After the conclusion of Round 1 of User Acceptance Testing (UAT), the contractors and our tester/SuperUsers went back to their respective offices: the contractors to work on identified issues in the MIS and eWIC systems and interface, and the SuperUsers back to their District Offices to share their knowledge with their colleagues.

Vermont IT staff continued their work preparing for Production phase, and Vermont WIC staff focused on refining the configurations, food packages, and approved products list, based on what was learned in UAT. WIC Central and Rutland District Office staff started to implement our Vermont Ceres/eWIC Readiness Toolkit (V-CeRT), designed to help district office staff prepare for their rollouts, with planning, activities, checklists, and timelines. They also worked with communications consultants on development the participant notification and education materials for conversion to eWIC, including flyers, posters, postcards, banners, the Vermont WIC food guide, a shopper video, grocer door decals, and other publicity collaterals. Rutland WIC staff launched planning for an ambitious kickoff event, bringing together local partner organizations to provide a day long fun and education opportunity for WIC families.

WIC vendor management staff begin processing applications from retailers for reauthorization as WIC vendors, and for eWIC. Rutland area retailers will be authorized by mid-May, to allow participation in the pilot. Retailers outside of Rutland be authorized in mid-September, before the conclusion of their current WIC agreements, and in time for rollout, which starts in October. Until a District Office rolls out, retailers in that region will continue to be able to accept the Vermont WIC fruit and veggie card. As soon as the district rolls out, fruit and veggie benefits will be accessed using the new WIC Card. Stores that are not reauthorized for the next three year period, because they don't or can't meet the minimum inventory or other new standards, are authorized through the end of September for the fruit and veggie card.

Xerox, Third Party Processors, Value Added Resellers (VARs) , chains and retailers continue their diligent work on eWIC integration. It appears at this time that the three big chains in Vermont (Shaws, Hannaford, and Price Chopper) will be integrated for eWIC in time for the Rutland pilot. Tops won't be ready for the pilot, but may be integrated by rollout statewide, starting in October. Retailers affiliated with the VAR Dumac will be integrated in time for pilot and rollout. All other retailers will be using stand-beside equipment provided by the state.

(Retailers: Please contact Sylvia Mitchem – Xerox at Sylvia.Mitchem@xerox.com for information and assistance, if you have not already made contact with her. There must be either a certified integration POS or a stand-beside in your store, if you want to continue to participate with Vermont WIC and accept our new eWIC card.)

Thanks to the diligence of our UAT testers, WIC Central staff, DII/AHS/VDH IT staff, Rutland pilot staff, and our contractors Ciber and Xerox, our MIS/EBT Implementation project is still on schedule for pilot start in Rutland in June 2015.