

Food Package Revision Transition (January – April 2026)

During the transition to the Revised Food Package (January – April 2026), WIC staff are **strongly discouraged** from voiding and reissuing Food Instruments (FIs) for **current month** benefits due to the uncertainty of whether any benefits have been redeemed.

Problem #1: FIs can have a status of *Issued* on the **Food Instrument List** screen even after they have been redeemed. (FIs change from *Issued* to *Redeemed* during an overnight process. Participants often redeem FIs before or after the overnight process OR the overnight process errors out for a variety of reasons.) The **Shopping List** updates in “real time” so it is a best practice to always review the **Shopping List** to determine if FIs have been redeemed.

Problem #2: If multiple participants in the same family are issued to individually, multiple FIs for the current month are aggregated (“lumped together”) in the family Electronic Benefit Account (EBA). If a benefit (such as milk) that occurs in multiple FIs is redeemed, the redemption process removes the benefit from the EBA and marks one of the FIs as status *Redeemed*. Because of the aggregation process, if any FIs **for the entire family** in the current month with a status of *Issued* are then voided, a **Benefits Mismatch** error is received. Therefore, if **ANY** foods that occur in multiple FIs for the family for the current month have been redeemed, all FIs for that month should be considered *Redeemed*.

If food benefits for the current month have a status of *Issued*:

1. ASK the family if they have used their eWIC card in the last several days, especially on the same day they were issued food benefits.
2. COMPARE the current month FI with the current month on the **Shopping List** to identify food benefit redemption.
3. The **Journal of Transactions** also contains a real-time record of benefit redemptions. Search for *Purchases* under the **Activity** drop-down.
4. Remember: if **ANY** foods that occur in multiple FIs (such as milk) for the family for the current month have been redeemed, all FIs for that month should be considered *Redeemed*.

If food benefits for the current month have been redeemed: DO NOT VOID the current month. Advise the family that they can receive the new food package with their next benefit month.

NOTE: if current month food benefits are redeemed and the current month FI is voided, Crossroads will display a **Benefits Mismatch** message AND/OR issue duplicate benefits. If errors are found on the **Shopping List** call the Community Nutrition Services Section (CNSS) Customer Service Desk (CSD) to have mismatched or duplicated benefits corrected.

The CNSS CSD will not process requests to modify **current month** food benefits during the conversion for families who express a preference for the “new” package. Participants with the “old” package who want the “new” package mid-month should be told they will get the “new” package with the start of their next benefit month.

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Other options for modifying food benefits during the transition include:

Use **Replace Current Benefits** to change FIs that have been issued **and redeemed** for the current month for two food subcategories:

- **Milk** to lactose-reduced, evaporated or UHT milk or Plant-based Milk Alternatives
- **Legumes** from peanut butter to beans/peas OR from beans/peas to peanut butter or to both.

Refer to the resource **Replace Current Benefits** for more information.

Use the **Exchange/Increase Formula** screen to add, increase or exchange Infant Formula or WIC-Eligible Nutritionals (WEN). Refer to the resources **Add / Exchange / Increase Formula Quick Guides** for more information.

REMINDER about mid-month category changes:

If a participant's WIC Category and/or Breastfeeding Status changes mid-month, the participant is still entitled to the Full Nutrition Benefit for the **current month**.

- If the new food package contains LESS food than the old food package, DO NOT take food away from the current benefits. The new food package will take effect with next month's issuance.
- If the new food package contains MORE food than the old food package, add the food to the current benefits.
 - Void and reissue the current month if the FI has a status of *Issued* and you have followed the steps under **If food benefits for the current month have a status of Issued** on Page One. **OR**
 - If FIs have a status of *Redeemed*, call or email the CSD and request that food be added to the current benefits. Please specify food categories and amounts in the request.

REMINDER about verification of benefit issuance:

Always verify that the correct benefits have been issued to participants by selecting the **Print Shopping List** button on the **Food Instrument List** screen and viewing the **Shopping List**. The **Shopping List** is a real-time report of eWIC benefits available to the participant in their EBA. The **Shopping List** does not have to be printed if the participant prefers to use the ebtEDGE Cardholder Portal or the ebtEDGE app for smartphones, but the correct issuance of benefits should always be verified on the **Shopping List**. Verification of benefit issuance is a best practice that should happen at every appointment when benefits are issued, exchanged, replaced or increased. Contact the CNSS CSD to correct missing or incorrect benefits.

If you have questions regarding any policy aspect of this document, please contact your Regional Nutrition Consultant. If you have any questions about Crossroads procedures, please contact the CNSS CSD at 919.707.5795, or via email at CNS.CustomerService@dhhs.nc.gov.