

Sept-Oct-Nov 2012

EBT Update

Ohio WIC is in the process of planning for statewide implementation of Electronic Benefits Transfer (EBT), with a targeted roll-out date of 2015. We have chosen to implement an offline EBT solution. In offline EBT, WIC participants use a "smartcard" containing a microchip onto which WIC benefits have been loaded for making their purchases. Please be expecting a series of communications and surveys over the next six to 12 months, all of which are intended to keep you apprised of developments and enable us to assist you in preparing for EBT implementation.

In the meantime, we have developed an Ohio WIC UPC database which we've made available to vendors for incorporating into their store systems, if possible, pre-EBT implementation. In a vendor letter dated September 10, 2012, we asked that all vendors complete a UPC Database survey by October 19, 2012. This survey will let us know when vendors anticipate being able to use the database.

Thank you for your cooperation and support. We look forward to working with you to successfully implement EBT in Ohio!

U.S Migration to Smartcard Technology

To reduce the incidents of credit card fraud, financial institutions around the world have moved to smartcard technology, in which benefits are issued to a microchip on the card. The U.S. is one of the last countries to migrate to this technology, but Visa, Master Card, Discover and American Express have announced plans to begin migration to smartcard technology here in the U.S. Visa and American Express have already begun this migration, and the others are not far behind.

This migration dovetails nicely with our plans to go with offline EBT, which will require smartcard readers in authorized vendor locations.

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