
Purpose	To describe the process of utilizing competitive prices as a selection criteria in the authorization process for Nebraska WIC vendors.
Definition	The Nebraska WIC Program's selection criteria includes the following provision: Prices, obtained during the store visit, are no more than 10% above the average price for a representative group of WIC foods for all stores within the same peer group.
Cost Containment Implications	Competitive prices are established for each peer group for use in the vendor selection process to: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ensure that the vendor applicant's prices are competitive with other vendors' prices and• Consider the vendor's shelf prices.
Process	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Prices are collected on a market basket of WIC foods.• The WIC foods that comprise the market basket are determined based upon the foods prescribed on the most redeemed food instruments.• Prices are collected and verified by the local agency WIC vendor manager as a component of the store authorization visit.• The documentation is submitted to the State WIC Office for data entry and calculation of a peer group average for each peer group.• Those stores over 10% of the average price are notified by the State WIC Office. The store is given the opportunity to lower their prices in order to continue the authorization process.<ul style="list-style-type: none">• If the store lowers their prices to within 10% of the average for their peer group, the store will continue the authorization process.• If the store chooses to not lower their prices to within 10% of the average for their peer group, the store will not continue the authorization process and their application for Nebraska WIC authorization will be not approved.
Participant Accessibility	Participant accessibility must be considered when establishing competitive price criteria and prior to not approving a store based upon the competitive price selection criteria. The process for determining participant accessibility is outlined in Volume IV, Section B, Pages 4 a-b and Volume IV, Section L, Page 2f.
