

## Lost Checks

- I. If this is the family's first incidence of lost checks during the last 12 months, checks may be replaced after a seven (7) day waiting period. Checks may only be replaced once per 12 month period.
- II. For documented cases of personal misfortune, these restrictions do not apply. (See IX below.)
- III. Checks that were accidentally used early may not be replaced.
- IV. Checks reported lost that were valid for the previous month cannot be replaced.
- V. Clients who redeem checks that were reported lost or stolen with redemption of both the lost and the replacement checks have committed a participant violation. (See Participant Violations.)
- VI. For any redeemed checks that the client denies personally redeeming, images of the check may be requested from the State WIC office. The signature on these checks should be reviewed to see whether it appears to be the client's signature compared to client signatures on the packet or in the signature history in VISION. Any checks that were apparently stolen from the client may be replaced according to policies for handling personal misfortune (see IX below).
- VII. Steps for replacing checks reported as lost are below:
  - a. Make a comment in VISION recording which checks are reported missing and the date they were reported lost.
    - i. Ask the client if any of the checks had been used.
  - b. In VISION, look at the FI Details within the Foods Benefits screen, by clicking on the check number. The FI Detail window will open and can be reviewed. It must be determined if the checks that are reported as lost have already been redeemed or rejected at the bank. Any redeemed or rejected checks may not be reprinted.
  - c. Inform the participant that there will be a waiting period of seven (7) calendar days before replacement checks can be issued. The client should be instructed to search for the lost check(s) during the waiting period. If they are not found, the client may return to the clinic on the same day of the week next week for the checks to be reprinted. If the clinic is not open on the day the seven (7) calendar day waiting period is completed, the clinic will reprint the checks the next day the clinic is open.
  - d. At the end of the seven-day waiting period ask the client again if they have used any of the previously issued checks. Check the FI Details again. If

any of the lost checks have not been redeemed or rejected by the bank by the end of the seven-day waiting period they may be replaced.

- e. Reprint the checks using the void code "Lost".
  - f. The VISION system will replace the WIC client's checks for the originally issued food package without proration regardless of the date they are reprinted. Do not manually prorate a lost check replacement, but allow the WIC client to receive the originally issued food package.
    - i. If any of the original checks are determined to have been used, the replacement checks for those foods cannot be given to the client.
  - g. Discuss with the endorser/proxy:
    - i. The necessity of safeguarding WIC checks. They should treat their WIC checks like cash.
    - ii. Remind them that if they later find the lost checks they should not be used. Any use of checks reported as lost along with use of the replacement checks will be considered a participant violation that will require a repayment of benefits or suspension.
    - iii. If the family reports a second or subsequent incidence of lost checks during a 12-month period, the clinic will not be able to replace the checks.
- VIII. When the local agency is aware that a WIC check(s) is being held by a known individual for which the checks were not issued (except for law enforcement), the local agency may reprint the checks for the authorized endorser using the 'Lost' void code. The local agency will contact the unauthorized individual involved requesting that the checks be returned to the clinic. If contact is not successful, send a letter to the individual. Checks that have already been redeemed cannot be reprinted.
- IX. Personal Misfortune. In isolated personal misfortune incidents where one or more households might be affected by some destructive incident such as domestic violence, theft, gas line explosion, water main break, house fire, etc., the clinic may replace WIC checks without a seven-day waiting period. In this situation the family does not need to be limited to one replacement within 12 months. Procedures for replacing checks in cases of personal misfortune are listed below:
- a. In the case of domestic violence, documentation must be provided, which may be in the form of a police report/case number, a third party report or the WIC participant may also self-declare their incidence of domestic violence and provide a written statement or affidavit documenting the incident.

- b. In the case of any other personal misfortune, documentation must be provided in the form of a police report/case number, fire, insurance or other related third party official report.
- c. The clinic must check the redemption status of the checks prior to reprinting. If the checks have been redeemed or rejected, they cannot be reprinted. If the checks are not redeemed, they can be reprinted using the 'Lost' void code.
- d. In the case of mass disasters where emergency feeding services are typically available, the clinic is directed to contact the State Agency for instructions.