

Appendix A.3: Survey

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Introduction

Hello! The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) and U.S. Digital Service (USDS) are partnering to better understand how to support WIC technology modernization. With the \$390 million from the American Rescue Plan Act, WIC has an unprecedented opportunity to use technology to expand program access and enhance WIC services.

As an initial step, we're asking all 89 WIC state agencies to complete the following questionnaire to help us understand more about your WIC agency's technology use and capacity. This information is critical to informing WIC modernization and what support agencies might need to take on new technology projects.

USDA and USDS will use your responses to better understand where states are currently at with WIC technology. This questionnaire is not being used to monitor state agency compliance.

It will take approximately **20 minutes to complete** this questionnaire. Please **respond by Friday, [DATE], 2021**.

Instructions:

- Your WIC Director or someone with expertise in WIC technology should complete the questionnaire. If there are any questions you're unable to answer, please forward the email to state staff who can. The link is unique to your state agency, so anyone with the link can access the questions. Any responses you enter will be saved when sharing the link.
- Please feel free to be open and honest, especially about your constraints with technology. These types of answers will help us identify how WIC technology initiatives can meet and support state agencies' goals and objectives.
- If you have any questions, please reply to [EMAIL].

Burden Statement

This information is being collected to assist the Food and Nutrition Service in understanding WIC state agency technology use and capacity. This is a voluntary collection and FNS will use the information to inform WIC modernization strategies. This collection does not request any personally identifiable information under the Privacy Act of 1974. According to the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, an agency may not conduct or sponsor, and a person is not required to respond to, a collection of information unless it displays a valid OMB control number. The valid OMB control number for this information collection is 0584-0613. The time required to complete this information collection is estimated to average 0.33 hours per response, including the time for reviewing instructions, searching

existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information. Send comments regarding this burden estimate or any other aspect of this collection of information, including suggestions for reducing this burden, to: U.S. Department of Agriculture, Food and Nutrition Service, Office of Policy Support, 1320 Braddock Place, 5th Floor, Alexandria, VA 22306 ATTN: PRA (0584-0613). Do not return the completed form to this address.

Privacy Statement

We'll share an **anonymized summary of findings** from this questionnaire with state WIC agencies. No individual state will be identified in this summary, and any comments shared will be anonymized if included. For any external information shared with the public, the names of respondent states will *not* be included.

We'll request the name of each WIC state agency completing the questionnaire. The name of the WIC state agency will be linked to your responses and used in data analysis and in internal conversations between USDA and USDS.

If you'd like to provide any feedback verbally or anonymously, please contact [EMAIL] and a member of the USDS team will schedule a call with you. Verbal comments shared with USDS may be kept anonymous upon request.

Staffing

Let's start by getting an understanding of who supports WIC technology for your agency. This will help us determine who FNS might work with when undertaking modernization efforts.

1. What is the name of your WIC state agency?
(select from drop-down)
2. Who is primarily responsible for implementing technical changes to your WIC systems and tools such as developing a new participant portal or shopping app? (select all that apply)
 - a. IT staff at the state level (e.g., central Office of IT Services)
 - b. IT staff at the WIC department level (e.g., Department of Health)
 - c. IT staff at the WIC program level
 - d. Vendor or contractor
 - e. Other: _____
3. Who do you rely on most for technical advice for your state WIC systems? (select up to 2 options)
 - a. IT staff at the state level (e.g., central Office of IT Services)
 - b. IT staff at the WIC department level (e.g., Department of Health)
 - c. IT staff at the WIC program level
 - d. Vendor or contractor

- e. FNS regional office
 - f. FNS headquarters
 - g. Other states
 - h. Other (please specify): _____
 - i. I don't know
4. How much technical expertise do your state staff have to take on new WIC technology projects like an online application or document uploader?
- a. No technical expertise
 - b. Low technical expertise
 - c. Medium technical expertise
 - d. High technical expertise
 - e. I don't know

Data Sharing

Next, we'd like to learn about data sharing between WIC and other programs. This will help us understand the prevalence of data sharing across WIC and barriers to data sharing.

5. Can your WIC program access information electronically—like participation status, name, or contact information—from any of the following benefit programs? (select all that apply)
- a. Medicaid
 - b. SNAP
 - c. TANF
 - d. Other (please specify): _____
 - e. We can't access information on other programs

5a. [If yes:] How do WIC staff use information from other benefit programs (select all that apply)?

- a. To conduct targeted outreach
- b. To pre-populate information about an applicant or participant in our MIS
- c. To verify eligibility during certification or recertification
- d. Other (please specify): _____
- e. I don't know

5b. [If yes:] How do you access information from other benefit programs? (select all that apply)

- a. From within our MIS
 - b. Manual file sharing from another benefit program
 - c. Shared in a separate portal or tool outside our MIS
 - d. Other (please specify): _____
 - e. I don't know
6. What are the barriers, if any, to sharing information between programs? Please include both technical and nontechnical barriers.
- a. Open response

Management Information System (MIS)

We're going to get a little more technical as we turn to questions about your MIS. These questions will help us better understand your WIC system and how responsive it is.

Please answer the questions as best you can. If you're unable to answer these questions, you can forward the questionnaire to a technical advisor within your agency. There is also space at the end of this questionnaire to provide a technical contact who we can follow up with.

7. Does your MIS have Application Programming Interface (API) endpoints, excluding those for EBT? In other words, does your MIS connect and share data with any third-party systems or tools? For example, an MIS with an API endpoint might receive information from an external eligibility pre-screener or scheduling tool and populate the MIS with that information without manual intervention.
- a. Yes, our MIS has API endpoints
 - b. No, our MIS does not have API endpoints
 - c. Our MIS is currently developing API endpoints
 - d. I don't know
- 8a. [If yes:] What third-party systems or tools, if any, have you integrated with your MIS? (select all that apply)
- a. Appointment scheduler
 - b. Document uploader
 - c. Eligibility pre-screener
 - d. Integrated multi-benefit application
 - e. Online application
 - f. Participant portal
 - g. Shopping app

- h. Text messaging or other communication tool
- i. Other (please specify): _____
- j. We haven't integrated any third-party systems or tools with our MIS

8b. [If yes:] What obstacles, if any, do you run into when trying to utilize these API endpoints?

- i. Open response

8. How long does it typically take to make a **large change** to your MIS, such as integrating an online application with your MIS? Include any planning, technical, and business or approval processes in your estimate.

- a. 0-2 weeks
- b. 2-6 weeks
- c. 6-12 weeks
- d. 3-6 months
- e. 6+ months
- f. I don't know
- g. It depends (please describe): _____

9. How long does it typically take to make a **small change** to your MIS, such as adding a certification question to your system? Include any planning, technical, and business or approval processes in your estimate.

- a. 0-2 weeks
- b. 2-6 weeks
- c. 6-12 weeks
- d. 3-6 months
- e. 6+ months
- f. I don't know
- g. It depends (please describe): _____

10. How long does it take you to access or query WIC data within your MIS? (select all that apply)

- a. We can access the data within our MIS at any time within a few hours
- b. We can access the data within our MIS within a few business days
- c. We have to pay a vendor to export data about our WIC program
- d. We do not have the ability to access our data

- e. Other (please specify): _____
- f. I don't know

11. Does your state, or do clinics within your state, use WIC data to inform program operations?

- a. No
- b. Yes, please describe how you use WIC data: _____

12. How satisfied are you with your current MIS?

- a. Very satisfied
- b. Satisfied
- c. Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied
- d. Dissatisfied
- e. Very dissatisfied

Procurement

Let's turn to procurement now. These questions will help us understand how your state procures technology and any barriers you face.

13. How long does it typically take to procure participant-facing technology outside of your MIS and EBT systems? This might include things like an online appointment scheduler or text messaging service.

- a. 0-3 months
- b. 3-6 months
- c. 6-9 months
- d. 9-12 months
- e. 12+ months
- f. I don't know
- g. It depends (please describe): _____

14. What do you consider to be the biggest challenges in procuring technology?

- a. Open response

15. How do funding constraints, if any, impact how you build, maintain, and update technology?

- a. Open response

Federal Support

You're almost done! This last section seeks feedback on your interest in shared technology services such as software as a service. Detailed comments here will be helpful as we consider how to approach future modernization projects.

16. Other than funding, what support would you need from FNS to improve your WIC technology?

- a. Open response

17. How interested would you be in FNS developing any shared technology services, like texting platforms, document uploaders, or online applications, for agencies to leverage?

- a. Not at all interested
- b. Slightly interested
- c. Moderately interested
- d. Very interested
- e. Extremely interested
- f. I don't know

18a. [If any interest:] What tools and systems would you like FNS to provide?

- a. Appointment scheduler
- b. Document uploader
- c. Eligibility pre-screener
- d. Integrated multi-benefit application
- e. Online application
- f. Participant portal
- g. Shopping app
- h. Text messaging or other communication tool
- i. Other (please specify): _____
- j. None of these

18b. Please rank the tools and systems you'd like FNS to provide.

- a. Survey logic will carry over responses from 18a, unless they select "none of these"

18. How concerned would you be about FNS providing or centralizing shared technology services?

- a. Not at all concerned

- b. Slightly concerned
- c. Moderately concerned
- d. Very concerned
- e. Extremely concerned
- f. I don't know

As you finish this last section, a quick reminder that only FNS and USDS have access to your individual responses, and will only share an anonymized summary of findings with state WIC agencies.

18a. [If concerned:] What are your main concerns about FNS providing or centralizing shared technology services for states to opt into?

19. What are your state's barriers to adopting new WIC technology?

20. In thinking about other states' implementation of WIC technology, which 2-3 states are you most inspired by? Why?

- a. Open response

21. Is there anything else you'd like to share?

- a. Open response

Wrap-Up

Who is the best person to contact if we have follow-up questions? (These individuals should be government employees, not vendors or contractors)

22. Program contact

- a. Name
- b. Email address
- c. Phone number

23. Technical contact (if different)

- a. Name
- b. Email address
- c. Phone number

Thank you for completing this questionnaire! Your responses will help inform WIC modernization efforts. We'll review your feedback, and may follow up with the contacts you provided if we have any questions.