

§ 246.3 Administration.

(a) *Delegation to FNS.* Within the Department, FNS shall act on behalf of the Department in the administration of the Program. Within FNS, SFPD and the Regional Offices are responsible for Program administration. FNS shall provide assistance to State and local agencies and evaluate all levels of Program operations to ensure that the goals of the Program are achieved in the most effective and efficient manner possible.

(b) *Delegation to the State agency.* The State agency is responsible for the effective and efficient administration of the Program in accordance with the requirements of this part; the Department's regulations governing non-discrimination (7 CFR parts 15, 15a, and 15b); governing administration of grants (7 CFR part 3016); governing nonprocurement debarment/suspension (7 CFR part 3017); governing restrictions on lobbying (7 CFR part 3018); and governing the drug-free workplace requirements (7 CFR 3021); FNS guidelines; and, instructions issued under the FNS Directives Management System. The State agency shall provide guidance to local agencies on all aspects of Program operations.

(c) *Agreement and State Plan.* (1) Each State agency desiring to administer the Program shall annually submit a State Plan and enter into a written agreement with the Department for administration of the Program in the jurisdiction of the State agency in accordance with the provisions of this part.

(2) The written agreement shall include a certification regarding lobbying and, if applicable, a disclosure of lobbying activities, as required by 7 CFR part 3018.

(d) *State agency eligibility.* A State agency shall be ineligible to participate in the WIC Program if State or local sales tax is collected on WIC food purchases in the area in which it administers the program, except that, if sales tax is collected on WIC food purchases by sovereign Indian entities which are not State agencies, the State agency shall remain eligible if any vendors collecting such tax are disqualified.

(e) *State staffing standards.* Each State agency shall ensure that sufficient staff is available to administer an efficient and effective Program including, but not limited to, the functions of nutrition education, certification, food delivery, fiscal reporting, monitoring, and training. Based on the June participation of the previous fiscal year, each State agency, as a minimum, shall employ the following staff:

(1) A full-time or equivalent administrator when the monthly participation level exceeds 1,500, or a half-time or equivalent administrator when the monthly participation exceeds 500.

(2) At least one full-time or equivalent Program specialist for each 10,000 participants above 1,500, but the State agency need not employ more than eight Program specialists unless the State agency considers it necessary. Program specialists should be utilized for providing fiscal management and technical assistance, monitoring vendors, reviewing local agencies, training, and nutritional services, or other Program duties as assigned by the State agency.

(3) For nutrition-related services, one full-time or equivalent nutritionist when the monthly participation is above 1,500, or a half-time or equivalent nutritionist when the monthly participation exceeds 500. The nutritionist shall be named State WIC Nutrition Coordinator and shall meet State personnel standards and qualifications in paragraphs (e)(3) (i), (ii), (iii), (iv), or (v) of this section and have the qualifications in paragraph (e)(3)(vi) of this section. Upon request, an exception to these qualifications may be granted by FNS. The State WIC Nutrition Coordinator shall—

(i) Hold a Master's degree with emphasis in food and nutrition, community nutrition, public health nutrition, nutrition education, human nutrition, nutrition science or equivalent and have at least two years responsible experience as a nutritionist in education, social service, maternal and child health, public health, nutrition, or dietetics; or

(ii) Be registered or eligible for registration with the American Dietetic Association and have at least two years experience; or

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(iii) Have at least a Bachelor of Science or Bachelor of Arts degree, from an accredited four-year institution, with emphasis in food and nutrition, community nutrition, public health nutrition, nutrition education, human nutrition, nutrition science or equivalent and have at least three years of responsible experience as a nutritionist in education, social service, maternal and child health, public health nutrition, or dietetics; or

(iv) Be qualified as a Senior Public Health Nutritionist under the Department of Health and Human Services guidelines; or

(v) Meet the IHS standards for a Public Health Nutritionist; and

(vi) Have at least one of the following: Program development skills, education background and experience in the development of educational and training resource materials, community action experience, counseling skills or experience in participant advocacy.

(4) A designated breastfeeding promotion coordinator, to coordinate breastfeeding promotion efforts identified in the State plan in accordance with the requirement of § 246.4(a)(9) of this part. The person to whom the State agency assigns this responsibility may perform other duties as well.

(5) A staff person designated for food delivery system management. The person to whom the State agency assigns this responsibility may perform other duties as well.

(6) The State agency shall enforce hiring practices which comply with the nondiscrimination criteria set forth in § 246.8. The hiring of minority staff is encouraged.

(f) *Delegation to local agency.* The local agency shall provide Program benefits to participants in the most effective and efficient manner, and shall comply with this part, the Department's regulations governing nondiscrimination (7 CFR parts 15, 15a, 15b), the Department's regulations governing the administration of grants (7 CFR part 3016), Office of Management and Budget Circular A-130, and State

agency and FNS guidelines and instructions.

[50 FR 6121, Feb. 13, 1985; 50 FR 8098, Feb. 28, 1985, as amended at 52 FR 21236, June 4, 1987; 59 FR 11499, Mar. 11, 1994; 65 FR 83277, Dec. 29, 2000; 71 FR 56728, Sept. 27, 2006]

Subpart B—State and Local Agency Eligibility

§ 246.4 State plan.

(a) *Requirements.* By August 15 of each year, each State agency shall submit to FNS for approval a State Plan for the following fiscal year as a prerequisite to receiving funds under this section. The State agency may submit the State Plan in the format provided by FNS guidance. Alternatively, the State agency may submit the Plan in combination with other federally required planning documents or develop its own format, provided that the information required below is included. FNS requests advance notification that a State agency intends to use an alternative format. The State Plan shall be signed by the State designated official responsible for ensuring that the Program is operated in accordance with the State Plan. FNS will provide written approval or denial of a completed State Plan or amendment within 30 days of receipt. Within 15 days after FNS receives an incomplete Plan, FNS will notify the State agency that additional information is needed to complete the Plan. Any disapproval will be accompanied by a statement of the reasons for the disapproval. After receiving approval of the State Plan, each State agency shall only submit to FNS for approval substantive changes in the State Plan. A complete and approved Plan shall include:

(1) An outline of the State agency's goals and objectives for improving Program operations.

(2) A budget for nutrition services and administration funds, and an estimate of food expenditures.

(3) An estimate of Statewide participation for the coming fiscal year by category of women, infants and children.

(4) The State agency staffing pattern.

(5) An Affirmative Action Plan which includes—