



**State of Louisiana**  
Louisiana Department of Health  
Office of Public Health

**February 24, 2022**

TO: Louisiana Authorized WIC Vendors  
FROM: Natalie Istre, LA WIC Vendor Manager  
RE: **LA WIC Vendor Infant Formula Substitutes due to Abbott Formula Recall – 2/24/2022 Updates**

Dear LA WIC Vendor,

In response to shortages due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic and the [Abbott formula recall](#), the USDA has granted several [waivers](#) to the Louisiana WIC Program (LA WIC) in an effort to allow the program increased flexibility to respond to the recall.

1. [Vendor Exchange Waiver](#). Allows LA WIC to waive the requirement that prohibits WIC authorized Vendors from providing exchanges of products purchased with WIC Benefits. See the [LA WIC Vendor Update – Abbott Infant Recall Guidance](#) issued on 2/22/2022.
2. [Medical Documentation Waiver](#). Allows LA WIC to issue noncontract brand infant formula without medical documentation for infants in Food Packages I and II.
3. [Maximum Monthly Allowance Waiver](#). Allows LA WIC to exceed the monthly maximum allowance for the issuance of WIC infant formula for infants in Food Packages I and II.

These waivers allow LA WIC to add substitute infant formula options to the LA WIC Authorized Product List (APL) effective 2/22/2022. **These substitutes are approved for WIC Participant purchase through 3/31/2022 for the Standard Infant Formula listed below.**

**Option 1: Equivalent Formula Substitutes**

WIC Participants may purchase an approved equivalent formula substitute using the existing WIC Benefits available on their WIC EBT card. No action is required by Participant to utilize this option.

LA WIC Approved Food Item as listed on the LA WIC EBT Card	LA WIC Approved Equivalent Formula Substitutions through 3/31/2022*
Similac Total Comfort – 12.6oz powder	Enfamil Gentlease – 12.4oz powder
	Parent’s Choice Gentle – 12.0oz powder
	Enfamil Reguline – 12.4oz powder
	Gerber Good Start Soothpro – 12.4oz powder
Similac Spit-Up – 12.5oz powder	Enfamil AR – 12.9oz powder
Similac Advance – 12.4oz powder	Enfamil Premium Infant – 12.5oz powder
	Gerber GoodStart Gentle Pro – 12.7oz powder
	Parent’s Choice Advantage – 12.4oz powder
	Parent’s Choice – 12.5oz powder
Similac Sensitive – 12.5oz powder	Parent’s Choice Sensitivity – 12oz powder

*Note: The items above may be used as substitutes in the exchange process of recalled items as indicated in the [LA WIC Vendor Update – Abbott Infant Recall Guidance](#) issued on 2/22/2022.*

The formula substitutions included in the table above are available for Participants to purchase using WIC Benefits as long as

1. The Vendor has the approved equivalent substitute in stock and available for purchase
2. The WIC Participant has the appropriate corresponding Similac formula benefit available on their WIC EBT card as indicated above
  - a. Ex: Participants who are prescribed Similac Total Comfort may use their WIC benefits to purchase Enfamil Gentlease 12.4oz powder; Participants who are prescribed Similac Advance may NOT use their WIC benefits to purchase Enfamil Gentlease 12.4oz powder because it is only available as a substitute for Similac Total Comfort.
  - b. Note: The Participant’s Beginning and Ending Benefits Balance receipts will continue to reflect the name of the recalled formula, ex. –

BEGINNING WIC Benefit Balance  
08/01/2021 through 08/31/2021

Cat	Subcat	Qty	Description
	02-000	1.00 LB	ALL WIC APPROVED CHEESE
	03-001	1.00 DOZEN	DOZ EGGS
	05-000	35.00 OUNCE	WIC BREAKFAST CEREAL
	06-000	1.00 CTNR	LB DRY OR 4 CANS BEANS/PEAS
	19-000	35.00 VALUE	FRUITS AND VEGETABLES
	21-082	9.00 CAN	12.4-OZ. SIMILAC ADVANCE W/IRON POW

3. The Vendor is using the most recent version of the APL that includes the UPCs of the approved equivalent substitutions.

**Exempt Infant Formula**

Elecare, Elecare Jr., and Alimentum are exempt formulas for Food Package III and require medical documentation for the issuance of an alternative formula. **WIC Participants with WIC Benefits for a recalled exempt formula must contact their local WIC clinic to determine the appropriate next steps.**

**Option 2: Non-Equivalent Formula Substitutes**

LA WIC recognizes that formula availability is limited due to the combined effects of the recall and pre-existing COVID-19 supply issues. In response, LA WIC is working to make concentrate, ready-to-feed, and larger-size powder formula substitutions available to Participants on an as-needed basis. **WIC Participants must contact their local WIC clinic to schedule an appointment in order to purchase the formula options below with WIC Benefits.**

The formula substitutions included in the table below are available for Participants to purchase using WIC Benefits as long as

1. The Participant has scheduled an appointment with their local WIC clinic to have the approved non-equivalent substitute added to their WIC EBT card PRIOR to purchase at the store
  - a. Note: Participants will NOT be able to use existing WIC Benefits to purchase the substitutions below until their WIC EBT card is updated at the WIC clinic.
2. The Vendor is using the most recent version of the LA WIC APL that includes both the sub-categories and UPCs of the approved non-equivalent substitutions.

**LA WIC Approved Non-Equivalent Formula Substitutions through 3/31/2022**  
(MUST be added to the WIC EBT card at a WIC Clinic PRIOR to purchase)

<b>Recalled Similac Formula</b>	<b>Non-Equivalent Substitute Option 1 (19 - 24oz powder cans)</b>	<b>Non-Equivalent Substitute Option 2 (27 - 35oz powder cans)</b>
<b>Total Comfort</b> 12.6oz powder	Enfamil Gentlease 19.9oz powder	Enfamil Gentlease 27.7oz powder
	Gerber Good Start SoothePro 19.4oz powder	Gerber Good Start SoothePro 30.6oz powder
	Signature Care Gentle Infant Formula 21.5oz powder	Similac Pro – Total Comfort 29.8oz powder
	Tippy Toes Infant Gentle 21.5oz powder	Tippy Toes Infant Gentle 33.2oz powder
<b>Advance</b> 12.4oz powder	Comfort Advantage Infant Formula 23.2oz powder	Comfort Advantage Infant Formula 35.0oz powder
	Signature Care Advantage Infant Formula 23.2oz powder	Signature Care Advantage Infant Formula 35.0oz powder
	Signature Care Infant Formula Premium 22.2oz powder	Signature Care Infant Formula 35.0oz powder
	Gerber Good Start Gentle Pro 20.0oz powder	Gerber Good Start Gentle Pro 32.0oz powder
	Tippy Toes Infant Formula Advantage 23.2oz powder	Tippy Toes Infant Formula Advantage 35.0oz powder
	Enfamil Neurpro Infant 20.7oz powder	Tippy Toes Infant Formula 35.0oz powder
		Similac Pro – Advance 30.8oz powder
	Similac 360 Total Care 30.8oz powder	
<b>Sensitive</b> 12.5oz powder	Comfort Sensitivity Infant Formula 22.5oz powder	Comfort Sensitivity Infant Formula 33.2oz powder
	Signature Care Sensitivity Infant Formula 22.5oz powder	Similac Pro - Sensitive 29.8oz powder
	Enfamil Neurpro Sensitive 19.5oz powder	Similac 360 Total Care Sensitive 30.2oz powder
	Tippy Toes Infant Formula Sensitive 22.5oz powder	Tippy Toes Infant Formula Sensitive 33.2oz powder
<b>Spit-Up</b> 12.5oz powder	Enfamil AR 21.5oz powder	

### **Vendor Next Steps**

1. **Download the most recent version of the LA WIC APL** as soon as possible.
  - a. Vendors are required to download the APL every 48 hours, but we are asking that you do this sooner, if possible.
  - b. Please contact your POS provider if you need assistance with this task.
2. **Share this memo** with
  - a. Customer service staff and
  - b. All staff who process WIC transactions
3. **Review the LA WIC Transaction Procedures** with staff who perform WIC transactions. Note that the addition of the formula substitutes above does **not require any change in the way that Vendors currently process WIC transactions**. Vendors should continue to follow the [LA WIC Transaction Procedures \(WIC-33\)](#) by
  - a. Allowing the purchase of formula that rings up as WIC eligible and that is removed from the WIC Participant's benefits balance.
  - b. **NOT** allowing the purchase of formula that either doesn't ring up as WIC eligible or that isn't removed from the WIC Participant's benefits balance.

If you should have any questions, please feel free to contact us at (225) 342-0725 or at LAWICVendor@la.gov.

Sincerely,

LA WIC Vendor Operations Unit

Louisiana Dept. of Health  
Office of Public Health  
Bureau of Nutrition Services  
(225) 342-0725  
(225) 376-4674 fax  
Email: LAWICVendor@la.gov