



State of Louisiana
Louisiana Department of Health
Office of Public Health

May 23, 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 – 5/23/2022 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.

NOTE: **This waiver applies only to items being exchanged under the 2022 Abbott recall.** Non-recalled formula, including the formula substitutes below that are purchased with WIC Benefits, may only be exchanged for an **identical (exact brand and size) item** and are **not** eligible for cash, credit, or exchanges of non-identical items. Participants wishing to exchange non-recalled formula purchased with WIC benefits, including the substitutes listed below, for a non-identical formula must schedule an appointment at their local WIC clinic.

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. **Non-Similac substitutes (such as Enfmail, Gerber Good Start, Parent's Choice, store brands) for Similac Advance, Similac Sensitive, Similac Total Comfort, Similac for Spit Up, and Similac Soy Isomil are approved for WIC Participant purchase through 8/31/2022.**

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 Participants to utilize this option.**

The formula substitutions included in the table below 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 below

- 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 06/31/2021

Cat	Subcat	Qty	Description
02-000	1.00 LB		ALL WIC APPROVED CHEESE
03-001	1.00 DOZEN		DOZ EGGS
05-000	36.00 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.

Non-Equivalent Formula Substitutes: Alternate 1 and Alternate 2

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 non-equivalent formula options below with WIC Benefits.** WIC Participants issued the Alternate 1 or Alternate 2 formula substitutes prior to this extension will need to schedule an appointment with their local WIC clinic in order to have their cards updated for use through August.

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.

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.**

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 below 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.
 - c. **Participants can purchase formula substitutes ONLY from those substitutes included in the category prescribed to their card.** For example, a WIC Participant prescribed Similac Total Comfort Alternate 1
 - i. may purchase the following formula with WIC benefits
 1. Enfamil Gentlease 19.9oz
 2. Gerber Good Start SoothePro 19.4oz
 3. Signature Care Gentle 21.5oz
 4. Tippy Toes Infant Gentle 21.5oz
 5. Parent's Choice Complete Comfort 22.5oz
 6. Earth's Best Organic Gentle Infant 21.0oz
 - ii. may **NOT** purchase substitute formulas included in the
 1. Similac Total Comfort Equivalent substitute list
 - a. Ex. Enfamil Gentlease 12.4oz powder
 2. Similac Total Comfort Alternate 2 list.
 - a. Ex. Similac Pro Total Comfort 29.8oz powder

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

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LA WIC Approved Infant Formula Substitutions through 8/31/2022

Similac Formula	Equivalent Powder Substitutes <i>(may also be used as substitutes in the exchange process of recalled items)</i>	Non-Equivalent Powder Substitutes (19 - 24oz cans) Alternate 1 on EBT card	Non-Equivalent Powder Substitutes (27 - 35oz cans) Alternate 2 on EBT card
Total Comfort 12.6oz	Enfamil Gentlease 12.4oz	Enfamil Gentlease 19.9oz	Enfamil Gentlease 27.4oz or 27.7oz
	Parent's Choice Gentle 12.0oz	Gerber Good Start SoothePro 19.4oz	Gerber Good Start SoothePro 30.6oz
	Enfamil Reguline 12.4oz	Signature Care Gentle 21.5oz	Similac Pro – Total Comfort 29.8oz
	Gerber Good Start SoothePro 12.4oz	Tippy Toes Infant Gentle 21.5oz	Tippy Toes Infant Gentle 33.2oz
		Parent's Choice Complete Comfort 22.5oz	Parent's Choice Complete Comfort 29.8oz
	Earth's Best Organic Gentle Infant 21.0oz		
Advance 12.4oz	Enfamil Premium Infant 12.5oz	Comfort Advantage 23.2oz	Comfort Advantage 35.0oz
	Gerber GoodStart Gentle Pro 12.7oz	Signature Care Advantage 23.2oz	Signature Care Advantage 35.0oz
	Parent's Choice Advantage 12.4oz	Signature Care Premium 22.2oz	Signature Care 35.0oz
	Parent's Choice 12.5oz	Gerber Good Start Gentle Pro 20.0oz	Gerber Good Start Gentle Pro 32.0oz
		Tippy Toes Advantage 23.2oz	Tippy Toes Advantage 35.0oz
		Enfamil NeuroPro Infant 20.7oz	Tippy Toes 35.0oz
		Parent's Choice Advantage 23.2oz	Parent's Choice Advantage 35.0oz
		Parent's Choice Infant 22.0oz	Parent's Choice Infant 35.0oz
		Earth's Best Organic Infant Dairy 21.0oz	Earth's Best Organic Infant Dairy 32.0oz
			Similac Pro – Advance 30.8oz
		Similac 360 Total Care 30.8oz	
Sensitive 12.5oz	Parent's Choice Sensitivity 12.0oz	Comfort Sensitivity 22.5oz	Comfort Sensitivity 33.2oz
		Signature Care Sensitivity 22.5oz	Similac Pro – Sensitive 29.8oz
		Enfamil NeuroPro Sensitive 19.5oz	Similac 360 Total Care Sensitive 30.2oz
		Tippy Toes Sensitive 22.5oz	Tippy Toes Sensitive 33.2oz
		Parent's Choice Sensitivity 22.5oz	Parent's Choice Sensitivity 33.2oz
	Earth's Best Organic Sensitivity 21.0oz	Earth's Best Organic Sensitivity 32.0oz	
Spit-Up 12.5oz	Enfamil AR 12.9oz	Enfamil AR 19.5oz	Parent's Choice AR 32.2oz
Soy Isomil 12.4oz	Enfamil Prosoabee 12.9oz	Parent's Choice Soy 22.0oz	
		Comfort Soy 22.0oz	
		Earth's Best Soy Infant Formula 21.0oz	