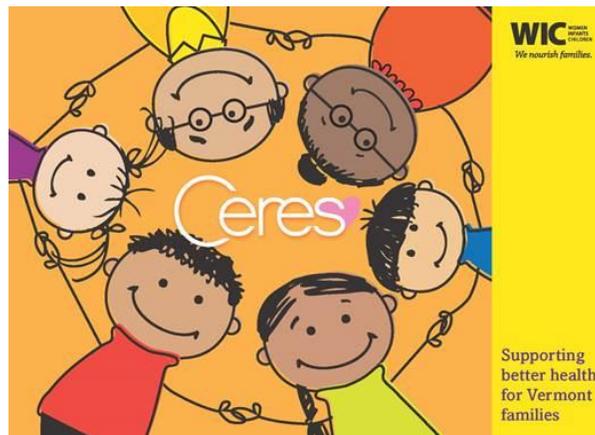


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# Vermont Department of Health

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## **State of Vermont WIC MIS/EBT Implementation Project Retail Enablement and Certification Plan**

WIC MIS/EBT Implementation Project	Version: 3.3
Retail Enablement and Certification Plan	Date: 9/30/14

## Revision History

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WIC MIS/EBT Implementation Project	Version: 3.3
Retail Enablement and Certification Plan	Date: 9/30/14

## Table of Contents

<b>1</b>	<b>Introduction.....</b>	<b>5</b>
1.1	<i>Background on Retail Enablement for WIC EBT (eWIC) .....</i>	<i>5</i>
1.2	<i>Models of WIC Integration .....</i>	<i>5</i>
1.2.1	<i>Stand-Beside system .....</i>	<i>6</i>
1.2.2	<i>Integrated system .....</i>	<i>7</i>
1.3	<i>Project Overview and Goal.....</i>	<i>7</i>
1.4	<i>Vermont Approach to Retail Enablement .....</i>	<i>8</i>
1.5	<i>Scope .....</i>	<i>10</i>
1.6	<i>Acronyms and Definition .....</i>	<i>10</i>
<b>2</b>	<b>Retail Enablement Activities to Date .....</b>	<b>10</b>
2.1	<i>Vermont WIC List-Serv .....</i>	<i>11</i>
2.2	<i>Retail Advisory Council.....</i>	<i>11</i>
2.3	<i>Webinar Series: Introduction to eWIC .....</i>	<i>11</i>
2.4	<i>Vermont eWIC blog .....</i>	<i>11</i>
2.5	<i>Retailer Surveys – 2012 and 2013.....</i>	<i>11</i>
2.6	<i>First Retail Enablement Plan .....</i>	<i>13</i>
<b>3</b>	<b>High Level Description of Enablement and Certification Activities and Schedule</b>	<b>13</b>
3.1	<i>Enablement and Certification Team.....</i>	<i>14</i>
3.2	<i>Management of the System Certification Process.....</i>	<i>15</i>
3.3	<i>Online eWIC Certified ECR/POS Systems .....</i>	<i>17</i>
<b>4</b>	<b>Plan for Retail EBT Enablement and Certification .....</b>	<b>17</b>
4.1	<i>Phase I - Notification .....</i>	<i>17</i>
4.1.1	<i>Procedure 1 - Leverage Relationships with Grocery Associations.....</i>	<i>18</i>
4.1.2	<i>Procedure 2 - Retail Corporate Contact .....</i>	<i>18</i>
4.1.3	<i>Procedure 3 - eWIC Program Letter to Retailers .....</i>	<i>19</i>
4.2	<i>Phase II - Retailer Enrollment .....</i>	<i>19</i>
4.2.1	<i>Procedure 1 - Meetings .....</i>	<i>19</i>
4.2.2	<i>Procedure 2 – Surveys .....</i>	<i>20</i>
4.2.3	<i>Procedure 3 - Corporate Headquarters Contact .....</i>	<i>20</i>
4.2.4	<i>Procedure 4 - Retailer Enrollment Documents .....</i>	<i>21</i>
4.3	<i>Phase III - Retailer Preparation, Certification, Installation, and Training .....</i>	<i>21</i>

WIC MIS/EBT Implementation Project	Version: 3.3
Retail Enablement and Certification Plan	Date: 9/30/14

4.3.1 Integrated eWIC Retailer..... 21

4.3.2 Stand-beside eWIC Retailers (Both Single and Multilane) ..... 25

4.3.3 Training ..... 28

4.3.4 Support ..... 32

**5 Deployment After Statewide Rollout ..... 36**

5.1 Stand-beside Retailers ..... 36

5.2 Integrated Retailers ..... 37

**6 Standards ..... 37**

6.1 Overview..... 37

6.2 FNS Operating Rules ..... 38

6.3 Technical Implementation Guide..... 38

6.4 WIC Universal Interface Specifications ..... 39

6.5 EBT Retail POS Interface Specifications ..... 39

6.6 Ownership of Integrated Software Financed with Federal Dollars ..... 39

**7 Stakeholders ..... 39**

7.1 WIC Participants..... 40

7.2 WIC Retail Vendors..... 40

7.3 Other stakeholders ..... 41

**8 Retail Enablement Challenges ..... 41**

8.1 Communication ..... 41

8.2 Training ..... 41

**9 Project Team..... 41**

9.1 Overview..... 41

9.2 Resources/Responsibilities ..... 42

9.3 Advisory Resources..... 44

**10 Communication Plan..... 45**

[https://vtwic.securespsites.com/Implementation/Shared\\_Documents/DistributeDocumentation/4.%20MasterProjectPlan](https://vtwic.securespsites.com/Implementation/Shared_Documents/DistributeDocumentation/4.%20MasterProjectPlan)..... 45

**11 Risk Management Plan ..... 45**

**12 Appendix A: Acronyms and Definitions ..... 45**

**13 Appendix B: ECR/POS WIC Integration Grant and Contract Process ..... 45**

**14 Appendix C: 2012 Survey of WIC Retailers ..... 46**

**15 Appendix D: 2013 Survey of Independent Retailers ..... 46**

WIC MIS/EBT Implementation Project	Version: 3.3
Retail Enablement and Certification Plan	Date: 9/30/14

# 1 Introduction

## 1.1 Background on Retail Enablement for WIC EBT (eWIC)

With the migration of Vermont WIC food benefit delivery from home delivery to retail, retail vendors (retailers) become critical stakeholders, contributing to the success of the Vermont WIC MIS/EBT project. Because Vermont WIC has also chosen to implement eWIC rather than use paper instruments, it is very important to promote and enable the ability of a broad network of retailers to interface with Vermont’s eWIC system. This will allow WIC participants to access their eWIC benefits without disrupting their current shopping patterns.

WIC online technology is very similar to that used for commercial Electronic Funds Transfer (EFT) and provides WIC agencies with an electronic alternative to paper-based (voucher) or home delivery of benefits. eWIC allows Vermont WIC participants to access their eWIC benefits electronically via magnetic stripe card technology. Cardholders may access their benefits through the electronic network using their eWIC card at any Vermont eWIC-authorized retailer.

The purposes of this Vermont Retail Enablement and Certification Plan are:

- **To describe the process** by which the Vermont WIC Program (VT WIC) and its EBT Contractor (Xerox) will support the efforts of grocers to interface with the VT WIC Electronic Benefits Transfer system (eWIC), and be authorized as Vermont eWIC retailers.
- **To present the objectives, methodologies, phases and activities** used to enroll and enable retailers to participate in eWIC
- **To provide guidance on the requirements** for eWIC integration in the retail environment
- **To describe the certification process** by which the integrated Point of Sale/Electronic Cash Register (POS/ECR) systems will be certified as operational for Vermont eWIC
- **To explain the training** that will be provided to retailers

The Vermont eWIC Retail Enablement and Certification Plan (“Retail Enablement Plan”) is for use by the Vermont Women, Infants and Children (WIC) project team, Vermont technical staff, Vermont testing staff, the Xerox project management and technical staff and to a lesser extent, those in the retail community responsible for their participation in the Vermont eWIC project.

## 1.2 Models of WIC Integration

There are two approaches to enabling retailers to accept eWIC cards: stand-beside and integrated systems. While the stand-beside POS device has been the most-used solution for enabling WIC retailers to process eWIC, there has been significant progress in the past decade toward eWIC retail integration. Currently many widely used payment platforms along with the Electronic Cash Register (ECR) systems of several major retail chains are certified to support eWIC. As a result, Xerox and Vermont WIC expect a high percentage of their authorized retailers to implement an

WIC MIS/EBT Implementation Project	Version: 3.3
Retail Enablement and Certification Plan	Date: 9/30/14

integrated solution and process eWIC transactions using the functionality resident in their ECR systems. Those retailers who do not have an ECR with eWIC capability will use a stand-beside device to process eWIC benefits.

### **1.2.1 *Stand-Beside system***

A stand-beside system is a freestanding or stand-alone point-of-sale (POS) device used to complete an EBT transaction. Generally, a stand-beside solution is one that is separate from any other payment technology that is present in the checkout lane. It does not interface with a cash register, a store's electronic item/pricing file, or its automated inventory systems. For eWIC, the stand-beside system must include a scanner (either built-in to the device, or attached electronically but hand-held). It also includes a card-reader, and is capable of sending messages to, and receiving messages from, the WIC host network. This type of solution will work satisfactorily in stores that do not have sophisticated electronic transaction processing capabilities.

Using a stand-beside solution requires that WIC food items are scanned or entered into the store's cash register system and are also scanned (a second time) by the stand-beside scanner to verify eligibility as a WIC approved food and record the WIC foods for the transaction. The price is entered on the stand-beside POS keypad. This process is known as dual scan / price entry.

Obviously, this is a less-than-optimal solution for EBT, as the WIC participant must separate WIC foods from other purchases, because of the dual scan/price entry, and because the WIC transaction must be separate from other purchase transactions. However, the stand-beside is a viable solution for some small stores without electronic cash register systems and scanners; it is also an interim solution for larger stores looking at future WIC-integration and by giving retailers these two options, it helps maintain the project schedule. While the option to utilize stand-beside POS equipment is essential to overall project success, Vermont WIC does not consider it the optimum permanent configuration for retail checkout lanes, and will continue to encourage all retailers to become integrated retailers (See [Section 1.2.2](#)).

For the stand-beside retailer, Xerox will provide the following services:

- Retailer Assessment
- Execute retailer agreements for stand-beside eWIC retailers
- Deploy stand-beside equipment with appropriate software and PIN pads for stand-beside eWIC retailers, at no cost to the retailer
- Equipment maintenance services
- Retailer training and materials
- Help Desk services
- Retailer website
- Production of retailer location and activity reports

WIC MIS/EBT Implementation Project	Version: 3.3
Retail Enablement and Certification Plan	Date: 9/30/14

- Assistance for State staff
- Manage existing retailer participation
- Ongoing retailer communications

Further details for stand-beside retailers are found in [Section 4.3.2](#).

### **1.2.2 Integrated system**

Integration is the optimal solution for retailers that have more sophisticated electronic cash register (ECR) systems. WIC redemption processing is integrated with all other tender types as a part of the total payment processing solution for the store, and uses the existing in-lane hardware infrastructure (ECR, card reader, printer, scanner) already used for all other supported tender types. Vermont WIC believes that having eWIC integrated into a store's mainstream payment system is the best possible solution, for both the store and the participant. The integrated solution provides more efficient flow through the lane, supports a mixed basket approach to redemption (i.e., all WIC and non-WIC items can be scanned without separating WIC items), and makes WIC essentially identical to all other transactions being processed in the checkout lane.

Large grocery chains typically have a single payment platform implemented in all of their stores. Under this scenario, the software can be modified once and implemented in all of the chain's stores as a very cost effective solution.

For integrated retailers, Xerox will provide the following:

- Retailer Assessment
- Execute Third Party Processor agreements
- Coordinate testing and certification
- Provide test cards and test scripts for certifications
- Support the test environment during certifications
- Production of retailer location and activity reports
- Retailer website
- Assistance for State staff
- Ongoing retailer communications

Details for enablement of integrated retailers are found in [Section 4.3.1](#).

## **1.3 Project Overview and Goal**

There are two parts, or phases, to this project:

WIC MIS/EBT Implementation Project	Version: 3.3
Retail Enablement and Certification Plan	Date: 9/30/14

1. **Development/installation** of eWIC integrated ECR/POS systems and installation of eWIC stand-beside systems; and
2. **Certification** that the integrated ECR/POS systems and the eWIC stand-besides meet online eWIC standards, are fully operational and able to transmit and receive messages with intermediaries (such as Third Party Processors – TPPs) and the eWIC Host.

The Vermont WIC Program EBT Retail Enablement Project will attempt to transfer as many WIC-Approved retailers as possible to an eWIC operational, fully integrated, and certified online ECR/POS system. For those retailers who do not have ECR systems, or who are unable or unwilling to integrate their ECR systems, Vermont WIC and Xerox will work with them to install a certified stand-beside card acceptance device for eWIC.

The Vermont Retailer eWIC Readiness survey conducted in 2012 as part of the eWIC planning project determined that a significant majority of WIC authorized retailers are using POS/ECR software that is available in an integrated version already certified for use for online eWIC transactions in at least one of the states with online eWIC systems. All Vermont retail chains have already completed the integration process for SNAP EBT, and are authorized Vermont WIC vendors for the Cash Value Benefit for fruits and vegetables, which operates using the existing SNAP EBT system. All of the Large Chain peer group members are certified integrated for the Massachusetts eWIC program.

For the remaining retailers in the Vermont WIC network, the alternatives for being EBT ready are to conduct a design and development project for software modifications necessary to integrate the ECR/POS with eWIC, or to install the Xerox stand-beside solution.

Therefore, Vermont WIC’s enablement project will consist of:

- Working with selected retailers to support development/installation and certification of the necessary software to integrate the retailer’s ECR/POS/VAR system with Vermont eWIC and
- Working with selected retailers and Xerox to install a stand-beside card acceptance device for eWIC.

WIC retailers who develop integrated software, and retailers who install software upgrades to integrate their ECR/POS system with WIC, will be required to undergo tests to certify that their systems are fully operational and compliant with the standards for Vermont WIC’s EBT system, before those retailers are authorized to accept VT eWIC cards for purchases. Details regarding the certification of eWIC integration systems are found in [Section 4.3](#).

**The specific tasks and timeline for completion of all necessary activities are included in the Vermont WIC MIS/EBT Implementation Project document “MSProjectFile,” the most current version of which is stored on the MIS/EBT Implementation Project SharePoint site.**

## 1.4 Vermont Approach to Retail Enablement

WIC MIS/EBT Implementation Project	Version: 3.3
Retail Enablement and Certification Plan	Date: 9/30/14

It is the intention of Vermont to build on the lessons learned in previous State Agencies' online EBT Implementations and take maximum advantage of the expertise of state agencies, FNS, retailers and the EBT Contractor. Constant communication and consistent messages are critical to successful involvement of retailers in the project. The Vermont EBT Implementation project will:

- **Engage retailers early and often**, listen to their concerns, suggestions, and priorities. Communications with retailers during this project will include:
  - Identification of retailers – to allow categorization as integration or stand-beside candidate and maintain current contact information
  - Outreach - to reach existing eWIC retailers by various methods to provide detailed information to retailers
  - Communication - to maintain awareness and engagement in the project and facilitate enablement of EBT participation
  - Education - to provide needed training
- **Seek input and expertise from other states** that have implemented, or are implementing eWIC, as well as input from experts in the field of electronic commerce and guidance from a quality assurance contractor
- **Be inclusive.** Invite other stakeholders to share in discussions on policy issues with Vermont project retailers, the FNS, and Vermont WIC project team.
- **Implement a robust retailer enablement plan early in the project**, and continuously improve earlier versions of the plan with input and recommendations from Xerox knowledge, from industry experts, and the Quality Assurance contractor as the project progresses
- **Update** both Vermont WIC's Retail Management Manual and the Vermont WIC policy manual sections regarding retail procedures.

The Vermont WIC Program, in partnership with Xerox will work with the ECR/POS/VAR Developers, Value Added Resellers, Processors and the retailer to integrate the various ECR/POS/VAR systems, terminal software, and online transaction processing capabilities. Vermont WIC and Xerox will coordinate the appropriate resources and support to integrate eWIC functionality in the Vermont retail stores authorized to redeem WIC benefits.

Throughout the life of the eWIC contract with Xerox, the WIC Program will promptly provide information to the contractor on new or disqualified retailers via the daily Authorized Retailer Update file and these additions/deletions will be addressed by the contractor as described in this plan.

A Stakeholder Registry for this project was updated periodically and maintained on the SharePoint site for the MIS/EBT Subprojects. A Retail Data File was also updated regularly and maintained on the SharePoint Site for the MIS/EBT Subprojects, until the Ceres Retail Vendor module was made available for production work early in 2014. Currently WIC authorized retailers are managed using the Ceres MIS, by the Retail Vendor Manager in the WIC State Office.

WIC MIS/EBT Implementation Project	Version: 3.3
Retail Enablement and Certification Plan	Date: 9/30/14

## 1.5 Scope

Vermont WIC's retail enablement efforts, with the aid of the EBT Contractor will consist of:

- 1) Development and certification of integrated systems
  - Working with selected retailers to support development of the necessary software to integrate the retailer's ECR/POS system with Vermont eWIC
  - Working with retailers to obtain full certification of integrated ECR/POS systems as eWIC operational
- 2) Development, certification and deployment of stand-beside solution
  - Certification that the EBT contractor's stand-beside solution conforms to FNS and Vermont eWIC requirements
  - Installation of the stand-beside device in appropriate retailer locations
- 3) Retailer Training
  - For integrated retailers, a "Train the Trainer" method will be used, which has been used successfully for the current VT WIC fruit and vegetable CVB EBT program
  - For stand-beside retailers, training will be provided to each retailer as part of the equipment installation process and/or retail authorization site visit

## 1.6 Acronyms and Definition

To assist the reader, a list of the acronyms referenced throughout this document and their associated meanings is included as [Appendix A](#). For a comprehensive WIC MIS/EBT Glossary please refer to:

- WIC MIS – EBT Communications Plan Glossary found at: [https://vtwic.securesites.com/Implementation/Shared\\_Documents/DistributeDocumentation/CommunicationsPlan.pdf](https://vtwic.securesites.com/Implementation/Shared_Documents/DistributeDocumentation/CommunicationsPlan.pdf)
- United States Department of Agriculture, Food and Nutrition Service (USDA/FNS) FRED Glossary found at: [http://www.fns.usda.gov/apd/FReD-2008/Appendix\\_B.pdf](http://www.fns.usda.gov/apd/FReD-2008/Appendix_B.pdf)

## 2 Retail Enablement Activities to Date

Vermont WIC has been preparing retailers for the advent of eWIC for several years. Frequent and open communications have allowed Vermont WIC to develop very positive relationships with retailers, including corporate chains and independents. The existing 135 retailers are very aware of the approaching implementation of EBT, and are already cooperative and supportive of Vermont WIC and its goals.

WIC MIS/EBT Implementation Project	Version: 3.3
Retail Enablement and Certification Plan	Date: 9/30/14

## 2.1 Vermont WIC List-Serv

During 2009 when Vermont WIC launched the CVB fruit and veggie benefit via the SNAP EBT platform, the Vermont Grocers Association began sponsoring and managing a list-serv for Vermont WIC, which allows Vermont WIC to communicate immediately via email to nearly two hundred interested retail stakeholders. The list-serv is used to communicate training, meetings, changes and updates to requirements, authorization schedules, etc.

## 2.2 Retail Advisory Council

Also at the time of the CVB launch, Vermont WIC established the Retail Advisory Council, which meets quarterly via teleconference. Membership is open to any interested retail stakeholder. Minutes of the meetings are posted on the grocer blog (see below), and notice of the meetings and posting of minutes is distributed through the list-serv. Corporate chain retailers (who comprise nearly 70% of Vermont's current WIC authorized stores) are deeply involved and participate in virtually every quarterly meeting.

## 2.3 Webinar Series: Introduction to eWIC

During 2011, Vermont WIC produced, delivered and distributed a series of four webinars providing an overview and introduction to eWIC for retailers. The webinars were recorded and have been available on the [Vermont WIC Retailer webpage](#) since that time. The four webinars are:

- What is eWIC?
- Online and Offline EBT
- National UPC Database and eWIC
- Profile of WIC in Vermont and the Approved Products List

## 2.4 Vermont eWIC blog

Soon after launch of the CVB, [a blog for Vermont's grocer partners](#) was initiated. Vermont WIC uses the blog to provide information on the WIC program in Vermont, training and program changes, and the EBT Implementation Project. The blog is posted at <http://vermontwicebt.com>

## 2.5 Retailer Surveys – 2012 and 2013

During the retail agreement reauthorization process, which took place in the summer of 2012, all retailers were reassessed for:

- Interest in becoming a full food package EBT retailer
- EBT readiness
- Their appropriateness and interest in participating in an integration project, or whether they would require a WIC/3SquaresVT stand-beside terminal

This survey identified several retailers using ECR/POS software and systems for which modifications are available to be certified as eWIC functional. Other retailers would need to

WIC MIS/EBT Implementation Project	Version: 3.3
Retail Enablement and Certification Plan	Date: 9/30/14

change their ECR/POS systems in order to be online eWIC functional, and others did not have ECR/POS systems and used state-provided stand-beside terminals to process WIC CVB cards.

Of the three chain retailers who make up a significant majority of VT WIC authorized retailers, two are operating ECR/POS systems already modified elsewhere for online eWIC. One chain uses proprietary software that would require an integration development project. Discussions were initiated at the time with that chain retailer to ensure their awareness of the need to plan for the integration in time for Vermont eWIC pilot in 2015, but the retailer’s integration process has since been undertaken for the retailer to be certified for the Massachusetts WIC online EBT program. The other two chain retailers were also engaged in discussions to prepare them for necessary changes they would need to make. The report of this survey is attached as [Appendix C](#).

In the third and fourth quarters of 2013, another survey was conducted that specifically targeted the non-chain (independent) retailers in Vermont (n=51; 99% of Vermont’s independent grocers), to determine whether any retailers were planning ECR/POS upgrades between 2013 and 2015, and also to gather contact information on the parties responsible for maintenance of their cash registers, and any CAD/POS system. This survey also identified the retailers likely to continue use of the stand-beside terminals. Key findings from this survey are:

- 28 (55%) use an outside IT/POS vendor or consultant
- 17 (33%) now use a state-provided EBT card reader, a much smaller proportion than Vermont WIC had anticipated.
- 34 (66%) have their own, or use a vendor provided ECR/POS system. This is higher than Vermont WIC expected and points to a much greater target population for integration among independent grocers than expected.
- Of the 28 retailers who use outside vendors for their ECR/POS systems, 15 are using AWI/AGNE, 4 are working with C-Starts, 3 with Duman Business Systems, and 2 with STCR Business Systems. This will allow joint collaboration on integration for a significant portion of Vermont’s independent retailers.
- Only 7 retailers are currently working on changes to the store’s ECR/POS. They need to be contacted immediately regarding integration.
- 10 are planning changes in the next 2-5 years, allowing Vermont WIC and Xerox to potentially direct them to integrated systems as they make changes

Contact information for the retailers and their ECR/POS vendors was collected as part of this survey. Names of newsletters and other sources of industry information trusted by the retailers were collected, in order to target Vermont WIC’s outreach about this project more effectively. This information is included in the Stakeholder Registry for this project, which is updated periodically and maintained on the SharePoint site for the MIS/EBT Subprojects.

The report of this survey is attached as [Appendix D](#).

WIC MIS/EBT Implementation Project	Version: 3.3
Retail Enablement and Certification Plan	Date: 9/30/14

## 2.6 First Retail Enablement Plan

During the Pre-Planning phase for the Vermont WIC MIS-EBT Implementation Project, a draft retailer enablement plan was developed, for inclusion in the Vermont WIC MIS/EBT Implementation Feasibility Study. Many elements of that original plan are carried forward into this plan.

At the time that draft was developed (December 2013), USDA-FNS periodically made grants to states to work with retail vendors for development of ECR-POS software that integrated eWIC into the retailer’s ECR-POS system. The draft plan reflected the availability of that funding, and set out the process by which Vermont WIC would assess need, apply for funding, and award funding to retailers for integration projects.

At this time, however, USDA-FNS no longer makes this funding available. Therefore, the section of the draft plan describing the Vermont process is no longer relevant to the enablement plan. However, should funding become available, Vermont WIC would use the process that had been documented. Therefore, the process is included as [Appendix B](#) to this Retail Enablement plan.

## 3 High Level Description of Enablement and Certification Activities and Schedule

The Integration and Certification Project is a subproject of the eWIC Implementation Project. The following table displays the phases and high-level tasks and target completion dates for the entire EBT Implementation.

Phase	High Level Task	Completion Target
<b>Planning</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Procurement Documentation and Contracting</li> <li>Project Management Planning</li> <li>Retail and Clinic Enablement Plans</li> <li>Selection of Vendors for Integration Projects (should funding be available)</li> </ul>	1/2014
<b>Design</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>System Design Requirements &amp; Specification Documentation</li> <li>Integration Project Planning</li> </ul>	6/2014
<b>Development</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>System Modification, Technical Testing, and Revisions</li> <li>Operational Planning, Documentation, and Training Materials</li> <li>Integrated ECR/POS System Development and Testing</li> <li>Stand-Beside POS Terminal Development and Testing</li> <li>Certification of Integrated Retail Systems</li> <li>Reauthorization of Retailers</li> </ul>	6/2015

WIC MIS/EBT Implementation Project	Version: 3.3
Retail Enablement and Certification Plan	Date: 9/30/14

<b>Pilot Operations</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pilot Area Training</li> <li>• System Pilot Test- 3 Month</li> <li>• Pilot Evaluation and System Modification/ Retesting</li> </ul>	9/2015
<b>Statewide Rollout</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• POS Stand-Beside Installations</li> <li>• Statewide Training</li> <li>• System Rollout</li> </ul>	3/2016

### 3.1 Enablement and Certification Team

This is an overview of key personnel and their responsibilities. **NOTE:** Where conflicts exist between this list and the official Project Plan, the [Project Plan](#) governs.

Role	Responsibilities
WIC Program Sponsor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Responsible for oversight and resource allocation to the overall project</li> <li>• Review and approve project deliverables, reports and status</li> </ul>
Program Project Manager	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Responsible for project management</li> <li>• Responsible for overall communication and coordination between the retailer enablement and certification project and the MIS/EBT Implementation project team</li> <li>• Monitor retailer enablement and certification project status</li> <li>• Monitor open tasks and issues</li> <li>• Participate in bi-weekly conference calls with each set of affected parties during each certification and provide assistance and support to the Retail Vendor Manager as need to ensure retailer enablement and certification</li> </ul>
Retail Vendor Manager	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Coordinate with EBT Vendor to provide operating rules and implementation guidelines to interested retailers</li> <li>• Host bi-weekly conference calls with each set of affected parties during each certification, and ensure appropriate and timely communication between scheduled calls</li> <li>• Schedule certifications with interested retailers, balancing priorities and coordinating to meet and maximize the schedules of all involved</li> <li>• Coordinate and maintain schedules for the various phases of certification</li> <li>• Oversee and ensure adequate testing is performed in each phase and that all scripts are executed</li> <li>• Oversee coordination with EBT and QA contractor to ensure receipts are reviewed and reconciliation is performed</li> </ul>
EBT Contractor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Serve as the information technology host for the Vermont WIC Program eWIC system</li> <li>• Provide a complementary group of personnel to support the integration</li> </ul>

WIC MIS/EBT Implementation Project	Version: 3.3
Retail Enablement and Certification Plan	Date: 9/30/14

	<p>and certification project</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide the test environment for eWIC transactions</li> <li>• Install, maintain, and service external EBT point-of-sale devices at participating grocery stores, and provide initial training to store personnel on its use</li> <li>• Provide the interface to store food benefits issued to eligible participants during the WIC application process</li> <li>• Communicate with grocery stores to identify food benefits issued and available for purchase,</li> <li>• Contribute to the Vermont WIC Retail Enablement Plan</li> <li>• Aid in the successful integration of the Vermont WIC retail environment</li> <li>• Install, maintain and service external eWIC point-of-sale devices at participating grocery stores,</li> <li>• Provide Technical assistance</li> <li>• Support the System certification effort</li> <li>• Provide Equipment specifications</li> <li>• Provide Deployment and training plans</li> <li>• Describe training materials</li> <li>• Reimburse vendors for authorized WIC purchases</li> <li>• Provide ongoing processing, equipment support and maintenance</li> <li>• Facilitate or report on retailer and third party processor agreements</li> <li>• Provide help desk services to WIC vendors for resolving issues/problems on eWIC contractor supplied stand-beside POS equipment</li> <li>• Help resolve settlement and dispute questions and issues</li> </ul>
Financial Manager VDH Business Office	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Properly track the use of funds, and maintain adequate supporting documentation</li> </ul>

### 3.2 Management of the System Certification Process

**NOTE:** The certification process for stand-beside equipment and for integrated retailers is described in detail in Section 3.3 for each of those categories of retailers. This section is meant to be a high-level explanation and description of the process.

eWIC is unlike a typical credit, debt or EBT card because instead of a cash value that can be used for shopper-determined purchases, the transaction involves specific redemption of specifically prescribed food items. Several rules must be met in order for the transaction to be processed successfully. Each food item must be verified against the WIC prescription specific to each participant, and in accordance with the Authorized Product List that is specific to the state agency. Retailer ECR/POS systems will be certified by the state WIC program, via a test host system created to run transactions that ensure data is formatted appropriately, and that the system will

WIC MIS/EBT Implementation Project	Version: 3.3
Retail Enablement and Certification Plan	Date: 9/30/14

process the transaction correctly. In some cases, certification will require the attendance of WIC state or local agency representatives running scripts and validating results.

The Vermont WIC Program will work with Xerox and the other stakeholders to schedule certification in the most logical and efficient manner, to affect the maximum benefit to participants, stakeholders, and WIC Programs in Vermont, the region and nationwide.

Vermont intends to schedule certifications using these criteria for priority:

- EBT Contractor stand-beside solution
- Chain retail grocers operating throughout the state
- Stores located in the pilot area (Rutland District Office)
- Retailers who may require only minor modifications to systems already certified elsewhere
- Retailers who are carrying out integration projects for systems not integrated elsewhere

Multi-store entities (“chain” stores) comprise a majority of store locations in the current Vermont WIC authorized retailer network, and will continue to do so after implementation of retail delivery via EBT. Therefore, the certification of multi-store entities will necessarily be a priority. All remaining retailers will be scheduled for certification as their integration development work is completed and internally tested.

Whether certification is conducted for an integrated retailer or for the stand-beside system that Vermont WIC and Xerox will develop, the data verified during testing will be the same. Data verified during testing includes:

- Descriptions listed in the APL match the descriptions, quantity and UOM on the receipts
- PIN validation
- Ensure coupons and promotions are included and processed correctly
  - Ensure Cash Value Benefit is processed correctly
  - Process transactions for WIC only, as well as mixed basket transactions
  - Ensure participant WIC accounts are decremented properly during purchases
  - Ensure voids and reversals process and credit participants’ accounts correctly
  - Verify that financial settlement to the retailer is accurate
  - Certify that the Management information reports communicated by the system are accurate
  - Ensure that full regression testing is performed if code changes are made as a result of the testing process

WIC MIS/EBT Implementation Project	Version: 3.3
Retail Enablement and Certification Plan	Date: 9/30/14

Throughout the project, the Vermont WIC Program will host regularly scheduled calls with all stakeholders to monitor open tasks, and additional calls will be held with the relevant parties to recap each certification.

### 3.3 Online eWIC Certified ECR/POS Systems

The most current list of eWIC Certified retailer systems is posted on the Vermont Department of Health WIC Program MIS/EBT Implementation Project page at:

[http://healthvermont.gov/wic/MISEBT\\_Project.aspx#Technical\\_Information](http://healthvermont.gov/wic/MISEBT_Project.aspx#Technical_Information)

The document, produced by FNS, displays the models of ECR hardware, operating systems and software, and Card Reader Hardware and Operating Systems that have been certified for other online EBT WIC agencies. The document also displays the state WIC agency and retailer involved in the certification of the ECR/POS hardware and software.

## 4 Plan for Retail EBT Enablement and Certification

As described fully above, of the two approaches in retailer enablement—the stand-beside and integrated methods, the second approach is the most desired—retailer integration. The Xerox team and Vermont WIC support the goal of achieving full integration for all WIC-authorized retailers.

### 4.1 Phase I - Notification

In Phase I, three procedures are used to notify retailers about the eWIC Program. It is important to communicate frequently and consistently with the retailer community to continue to encourage participation in the integration project and online eWIC. The processes within this phase of the project builds general program awareness, establishes program identity through consistent use of Xerox’s materials, the eWIC card and the eWIC Program logo on materials, provides a mechanism to communicate the benefits and responsibilities of participation in eWIC, and encourage participation.

This phase will be facilitated by the work already done by Vermont WIC to gather and maintain up to date contact information for project stakeholders, and build awareness and support for eWIC. (See [Sections 2.1](#) and [2.2](#).)

The success of this implementation requires that the Vermont WIC Program continues to be the central point of contact for retailer communications and concerns that may surface throughout this project. The Vermont WIC Program will work closely with Xerox and all stakeholders to manage any concerns or interests with minimal impact on the project, and to the satisfaction of the concerned parties. While the integration process must be managed and coordinated by Vermont WIC, all parties must communicate with integrity, transparency and honesty in order for the project to be a success.

The initial stage of Vermont WIC’s plan for working with its retailers (as described in Sections 2.1 and 2.2) is already underway is to reach out to the retailer community to:

WIC MIS/EBT Implementation Project	Version: 3.3
Retail Enablement and Certification Plan	Date: 9/30/14

- Explain what eWIC is and how it will impact them
- Provide an initial project schedule
- Provide information on the various paths by which a store may be enabled for eWIC
- Provide information about eWIC standards
- Identify retailers who wish to integrate
- Identify key IT contacts for all authorized retailers

The intent of this outreach is to accomplish several purposes:

- Establish support among all stakeholders
- Identify issues and concerns
- Leverage their contacts and infrastructure to spread the word about Vermont eWIC and to gain a broad based support from their constituencies
- Use as a sounding board for approaches to training and equipment deployment
- Provide a forum for addressing practices and methodologies

Additional information on communications with retailers is provided in [The Communication Plan section](#) of this plan.

#### **4.1.1 Procedure 1 - Leverage Relationships with Grocery Associations**

Building on the previous effective work of the Vermont WIC Program with the Vermont Grocers Association (VGA), Vermont WIC will regularly communicate with VGA regarding Xerox's activities in Vermont, for VGA leadership as well as for communication to the association's members. VGA strongly supports the eWIC project and Vermont WIC intends to ensure that a good working relationship continues among the WIC Program, Xerox, and VGA.

Vermont WIC will seek out and communicate with other associations as well, including those representing cooperatives and general stores.

#### **4.1.2 Procedure 2 - Retail Corporate Contact**

Vermont WIC has established strong and positive relationships with corporate chain retailers in the state. The Xerox will work with retailer corporate contacts by responding to questions about eWIC, to solicit information from the chain about their current Electronic Funds Transfers and/or in-store technology, and offer assistance for eWIC enablement and certification. Regardless of whether the corporate retailer expresses a desire to integrate or accept contractor-installed stand-beside machines, a meeting is established. This type of meeting sets the foundation for a productive relationship with the chain.

After initial meetings, most future communication with the chain headquarters will be via telephone, email and direct mail. Frequent communication with the corporate contact reinforces

WIC MIS/EBT Implementation Project	Version: 3.3
Retail Enablement and Certification Plan	Date: 9/30/14

program awareness, facilitates the integration and certification process, and maintains participation in the eWIC Program.

#### **4.1.3 Procedure 3 - eWIC Program Letter to Retailers**

The WIC Program will send a letter to retailers to initiate the eWIC project, and introduce retailers to Xerox’s contacts. This letter is sent to chain headquarters and to independent stores to initiate the planning for enablement, integration and certification. Because of the significant stakeholder engagement activities already carried out by Vermont WIC, the eWIC letter will not be the first official notification about eWIC, but will establish the official “launch” of this project, so it is an important first step in actively engaging retailers in the project. The letter affirms the VT WIC Program’s commitment to and endorsement of eWIC, informs retailers of the schedule and upcoming activities, and introduces Xerox’s role in the program.

The Xerox’s Retailer Manager, will be the retailer’s initial point of contact.

### **4.2 Phase II - Retailer Enrollment**

Phase II focuses on enrollment activities and obtaining signed Retail Agreements from eWIC-authorized retailers. In this phase, it is important to emphasize the retailers’ benefits and responsibilities of participation in eWIC, and overcome any barriers to participate. At the conclusion of Phase II—Retailer Enrollment, retailers should be familiar and comfortable enough with eWIC that they will sign and submit enrollment documents, which allows them to participate in eWIC.

#### **4.2.1 Procedure 1 - Meetings**

##### **Kickoff Meeting**

While the State has been working with retailers for some time regarding eWIC, for Xerox, engaging retailers in eWIC enablement begins with a retailer kickoff meeting. The retailer kickoff meeting is attended remotely via teleconference and can be combined with a regularly scheduled State agency retailer meeting. The kickoff is an opportunity for the State and Xerox to meet as a team with the WIC retailer community and provide some insight to the changes retailers will experience in the coming months. For many retailers, the kickoff meeting is where they will learn about integration opportunities and the steps required for achieving integration. The retailer kickoff meeting is followed by direct contact with retailers, TPPs, and other stakeholders as appropriate to initiate the Retailer Integration Process.

##### Retailer Kickoff Meeting Outline

- Define eWIC
- Introduce program guidelines
- Schedule of upcoming activities
- Review benefits of eWIC to the eWIC Program, cardholder, and retailers

WIC MIS/EBT Implementation Project	Version: 3.3
Retail Enablement and Certification Plan	Date: 9/30/14

- Overview program features
- Detail retailer involvement and responsibilities of participation
- Detail retailer support services
- Enrollment process
- Provide information regarding equipment installation and training
- Settlement
- Questions and answers
- Retail site survey

### **Integration Meetings and Documentation**

Xerox will work closely with the State agency to hold regular bi-weekly integration meetings, via conference call, with retailers and other stakeholders to establish a schedule for integration activities, identify and engage the required parties, and educate all involved. The participants of these bi-weekly integration meetings generally include retailer IT personnel, FNS, TPPs, ECR service providers, Xerox, State vendor personnel, and in some cases ECR manufacturers.

In an effort to promote integration and help retailers understand what is required for their ECR to process eWIC transactions, Xerox has created an informal guide that provides information regarding the fundamental system requirements, enablement processes, and stakeholder activities. This will be distributed to interested retailers.

#### **4.2.2 Procedure 2 – Surveys**

To better understand individual retailer needs and to group retailers into categories to better address their needs as a whole, Xerox will work closely with the State to create and administer retailer surveys that will provide ECR, TPP, service provider, and other information required to initiate and complete integration activities. Xerox understands the State has completed much groundwork in this area and will look to build upon rather than repeat what has been performed already. Xerox will review the retailer enablement data collected by the State and identify any additional information required to initiate integration efforts with individual stakeholders (i.e. retailers, TPPs, etc.).

#### **4.2.3 Procedure 3 - Corporate Headquarters Contact**

As indicated in section 3.1.2 Corporate Contact, corporate contacts for many of the larger supermarkets will already have been contacted in Phase II. At this point in the project, Xerox sends copies of the retailer enrollment documents to the corporate contact. This is done in advance of the implementation date to ensure that the chain corporate headquarters have enough time to review and complete the retailer enrollment documents.

WIC MIS/EBT Implementation Project	Version: 3.3
Retail Enablement and Certification Plan	Date: 9/30/14

#### **4.2.4 Procedure 4 - Retailer Enrollment Documents**

A “Welcome to EBT,” via U.S. mail and email will be sent, advising retailers to go to the Vermont WIC Retailer website to download and print the WIC enrollment materials. If a retailer does not have internet access, they may request by telephone or by a reply email that the enrollment materials be mailed to them.

Vermont authorized WIC retailers will connect to EPPIC either directly or via a Third Party Processor (TPP). The manner in which the retailer connects will determine whether the retailer has an agreement directly with Xerox.

##### **Retailer Agreements**

eWIC retailers that utilize stand-beside equipment to process eWIC transactions will have a direct relationship with Xerox and therefore will have an agreement with Xerox. The Xerox retailer agreement will be provided separately for review and approval.

Such retailers will receive settlement payments each banking day directly from Xerox via Xerox’s partner bank. Retailers that have agreements with Xerox will have access to pending ACH payments via the vendor portal, access to the Xerox support team, and will work directly with Xerox for dispute resolution where appropriate.

##### **Third Party Processor Agreements**

Though a direct-connect integrated retailer option is available, it is expected that all Vermont WIC authorized retailers that utilize an integrated solution will do so via a TPP. To facilitate this type of transaction processing, Xerox has certified with the major TPPs and has in place agreements to process eWIC transactions for WIC authorized retailers via third party processors. TPPs requiring recertification or new TPPs will follow the process, Processes and Standards for Acquirers/TPP Certification. The TPP agreement will be provided separately for review and approval.

The enrollment documents will finalize the determination of which retailers will be treated as integrated retailers, and which will be treated as stand-beside retailers.

### **4.3 Phase III - Retailer Preparation, Certification, Installation, and Training**

The specific details of retailer preparation, system certification, equipment installation, and training to participate in eWIC vary depending upon the type of terminal unit used by the retailer. For the purpose of eWIC, retailers fall into one of the following categories:

- Integrated eWIC retailer
- Stand-beside eWIC retailers (both single and multilane)

#### **4.3.1 Integrated eWIC Retailer**

Vermont’s eWIC will conform to *FNS eWIC Operating Rules and Technical Implementation Guide* (TIG). Implementation will build upon the work that was completed by FNS, Xerox and other WIC agencies to enable retailer integration. . In an effort to provide the optimal solution and take advantage of early integration efforts, Xerox has already certified with many retailers, payment

WIC MIS/EBT Implementation Project	Version: 3.3
Retail Enablement and Certification Plan	Date: 9/30/14

platforms and TPPs, including NCR, Supervalu, Retailx, IBM ACE, Wal-Mart, Food Lion, Kroger, Spartan, and Meijer. Other large retailers such as Walmart, Fred Meyer, and Safeway, and electronic cash register (ECR) system software companies (Retailx, RORC, and IBM) and TPPs (First Data and Vantiv) have already developed certified and implemented eWIC capabilities. Xerox will actively engage Vermont WIC retailers early in the project to identify retailers who have integration capabilities, educate them on the benefits and process of integration certification, and encourage active participation in integration activities. Xerox will determine which Vermont eWIC - authorized retailers want to integrate. This information will also be used to determine if they are currently using a TPP or cash register system that has been previously certified, and to identify which level of certification each retailer and TPP will require.

These are the activities related to deployment of integrated retailers:

**A. Design and Development**

Vermont eWIC retailers wanting to use an integrated cash register system must have their cash register system and TPP certified by Vermont WIC. Stores wishing to integrate are responsible for their own design and development initiatives. Xerox will provide the technical specifications and business rules to which the integrated solution must conform. Integration development by retailers may require 18 to 24 months.

- **Initiation.** This phase includes reviewing the integrated specifications with the retailer and TPP to ensure all requirements are understood. Once all integrated specifications are understood, Xerox develops a project plan with input from the retailer and TPP. The project work plan includes the retailer and TPP development and testing tasks as well as Xerox tasks leading up to certification.
- **Integration Testing.** This phase includes providing the retailer and TPP with eWIC test cards and a separate test environment for their development integration testing to Xerox. Xerox holds regularly scheduled calls with each retailer and the State Vendor Manager and WIC Project Manager to review and track progress. The exit criteria for this phase include retailer and TPP processing of all WIC financial transactions to the EPPIC system.
- **Precertification.** Once the entrance criteria have been met, Xerox reviews all integration testing results. Upon satisfactory review of the test results, Xerox schedules a block of time for precertification. The precertification consists of Xerox providing a copy of the integrated retailer certification scripts that mirror the scripts that are used during the certification process. The precertification is performed remotely but is monitored by Xerox, through the online WIC testing tool called Versado that provides real-time Web viewing of transactions. Versado provides a certification report and instant feedback if a transaction passes or fails the Xerox Integrated Retailer Certification Scripts. In addition, the State is able to review the progress of how testing is proceeding by logging in remotely.

The exit criteria for precertification includes completion of all test scripts, and no failed transactions in the certification report produced by Versado. In addition, the retailer and TPP

WIC MIS/EBT Implementation Project	Version: 3.3
Retail Enablement and Certification Plan	Date: 9/30/14

are responsible for providing receipt samples and for performing reconciliation of the certification testing.

## B. Certification

Once precertification testing has been successfully completed, the State agency schedules the onsite certification acceptance test. Xerox supports State acceptance testing remotely. Acceptance testing follows the integrated certification script provided by Xerox and approved by the State and FNS. The State agency determines if the retailer passes acceptance testing and provides notice of final certification. The retailer will provide sample receipts and perform reconciliation with the eWIC host. Certifications can be not approved, conditionally approved, or unconditionally approved.

Xerox will work closely with Vermont WIC to ensure that a test eWIC processing platform and environment is available to support certifications. Test scripts, cards, and accounts, as well as support services, must also be available for certification and are provided by Xerox. Adhering to the common set of business rules and message standards established by FNS and participating stakeholders (the X9.93 messaging standards, the Technical Implementation Guide, and the Operating Rules) will greatly simplify the process.

Certification is a four-step process:

- **Pre - certification** is conducted by the retailer/retailer to help ensure that the system is ready for certification and to identify any changes needed prior to the Level One or Level Two Certification.
- **Level One Certification** involves the WIC Agency certifying the base retailer ECR System or an off the shelf version of a retailer ECR System before the TPP process.
- **Level Two Certification** involves the WIC Agency certifying the retailer ECR system through to their TPP. Level Two Certification involves a customized version of a base ECR system.

Both Level 1 and Level 2 require certification to the full set of eWIC certification scripts, and are not treated any differently from a certification perspective. These are not progressive; the requirement is satisfied as long as one of the two types of certification is completed for a retailer new to eWIC.

- **Level Three Certification** involves the retailer certifying their ECR system through the TPP and to the VT eWIC Host by validating the production end-to-end process. In-store certification is not typically required; however, a live compliance purchase will be required at the store level to confirm hardware and software are operating correctly. Level Three Certification will require the attendance of WIC Agency representatives running scripts and validating results. The retailer and TPP will perform their development integration testing in order to process every conceivable financial transaction and validate formatting. The retailer will provide sample receipts and perform end-to-end reconciliation with the TPP.

WIC MIS/EBT Implementation Project	Version: 3.3
Retail Enablement and Certification Plan	Date: 9/30/14

The type of certification a retailer goes through is determined by the following:

- If the solution is a brand new implementation of eWIC then it will require a full certification.
- A retailer certification in one state should serve to demonstrate that retailer’s capabilities for all states in which the same technology (hardware and software) is being used. If the solution is a previously certified “commercial model” system then, because it has already undergone a rigorous certification process to become approved, the in-store implementation will only require a Level 3 certification by completing a successful eWIC purchase transaction at the store.
- If the solution is for an integrated chain store, then one certification of the chain’s WIC implementation is considered sufficient. It is not necessary to certify every store that is installing that solution. A self-certification process wherein WIC provides the test scripts to the store and the retailer exercises them internally and provides WIC with a document attesting to certification can also be considered sufficient.
- In an online environment, where many retailers use the services of third parties who in turn might use the services of a gateway provider, transaction certification will be delegated downstream. For example, the host processor will certify the transaction gateway. The gateway will in turn certify the acquirers or TPPs that want to send the gateway transactions on behalf of their retail customers. Each TPP will certify all stores for which it is acquiring transactions. However, even in this environment, WIC may want to actually validate the in-store processing that is taking place at least upon initial implementation.
- If a system undergoes a significant modification, then a recertification may be necessary. The scope of the recertification depends on the extent of the changes and the perceived risk. The State will make this determination.

Certification will require the attendance of Vermont eWIC Agency as well as participation by the Vermont WIC Quality Assurance (QA) contractor. The retailer and TPP will perform their development integration testing in order to process every conceivable financial transaction and validate formatting. Data verified during testing includes:

- Descriptions listed in the APL match the descriptions, quantity and UOM on the receipts
- PIN validation (including using additional digits at the end of the PIN)
- Ensure coupons and promotions are included and processed correctly
- Ensure CVB is processed correctly
- Process transactions for eWIC only, as well as mixed basket transactions
- Ensure accounts are decremented properly during purchases
- Ensure voids and reversals process and credit accounts correctly
- Verify that financial settlement to the retailer is accurate

WIC MIS/EBT Implementation Project	Version: 3.3
Retail Enablement and Certification Plan	Date: 9/30/14

- Certify that the management information reports communicated by the system are accurate
- Ensure that full regression testing is performed if code changes are introduced

**C. Processing Standards for Acquirers/TPP Certification**

While the activities in the above section described integrated certification for retailers and acquirers/TPPs as an overall parallel process, individual certifications between Xerox and a TPP may be pursued without involving a retailer. While this does not reduce the involvement of a TPP in a retailer integration certification, it does eliminate much of the related development required for the TPP.

The process for TPP certification follows the same four phases listed for retailer certification, but does not generally include State or FNS participation since there is no authorized WIC retailer involved. This is not to say that the State and FNS do not validate the accuracy of the TPP transaction processing, it is simply performed in the course of the retailer certification efforts.

**D. Installation**

Integrated stores are responsible for their own installations

**E. Maintenance**

Integrated stores are responsible for their own maintenance

**F. Transaction Acquiring**

Integrated stores are responsible for any third party or acquirer agreements they hold. Alternately, they may directly link to the EBT host system, with assistance from Xerox.

**4.3.2 Stand-beside eWIC Retailers (Both Single and Multilane)**

Vermont retailers have the ability to participate in eWIC via the use of Xerox’s provided WIC-only stand-beside POS terminal system.

Each stand-beside retailer is required to complete and return the retailer enrollment documents to participate in eWIC. Any required site preparation other than an appropriate digital or analog connection and electrical outlet is performed upon terminal installation.

Xerox will work with Vermont to develop a rollout schedule to ship the stand-beside equipment to eWIC retailers. Xerox will use the guidelines developed by Vermont to determine how many devices the eWIC retailers should receive.

For stand-beside retailer installations, Xerox ships all equipment and trains the store’s staff. For chains choosing the stand - beside solution, “train - the - trainer” information is provided to the company’s training staff upon request. After the completion of training and terminal installation, each store performs a test set of all the eWIC transactions at each terminal to verify that staff know how to process the transactions and that the terminal units are successfully linked through to Xerox’s host.

WIC MIS/EBT Implementation Project	Version: 3.3
Retail Enablement and Certification Plan	Date: 9/30/14

These are the activities related to stand-beside deployment:

**A. Certification**

Xerox will assist the Vermont WIC program in certification of the system as meeting all requirements for eWIC processing. Testing will be performed as part of the Vermont WIC and FNS user acceptance testing (UAT).

**B. Installation**

Xerox will supply stand - beside equipment and software in all Vermont WIC retailer locations requiring stand - beside devices. The VeriFone Vx570 will be provided for installation at retailers participating in the Vermont eWIC program. Installation and training support is provided to the retailer over the phone via the ship and train process. The VeriFone Vx570 terminal will have the Xerox Vermont eWIC specific software program that can accommodate analog dialup telephone line or high speed Internet connectivity to the Xerox host processing system. All participating stores receive one or two EBT only terminals as determined by Vermont WIC. Site-preparation including appropriate digital or analog connection and electrical outlet is the responsibility of the retailer.



VeriFone Vx 570 POS Terminal

The VeriFone Vx570 point-of-service (POS) terminals have a large display screen and are programmed to walk vendor and client users through every step necessary for the WIC program.

During the activation and installation process, technicians will program the equipment to receive software updates at a vendor-selected time either after hours or during a non-peak period at the retailer facility. The majority of retailers close between 10:00 p.m. and 12:00 a.m. EST, so download times have historically occurred between 12:00 a.m. EST and 5:00 a.m. EST. The equipment will receive a notification of an installation update and then connect to the Xerox Electronic Payment Processing Information Control (EPPIC) host at the pre-programmed time. The equipment does not need to be reactivated for the software update to take effect. Note that the device must be connected to the network in order to receive the software update.

WIC MIS/EBT Implementation Project	Version: 3.3
Retail Enablement and Certification Plan	Date: 9/30/14

It is important to receive accurate dates and times from the equipment throughout the year as part of the WIC program. Therefore, the equipment is programmed prior to installation to receive a synchronization of time from the EPPIC host during the first transmitted transaction after a date change (daily) or after any restoration of power. The time synchronization occurs before transactions are processed to ensure accuracy. The terminals are programmed during the activation and installation process for the Eastern Time Zone and to adjust for Daylight Savings Time. This enables time synchronization between the host and the equipment to occur following the time change but prior to the initial transaction being processed by the host, ensuring that the equipment maintains the correct time and date on a daily basis.

After the completion of training and terminal installation, each store performs a test set of all the eWIC transactions at each terminal to verify that staff know how to process the transactions and that the terminal units are successfully linked through to Xerox's host.

**C. Deployment Scheduling during Pilot and Rollout**

Xerox will work with Vermont to develop a rollout schedule to ship the stand-beside equipment to eWIC retailers. Xerox will use the guidelines developed by Vermont to determine how many devices the eWIC retailers should receive.

When it is time for the pilot, Xerox will bring the EPPIC host system online. Prior to that time, Xerox will load the Vermont WIC vendor database, which has been provided by the State. Once the vendor database has been loaded, Xerox will create work orders from that database for all retailers that have successfully completed and returned the Xerox required paperwork that includes the Xerox Vermont WIC Vendor Agreement and banking information. Any retailers who have not completed and returned the agreement will be called and followed up with on an individual basis.

Pilot retailers will receive first priority for scheduling installation and training. Xerox will follow the schedule of the statewide rollout to enable the retailers in a rollout area prior to their go live. Technicians will receive ship and train work orders for those retailers that have completed the Xerox required paperwork. Retailers who return the required paperwork after this date will have work orders processed on a daily basis by Retail Operations.

Upon receiving the work orders, Xerox will begin scheduling installations by placing telephone calls to the contact person provided on the work order.

The installation scheduler will cover the following topics with the retailer during the initial scheduling call:

- Introduce themselves as a representative calling on behalf of Xerox and the Vermont eWIC program to schedule an installation and training on the new equipment needed for the start of the new eWIC system.
- Ask to speak with the owner or manager.
- Confirm the retailer location, name and address with what is listed on the work order.

WIC MIS/EBT Implementation Project	Version: 3.3
Retail Enablement and Certification Plan	Date: 9/30/14

- Confirm the number of devices the retailer will receive with what is listed on the work order.
- Confirm with the vendor their choice of equipment communication connectivity – dialup or high speed internet.
- Inform the retailer that the communication lines must be available and properly connected before the installation.
- Schedule a time to provide equipment installation support and training via phone.

**D. Testing of Deployed Stand-beside device**

During installation of the new equipment, the technician walks the retailer through the installation steps and, if required, assists as the retailer completes a download from the Xerox host system that loads the vendor specific profile into the equipment. This process creates a receipt listing the equipment’s configuration that includes the vendor’s name, address, and Processor ID, which the technician will compare to the work order to confirm the equipment’s profile is correct.

The equipment and software is then tested to verify proper functionality and connectivity to the Xerox host system. During the installation call, the technician will walk the retailer through a test transaction using a plain-stock card that contains a mag-stripe along with a “dummy” PIN number. When the transaction is sent to the EPPIC system, it will be rejected with an Error Code returned to the equipment displaying “Card Not Found”. This test will also ensure that the equipment’s card reader and external PIN pad are functioning correctly and that the transaction has reached the host system and was successfully returned to the equipment completing a system end-to-end test.

This entire process ensures that all required equipment is in place, tested, and ready to be used.

**4.3.3 Training**

The training of all retailers is an important aspect of successful implementation. This is especially important for retailers using the stand-beside systems, as they are generally the smaller stores, without dedicated staff for maintenance and use of electronic devices. Xerox will train the retailers on how to use the device and how to incorporate this new electronic system in their everyday store operations onsite, at the time of installation.

The goal of the various types of training to be used by Xerox in training the retailers is to ensure that retailers have a clear understanding (as applicable) of:

- How to perform all retailer transactions on their stand-beside POS terminal (if applicable) including:
  - Clerk functions
  - Supervisor functions

WIC MIS/EBT Implementation Project	Version: 3.3
Retail Enablement and Certification Plan	Date: 9/30/14

- Voids
- Reversals
- Reconciliation and settlement procedures
- POS terminal use, care and troubleshooting
- POS terminal security
- Customer service procedures
- Tips on dealing with cardholder concerns
- Dealing with damaged eWIC cards

Xerox works closely with its partners to complete all retail installations. All retail installations and training activities are coordinated by the retail manager and the POS vendor, CDE. Xerox retail manager’s role is to manage and oversee all retail installations and training activities. During the installation and training period, the retail manager and CDE meet regularly with staff to plan, coordinate, and define objectives for retailer installation and training.

One of the main goals during this phase is to determine if the retailer will be using a stand-alone WIC/EBT POS terminal provided by Xerox Team, a commercial stand-alone POS terminal, or will be integrating WIC into their existing Electronic Cash Register (ECR) configuration. Xerox’s retail training process includes the following:

- For those retailers deciding to use the stand-alone POS equipment, training is conducted predominantly through Xerox’s ship and train methodology. Xerox uses this method successfully across all new implementations and existing operations to ensure that the retailers and their staff are comfortable using the POS device they have installed. The retailer contacts the Xerox in advance to notify them of the equipment change and to schedule a telephone installation and training time. The retailer is instructed on how to set up the POS terminal in training mode in order to conduct clerk-training sessions. The trainer walks the retailer through how to get out of training mode and performs a transaction test before completing the install call to ensure that the POS equipment has connectivity with the host system. Trainers instruct the retailers how to call the Customer Service Center (CSC). If any additional training is needed retail staff run transactions while the trainer is on the phone and able to confirm successful transaction processing. Retailers are also provided with the retail TIPS card and POS User Manual in the shipment with their POS equipment, and are instructed to contact Xerox’s Customer Service Center (CSC) if they have questions or issues.

The topics listed below define, at a minimum, what the training curriculum of retailer training will include:

- eWIC Equipment Overview
  - Installing printer rolls
  - Logon and logoff

WIC MIS/EBT Implementation Project	Version: 3.3
Retail Enablement and Certification Plan	Date: 9/30/14

- Terminal smart key descriptions
- Maintenance and troubleshooting
- Interpreting error messages
- Balance Inquiry
- Typical WIC Purchase
- WIC client tasks and responsibilities
- Vendor tasks and responsibilities
  - Additional Tasks During a WIC Purchase
  - Manually entering a card number
  - Manually entering a UPC during purchase
  - Changing an item price during purchase
  - Voiding items already entered
  - Entering Cents-Off Coupons
  - Printing a subtotal receipt
  - Cancelling the entire WIC purchase
  - Process to Request Addition of UPC's to the UPC Database
- eWIC system training for WIC authorized retailers will processing eWIC transactions through their integrated front-end systems will be provided by their TPP, internal IT department, and/or ECR service provider.

The topics listed below describe, at a minimum, the elements of the retailer-training curriculum:

- Each State's WIC Authorized WIC Product List including options for mapping of Price Look Up (PLU) codes for the implementation of the Cash Value Voucher (CVV) program
- Processing WIC transactions
- Retailer customer service operations and functions including a toll free number
- Use of the retailer web portal, URL and website functions including toll free number to call if the retailer is having a problem accessing the website
- Use of the Automated Response Unit (ARU)
- POS terminal operations and procedures for retailers receiving EBT-only/Stand-beside terminals

WIC MIS/EBT Implementation Project	Version: 3.3
Retail Enablement and Certification Plan	Date: 9/30/14

- An EBT contractor eWIC Retail Policy and Procedures Manual in English and other languages specified by each CSA
- Proper installation and operation of eWIC equipment
- Security set up
- Device/configuration options
- Training on all terminal administrative functions
- Training on all terminal transaction functions
- Training on troubleshooting equipment problems
- Interpreting POS error messages
- Reversals, adjustments, and corrections
- Reconciliation and settlement
- Manual voucher procedures for WIC transactions, if applicable
- Retail customer service
- Store signage requirements

Xerox uses a training checklist to ensure the proper training of the eWIC only retailers. The training checklist covers all topics for vendors to complete transactions and reports. The Xerox eWIC retailer also receives a POS Vendor Manual that is a multi-page guide that provides detailed information so retailers are able to participate in and understand the eWIC program and POS equipment.

Xerox also supplies retailers with a Retailer Quick Reference Guide (QRG), which is a two-sided document, designed to be kept close to the eWIC only POS equipment. This guide provides a quick reference to the functions the retailers need to perform most often. The following procedures are included on the QRG:

- Logging on and logging off the POS device
- Balance Inquiry
- Load/Change WIC Prices
- WIC Purchase with No Cents-Off Coupons
- WIC Purchase Smart Keys
- Retailer Totals Report

Upon completion of the equipment installation process, the retail staff notes successful installation and training on their work order, along with date and time of install. Each installer turns in a completed work order to the supervisor, who then compiles a daily report that is sent to Xerox. Xerox enters the completed work orders and equipment serial numbers into the retail database, thus closing the work order and documenting it as completed.

WIC MIS/EBT Implementation Project	Version: 3.3
Retail Enablement and Certification Plan	Date: 9/30/14

Xerox provides each retailer with all necessary training materials, including the eWIC Installation and Training Procedures Manual, Retail POS User Manual, Retail Tips Card, and any required signage. Trainers report any problems or issues encountered with vendors directly to Xerox’s WIC Retail Manager.

The eWIC retailer is instructed on how to set up the POS terminal in training mode in order to conduct clerk-training sessions. The trainer walks the retailer through how to get out of training mode and performs a transaction test before completing the install call to ensure that the POS equipment has connectivity with the host system. Trainers instruct the retailers to call the CSC if any additional training is needed.

eWIC Retail POS User Manual is a resource handbook provided to retailers during installation. The manual explains, in detail, retailer-related aspects of the eWIC program, including systematic instructions for each transaction and all terminal administrative functions. The manual also contains information on accessing POS reports; reconciliation and settlement; reversals; adjustments and corrections; retailer helpdesk services; troubleshooting equipment issues; error message explanations; manual voucher processing guidelines; and record retention. Xerox’s eWIC Retail POS User Manual is used as the primary training documentation and is provided in both English and Spanish.

Xerox provides a Retail Tip Card, in both English and Spanish that serves as a quick reference guide to the VeriFone VX570 terminal and includes the following quick tip topics:

- Log on terminal/log off terminal
- Supplies
- Balance inquiry
- Load/change WIC prices
- WIC purchase with No cents off coupon
- WIC purchase smart keys
- Retail reports
- How to contact the CSC and phone number

#### **4.3.4 Support**

##### **A. Stand-beside WIC retailers**

The Xerox Retailer Helpline is available 24/7 through one unique toll-free telephone number used only by eWIC retailers. (The Xerox Retailer Helpline only supports stand-beside eWIC vendors. eWIC cardholders have a separate toll-free telephone number to call for assistance.) The customer service representatives (CSRs) support both English and Spanish languages.

Retailers connect to the Interactive Voice Response (IVR) first when dialing the Xerox Retailer Helpline number. The IVR has been designed for efficiency and responsiveness to the majority of

WIC MIS/EBT Implementation Project	Version: 3.3
Retail Enablement and Certification Plan	Date: 9/30/14

retailer questions. If the IVR cannot adequately assist the eWIC only retailer, they will be transferred to the Xerox Retailer Helpline live customer support.

The Xerox dedicated 24/7 Retailer Helpline will be accessible from the IVR to address retailer questions, problems, and procedures. Xerox' Retailer Helpline offers a staff of CSRs trained to address all retailer questions in English and Spanish.

Xerox CSRs are one of the primary contacts for the retailers. Xerox uses the following approach to ensure the CSRs are qualified and sufficiently trained:

- Recruitment based on vocal clarity and language abilities.
- Classroom and hands-on training in customer service techniques, as well as specific state eWIC program knowledge.
- Comprehensive CSR performance monitoring and tracking through a combination of silent monitoring, recording, and call review.
- Staffing levels based on up-to-date call volume statistics, adjusted continuously.
- Management and support staff of supervisors and quality assurance agents that monitor calls for speed, accuracy, and overall quality.

The Xerox Retailer Helpline that will assist retailers with all of their eWIC needs, including:

- eWIC stand-beside equipment issues
- Ordering Vendor manuals
- Ordering eWIC decals (if provided by Xerox rather than Vermont WIC)
- Bank account or settlement issues
- General information regarding eWIC policy and procedures

Integrated retailers and those using TPPs for eWIC will continue to use the retailer's existing TPP call center for the following:

- POS equipment repairs
- Settlement questions or issues
- Policy and/or procedures questions

**B. Support for Use of Stand-beside Equipment**

Xerox provides training to the retailers on the design, functions, operation, and use of stand-beside WIC POS terminals. Xerox also provides stand-beside WIC vendors with a quick reference guide and a WIC Retail Manual designed to be kept near the stand-beside POS equipment. These materials provide a speedy reference to the functions that the vendors needs to perform including various clerk or supervisor transactions, such as returns and voids.

WIC MIS/EBT Implementation Project	Version: 3.3
Retail Enablement and Certification Plan	Date: 9/30/14

If vendors require additional training, they may call the CSC, where a trained CSR will assist them. In addition to responding to retailer-specific requests for assistance or training, the CSC also provides access to general information regarding eWIC policies and procedures. While these policies and procedures are thoroughly discussed in retail training and included in retail materials received during training, retailers may contact the CSC at any time and can be assured that their issue is brought to timely and accurate resolution.

**C. Retailers also contact the CSC to order additional tapes or supplies, which are shipped directly to the retailer by Xerox. Stand-beside Equipment Issue Resolution and Support**

Retailers may use the Xerox Retailer Helpline for equipment issue resolution and support. CSRs are trained on the use and troubleshooting methods of stand-beside POS equipment to provide as much live support as possible. Most issues can be resolved through over the phone support and/or replacement equipment.

If a CSR cannot provide the level of assistance the retailer requires for POS equipment-related issues, the CSR will generate a ticket and send it to Xerox’s retail equipment vendor. A technician calls the retailer to provide second-level technical support. If the POS equipment is still not functioning properly, the technician will determine if the defective hardware needs to be replaced, and enter a ticket that triggers Xerox’s vendor to overnight ship a replacement unit to the retailer. A pre-paid, pre-addressed FedEx return label will be included with the replacement POS equipment for the retailer to return the malfunctioning POS equipment.

Retailers are provided instructions about how to return the defective hardware including a mailing label for the return. Xerox Team retail database is updated with the chain of events that has taken place and the appropriate serial numbers are logged so Xerox knows where every piece of hardware is at any given time. In addition, CDE assists the retailer in activating a new terminal.

If initial troubleshooting indicates an issue with the retailer’s phone service or Internet connection, the retailer will be asked to have the phone or Internet service provider resolve the connectivity issue before replacement equipment is provided.

**D. System Outages**

CSRs are trained to respond to retail reports of system outages. Such reports are immediately escalated within Xerox Team to ensure a rapid response to the reported issue. During the outage, CSRs are often provided a script for communication with callers. Xerox Team and Vermont can work quickly together to make sure callers receive timely information about the outage through the CSRs.

**E. Settlement and Reconciliation**

Stand-beside retailers will call the Xerox Retailer Helpline at any time for assistance with retailer balancing issue resolution and support. Due to the nature of these inquiries, CSRs handle all of these calls. In certain instances, these inquiries may be complex and the CSR opens a ticket with

WIC MIS/EBT Implementation Project	Version: 3.3
Retail Enablement and Certification Plan	Date: 9/30/14

the Xerox Settlement and Reconciliation unit to resolve the issue and follow up with the retailer. The CSRs are the first level of support for retailers and resolve the majority, but not all, of the retailer inquiries. The Xerox Settlement and Reconciliation is the final support group for addressing all balancing issues not resolved initially by the CSRs.

**F. Support Provided to All Vendors**

- System Adjustments/Out-of-Balance Resolution

All State-authorized eWIC retailers can call the CSC at any time for assistance with system adjustments and resolution of out-of-balance conditions. The retailer initiates the adjustment or out-of-balance situation request, and Xerox then investigates to resolve these situations and make the appropriate debits and credits to cardholder and retailer accounts.

- eWIC Signage/Posters

CSRs also respond to requests from authorized eWIC retailers for signs and posters promoting the eWIC Program. Once the request is logged, the requested materials are promptly mailed to vendors. (Signs provided to retailers by Xerox must be pre-approved by the Vermont WIC Program.)

- Upfront State Messaging

Xerox can readily add State messages to the beginning of the retailer ARU script. Messages can typically be recorded, approved, and implemented within one business day. These messages could announce disaster situations, outages, or other messages directed at retailers. These messages do not interfere with the normal functions of the retailer customer service ARU, and can only be added or removed upon notification from Vermont. Xerox also can pre-record disaster or other messages for approval by a Vermont, which can be immediately deployed upon notification.

- Vendor Portal

The purpose of the Internet based WIC Vendor Portal application is to provide WIC retailers the ability to view Transaction and ACH Payment information and Authorized Product List (APL) information specific to their Vendor ID. The information that can be viewed by the vendor user is controlled by the login account that is setup by Xerox when vendor information is received by the Management Information System (MIS). This portal is primarily used by vendors, which utilize State-deployed, stand-beside equipment, and for those vendors, which are directly-connected to the Xerox host EPPIC system. All other vendors should be communicating with their third-party processor for the subject information.

**G. Summary of Xerox Retail Support**

WIC MIS/EBT Implementation Project	Version: 3.3
Retail Enablement and Certification Plan	Date: 9/30/14

eWIC Retailer Support	Xerox Team Detail
Toll-free and without charge or fee to the WIC retailers	All retailers are provided a toll free number to access Xerox Team's vendor ARU and CSC.
Accessible to all WIC retailers	All retailers have access to the CSC without regard to language or disability.
Used exclusively for WIC authorized retailers	Xerox Team CSRs are trained and assigned to the Vermont eWIC Program. Additional CSC staff are trained in eWIC in the event high call volume requires additional staffing.
Operated and staffed in a financial industry standard manner	The CSC was designed to meet, and has met the financial industry standard model since inception
Support in English and Spanish	All retailers have the option of having their call handled in Spanish or English. Retailers with other language needs are assisted through Xerox's language line.
Not limited for the number of calls a WIC retailer makes	Retailers are provided unlimited calls to the CSC. From Xerox's perspective, anything less jeopardizes the integrity of the eWIC program.
Retailers customer service web portal	Retailers have free, easy access to transaction and account settlement information via a secure Web portal

## 5 Deployment After Statewide Rollout

### 5.1 Stand-aside Retailers

Xerox initiates the deployment of stand-aside equipment to all new retailers approved by the State for equipment throughout the contract. Each business day that a request is received from Vermont WIC, the Xerox Retail Operations team provides Xerox's retail equipment vendor (CDE Services, Inc.) with a list of new vendors that require POS equipment deployment. The information is derived from the receipt and subsequent processing of a Xerox Vermont WIC Vendor Agreement by Retail Operations.

To begin the ship-and-train process, technicians initiate a software load into a POS device. This software is loaded onto the POS device with a Xerox EPPIC assigned Processor and Terminal ID. These IDs are specific to the individual retailer being assigned the POS equipment and is the control for loading the specific merchant information including name, address, phone number, and settlement information into the POS software profile. The downloading of specific retailer processor and terminal ID information into the POS device installs and activates the terminal, preparing it for operation at the retailer location once received.

While the software load is being completed, a personal identification number (PIN) pad for PIN entry is also selected to be deployed with the POS device. The PIN pad is loaded with secure PIN encryption software compatible with the POS device. Each POS terminal will come with a pin pad and a handheld barcode scanner.

After the POS software installation, the POS device, pin pad and scanner are recorded in the Xerox database as assigned to the particular retailer and prepared for shipping. The equipment vendor will load, test and ship the eWIC POS equipment the same business day. The POS equipment is shipped by FedEx ground services unless special circumstances requiring more expedited shipping

WIC MIS/EBT Implementation Project	Version: 3.3
Retail Enablement and Certification Plan	Date: 9/30/14

are determined. Each set of POS equipment is shipped in a secure package and includes the following:

- POS device loaded with retailer specific profile
- Encrypted PIN pad
- Handheld Scanner
- Vendor Policy and Procedures Manual
- Quick Reference Guide
- WIC window decal
- WIC lane decals

## 5.2 Integrated Retailers

After statewide rollout, integrated retailers accepted by the WIC Program would contact their TPP to determine if their TPP had been integrated previously. If the TPP has been integrated with Xerox, the store will work with their TPP and the WIC program to schedule certification, as required by the State.

TPPs who had not integrated, would contact Xerox directly to receive the integrated specifications and schedule development and testing efforts. This process generally does not include State or FNS participation since there is no authorized WIC retailer involved.

## 6 Standards

### 6.1 Overview

This section describes the standards that establish required functionality of retail Point of Sale (POS)/Electronic Cash Register (ECR) systems, and the necessary interactions that will enable participation in Vermont WIC, with EBT processed by the EBT Contractor's Online WIC system. These standards and requirements are found in the American National Standards Institute (ANSI) X9.93 Standard, and the USDA FNS Operating Rules and Technical Implementation Guide.

**Vermont's eWIC will conform to FNS eWIC Operating Rules and FNS WIC Technical Implementation Guide (TIG), which together present a national eWIC standard for retail electronic processing.**

The ANSI X9.93 and TIG standards and FNS Operating Rules:

- 1) Provide guidance on the usage of data elements received from/sent to the host.
- 2) Provide information on the receipt and use of the Universal Product Code (UPC)/Price Look Up (PLU) Approved Product List (APL) file that is downloaded to the ECR systems.
- 3) Provide the business rules for the processing of WIC online transactions with Vermont WIC's MIS, the Ceres system.

WIC MIS/EBT Implementation Project	Version: 3.3
Retail Enablement and Certification Plan	Date: 9/30/14

## 6.2 FNS Operating Rules

The USDA FNS Operating Rules govern the operation of eWIC for all parties participating in the program. The rules apply to:

- WIC state agencies
- WIC Cardholders (participants)
- ECR/POS system vendors
- WIC retail vendors (grocers)
- Acquirers and Processors

The current version of the USDA FNS Operating Rules can be located at <http://www.fns.usda.gov/wic/ebt/operatingrules - implemguide.htm>

## 6.3 Technical Implementation Guide

THE USDA Technical Implementation Guide (TIG) provides implementation guidelines for use of ANSI X9.93 standards for processing of online and offline (smart card) eWIC transactions, and describes how the ANSI X9.93 Part 1 Messages and Part 2 Files standards are to be implemented for eWIC. The TIG applies to:

- Retail grocery vendors (retailers)
- POS system integrators
- ECR/POS vendors
- Third party processors
- EBT Card Issuer processors

All sections of the TIG applicable to online eWIC apply to Vermont WIC's EBT implementation.

The X9.93 Standards<sup>1</sup> are available for purchase via the following link to the ANSI eStore, as provided on the USDA FNS Document Library:

<http://webstore.ansi.org/FindStandards.aspx?SearchString=X9.93&SearchOption=1&PageNum=0>

The current version of the Technical Implementation Guide can be located at <http://www.fns.usda.gov/wic/ebt/operatingrules - implemguide.htm>

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<sup>1</sup> The X9.93 Standards are copyrighted and protected by Digital Rights Management (DRM) at the request of the copyright holder. The copyright holders may impose other restrictions that limit document printing and copy/paste of documents.

WIC MIS/EBT Implementation Project	Version: 3.3
Retail Enablement and Certification Plan	Date: 9/30/14

All transactions presented for authorization in Xerox’s system are in the approved ANSI X9.93-2008 format and conform to USDA FNS Technical Implementation Guide for implementing X9.93.

## 6.4 WIC Universal Interface Specifications

The WIC Universal MIS - EBT Interface Specification (UI) document dated June 2012 is available at <http://origin.www.fns.usda.gov/wic/ebt/WICUniversalMISEBTInterfaceSpecification.pdf>

This document standardizes the functional requirements for the universal Interface between a WIC MIS and the eWIC system. As WIC agencies implement new and updated MIS and EBT systems, whether a new system or transfer of an existing system, the Universal Interface Specification must be followed. All WIC State agencies and their Management Information System (MIS) and Electronic Benefit Transfer (EBT) contractors are required, at a minimum, to implement the required functions. Optional functions may be implemented at the WIC State agency’s discretion. However, if a WIC State agency chooses to implement an optional function, the implementation must comply with the Universal Interface Specification. Vermont WIC supports the use of UI and expects that Xerox will cooperate with the Vermont WIC MIS Transfer and Implementation Contractor in the development of the online WIC interface for Ceres, and will design their own Vermont retail Interface to support the UI specifications by using compatible elements.

## 6.5 EBT Retail POS Interface Specifications

Xerox will supply an EBT host/retail POS interface specification document. The document will provide guidelines that define the business requirements for the functionality of retail ECR/POS Systems. The document will provide the framework for the processing of WIC online transactions with the contractor’s host EBT system, provide information on the receipt and use of the UPC/PLU APL file downloaded to the ECR System, and provide guidance on the use of data elements transmitted to/from the contractor’s host EBT system. The WIC Online Retail Interface document will provide information on the core messages, fields and field contents used in the retailer’s host EBT system and will be developed using the USDA FNS Operating Rules and Technical Implementation Guide.

## 6.6 Ownership of Integrated Software Financed with Federal Dollars

If federal funds are used by a retailer to pay for modifications to core code to integrate eWIC system functionality within a store’s electronic cash register (ECR) system, the USDA FNS retains ownership of the code developed and will be entitled to delivery of the source and executable code for use and distribution. This rule benefits other State Agencies who might also, following Vermont, implement the Mountain Plains States Consortium’s system (MPSC) with online EBT.

## 7 Stakeholders

Many stakeholders are involved and affected by the successful implementation of fully integrated online eWIC.

WIC MIS/EBT Implementation Project	Version: 3.3
Retail Enablement and Certification Plan	Date: 9/30/14

## 7.1 WIC Participants

Primary stakeholders in this project are the WIC participants, who will experience a more dignified and efficient shopping experience. They will have a broader range of choices for their food package, manage their use of the WIC food package to their own schedules, and will experience the convenience of mixed basket purchases if shopping in fully integrated stores.

## 7.2 WIC Retail Vendors

WIC retailers are also primary stakeholders. Online eWIC will allow the authorized WIC vendors to provide the full WIC food package to customers, while experiencing a smoother traffic flow for in-lane transactions when compared to transactions using paper food instruments. The statewide network of WIC authorized retailers includes the following two types.

- Supermarkets— all contacts with supermarket chains are with the corporate chain contact. The initial contact is made by telephone, with an in person meeting if necessary.
- Independents—these are independent grocery stores. Contact with stores in this group will be with the owner or designated manager of the store.

Current VT WIC retailers have been selected and authorized by the Vermont WIC Program to provide reasonable participant convenience and access for WIC fruit and vegetable CVB, and are currently certified for and operating with Online 3SquaresVT (SNAP) online EBT technology. As part of the transition from home delivery to full food package delivery via eWIC, Vermont WIC is evaluating whether additional retailers will be authorized, starting in 2015.

As described in detail in this plan, this project will involve either integration/certification of the authorized retailers' ECR/POS systems or development of a stand - beside terminal with eWIC capability, in order to allow the Vermont WIC program to transition from home delivery to retail delivery of the WIC food packages. Retailers who integrate their ECRs will avoid having to install stand - beside terminals for WIC transactions, but their systems will need to be certified as WIC operational. Thus, all current and potentially authorized retailers will be affected by this project.

The Vermont WIC Program and Vermont's EBT Contractor will work with their retailers in a manner that emphasizes collaboration among those with common components, to maximize efficiency and avoid duplication of resources.

Balancing the cost/benefit ratio for retailers may be a challenge. Transaction fees are considered part of doing business in a multi - tender environment that includes debit, credit, gift cards and various cobranded cards, as well as eWIC. In making the choice, whether to integrate or to accept a WIC stand - beside, retailers would have to weigh the cost of integration development cost compared to the impact of double scanning using the stand - beside process. Vermont WIC will communicate with retailers to ensure they fully understand all options. While it will be the retailers' responsibility to conduct their own cost - benefit analysis of using the stand - beside with double scanning compared to ECR/POS integration, Vermont WIC and Xerox will work with the retailers to help them understand the impact of their various EBT implementation choices.

WIC MIS/EBT Implementation Project	Version: 3.3
Retail Enablement and Certification Plan	Date: 9/30/14

### 7.3 Other stakeholders

Stakeholders supporting the participants and retailers through implementation include the Vermont WIC Program and Xerox, along with associations such as the National Grocer Association, Vermont Grocer’s Association, Associated Grocers of New England, and the providers of retail IT support such as the ECR/POS developers and providers and TPPs.

## 8 Retail Enablement Challenges

There are challenges and obstacles inherent in projects of this type requiring coordination, cooperation, and consistency from the USDA FNS, Vermont WIC’s EBT Contractor, Vermont WIC, the retailers, the ECR/POS/VAR developers and Third Party Processors, to manage challenges as they arise. Vermont WIC will schedule recurring conference calls and status updates with the relevant parties during integration and certification to provide a forum for all involved parties to communicate.

### 8.1 Communication

While the Vermont WIC Program will build on the work already done to prepare retailers, and on the enablement and certification processes successfully utilized by other WIC agencies and the Vermont eWIC Contractor, there are still inherent challenges with requirement gaps, various hardware platforms and versions, and having adequate testing resources. Vermont WIC and Xerox will maintain open lines of communication with the retailers and request that they provide advance notice of any changes to their system that may have an impact on eWIC. Following discussions of these changes, Vermont WIC and Vermont WIC’s EBT Contractor will evaluate any impacts and identify testing relating to these changes. In the same vein, Vermont WIC is committed to providing retailers with adequate time to incorporate WIC integration planning into their own IT development schedules.

### 8.2 Training

Training at the retailer level will pose the same challenges the Vermont WIC Program met when going online using the 3SquaresVT platform. Each ECR/POS/VAR system will process differently, and one size does not fit all. While retailer integrated training is a function for the retailer, Vermont WIC will work with retailers to ensure their staff has adequate training to transition to the full WIC food package, whether using an integrated solution or the stand - beside.

## 9 Project Team

### 9.1 Overview

The key personnel devoted to this project have the requisite experience, skills and education to make positive contributions in their assigned areas of expertise. The Vermont WIC Program was the only agency in the nation to implement Online EBT for Fruits and Vegetable Program statewide, and carried out that implementation with Xerox as well

WIC MIS/EBT Implementation Project	Version: 3.3
Retail Enablement and Certification Plan	Date: 9/30/14

The project team members have attended several EBT technology conferences, participated in the FNS EBT User Group, in WIC Technical Conference Calls hosted by FNS and conference calls for the NERO EBT Users Group.

Vermont WIC is the coordinating entity for retailer enablement, providing project management to the overall integration and certification effort. The Vermont WIC Program will provide a number of critical functions to integrate retailer ECT/POS/VAR systems to streamline the purchase process and remove the stigma associated with WIC purchases. Functions include but are not limited to

- Working with Xerox to identify retailers interested in participating in eWIC, and assigning retailers to either integration or stand - beside category of participation;
- Coordinate with Xerox to provide operating rules and implementation guidelines to interested retailers
- Schedule certifications with various retailers, balancing priorities and coordinating to meet and maximize the schedules of all involved
- Host recurring conference calls with each set of affected parties during each certification and ensure appropriate and timely communication between scheduled calls
- Monitor open tasks and issues
- Coordinate and maintain schedules for the various phases of certification
- Ensure adequate testing is performed in each phase and that all scripts are executed
- Coordinate with the Quality Assurance contractor, DRC, during certifications to ensure receipts are reviewed and reconciliation is performed
- Communicate and coordinate with other WIC Programs regarding integration efforts and resources to develop and utilize a standardized and efficient process for current and future implementations
- Properly track the use of funds, and maintain adequate supporting documentation.

## 9.2 Resources/Responsibilities

This is an overview of key personnel and their responsibilities. NOTE: Where conflicts exist between this list and the official Project Plan, the Project Plan governs.

Role	Name	Responsibilities
WIC Program Director	Donna Bister	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Responsible for oversight and resource allocation to the overall project</li> <li>• If funding is available for integration projects, review and approve retailers' project proposals and allocate available Sub Grant funding</li> </ul>
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Responsible for project management</li> </ul>

WIC MIS/EBT Implementation Project	Version: 3.3
Retail Enablement and Certification Plan	Date: 9/30/14

Program Project Manager	Jeanne Keller	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Responsible for overall communication and coordination of the participating entities for the project in general</li> <li>Host bi - weekly conference calls with each set of affected parties during each certification (retailer/POS/ECR/TPP/VAR/FNS), and ensure appropriate and timely communication between scheduled calls</li> <li>Communicate and coordinate with other WIC Programs regarding integration efforts and resources to develop and utilize a standardized and efficient process for current and future implementations</li> <li>Monitor open tasks and issues</li> </ul>
Retail Vendor Manager	Patrick Henry	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Participate in bi - weekly conference calls with each set of affected parties during each certification (retailer/POS/ECR/TPP/VAR/FNS/BAH), and ensure appropriate and timely communication between scheduled calls</li> <li>Coordinate with Xerox to provide operating rules and implementation guidelines to interested retailers</li> <li>Ensure adequate testing is performed in each phase and that all scripts are executed</li> <li>Coordinate with QA Contractor to ensure receipts are reviewed and reconciliation is performed</li> <li>If funding for integration projects is available from FNS: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Determine interest, eligibility, and funding needs from retailers interested in integration</li> <li>Review and approve retailers' project proposals</li> <li>Allocate available sub grant funding to subsidize the viable costs of integration efforts where needed, to the maximum benefit of participants and retailers</li> </ol> </li> <li>Schedule certifications with interested retailers, balancing priorities and coordinating to meet and maximize the schedules of all involved</li> <li>Coordinate and maintain schedules for the various phases of certification</li> <li>Assist with certification testing and ensure that all scripts are executed</li> <li>Coordinate with the QA Contractor to ensure receipts are reviewed and reconciliation is performed</li> </ul>
EBT Contractor	Xerox	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Serve as the host for the Vermont WIC Program EBT system</li> <li>Provide every WIC retailer with the opportunity to participate in the eWIC system</li> <li>Ensure that the participating WIC vendors understand their responsibilities with regard to operating rules, and operations of the eWIC system</li> <li>Provide the interface to store food benefits issued to eligible participants during the WIC application process</li> <li>Sign a direct connect WIC retail agreement or a TPP agreement, as applicable. Vermont WIC and USDA FNS must approve the agreements</li> </ul>

WIC MIS/EBT Implementation Project	Version: 3.3
Retail Enablement and Certification Plan	Date: 9/30/14

		<p>prior to the agreements being sent to WIC vendors and TPPs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Allow dial-up, high speed internet, and direct connect communications between the WIC retailer’s stand-beside terminal or integrated system to the eWIC system</li> <li>• Work with the WIC program to fully integrate retail ECR/POS/VAR systems to streamline the purchase process and remove the stigma association with WIC purchases</li> <li>• Provide retail integration and equipment specifications</li> <li>• Facilitate or report on retailer and third party processor agreements</li> <li>• Installing, maintaining and otherwise supporting eWIC contractor provided stand-beside POS equipment as necessary in accordance with USDA FNS Operating Rules for eWIC</li> <li>• Provide Deployment and training plans</li> <li>• Provide training materials</li> <li>• Provide help desk services to WIC vendors for resolving issues/problems on eWIC contractor supplied stand-beside POS equipment and helping to resolve settlement and dispute questions and issues</li> <li>• Assist the System certification effort</li> <li>• Provide ongoing equipment support and maintenance</li> <li>• Reimburse vendors for authorized WIC purchases</li> <li>• Communicate with grocery stores to identify food benefits issued and available for purchase,</li> <li>• Coordinate with the Vermont WIC Program to provide various reports used to track participation statistics</li> <li>• Coordinate with State agency personnel on matters of common interest</li> </ul>
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### 9.3 Advisory Resources

In addition to the Project Team, other contributors to the success of this integration and certification include:

- Vermont Grocers Association
- Associated Grocers of New England
- FNS New England Regional Office (NERO)
- National Grocers Association

WIC MIS/EBT Implementation Project	Version: 3.3
Retail Enablement and Certification Plan	Date: 9/30/14

## 10 Communication Plan

The Vermont WIC Program is dedicated to keeping clear and consistent communication with the key stakeholders throughout the project. Vermont WIC will continue to host recurring conference calls with interested retailers to keep them abreast of progress and any adjustments to the project plan and schedule. Vermont WIC also maintains an email list-serv sponsored by the Vermont Grocers Association that includes all authorized vendors and is open to any interested stakeholders. Vermont WIC also maintains a blog site at <http://vermontwicebt.com>. These communication modes will continue throughout implementation and into the maintenance phase of the EBT project

The Vermont WIC Program will work with the affected parties to define what role each party will play in communication, and identify who is responsible for communicating the various elements of the project moving forward. Information concerning communication as it relates to retail integration may be located in the WIC MIS/EBT Implementation Project Communication Plan in Appendix A under Work Groups. The plan is located at

[https://vtwic.securespsites.com/Implementation/Shared\\_Documents/DistributeDocumentation/4.%20MasterProjectPlan](https://vtwic.securespsites.com/Implementation/Shared_Documents/DistributeDocumentation/4.%20MasterProjectPlan)

## 11 Risk Management Plan

Retail Enablement associated risks will be recorded in the MIS/EBT Implementation Project Risk Matrix and follow Risk Management Plan guidelines for categorizing risks, for types of actions to be applied to the risk. The Risk Matrix can be found in the Risk plan, located at

[https://vtwic.securespsites.com/Implementation/Shared\\_Documents/DistributeDocumentation/4.%20MasterProjectPlan](https://vtwic.securespsites.com/Implementation/Shared_Documents/DistributeDocumentation/4.%20MasterProjectPlan)

## 12 Appendix A: Acronyms and Definitions



Appendix A  
Acronyms and Definit

## 13 Appendix B: ECR/POS WIC Integration Grant and Contract Process



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WIC MIS/EBT Implementation Project	Version: 3.3
Retail Enablement and Certification Plan	Date: 9/30/14

## 14 Appendix C: 2012 Survey of WIC Retailers



Retail Vendor Tech  
and Biz Capacity FIN/

## 15 Appendix D: 2013 Survey of Independent Retailers



IndyGrocerSurveyRe  
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