

# WIC EBT Pilots

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# Why is a Pilot Needed?

- **It is an opportunity to test the EBT system in a limited implementation and identify any bugs or issues**
- **Assess training and preparation activities**
- **Evaluate new policies, processes, and procedures**
- **Validate settlement, reconciliation and reporting**
- **Assess support levels**
- **Determine if changes are needed for statewide rollout**

# Changing Focus of Pilots

- In early WIC EBT projects the focus of the pilot was cost and technology evaluation
  - Can the State Agency afford EBT?
  - Does the technology work well enough to rollout statewide?
- Since affordability is now assessed in the planning phase, projects are planned through implementation and technologies are proven, the focus of pilots could be changing
- However, Handbook 901 still requires:
  - The State Agency to evaluate costs prior to statewide expansion to determine affordability of the EBT system

# Pilot Requirements

- **The current version of Handbook 901 Requires:**
  - Plans for implementing and operating the pilot must be addressed in the IAPD
  - If State Agency is small and a pilot determined not to be feasible, they may be able to implement EBT statewide without conducting a pilot
  - FNS must approve a cost evaluation, retailer management plan, and clinic management plan before rolling out beyond pilot (IAPDU required)
- **Handbook 901 is being updated, changes to pilot requirements are unknown**

# Pilot Site Recommendations

The location should:

- Have a mix of retailer types
- Have multiple clinic sites (if possible)
- Have willing and enthusiastic staff
- Be self contained – participants with cards will not likely shop at retailers outside of the EBT enabled pilot area
- Not be too far from the State office since frequent trips to the site occur
- Last a minimum of three months
- Be a manageable size (size can be variable by State Agency)

# Pilot Evaluation

- Evaluation activities start prior to the pilot including assessing and identifying improvements in:
  - Staff training
  - Clinic readiness activities
  - State office readiness
  - Retailer enablement activities

# Pilot Evaluation (Continued)

- **During the pilot evaluation activities include assessments of:**
  - Participant card issuance and training
  - Clinic work flow with EBT and identification of modifications needed
  - Severity of system bugs and proposed fixes
  - Financial processes
    - Important that retailers are paid correctly and on time
    - System balances and reconciliation is occurring
  - Accuracy of reporting
  - Costs and affordability (?)

# Contact Information

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