Date:       June 5
To:         All Media
From:       Teri Thalhofer RN, BSN, Director
            North Central Public Health District
Subject:    WIC services modified to assist migrant families

The Covid-19 pandemic has led to some changes in how WIC services are handled for both local families and migrant seasonal farmworkers coming to Wasco County for cherry harvest.

Normally, the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) which is administered by North Central Public Health District, partners with Oregon Child Development Coalition Head Start in The Dalles during their enrollment period to provide WIC transfer services to families in a one stop shop location.

There, families were able to do the paperwork needed to temporarily transfer their WIC services and food benefits from their originating state to Oregon. A typical year sees 200-300 participants in the transfer program.

This year, however, transfer services will be handled electronically. Participants should call the WIC office at 541-506-2610 to begin the process.

When their Oregon e-WIC card is ready with the food benefits loaded on it, participants will be asked to come to North Central Public Health District office located at 419 E. 7th St. in The Dalles and pick up the Oregon eWIC card in the parking lot. Families will be directed to park in a designated parking spot, marked with numbered cones, and a WIC staff member will bring the e-card out to them, said Maricela Elias, WIC program coordinator North Central Public Health District.

The transfer process is to ensure that WIC participants who move into Oregon receive continuous services and/or food benefits during their certification period without inconvenience or undue delay. This transfer process involves verifying the participants' certification dates for their previous state by submitting a transfer card or verification of certificate (VOC) in addition to providing proof of new address in Oregon and proof of identity for the participating children and their parents/guardian.
Maricela said families often don’t have that VOC transfer card with them. It can be obtained by calling the originating state and requesting the information verbally or to be faxed. That does delay the process, however, she said.

This service will be available during the health department’s normal hours of operation, which are 8:30 a.m. to noon and 1-5 p.m.

(For more information, please contact North Central Public Health District at 541-506-2600 or visit us on the web at www.ncphd.org or our Facebook Page at https://www.facebook.com/NorthCentralPublicHealth/.)

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