
**FOOD AND NUTRITION SERVICES CERTIFICATION
CASE ASSIGNMENT AND MAINTENANCE
Simplified Reporting Recertifications**

FNS 425 SIMPLIFIED REPORTING RECERTIFICATIONS

Change #4- 2019

November 1, 2019

425.01 SIMPLIFIED REPORTING RECERTIFICATION PROCEDURES

NC FAST selects active cases that are subject to Simplified Reporting with a certification period that expires the following month and generates and mails the **Food and Nutrition Services (FNS)** unit a DSS-2435, Food and Nutrition Services Notice of Expiration. Cases are selected on the **twelfth** calendar day of the month unless it falls on a holiday or weekend.

FNS units are required to have a face-to-face or telephone interview once every 12 months. NC FAST will include the requirement for an interview on the DSS-2435 based on information entered into the system. The "method" selected in NC FAST at each application/recertification will determine which version of the DSS-2435 is sent for the **next recertification**. Do not schedule an interview earlier unless the FNS unit requests one to assist with completing the DSS-2435. Schedule the interview appointment for a date prior to the 16th of the last month of the certification period.

When a household reports during the last two months of their certification period or during their suspense month that they have moved into a new county and has not visited or submitted an application/recertification to the new county, the county in which the client is active is responsible for completing the recertification. Do not refer the client or the recertification to the new county of residence. Once the recertification is complete, the case will be transferred to the new county.

When a household moves into a new county and the client submits a recertification or visits their new county of residence during the last two months of their certification period or during their suspense month, the new county is responsible for the recertification. The only exception would be if an action is pending in the active county. If an action is pending in the active county, the new county should fax the DSS-2435 to the active county for completion of the recertification. Do not refer the client back to the active county. A supervisor in the new county must contact the county in which the household is active within 3 days of receipt of the recertification or office visit. The county in which the client is active is responsible for changing the address and the owner of the income support and product delivery case.

425.02 DSS-2435 MAIL IN RECERTIFICATION PROCEDURES

- A. The DSS-2435 is accepted as a filed application if it is signed by an adult member of the household or the authorized representative and the applicant's name and address are included. Date stamp the signed DSS-2435 upon receipt. The date the signed DSS-2435 is received in the agency is the date of application (if received during non-business hours the date received will be the next business day). Faxed DSS-2435's is acceptable (if received during non-business hours the date received will be the next business day). **Return the DSS-2435 for signature if it is unsigned. This is not a filed recertification.**

Note: An application can be used and accepted as a recertification.

- B. When a complete DSS-2435 is returned to the local DSS, determine if an interview must be conducted with the household. If an interview is required:
1. **Contact the FNS unit by telephone to conduct the recertification interview.**
 2. **If the FNS unit cannot be contacted by telephone to conduct the interview**, mail the FNS unit a DSS-8650, Notice of Information Needed, with a scheduled appointment. The DSS-8650 must include a specific date, time and method of the interview (telephone or face-to-face). The appointment may be either a

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telephone or office interview. The worker may also request any information that is potentially required to process the recertification based on review of the information provided on the filed DSS-2435.

3. Conduct a face-to-face or telephone recertification interview for a Simplified Reporting household at one of the following locations:
 - a. The department of social services (DSS) agency; or
 - b. The FNS unit's residence; or
 - c. Any other mutually acceptable location.
 4. If the FNS unit fails to complete the recertification interview or contact the agency to reschedule, deny the recertification using the appropriate processing time frame standards based on the date the recertification was received.
- C. If an interview is not required, review the DSS-2435 for completeness in a timeframe that will allow for timely issuance of benefits.
1. The form is complete if:
 - a. All blocks are checked;
 - b. The form is signed by applicant or authorized representative;
 - c. Verification of the FNS unit's income (earned and unearned) for the base period is attached; **and**
 - d. Verification of reported changes is attached.
 2. Contact the FNS unit to complete the information on the DSS-2435 if it is incomplete due to unchecked blocks. If unable to contact the FNS unit, send the DSS-8650, Notice of Information Needed, to have the FNS unit complete the form.
- D. Send the FNS unit a DSS-8650, Notice of Information Needed, if the DSS-2435 is incomplete because required verification is missing. Give the FNS unit ten calendar days to return the required verification. Also request verification of child care, medical expenses, and changes in shelter expenses reported on the DSS-2435. If the required verifications are not returned, deny the recertification on the last day of the processing time. Do not deny the recertification if verification of allowable deductions is not returned, process without allowing the deductions.
- NOTE:** If the FNS unit provides verification of the above expenses at a later date, evaluate the change to determine if the FNS unit's benefits will increase. If verification is provided within 30 days of the date of recertification, make the change effective with the month of recertification. If the verification is provided more than 30 days after the date of recertification, make the change effective the month after the verifications are received.
- E. Determine if the recertification is timely, untimely, or late and process accordingly. For late recertifications, evaluate for good cause and expedited benefits. If good cause is determined, do not prorate benefits.
- F. Resolve any discrepancies prior to certifying the case.

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- G. If the FNS unit is eligible, assign the appropriate certification period, per section 400.02, Certification Periods.

**425.03 REACTING TO CHANGES IN SITUATION FOR
RECERTIFICATION/REAPPLICATIONS**

Eligibility for recertification/reapplications is determined based on circumstances anticipated for the certification period starting the month following the expiration of the current certification period.

When the Food and Nutrition Services (FNS) unit reports a change or a change becomes known to the agency prior to disposition of the recertification, take the following actions:

- A. Evaluate the changed information. Use a DSS-8650, Notice of Information Needed, to request additional information. Allow the FNS unit ten calendar days to provide the needed information. See Section 350.07, Regulatory Delay, if this results in exceeding the processing due date.
- B. Include the changed information when determining eligibility.

425.04 PROCESSING TIMELY DSS-2435 RECERTIFICATION FORMS

A timely recertification entitles the FNS unit to uninterrupted FNS benefits; therefore, if eligible, benefits must be available to the FNS unit on their normal issuance date.

- A. A recertification is timely if the FNS unit submits a DSS-2435 by the 15th calendar day of the last month of the current certification period. The date the signed DSS-2435 is received in the agency is the date of application.
- B. Process the timely DSS-2435's by the end of the certification period **if the required interview is completed and** all required verification is provided. Close the case on the last workday of the month **if required interview is not completed or** if all required verifications are not received. If a recertification is closed for failure **to complete required interview or** failure to provide all required verifications, **it may be reopened if the required interview is completed and all necessary verifications are** provided within the allowable time frame.
1. **If the required interview is completed and all required verifications are provided** within 30 days following the date of application:
 - a. Reopen the case; **and**
 - b. Keep the original date of application; **and**
 - c. Do not prorate benefits.
 2. **If the required interview is completed and all required verifications are provided after the 30th day following the date of application but on or before the 30th day from the last day of the certification period:**
 - a. Reopen and process the case within five calendar days of receipt of the required information; **and**
 - b. Change the date of application to the date final verification is received; **and**
 - c. Prorate benefits.

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3. If the required interview and all required verifications are provided after the 30th day from the last day of the certification period:
- a. The case cannot be reopened. The FNS unit must complete a new application to be determined eligible for continued benefits.

Note: Refer to chart below to determine last day interview and/or required information must be returned to be eligible for reopen as a recertification.

| Last Month of CP | Last day to reopen | Last Month of CP | Last day to reopen |
|---|--|------------------|----------------------------|
| January (leap year) | March 2 nd March 1 st | July | August 30 th |
| February | March 30 th | August | September 30 th |
| March | April 30 th | September | October 30 th |
| April | May 30 th | October | November 30 th |
| May | June 30 th | November | December 30 th |
| June | July 30 th | December | January 30 th |
| Note: If the last day to reopen falls on a non-workday, the household must provide verifications on or before the last work day prior to the reopen date. | | | |

- C. If an FNS unit reports a change in situation or a change in situation becomes known prior to processing, mail a DSS-8650, Notice of Information Needed, and allow ten calendar days to provide the required verification information. Verify the change and process the recertification by the end of the current certification period if time frames allow. Do not deny an application for recertification before the last workday of the current certification period for failure to provide information.

If the DSS-8650 expiration date extends beyond the end of the current certification period due to the date the change was reported, do not close the case on the last workday. Process the change within five calendar days of receipt of the final verification if provided by the DSS-8650 expiration date and do not prorate benefits. If the FNS unit fails to provide the requested verification, close the case on the DSS-8650 expiration date. If the DSS-8650 expiration date falls on a weekend or a holiday, close the case on the next workday. **If the requested verification is received after the case is denied for failure to provide information, but prior to or on the 30th day following the end of the certification period**, reopen the case using the date that the information is received as the new date of application and prorate benefits.

NOTE: In situations in which the expiration date of the DSS-8650 extended beyond the end of the current certification period falls on a weekend or a holiday and the requested verification is provided on the next workday, the case must be closed and reopened using the date the final verification is received as the new date of application.

425.05 PROCESSING UNTIMELY DSS-2435 RECERTIFICATION FORMS

An untimely recertification does not guarantee uninterrupted FNS benefits. If the FNS unit is eligible for benefits, the benefits must be available by the 30th day from the date of application.

- A. A recertification is untimely if the FNS unit submits a DSS-2435 between the 16th calendar day of the month and the last calendar day of the last month of the certification period. The date the signed DSS-2435 is received in the agency is the date of application.

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- B. Process the untimely recertification no later than 30 days from the date of application. If the FNS unit is eligible for benefits, the benefits must be available by the 30th day. **If the FNS unit fails to complete the required interview or fails to provide the required verifications, close the case on the 30th day from the date of application. Do not deny an application for recertification before the 30th day for failure to complete a required interview or failure to provide required information.** If the 30th day falls on a weekend or a holiday, deny the application for recertification on the next work day. **If a Simplified Reporting case is closed for failure to complete a required interview or failure to provide necessary verification it may be reopened if the necessary verification is provided within the allowable time frame.**

If the required interview and all required verifications are provided after the closure for failure to interview or failure to provide required information but on or before the 30th day from the last day of the certification period (reference chart in 425.04 B. 3.):

1. Reopen and process the case within five calendar days of receipt of the required information; **and**
 2. Change the date of application to the date final verification is received; **and**
 3. Prorate benefits.
- C. If an FNS unit reports a change in situation or a change in situation becomes known prior to processing, mail a DSS-8650, Notice of Information Needed, and allow ten calendar days to provide the required verification information. Verify the change and process the recertification no later than 30th day from the date of application, if time frames allow. Do not deny an untimely application for recertification prior to 30 days from the date of application for **failure to complete required interview or failure to provide required information.**

If the DSS-8650 expiration date extends beyond the 30th day due to the date the change was reported, do not close the case on the 30th day. Process the change within five calendar days of receipt of the final verification if provided by the DSS-8650 expiration date and do not prorate benefits. If the FNS unit fails to provide the requested verification close the case on the DSS-8650 expiration date. If the DSS-8650 expiration date falls on a weekend or a holiday, close the case on the next workday. If the requested verification is received after the expiration date of the DSS-8650, but prior to the **30th day following the end of the certification period**, reopen the case using the date that the information is received as the new date of application and prorate benefits

NOTE: In situations in which the expiration date of the DSS-8650 extended beyond the 30th day falls on a weekend or a holiday and the requested verification is provided on the next workday, the case must be closed and reopened using the date the final verification is received as the new date of application.

425.06 PROCESSING LATE DSS-2435 RECERTIFICATION FORMS

A late recertification does not guarantee uninterrupted FNS benefits. If the FNS unit is eligible for benefits, the benefits must be available by the 30th day from the date of application with the exception of FNS unit's that qualify for expedited benefits.

- A. A recertification is late if the signed recertification form is returned to the DSS agency in the month following the last month of the certification period. The date the signed DSS-2435 is received in the agency is the date of application.
- B. Evaluate for expedited benefits. If eligible for expedited benefits, follow processing timeframes in Section 320, Expedited Services.

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- C. If ineligible for expedited benefits, process the late recertification no later than 30 days from the date of application. If the FNS unit is eligible for benefits, the benefits must be available by the 30th day. Prorate benefits from the date the DSS-2435 is received, if good cause is not established. Do not shift the base period for late recertifications. If the FNS unit fails to provide the requested verification, close the case on the 30th day from the date of application. Do not deny a late application for recertification before the 30th day for failure to provide information. If the 30th day falls on a weekend or a holiday, deny the application for recertification on the next work day. Applications for recertification that are denied for failure to provide necessary verification cannot be reopened and the FNS unit must reapply for benefits.

Example: Certification period ends in March. FNS unit comes in for recertification on April 15. Complete a DSS-2435 and evaluate for expedited FNS benefits. Worker determines that FNS unit is not eligible for expedited benefits. FNS unit returns all necessary verifications on May 8. Prorate FNS benefits from the date of application, April 15.

- D. If an FNS unit reports a change in situation or a change in situation becomes known prior to processing, mail a DSS-8650, Notice of Information Needed, and allow ten calendar days to provide the required verification information. Verify the change and process the recertification no later than 30th days from the date of application if time frames allow. Do not deny a late application for recertification prior to 30 days from the date of application for failure to provide information.

If the DSS-8650 expiration date extends beyond the 30th day due to the date the change was reported, do not close the case on the 30th day. Process the change within five calendar days of receipt of the information if provided by the DSS-8650 expiration date and do not prorate benefits. If the FNS unit fails to provide the requested verification, close the case on the DSS-8650 expiration date. If the DSS-8650 expiration date falls on a weekend or a holiday, close the case on the next workday.

NOTE: In situations in which the expiration date of the DSS-8650 extended beyond the 30th day falls on a weekend or a holiday and the information is provided on the next workday, the case must be closed.