

**DSS ADMINISTRATIVE LETTER ECONOMIC AND FAMILY SERVICES 25-2020
EFS_FNS_AL-25-2020**

Food and Nutrition Services

TO: County Directors of Social Services

ATTENTION: Food and Nutrition Services (FNS)

DATE: July 22, 2020

SUBJECT: Application and Recertification Interview Waiver Extension

EFFECTIVE DATE: July 22, 2020

I. GENERAL INFORMATION

On March 18, 2020, the Families First Coronavirus Response Act of 2020 was signed to help state agencies to provide Food Nutrition Services assistance to those households effected by the COVID-19 virus. The United States Department of Agriculture allowed states to waive the requirement to complete an interview prior to approval of applications and recertifications through June 30, 2020. NC requested an extension of the waiver through July 31, 2020 but was originally denied. USDA has reconsidered the request and has provided approval for extension of this waiver through August 31, 2020.

II. IMPLEMENTATION INSTRUCTIONS

A. WHAT CASES DOES THE WAIVER APPLY TO?

The requirement to conduct interviews (face-to-face or telephone) at initial application or recertification is waived for all pending applications or recertifications that have not been processed by the effective date of this policy. The interview may be waived for all applications and recertifications currently pending and received up to and including August 31, 2020.

The requirement to conduct interviews (face-to-face or telephone) at initial application or recertification is being waived only if all the following conditions are met:

1. The Identity of the person making the application is verified; **and**
2. All data matches are completed; **and**
3. All mandatory verifications, as outlined in FNS manual section 200 have been provided; **and**
 - If mandatory verifications are not provided and cannot be verified through data matches or third-party contact, a DSS-8650 must be sent

to the household and allow 10 days for the household to provide the mandatory verifications.

4. No information on the application is questionable.

- If information is questionable, an attempt to contact the household to clarify the necessary information must be completed.
- If unable to contact the household by phone, send a DSS-8650 and allow 10 days for the household to contact the agency with the required clarifications.

If all the above conditions are met the household may be certified without conducting an interview with the FNS unit. Document in the NC FAST case notes that the interview was waived due to the issuance of this administrative letter.

III. EFFECTIVE DATE

This policy is effective upon receipt for all FNS applications and recertifications currently pending and received up to and including August 31, 2020. Submit any questions regarding this policy to Operational Support Team (OST) at DSS.Policy.Questions@dhhs.nc.gov.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "David Locklear".

David Locklear, Deputy Director
Economic and Family Services Section

DL/rc