

**DSS ADMINISTRATIVE LETTER ECONOMIC AND FAMILY SERVICES 7-2020**  
**EFS\_FNS\_AL-7-2020**

**Food and Nutrition Services**

**TO:** County Directors of Social Services

**ATTENTION:** Food and Nutrition Services (FNS)

**DATE:** April 1, 2020

**SUBJECT:** Application and Recertification Interview Waiver

**EFFECTIVE DATE:** April 1, 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 allow states to waive the requirement to complete an interview prior to approval of applications and recertifications because it has been determined to be consistent with what is practicable under actual conditions in areas affected by the COVID-19 Public Health Emergency.

**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 will be waived for all pending applications or recertifications that have not been processed on the effective date of this policy. The interview may be waived for all applications and recertifications currently pending and received up to and including May 31, 2020.

B. The requirement to conduct interviews (face-to-face or telephone) at initial application or recertification can be 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 May 31, 2020. Submit any questions regarding this policy to Operational Support Team (OST) at [DSS.Policy.Questions@dhhs.nc.gov](mailto:DSS.Policy.Questions@dhhs.nc.gov).

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "David Locklear". The signature is cursive and includes a small mark at the end.

David Locklear, Deputy Director  
Economic and Family Services Section

DL/rc