
FOOD AND NUTRITION SERVICES CERTIFICATION

APPLICATIONS

FNS 400 HOW TO APPLY FOR FNS

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Change #09-2021

August 9, 2021

400.01 STATE APPROVED APPLICATIONS

Households must file Food and Nutrition Services (FNS) applications by submitting a state-approved application form to a county Department of Social Services. State approved forms include:

- A. DSS-8207 Application for Food and Nutrition Services.
- B. North Carolina Families Accessing Services through Technology (NC FAST) guided interview application.
- C. ePASS online application.

400.02 SUBMITTING A FNS APPLICATION

The FNS application may be submitted in one of the following methods:

- A. In Person in the FNS office in the county in which they reside.
- B. Mail
- C. Fax
- D. Email
- E. ePASS
 - 1. All households that complete the ePASS application in the local office must be given the opportunity to review and receive a printed copy of the ePASS FNS application for their records upon request.
 - 2. Signage in English and Spanish must be displayed in areas where households complete ePASS applications indicating their right to receive a printed copy.
- F. Social Security Administration. See 400.04 for details.

400.03 WHO MAY SUBMIT A FNS APPLICATION

Any of the following individuals may make an application for FNS:

- A. Any adult individual in the FNS household

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- B. Authorized Representatives as described in FNS 175 Authorized Representative.
- C. If there is **no** adult in the household, a legally emancipated minor may make and sign the application.

400.04 SOCIAL SECURITY ADMINISTRATION APPLICATIONS

- A. The SSA Office takes FNS applications for those households who contain only SSI applicants/recipients. The SSA refers non-SSI households to the appropriate county department of social services (DSS) to apply.
 - 1. Do not require the applicant to be seen at the local DSS when the SSA Office takes an application.
 - 2. Additional information may be requested, but the applicant does not have to come in to the agency.
 - 3. In no event would the applicant be required to appear at the FNS office to complete the application process.

The SSA Office completes joint SSI and FNS applications for residents of public institutions. In accordance with the SSA Pre-Release Program, these individuals may apply for both SSI and FNS benefits prior to their release from the institution. The applicant is not eligible to receive the FNS benefits until he is released from the institution.

- B. County Responsibilities
 - 1. Determine eligibility and give eligible SSI households the opportunity to purchase food within 30 days following the date the application was received by SSA. All eligibility factors must be verified. Note time frame exceptions with expedited service applications and pre-release applications.
 - 2. Process expedited service applications so eligible households are able to purchase food within seven calendar days. The expedited processing time standards begin on the date DSS receives the application.
 - 3. If an application and the supporting documentation are sent to the wrong DSS, the receiving DSS must forward the application and documentation to the appropriate DSS within one working day of receipt.
 - 4. Applicant households that contain only SSI applicants or recipients are not required to see a DSS eligibility worker or be interviewed by DSS staff. DSS must process the FNS application. DSS must not contact the applicant household to obtain information for certification unless:

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- a. The application is improperly completed; **or**
 - b. Mandatory verification is missing; **or**
 - c. DSS determines that information on the application is questionable.
5. Screen all applications received from SSA for entitlement to expedited service. This must be done on the day the application is received by DSS.
 6. Determine if members of SSI households are active FNS participants prior to processing the application.
 7. Allow SSI households to apply for FNS benefits at the agency if the household chooses to do so. In such cases, all verification, including that pertaining to SSI Program benefits, must be provided by the household, by SDX or BENDEX, or obtained by DSS rather than being provided by SSA.