

CHANGE NOTICE FOR MANUAL

December 21, 2007

MANUAL: Food and Nutrition Services Certification Manual
CHANGE NO.: 1-2008
TO: County Directors of Social Services
EFFECTIVE: **January 1, 2008**, make the following changes to the Food and Nutrition Services Certification Manual

I. BACKGROUND

The purpose of this change notice is to add clarifications and make corrections to the Food and Nutrition Services Certification Manual as reflected in updated interpretations from the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) and changes in federal regulations. This change notice also includes Face-to-Face Recertification policy, which obsoletes DSS Administrative Letter 4-2007. The change of North Carolina's program to Food and Nutrition Services is reflected in all listed sections

II. SPECIFIC CHANGES

A. Table of Contents

B. Section 120, Non-Discrimination Policy

Adds instructions and time limits for counties to react to discrimination allegations in Section 120.02, County Responsibilities.

C. Section 125, Complaint Procedures

Adds time limits for mailing discrimination allegations to Section 125.04, State Complaint Procedures.

D. Section 135, Retention of Records

Corrects the web address for record retention of fiscal records and adds web address for record retention and disposition of certification records in Section 135.01, Retention of Records.

E. Section 150, Second Party Review

Removes reference to an obsolete form, DSS-2164, in Section 150.01, Second Party Review.

F. Section 160, Quality Control

Corrects manual section reference found in Section 160.01, Quality Control, to 210.13 not 210.14.

G. Section 250, Resources

1. Clarifies when to report receipt of resources in Section 250.05A, Participating FNS Units.
2. Adds note to include Educational Loans under Combined Funds to Section 250.06, Countable/Excludable Reference List of Resources.
3. Clarifies Educational Aid as a countable resource in Section 250.06, Countable/Excludable Reference List of Resources.

4. Adds FEMA payments to Section 250.06, Countable/Excludable Reference List of Resources.
5. Adds Gift Cards to Section 250.06, Countable/Excludable Reference List of Resources.
6. Adds note to include Educational Loans to Loans in Section 250.06, Countable/Excludable Reference List of Resources.
7. Adds note to include the North Carolina National College Savings Program as a Mutual Fund to Section 250.06, Countable/Excludable Reference List of Resources.
8. Adds Severance Pay to Section 250.06, Countable/Excludable Reference List of Resources.
9. Adds Lottery Winnings to Section 250.16, Non-Recurring Lump-Sum Payments.

H. Section 263, Sources of Income

1. Clarifies income must be verified prior to certification in Section 263.01C.1a, Sources of Income.
2. Adds Child Care Wages to Section 263.02, Sources of Income.
3. Adds note to refer to Section 265.29, Representative Payments, to Child Support in Section 263.02, Sources of Income.
4. Adds Gift Cards to Section 263.02, Sources of Income.
5. Adds note clarifying funds spent in accordance to an approved Plan for Achieving Self-Support (PASS) or deposited into a PASS savings account are not counted as income to PASS in Section 263.02, Sources of Income.
6. Adds Refugee Cash Assistance to Section 263.02, Sources of Income.
7. Adds note clarifying when to count Severance Pay as income and when to count as reserve to Severance Pay in Section 263.02, Sources of Income.
8. Clarifies to count the net if benefits are reduced to repay a prior SSA overpayment and removes policy to count the net if benefits are reduced to repay a prior SSI overpayment to Social Security Benefits in Section 263.02, Sources of Income.
9. Adds note clarifying to count the net UIB if benefits are reduced to repay a prior UIB overpayment to Unemployment Insurance Benefits (UIB) in Section 263.02, Sources of Income.

I. Section 265, Variable Income

1. Adds reference to see Section 450.11, Situations When Benefits Cannot Be Increased and adds instructions for budgeting WFFA benefits terminated due to non-compliance or failure to meet an eligibility requirement to Section 265.03, Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC), Work First Family Assistance (WFFA), Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF)
2. Clarifies budgeting bonus/vacation pay when received less frequently than monthly in Section 265.05, Bonus/Vacation Pay.
3. Adds clarification for budgeting monies received by a protective payee to Section 265.29, Representative Payments.

4. Updates Special Assistance In-Home Program Participating Counties in Section 265.31, Special Assistance.

J. Section 268, Budgeting Stable Income

Adds reference to see Section 263.02, Sources of Income to clarify budgeting Social Security Benefits to Section 268.01B, Rules for Budgeting Stable Income.

K. Section 280, Income Deductions

1. Adds clarification for budgeting shelter deductions to Section 280.05, Shelter Deductions.
2. Adds definition of a vendor payment to Sections 280.07, Non-Allowable Housing Expenses and to Section 280.09, Utility Expenses.
3. Adds the following changes to Section 280.14, Medical Deductions:
 - a. Ineligible ABAWDS to the exceptions list for a specified person,
 - b. Medicare Part D premiums to the list of allowable deductions,
 - c. Deletes Medicare Approved Prescription Drug Discount Card Program credits as an allowable medical deduction,
 - d. Updates the mileage rate reimbursement amount, and
 - e. Provides a reference to Recurring Medical Expenses for monthly medical expenses at recertification.

L. Section 290, Controlled Substance Felons

Corrects disqualification date and clarifies requirement for controlled substance felons in Section 290, Controlled Substance Felons.

M. Section 305, Filing An Application

Removes reference to an obsolete form, DSS-8213, in Section 305.02, Requirements for Filing an Application.

N. Section 310, Interviewing

Clarifies interview procedures are for applications submitted in person, by an authorized representative, faxed, mailed or by e-mail in Section 310.05, Procedures for Scheduling an Interview.

O. Section 315, Application Time Frames

1. Removes sentence that states “the food stamp unit (fsu) must be given the opportunity to attend EBT training” from Section 315.02, Normal Application Processing Time Frames.
2. Removes sentence that states “the food stamp unit (fsu) must be given the opportunity to attend EBT training” from Section 315.03, Expedited Service Application Processing Time Frames.

P. Section 320, Expedited Service

1. Removes the word “if” and replaces it with “and” in Section 320.01 C, Expedited Service Requirements.
2. Removes the word “may” and replaces it with “must” in Section 320.02, Procedures for Prescreening and Screening For Expedited Service.

Q. Section 350, Case Disposition

Adds clarification explaining the certification period must begin with the first eligible month and not include a denied month to Section 350.08 B & C, Special Procedures for Initial Applications.

R. Section 365, Authorizing Benefits

Adds clarification explaining categorically eligible household will not receive an allotment under \$10. Non-categorically eligible households can receive allotments less than \$10 in Section 365.02, Determining Initial Allotment Amounts.

S. Section 400, Standard Recertification Category

1. Adds clarification to allow a deduction expense if requested as part of the recertification process via the DSS-8650 to Section 400.05, Changes in Deductions During the Certification Period.
2. Adds clarification on reacting to changes when WFFA benefits terminate due to non-compliance or failure to meet an eligibility requirement to Section 400.11, Situations When Benefits Can Not Be Increased.
3. Adds instructions for closing a case if a FNS unit reports a change in situation prior to processing and the information is not received by the DSS-8650 expiration date to the Exception note in Section 400.20, Timely Standard Recertifications.
4. Adds instructions to not deny a case before the 30th day for failure to provide information to Section 400.21, Untimely Standard Recertifications.
5. Provides a note to see the Exception in 400.20 and adds clarification on the five calendar day timeframe for reopening a case in Section 400.24, Timely Standard Recertifications.
6. Provided a note to see the Exception in 400.20 and provides instructions to not deny a case before the 30th day for failure to provide information in Section 400.24, Untimely Standard Recertifications.
7. Removes the word “only” and adds reference to ineligible household members to Citizenship and Alien Status in Figure 400-1, Recertification Verification Requirements.

T. Section 450, Semi-Annual Recertification Category

1. Adds note for reacting to specified households and categorically eligible households who exceed 130% of the poverty level to Section 450.05A1, Changes during the Certification Period.
2. Adds clarification for changes reported to WFFA when the FNS unit's income exceeds 130% of the poverty level or a change that would increase benefits regardless to the change made to the WFFA payment amount to Section 450.05 A 4, Changes During the Certification Period.
3. Clarifies reacting to all changes within ten calendar days of a reported change in Section 450.06, Reacting to Changes.
4. Adds clarification on reacting to changes when WFFA benefits terminate due to non-compliance or failure to meet an eligibility requirement to Section 450.11D, Situations When Benefits Can Not Be Increased.

5. Adds note to exclude Benefit Diversion to Section 450.11D, Situations When Benefits Can Not Be Increased.
6. Adds instructions for conducting and tracking the 12-month interval face-to-face or telephone interview for SR households to Section 450.18, SR Interview Procedures. This obsoletes DSS Administrative Letter 4-2007.
7. Adds instructions for closing a case if a FNS unit reports a change in situation prior to processing and the information is not received by the DSS-8650 expiration date to the Exception note in Section 450.19 B, Timely SR's.
8. Adds clarification on the five calendar day timeframe for reopening a case and instructions not to deny a case before the 30th day for failure to provide information to Section 450.23, Processing a SR.
9. Removes the word "only" and adds reference to ineligible household members to Citizenship and Alien Status in Figure 450-1, Recertification Verification Requirements.

U. Section 500, Simplified Recertification Category

1. Adds clarification to allow a deduction expense if requested as part of the recertification process via the DSS-8650 to Section 500.05, Changes in Deductions During the Certification Period.
2. Adds instructions on when to close a case for information not received by the expiration date on the DSS-8650 to the Exception note in Section 500.17, Timely Simplified Recertifications.
3. Adds instructions for closing a case if a FNS unit reports a change in situation prior to the processing and the information is not received by the DSS-8650 expiration date to the Exception note in Section 500.17, Timely Simplified Recertifications.
4. Adds clarification not to deny a case before the 30th day for failure to provide information to Section 500.18, Untimely Simplified Recertification.
5. Adds instructions for conducting the telephone interview for Simplified households to Section 500.21, Processing a Simplified Recertification. This obsoletes DSS Administrative Letter 4-2007.
6. Adds clarification on the five calendar day timeframe for reopening a case and instructions not to deny a case before the 30th day for failure to provide information to Section 500.21, Processing a Simplified Recertification.
9. Removes the word "only" and adds reference to ineligible household members to Citizenship and Alien Status in Figure 500-1, Recertification Verification Requirements.

V. Section 550, Transitional Food and Nutrition Services Benefits

1. Clarifies a household receiving Transitional Food and Nutrition Services benefits must have a recertification interview at the end of its transitional period in Section 550.01, Transitional Food and Nutrition Services Benefits.
2. Clarifies the sanctions that close a WFFA case in Section 550.02A.2a, Transitional Food and Nutrition Services Benefits Eligibility.

W. Section 600, Simplified Nutritional Assistance Program (SNAP)

1. Deletes reference to the DSS-6240 and replaces it with the DSS-8232 in Section 600.09, SNAP Recertifications Procedures.
2. Changes the SNAP conversion process to monthly in Section 600.04, SNAP Conversion Process.
3. Changes the SNAP allotment amounts to reflect the recent increase in Section 600.02, SNAP Eligibility.

X. Section 605, Automated Inquiry and Match Procedures

Adds DOC as a required match to verify drug felons to Section 605.12, Department of Corrections (DOC) Inquiry.

Y. Section 625, Commodities Program

Adds instructions for a recipient to self declare their eligibility when they do not have a commodities card to Section 625.03, DSS Administered TEFAP Commodities Program.

Z. Section 635, Notices

Adds, as a reason to void a Notice of Adverse Action, the household providing sufficient information to determine eligibility and/or benefit level prior to the effective date of the Notice of Adverse Action, to Section 635.05, Canceling or Voiding the Notice of Adverse Action.

AA. Section 705, Fair Hearings

1. Adds instruction for remanded hearings to Section 705.33, Remanded Hearings.
2. Adds clarification regarding continued benefits at the end of a certification period to Section 705.11, Continuation of Benefits.

BB. Section 710, Administrative Disqualification Hearing

Adds clarification to mail the original DSS-8556, Advanced Notice of ADH to the FNS unit to Section 710.05, Advanced Notice of Administrative Disqualification Hearing.

CC. Section 805, Requirements for Establishing Recipient Claims

Removes instructions to establish suspected IPV claims as IHE while waiting for an ADH or court decision in Section 805.05, Determining the Claim Type.

DD. Section 810, Administrative Error (AE) Claims

Adds a statement regarding the collection of AE claims to Section 810.01, General Policy.

EE. Section 815, Inadvertent Household Error (IHE) Claims

1. Includes recoupment and NC Education Lottery interception as automatic collections for terminated claims in Section 815.07, Collecting the IHE Claim.
2. Adds Figure 815-1 and Figure 815-2 that may be used to correctly calculate the first month of overissuance to the end of the section.

FF. Section 825, Intentional Program Violation (IPV) Disqualifications

1. Includes instructions that an IPV disqualification can be pursued when a claim will not be established in Section 825.03, Establishing an IPV Disqualification.
2. Deletes Section 825.07, DSS-8648, Food Stamp Investigation and Disqualification Report.

GG. Section 845, Treasury Offset Program (TOP)

Includes instructions to enter information in the repayment approach screen to allow automatic blocking and unblocking of debtors for TOP certification in Section 845.02, Rules for Selecting Claim Debtors for TOP.

HH. Section 910, Replacement of Authorized Issuance

Includes instructions to have a DSS-1678, Replacement Affidavit, completed and signed by a FNS Unit requesting replacement benefits in Section 910.01, Requirements for Replacing Destroyed Food Purchased with Food and Nutrition Services, Section 910.02, Benefits Stolen under Duress, and Section 910.03, Documentation and Verification Requirements.

III. IMPLEMENTATION INSTRUCTIONS

These changes are effective with each application, change in situation, or recertification taken or processed on or after January 1, 2008.

IV. INSTRUCTIONS FOR MAINTENANCE OF THE FOOD and NUTRITION SERVICES MANUAL

<u>Section</u>	<u>REMOVE</u>	<u>Pages</u>	<u>Section</u>	<u>INSERT</u>	<u>Pages</u>
Table of Contents		All	Table of Contents		1-3
120		All	120		1-2
Figure 120-1		All	Figure 120-1		1
125		All	125		1-2
135		All	135		1
150		All	150		1
160		All	160		1
250		All	250		1-22
263		All	263		1-22
265		All	265		1-10
268		All	268		1-7
280		All	280		1-23
290		All	290		1-5
305		All	305		1-3
310		All	310		1-4
315		All	315		1
320		All	320		1-9
350		All	350		1-4
365		All	365		1
400		All	400		1-15
450		All	450		1-15
Figure 450-1		All	Figure 450-1		1
500		All	500		1-11
Figure 500-1		All	Figure 500-1		1
550		All	550		1-3
600		All	600		1-6
605		All	605		1-12
625		All	625		1-2

635	All	635	1-4
705	All	705	1-9
710	All	710	1-10
805	All	805	1-9
810	All	810	1-12
815	All	815	1-18
		Figure 815-1	1
		Figure 815-2	1
825	All	825	1-6
845	All	845	1-9
910	All	910	1-2

If you have any questions, please contact your Food and Nutrition Services & Energy Programs Representative.

Sincerely,

/S/

Adonica Hampton, Assistant Chief
Economic Services Section

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