
FOOD AND NUTRITION SERVICES CERTIFICATION

SNAP AND TFNS BENEFITS

TRANSITIONAL FOOD AND NUTRITION SERVICES BENEFITS

FNS 650 TRANSITIONAL FOOD AND NUTRITION SERVICES BENEFITS

Change #4-2021

June 15, 2021

650.01 TRANSITIONAL AND NUTRITION SERVICES BENEFITS

Transitional Food and Nutrition Services (TFNS) benefits are five months of extended Food and Nutrition Services (FNS) benefits for families who become ineligible to receive Work First Family Assistance (WFFA). Most FNS units are eligible to receive TFNS benefits for a period of five months when WFFA terminates, including open/shut cases. A face-to-face recertification must be done with each TFNS unit during the last month of the certification period. A TFNS unit cannot be recertified as a TFNS case during this time.

**650.02 TRANSITIONAL FOOD AND NUTRITION SERVICES BENEFITS
ELIGIBILITY**

- A. There are only a few situations in which a household cannot receive TFNS. Those situations are as follows:
1. The FNS unit contains a member who is currently disqualified from the Food and Nutrition Services Program and/or WFFA; **or**
 2. The FNS unit loses WFFA for any of the following reasons:
 - a. The WFFA case closes due to the following sanctions: Failure to cooperate with Child Support Enforcement and Non-compliance with the provisions of the Mutual Responsibility Agreement (MRA); **or**
 - b. The WFFA Unit moves out of North Carolina; **or**
 - c. The FNS unit was receiving more than one WFFA payment prior to the WFFA termination and at least one WFFA payment is still being received.
 3. The FNS unit is over the Food and Nutrition Services gross income limits due to the loss of categorically eligible status; **or**
 4. The WFFA case is approved as a Benefit Diversion case.

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650.03 TRANSFERRING CASES TO TRANSITIONAL FOOD AND NUTRITION SERVICES BENEFITS

The North Carolina Families Accessing Services Through Technology (NC FAST) will automatically determine a FNS units' eligibility for TFNS based on the termination of the WFFA case. Workers cannot transfer cases to TFNS, if NC FAST does not transfer automatically, the worker must submit a help desk ticket to NC FAST for assistance in transferring to TFNS. However, the worker does have the ability to override the system and prevent a case from being transferred to TFNS by following job aids located in NC FAST Help.

A. The following policies and procedures are important when transferring cases to TFNS:

1. Act within 10 calendar days of notification of WFFA termination.
2. Use the date the DSS-8125 was processed in NC FAST to terminate the WFFA case as the date the change was known to WFFA.
3. Add 10 calendar days for Food and Nutrition Services to act to determine the initial transitional month.
4. Determine if supplements are due as a result of removing the WFFA.
5. Work requirements and ABAWD status do not apply during the TFNS period.
6. Do not budget new or increased income that made the FNS unit ineligible for WFFA. Use the prior month's FNS budget less the WFFA payment to determine the TFNS benefit amount.

EXAMPLE: A household reports new earnings toward the end of May. Because of the adverse action time frames, the June WFFA payment and FNS benefits are not changed. When the change is processed, the family becomes ineligible for WFFA effective July. Transfer the FNS case to TFNS effective July through November. The benefit amount would be based on the June FNS budget minus the WFFA payment but not including the new or increased income.

- B. Do not add, remove, or change any other sources of income when transferring a FNS case to TFNS benefits.
- C. If there is a pending Notice of Adverse Action (NOAA), do not make the change. Base the allotment on the prior month's allotment less the Work First payment.

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- D. FNS cases that are in a suspense status are eligible for TFNS. There may be instances where the FNS case skips a month of benefits.

For example: A case that is in suspense in the month of June for failure to complete a recertification becomes eligible for TFNS effective July. The TFNS benefits will start in July. The FNS unit will not receive June benefits unless they complete a recertification prior to the end of the suspense month.

- E. Assigning a new five-month certification period is not considered shortening the certification period since the household is eligible for benefits under a new category.
- F. Resources are not evaluated or considered when transferring a case to TFNS.
- G. It is not necessary for all members of the FNS unit to be WFFA recipients to be eligible for TFNS. This includes, but is not limited to, FNS cases that consist of child-only WFFA recipients and their adult caretakers. These cases are eligible to transfer to TFNS if all other eligibility factors are met.

650.04 CHANGES DURING THE TRANSITIONAL FOOD AND NUTRITION SERVICES BENEFIT PERIOD

TFNS households have the same reporting requirements as simplified reporting households. However, do not make any changes to the TFNS case during the five-month certification period unless:

- A. It is necessary to add a member of a TFNS case to another FNS case. Issue a NOAA and remove the individual following regular Food and Nutrition Services Program procedures. Dual participation is not allowed.
- B. The FNS unit chooses to apply for recertification during the transitional period. If the FNS unit requests regular food FNS benefits instead of TFNS:
1. Discuss the pros and cons of recertifying the case and inform the FNS unit prior to completing the recertification.
 2. Determine benefits according to the FNS unit's circumstances at the time of the recertification.
- C. The FNS unit provides a written request of termination.
- D. The county discovers a county-responsible under issuance due to not subtracting the WFFA payment. If this occurs, remove the WFFA payment and restore benefits as needed.

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- E. A FNS unit member receives an Intentional Program Violation disqualification during the TFNS period. If this occurs, impose the disqualification but do not terminate the TFNS.
- F. A claim is established. It is acceptable to reduce the allotment amount due to a recoupment.
- G. The household no longer resides in North Carolina.
- H. A change that results in no eligible individual in the home due to the institutionalization or death of all FNS unit members.
- I. A household receiving TFNS begins receiving WFFA cash assistance again during the transitional period. The household must be recertified to determine if the household will continue to be eligible for FNS benefits. Send a DSS-2435I to the FNS household to complete a recertification.

If the household requires recertification and results in shortening the household's certification period; the Notice of Adverse Action will not be issued to inform the household of the shortened certification period. The Notice of Expiration and Interview Recertification Form, DSS-2435I must be sent to inform the household of the recertification. If the household has not reached the maximum number of months in the certification period during the transitional period, the prior certification period can be shortened in order to recertify the household.

650.05 PROCEDURES FOR RECERTIFICATION AT END OF TRANSITIONAL FOOD AND NUTRITION SERVICES BENEFITS PERIOD

A Food and Nutrition Services Notice of Expiration and Interview Recertification Form, DSS-2435I, will be generated in the fourth month of the TFNS period. Follow regular FNS recertification policy and procedures to complete the interview and determine eligibility.