

# ARKANSAS REGISTER

## Transmittal Sheet



Sharon Priest  
Secretary of State  
State Capitol Rm. 01  
Little Rock, Arkansas 72201-1094

For Office Use Only: Effective Date 12/20/98 Code Number 016.20.98--035

Name of Agency Department of Human Services

Department Division of County Operations

Contact Person Roy D. Kindle, Jr. Phone 682-8251

Statutory Authority for Promulgating Rules P.L. 104-193 The Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996.

FSC 98-20

Date

Intended Effective Date

Legal Notice Published . . . . . 10-30-98

☐ Emergency

Final Date for Public Comment . . . . . 11-28-98

☒ 10 Days After Filing

Filed With Legislative Council. . . . . 10-30-98

☐ Other

Reviewed by Legislative Council . . . . .

Adopted by State Agency . . . . . 12-1-98

### CERTIFICATION OF AUTHORIZED OFFICER

I Hereby Certify That The Attached Rules Were Adopted  
In Compliance with Act 434 of 1967 As Amended.

[Signature]  
Signature

682-8375

Phone Number

Director

Title

Date

FILED  
AR. REGISTER DIV.  
CDDC-2 40 9:53  
STATE OF ARKANSAS

11500

3

11500  
11500  
11500  
11500  
11500

**DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES  
DIVISION OF COUNTY OPERATIONS  
AMENDING LEGISLATIVE REGULATION  
ARKANSAS LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL**

**NUMBER AND TITLE:** FSC 98-20, Changes to the 100, 1000, 14000, and 17000 sections of the Food Stamp Certification (FSC) Manual.

**PROPOSED EFFECTIVE DATE:** December 1, 1998

**STATUTORY AUTHORITY:** The Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996.

**NECESSITY AND FUNCTION:** Changes to the 100, 1000, 14000, and 17000 sections of the Food Stamp Certification (FSC) Manual. These policy changes are needed to insure the FSC policy has been updated to reflect current issuance procedures.

**PAGES FILED:** A total of 50 pages were filed.

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
**Roy D. Kindler, Jr.**

**Assistant Director**

**Office of Program Planning and Development**

**PROMULGATION DATE:** December 1, 1998

**CONTACT PERSON:**

**Roy D. Kindler, Jr.**

**Assistant Director**

**Office of Program Planning and Development**

**P.O. Box 1437, Slot 1220**

**Little Rock, AR 72203-1437**

**(501) 682-8251**

**FINANCIAL IMPACT STATEMENT**

To comply with Act 844 of 1992, please complete the following Financial Impact Statement and file with the document and proposed rules.

WORK TITLE OF THIS RULE: RPT 98-29

Does this proposed, amended, or repealed rule or regulation have a financial impact? YES ☒ NO ☐

If you believe that the development of a financial impact statement is so speculative as to be prohibited, please explain.  
The policy has been revised to reflect the issuance of food stamp benefits through an Electronic Benefits Transfer (EBT) system. The EBT system has already been implemented.  
If the purpose of this rule or regulation is to implement a federal rule or regulation, please give the incremental cost for implementing the regulation.

1998-99 Fiscal Year		1999-00 Fiscal Year	
General Revenue	\$ 0	General Revenue	\$ 0
Federal Funds	\$ 0	Federal Funds	\$ 0
Cash Funds	\$ 0	Cash Funds	\$ 0
Special Revenue	\$ 0	Special Revenue	\$ 0
Other	\$ 0	Other	\$ 0
Total	\$ 0	Total	\$ 0

What is the total estimated cost by fiscal year to any party subject to the proposed, amended, or repealed rule or regulation?  
NA

1998-99 Fiscal Year \$ 0 1999-00 Fiscal Year \$ 0

What is the total estimated cost by fiscal year to the agency to implement this regulation?

1998-99 Fiscal Year \$ 0 1999-00 Fiscal Year \$ 0

# MANUAL TRANSMITTAL

## Arkansas Department of Human Services

### Division of County Operations



☒ Policy ☐ Form ☐ Policy Directive

Issuance Number FSC 98-20

Food Stamp Certification Manual

Issuance Date 12/1/98

From: Ruth Whitney  
Director

Expiration Date Until  
Superseded

Subj: General Update of Food Stamp Certification Manual

<u>Directives to be Deleted</u>	<u>Dated</u>
PD FSC 97-9	9/7/97

<u>Appendixes to be Deleted</u>	<u>Dated</u>
Appendix J	10/1/96

	<u>Pages to be Deleted</u>	<u>Dated</u>	<u>Pages to be Added</u>	<u>Dated</u>
Front	110 - 120	6/1/93	110 - 120	12/1/98
Back	120 - 121	6/1/93	120 - 121	12/1/98
Front	121 - 200	6/1/93	121 - 200	12/1/98
Back	None		200 - 220	12/1/98
Front	200 - 220	10/1/97	230 - 240	10/1/97
Back	230 - 240	10/1/97	None	
.....				
Front	800 - 801	5/1/95	800 - 801	12/1/98
Back	801 - 810	5/1/95	801 - 810	12/1/98
Front	810 - 830	3/15/88	810 - 830	12/1/98
Back	840 - 840	10/1/86	840 - 840	12/1/98
Front	840 - 850	10/1/86	840 - 850	12/1/98
Back	None		860 - 870	12/1/98
Front	860 - 870	10/1/86	880 - 890	12/1/98
Back	880 - 890	4/1/92	890 - 920	12/1/98
Front	890 - 920	4/1/92	None	
Back	None		None	
Front	930 - 950	10/1/86	930 - 950	12/1/98
Back	920 - 930	10/1/86	920 - 930	12/1/98

Front	950 – 970	10/1/86	950 – 970	12/1/98
Back	980 – 984	5/1/95	980 – 980	12/1/98
Front	984 – 985.1	5/1/95	981 – 981.2	12/1/98
Back	985.1 – 985.2	10/1/86	981.2 – 981.4	12/1/98
Front	985.2 – 986	10/1/86	981.5 – 981.5	12/1/98
Back	None		982 – 983.1	12/1/98
.....				
Front	1720 – 1730	4/1/92	1720 – 1730	12/1/98
Back	1730 – 1730	4/1/92	1730 – 1730	12/1/98
Front	1730 – 1730	4/1/92	1730 – 1730	12/1/98
Back	1730 – 1800	4/1/92	1740 – 1800	12/1/98
Front	1800 – 1821	4/1/92	1800 – 1821	12/1/98
Back	1821 – 1825	5/1/95	1821 – 1825	12/1/98
Front	1830 – 1832	9/1/92	1830 – 1832	12/1/98
Back	1832 – 1841	9/1/92	1832 – 1841	12/1/98
Front	1841 – 1841.1	10/1/97	1841 – 1841.1	12/1/98
Back	1841.2 – 1850	10/1/97	1841.2 – 1850	12/1/98
Front	1850 – 1851	10/1/97	1850 – 1851	12/1/98
Back	1851 – 1852	10/1/97	1851 – 1852	12/1/98
.....				
<b>Sections to be Deleted</b>		<b>Dated</b>	<b>Sections to be Added</b>	<b>Dated</b>
FSC 14000		Various Dates	FSC 14000	12/1/98
.....				
FSC 17000		10/1/86	FSC 17000	12/1/98
.....				
Glossary		Various Dates	Glossary	12/1/98

### SUMMARY OF CHANGES

FSC 110 – 121, FSC 200 – 220, FSC 800 – 890, FSC 980 – 983.1

Some of the changes in the 100 section are general in nature. These changes include:

- A general rewrite of the policy for clarity;
- The deletion of all policy referring to mailing food stamps;
- Substitution of the word “benefits” for the word “allotment”; and
- A rewrite of the policy in 800-890 to reflect the change from Quality Control to Quality Assurance.

Specific changes are listed below:

---

**FSC 110** – The statement about the purpose of the Food Stamp Program has been updated to agree with the current law.

**FSC 980** – This section has been expanded. It now contains information about disqualifying facilities for misuse of food stamp benefits.

**FSC 981** – Old section FSC 981 has been deleted and replaced by a new section explaining the conditions under which the residents of a drug and/or alcohol treatment center may participate in the Food Stamp Program.

**FSC 981.1** – This is a new section. It provides information about a treatment center's responsibilities under Food Stamp Program rules.

**FSC 981.2** – This is a new section. It provides information about how residents of treatment centers will access food stamp benefits through the EBT system.

**FSC 981.3** – This is a new section. It provides instructions for authorizing ARs for residents of treatment centers.

**FSC 981.4** – This is a new section. It provides instructions for handling EBT accounts when a resident leaves a treatment center.

**FSC 981.5** – This is a new section. It provides general guidelines for treatment centers.

**FSC 982** – This section has been renumbered. It now contains information about authorized representatives for group living arrangements.

**FSC 982.1** – This is a new section. It provides information about how residents of group living arrangements will access food stamp benefits through the EBT system.

**FSC 983.1** – This is a new section. It provides information about how residents of shelters for battered women will access food stamp benefits through the EBT system.

**FSC 984** – This section has been deleted. The information found in this section has been moved to FSC 980.

**FSC 985 to FSC 985.3** – These sections have been deleted. The information found in these sections has either been deleted or moved to Sections 981 – 981.5.

## **FSC 1720 - 1852**

The changes in the 1000 section are general in nature. These changes include:

- A general rewrite of the policy for clarity;
- The deletion of all policy referring to mailing food stamps;
- Substitution of the word "benefits" for the word "allotment"; and
- An update of the policy regarding treatment centers and authorized representatives.

## FSC 14000

The entire section is being reissued. This section has been completely rewritten to reflect the use of EBT to issue food stamp benefits. Specific changes are listed below:

### FSC 14000 Summary

Provides a general explanation of how food stamp benefits are issued.

### FSC14100 Types of Issuance

Provides an explanation of the three-digit code that describes the type of issuance, regular, supplemental, restoration, etc.

### FSC 14110 Monthly Extract

Explains how and when daily extract occurs and which cases are authorized for issuance on monthly extract.

### FSC 14120 Daily Issuance Extract

Provides general information about daily issuance extract.

### FSC 14121 Retroactive Benefits

Explains how and why retroactive benefits are issued.

### FSC14122 Prorated Benefits

Explains how and why prorated benefits are issued.

### FSC 14123 Aggregate Benefits

Explains how and why aggregate benefits are issued.

### FSC 14130 Benefits Authorized Via WFMO

Explains which benefits are issued via the WFMO screen

### FSC 14131 Release From Hold

Provides instructions for authorizing a release from hold.

### FSC 14132 Replacement of Food Lost in a Household Misfortune

Provides instructions for authorizing replacements of food lost in a household misfortune.

### FSC 14133 Supplemental Benefits / Restored Benefits

Gives a general explanation of restored and supplemental benefits.

#### FSC 14133.1 Authorization of Supplemental Benefits

Provides instructions for authorizing supplemental benefits.

#### FSC 14133.2 Authorization of Restored Benefits

Provides instructions for authorizing restored benefits.



---

**FSC 14134**    Issuance to Residents of Battered Women's Shelters

Provides instructions for authorizing a second issuance to women who reside in a shelter.

**FSC 14135**    Code 500 – Special Transactions

Provides instructions for authorizing a 500 type transaction.

**FSC 14200**    Failure to Extract on Daily Issuance

Explains the *Daily Report of Messages*.

**FSC 14300**    Electronic Benefits Transfer (EBT)

Provides a general explanation of EBT.

**FSC 14310**    Issuance of Cards

Explains how EBT cards are issued to food stamp benefit recipients.

**FSC 14320**    Personal Identification Number

Explains how a personal identification number (PIN) is assigned, how it is used, and how a recipient may get another PIN if necessary.

**FSC 14330**    Authorized Representative

Explains how an authorized representative may use a household's EBT benefits to purchase food for the household.

**FSC 14340**    Availability of Benefits

Explains when food stamp benefits will be available to food stamp recipients.

**FSC 14350**    Cancellation of Benefits

Explains when and how food stamp benefits may be canceled after extract.

**FSC 14360**    Account Balances

Explains how a recipient may access benefits remaining in an EBT account.

**FSC 14400**    Replacing Lost, Stolen or Damaged Cards

Explains how a recipient may request replacement of a lost, stolen or damaged EBT card.

**FSC 14500**    Alcoholism and Drug Treatment Rehabilitation Centers

Explains how a resident of an alcohol or drug addiction treatment center will access EBT benefits while he or she resides in a center and after he or she leaves the center.

**FSC 14600**    Group Living Arrangements

Explains how a resident of a group living arrangement will access EBT benefits.

**FSC 14700**    Homeless Households

Explains the arrangements necessary to allow a homeless household to receive the EBT card and PIN at the county office.

---

**FSC 14800    Food Stamp Coupon Conversion**

Explains how households may convert EBT benefits to food stamp coupons if the household is moving to a state where the household's EBT benefits will not be accepted.

**FSC 17000**

The entire section FSC 17000 is being reissued. General changes in the 17000 section include:

A rewrite of the policy for clarity;  
The deletion of all policy referring to mailing food stamps; and  
Substitution of the word "benefits" for the word "allotment."

There is no Specific change:

**FSC 17110** – This is a new section. It explains the Disaster Plan and how that plan relates to the policy in the 17000 section.

**GLOSSARY**

The entire Glossary is being reissued. General changes in the Glossary include:

A general rewrite of the policy for clarity;  
The deletion of all policy referring to mailing food stamps; and  
Substitution of the word "benefits" for the word "allotment."

Specific changes are explained below.

**Administrative Hearing** – "Fair Hearing" has been changed to "Administrative Hearing" and moved to page 1 of the Glossary.

**Alcoholism and/or Drug Addiction Treatment and Rehabilitation Program** – This definition has been added.

**Central Mail Issuance** – This definition has been deleted.

**Deemed Income** – This definition has been deleted.

**Deeming Period** – This definition has been deleted.

**Deemed Resources** – This definition has been deleted.

**Destitute Household** – This definition has been deleted.

**Head of Household** – This definition has been deleted.

**Identification Card** – This definition has been deleted.

**Quality Assurance Reviews** – This definition replaces the definition of "Quality Control."

---

**Simplified Food Stamp Program** – This definition has been added.

**Sponsor of an Alien** – This definition has been deleted.

**Sponsor's Spouse** – This definition has been deleted.

**Sponsor's Tax Dependents** – This definition has been deleted.

**Transitional Employment Assistance** – This definition has been added.

---

**Inquiries to:** Betty Helmbeck, Food Stamp Section, (501) 682-8284

11

110 Purpose of Food Stamp Program

The Food Stamp Act of 1977 authorizes the Food Stamp Program. Section 2 of this act states in part:

"It is hereby declared to be the policy of Congress, in order to promote the general welfare, to safeguard the health and well-being of the Nation's population by raising levels of nutrition among low-income households. Congress hereby finds that the limited food purchasing power of low-income households contributes to hunger and malnutrition among members of such households. Congress further finds that increasing utilization of food in establishing and maintaining adequate national levels of nutrition will promote the distribution in a beneficial manner of the Nation's agricultural abundance and will strengthen the Nation's agricultural economy, as well as result in more orderly marketing and distribution of foods. To alleviate such hunger and malnutrition, a food stamp program is herein authorized which permits low-income households to obtain a more nutritious diet through normal channels of trade by increasing food purchasing power for all eligible households who apply for participation."

To summarize: The Food Stamp Program is designed to increase the limited food purchasing power of low-income households and thus alleviate hunger and malnutrition.

120 Use of Food Stamp Benefits

Participating households may use their food stamp benefits at retail stores authorized by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), Food and Nutrition Service (FNS), to accept food stamp benefits.

A household may purchase only eligible foods with food stamp benefits. Eligible foods include plants and seeds that the household may use to grow food. Ineligible items which cannot be purchased with food stamps include alcoholic beverages, household products, tobacco, pet foods, and other non-food items. At grocery stores with delicatessens, the household may use food stamp benefits to purchase foods that have not been heated above room temperature and are to be eaten away from the store.

Example: Food stamp benefits could be used to purchase sliced cold cuts at the delicatessen, but could not be used to purchase a barbecued chicken cooked by the delicatessen and kept under warming lamps.

Residents of drug and alcoholic treatment centers, group living arrangements, and shelters for battered women/children who are certified to participate in the Food Stamp Program may use their food stamp benefits to purchase meals prepared especially for them. Limitations are: 1) the facility must be authorized by FNS or the appropriate state agency; and 2) the meals must be prepared by the

facility during the course of the facility's normal program - i.e. a person in a drug treatment program must be residing at the facility and undergoing the treatment program. Exception - Residents of group living arrangements and/or shelters for battered women need not be involved in a formal treatment program. See FSC 1800-1842.

Homeless households may use their food stamp benefits, on a voluntary basis, to purchase meals from authorized meal providers. See FSC 1850-1852.

## 121 Communal Dining Facilities

Certain households may use their food stamp benefits to purchase prepared meals at a communal dining facility or to purchase meals delivered to them at home by a nonprofit meal delivery service.

A communal dining facility means:

1. A public or nonprofit private establishment, approved by the Food and Nutrition Service (FNS), which prepares and serves meals to households composed of elderly persons and their spouses, or households composed of SSI recipients and their spouses, or both;
2. A public or private nonprofit establishment (eating or otherwise) that feeds households composed of elderly persons and their spouses, or SSI recipients and their spouses or both;
3. Federally subsidized housing for the elderly at which meals are prepared and served to the residents; or
4. Private establishments that contract with the Arkansas Department of Human Services to offer meals at concessional prices to households composed of elderly persons and their spouses, or of SSI recipients and their spouses, or both. (The contract must specify the approximate prices to be charged for the meals.)

All meal delivery services and communal dining facilities desiring to prepare and serve (or deliver) meals to eligible households must be approved by FNS to accept food stamp benefits.

Households composed of homeless individuals may purchase meals from restaurants that contract with the Arkansas Department of Human Services to supply meals to the homeless at an already low or reduced price. These restaurants must also be approved by FNS to accept food stamp benefits.

Restaurants that intend to accept food stamp benefits from all groups of households (elderly, SSI and the homeless) must either submit a separate contract pertaining only to the homeless or must submit one contract which clearly identifies each group to be served.

FOOD STAMP CERTIFICATION MANUAL 121 - 200 DATE: 12-1-98	SECTION: GENERAL PROVISIONS SUBJECT: STATE'S RESPONSIBILITIES
---	--

Restaurants interested in contracting with the Arkansas Department of Human Services to furnish meals to specified food stamp benefit recipients should contact the Central Office, Food Stamp Section, (501) 682-8284.

200

#### Authorization of the Program and the State's Responsibilities

U.S.D.A., Food and Nutrition Service and the Division of County Operations (DCO) have jointly entered into a Plan of Operation of the Food Stamp Program in Arkansas and have prescribed policies and procedures, and rules and regulations as set forth in this manual for the administration of this program.

DCO responsibilities include but are not limited to:

1. Insuring that county offices administer the program in a manner which guarantees prompt action, nondiscrimination, and accurate completion of the certification process.
2. Establishing the policies and procedures under which the Food Stamp Program is administered.
3. Issuing food stamp benefits to eligible households. Benefits are issued via an Electronic Benefits Transfer (EBT) system.
4. Maintaining issuance control and submitting accurate and timely financial and program reports.
5. Providing qualified employees to conduct interviews and to determine initial and ongoing eligibility for the program. NOTE: Only DCO employees may conduct interviews with food stamp benefit applicants and/or recipients unless the applicant is interviewed as part of a joint SSI/Food Stamp application as specified in FSC 8240.
6. Developing, conducting, and evaluating training of certification and issuance personnel.
7. Maintaining a Performance Reporting System (Quality Assurance and Management Evaluation) in accordance with federal regulations.
8. Making program records available for review or audit by U.S.D.A., FNS (Office of Audit and Office of Investigation) for a period of three years from the month of origin of each record.
9. Handling recipient claims and restorations of lost benefits in accordance with federal regulations.

FOOD STAMP CERTIFICATION MANUAL 200 - 220 DATE: 12-1-98	SECTION: GENERAL PROVISIONS SUBJECT: INFORMATIONAL ACTIVITIES/ PERSONNEL STANDARDS
---	--

10. Disqualifying individuals and households from participation in accordance with federal regulations.
11. Developing and maintaining complaint procedures.
12. Administering disaster certification programs only when authorized by the Department of Agriculture, Food and Nutrition Service.
13. Developing and implementing program information activities.
14. Serving as a voter registration agency. See Appendix V.

#### 210 Program Informational Activities

Program informational activities are intended to explain the Food Stamp Program to applicant and recipient households. Such information may be conveyed by means of publications, telephone hotlines, and face to face contacts.

County offices must comply with the following minimum program informational activity requirements:

1. Informing each applicant and recipient household of their rights and responsibilities during the interview process and providing written information on forms and notices. See FSC 8250 for additional information.
2. Displaying the required FNS posters in waiting areas for food stamp applicants and recipients.

#### 220 Personnel Standards

DCO employees who interview and certify households for food stamp benefits must meet agency standards or any standards later specified by the Federal Office of Personnel Management. Only authorized personnel may have access to issuance documents.

Volunteers and/or other non-state agency employees (with the exception of SSA employees who conduct joint interviews as specified in FSC 8940) are not allowed to interview or to certify food stamp benefit applicants. However, they may be used in related activities such as prescreening, assisting applicants in completing the application, and assisting applicants in securing verification.

Exception - Individuals and organizations who are parties to a strike or lockout cannot be used in the certification process except as a source of verification for information supplied by the applicant.



FOOD STAMP CERTIFICATION MANUAL 230 - 240 DATE: 10-1-97	SECTION: GENERAL PROVISIONS SUBJECT: BILINGUAL STAFF/ TRAINING
---	--

230 Bilingual Staff and Materials

Bilingual staff or interpreters and bilingual certification materials (i.e. applications, change form, QR form and notices) must be provided when a county has a specified number of low income households which speak the same non-English language and which do not contain an adult fluent in English as a second language. Such households are considered a single language minority.

Bilingual certification materials, program information materials, and bilingual staff (or interpreters) will be requested from the Food Stamp Section when the county office provides service to approximately 100 single language minority low income households. Bilingual materials and staff may also be requested if there are fewer than 100 low income households if the majority of these households are of a single language minority.

231 Seasonal Influx of Non-English Speaking Households

A seasonal influx of non-English speaking households will require the use of bilingual staff or interpreters if at least 100 non-English speaking households apply. Bilingual staff or interpreters may be requested for less than 100 applicants if the majority of these households are of a single language minority.

232 Estimates of Low-Income Single-Language Households

The Central Office will make estimates of the number of households of a single language minority in each county by using census figures and other appropriate sources of information.

240 Training Requirements

Continuing training will be provided for food stamp eligibility workers, hearing officials and performance reporting system reviewers. Training will occur following issuances of new policy when the policy issuance is extensive and/or entails a major change. In addition, training may occur on an individual, county wide, area wide or state wide basis when problem areas are identified through the monitoring process, reviews or when otherwise deemed necessary.



800 Quality Assurance (Q.A.)

DCO is required to conduct quality assurance reviews on a statistically valid sample of households currently participating in the Food Stamp Program and of households for which participation was denied or terminated. The objectives of quality assurance reviews are to provide:

1. A systematic method of measuring the validity of the food stamp caseload;
2. A basis for determining error rates;
3. A timely, continuous flow of information upon which corrective action is based at all levels of administration;
4. A basis for establishing the state's liability for errors that exceed national standards; and
5. A basis for establishing eligibility for enhanced funding.

801 Cooperation with Q.A.

A household that refuses to cooperate when a Q.A. Review is being conducted is ineligible to participate in either the regular or the Simplified Food Stamp Program. If a household's case is closed for refusal to cooperate in the Q.A. process, the household may reapply but cannot be determined eligible until:

1. The household cooperates with the Q.A. reviewer; or
2. Until January 3rd of the year that follows the end of the completed annual review period. The annual review period ends September 30th.

To resume participation, a household must provide verification of all eligibility requirements prior to certification.

Example: A household's food stamp case is being reviewed by Quality Assurance for the review month of April, 1999. The household refuses to cooperate with the reviewer. The annual review period ends on September 30, 1999. The household cannot be determined eligible until January 3, 2000. On January 10, 2000, the household reapplies and may be found eligible after all eligibility factors are re-verified.

If a household's case is closed for refusal to cooperate in the Federal Quality Control process, the household may reapply but cannot be determined eligible until:

1. The household cooperates with the Federal Quality Control reviewer;  
or

2. Until seven months after the end of the completed annual review period (April 30th). The annual review period ends on September 30th.

The household must provide verification of all eligibility requirements prior to certification.

Example: A household's food stamp case is being reviewed by Federal Quality Control for the review month of March, 1999. The household refuses to cooperate with the reviewer. The annual review period ends on September 30, 1999 and the seven month period ends April 30, 2000. On May 5, 2000, the household reapplies and is found eligible after all eligibility factors are verified.

810

### The Selection Process

Cases are selected at random for Quality Assurance reviews. This is referred to as a "Q.A. Pull". A Q.A. Pull is conducted each month for the previous month. This means that the September Pull contains only denials or closures completed in August or cases on households who participated during the month of August. August will be considered the "review month". August 1st will normally be the "review date". Q.A. may consider another day within the review month the review date - for example, if an initial application was received in the review month, the date the application was certified becomes the review date.

Denials or closures are referred to as negative actions or negative cases. Cases on households who participated in the review month are called active cases.

Certain cases are not subject to the review process. These are cases in which:

1. All household members died or moved out of the state before the review could be completed;
2. The household is receiving food stamp benefits under a disaster certification authorized by FNS;
3. The household is under investigation for an intentional program violation with a pending administrative disqualification hearing;
4. The household is appealing an adverse action when the review date falls within the time period covered by continuation of benefits pending a hearing decision; or
5. The household is not currently participating in the Food Stamp Program, but did receive a restoration of food stamp benefits in the review month.

FOOD STAMP CERTIFICATION MANUAL 810 - 830 DATE: 12-1-98	SECTION: GENERAL PROVISIONS SUBJECT: QUALITY ASSURANCE (Q.A.)
---	--

Certain negative actions are not subject to review. These are actions in which:

1. The household's case was closed due to expiration of its period of certification;
2. The household withdrew its application before approval or denial;
3. The household is under investigation for an intentional program violation; or
4. All members of the household died or moved out of state before the review was completed.

#### 820 Responding to a Request by Quality Assurance for a Case Record

Quality Assurance assigns each of the cases listed on the Q.A. Pull to a Q.A. reviewer who sends a memo to the appropriate county office requesting the case record. The county office must immediately enter the case name and number on a Quality Assurance log and send the case record to the reviewer no later than the next working day. The county office will not attempt to make any decision about whether the case is subject to review.

After reading the case and documenting certain information, the Q.A. reviewer returns the case record to the county office. If an error is found, the case must then be sent to the Central Office, Quality Assurance, Slot 501, to be presented to a committee of personnel from DCO Office of Program Planning and Development and from DCO Field Operations. If this committee concurs with Q.A.'s decision, the review is considered complete.

#### 830 Prior Knowledge of the Case

The reviewer must not have prior knowledge of the case to be reviewed. Prior knowledge is defined as having:

1. Taken any part in the decision that has been made in the case; or
2. Had any discussion of the case with staff who participated in the decision; or
3. Had any personal knowledge of, or acquaintance with, any household member.

FOOD STAMP CERTIFICATION MANUAL 840 - 840 DATE: 11-1-98	SECTION: GENERAL PROVISIONS SUBJECT: QUALITY ASSURANCE (Q.A.)
---	--

## 840      Reviewing Active Cases

Active cases are defined as those that were certified prior to or during the review month and for which benefits were issued during the review month.

The reviewer determines if the household was eligible during the review month. If the household was eligible during the review month, then the reviewer determines if the proper amount of food stamp benefits were issued for that month. In order to accomplish this, the reviewer completes the following steps:

### 1.      Examining the Case Record

During this examination, the reviewer identifies specific facts related to the household's eligibility and basis of issuance of food stamp benefits. It is considered improper for a reviewer either to question a county office worker or to accept information not in the case record from the county office. The case record (including all online screens and reports) is considered the reviewer's only source of information about the county's action.

### 2.      Conducting the Field Review

During the field review, the Q.A. reviewer obtains information about the household's actual circumstances during the review month. The reviewer verifies and documents this information. The two basic activities of the field review are interviewing the household and making collateral contacts. A worksheet is used to record the results of the field review.

### 3.      Identifying Variances

Using information shown in the case record and information gathered during the field review, the reviewer determines if there are any differences between the information the reviewer has verified and information used by the county office to issue food stamp benefits.

Example: If changes have occurred and have been reported or the county has not acted on a reported change within the proper timeframe, a variance will be determined.

FOOD STAMP CERTIFICATION MANUAL 840 - 850 DATE: 12-1-98	SECTION: GENERAL PROVISIONS SUBJECT: QUALITY ASSURANCE (Q.A.)
---	--

#### 4. Making the Review Decision

The final step of the review is deciding whether or not the case is in error. The reviewer may determine that a variance has occurred, but the case will not be considered an error case unless the food stamp benefit amount was incorrect by at least \$5.00. If the case is in error, the reviewer must determine the amount of the error and whether too many or too few food stamp benefits were issued. The results will then be entered on the proper forms.

Any active case which contains a variance of at least \$5.00 (over or under issuance) will be used in determining the case error rate for the county and state. A variance which caused the household to be ineligible for food stamp benefits or to receive \$5.00 or more in food stamp benefits than they were entitled to receive will be used to calculate the dollar error rate for the county and state. Such errors are called overissuances and ineligibles. Errors where the household received less food stamp benefits than they were entitled to receive are called underissuances. Case and dollar error rates are used to determine the quality of the operation of the program in a county.

#### 850 Calculating Case Error Rate

The following procedures will be used when calculating the case error rate for a specified period of time:

1. Total the number of completed Q.A. reviews;
2. Total the number of complete reviews in which an error (overissuance, underissuance or ineligibility) occurred;
3. Divide the total number of reviews with errors by the number of Q.A. reviews completed to determine the case error rate percentage.

Example: total Q.A. reviews completed	31
total overissued cases	3
total underissued cases	1
total ineligible cases	2

Total error cases (6) - total Q.A. reviews (31) = 19.35%

Case Error Rate - 19.35%

860 Calculating Dollar Error Rate

The following procedures will be used when calculating the dollar error rate for a specified period of time.

1. Obtain the total amount of food stamp benefits issued in the cases upon which a review was completed. (Include all cases reviewed in the specified period of time).
2. Obtain the total amount of food stamp benefits issued in error.
3. Divide the total amount of food stamp benefits issued in error by the total food stamp benefits issued to determine the dollar error rate.

Example: Total food stamp benefits issued	728
Total food stamp benefits over or under issued	25
Total food stamp benefits issued to ineligible households	10

Over or under issued benefits (\$25) + \$ ineligible (\$10) = Total issued in error (35) - Total food stamp benefits issued (\$728) = 4.81% Dollar Error Rate.

870 Reviewing Negative Cases

The reviewer examines the case record and verifies through documentation in the case file if the reason for the denial or closure is correct. When the case record alone provides acceptable documentation that the decision to deny or close was correct, the review is considered complete. If it is determined that the reason for denial or closure is incorrect, the reviewer determines if the household was actually ineligible at time of the action.

The reviewer may find it necessary to contact the household or collateral contacts. However, negative case reviews are generally limited to a review of the case record.

If an error is found in a negative case, the county office must take the steps necessary to determine the household's eligibility. If the household is determined eligible for the review month (and in the case of closures, for subsequent months in the original certification period) benefits will be restored. See FSC 13300 for procedures for restoring food stamp benefits.



FOOD STAMP CERTIFICATION MANUAL 880 - 890 DATE: 12-1-98	SECTION: GENERAL PROVISIONS SUBJECT: QUALITY ASSURANCE (Q.A.)
---	--

## 880      The Q.A. Log

Each county office must maintain a quality assurance log. This log will, at a minimum, contain the following information:

1. Case name;
2. Case number;
3. Case worker name;
4. Date the case was sent to Q.A.;
5. Date the case was returned;
6. Review number;
7. Whether the case was in error;
8. Whether the error was attributed to the household or the agency;
9. The corrective action needed;
10. Date the response is due; and
11. The date the response was completed.

Each county office will design a Q.A. log. The log may be automated or manual and may contain as much additional information as the county desires. The county office will use the log to determine the need for corrective action and to track the number of errors by individual workers so that the appropriate actions may be taken. The log will be monitored.

## 890      The Q.A. Appeal Process

Upon notification by Quality Assurance that a selected case is in error, the county office will have the opportunity to appeal the findings. Listed below are the requirements for appealing a case:

1. Just cause for appealing the case must be determined by the DCO county supervisor and the Program Support Specialist.
2. An appeal packet must be prepared. The packet must contain a narrative justification with specific policy references along with any supporting documentary evidence.
3. Within ten calendar days, the case record must be submitted along with the appeal to the Quality Assurance Unit. The address is:

Administrator  
Quality Assurance  
P. O. Box 1437, Slot 501  
Room 305, Donaghey Plaza South  
Little Rock, AR 72203

The entire appeal process must occur within the specified ten calendar day period. The ten day period begins with the date that Q.A. sends the error summary and appeal form to the county office. (This is the date Q.A. sends out the error summary and not the date the error summary is received in the county office.)

All documentation for the appeal must be received by the Quality Assurance Unit no later than the tenth day. If, in rare instances, the preparation of the appeal will require more than ten days, advance approval must be given by the Administrator of the Quality Assurance Unit. Extensions granted will be limited to five days.

There may be a time period at the last of the calendar year when it will not be possible to allow counties a full ten day period to submit an appeal since the agency must meet federal Quality Control (Q.C.) completion requirements.

On any case submitted for an appeal of a Q.A. error, adverse action on the matter under appeal will be delayed until a decision is rendered in the appeal. County offices will be notified of the decision via memorandum from the Administrator, Quality Assurance Unit.

900 Authorized Representatives

An authorized representative (AR) is an individual designated by the casehead, spouse, or other responsible household member to act on behalf of the food stamp household. Some residential facilities may serve as AR's for their residents. The authorized representative may:

1. Make application for the program;
2. Be interviewed for the household; and
3. Use food stamp benefits to purchase food for the household.

910 Who May be an Authorized Representative

An AR must be an adult who is knowledgeable about the food stamp household's circumstances and who has not been disqualified in accordance with FSC 970 from serving as an AR in the Food Stamp Program.

920 Who May Not be an Authorized Representative

Individuals to whom at least one of the following restrictions apply may not be an AR in the Food Stamp Program.

FOOD STAMP CERTIFICATION MANUAL 920 - 930 DATE: 12-1-98	SECTION: GENERAL PROVISIONS SUBJECT: LIABILITY
---	---

1. Employees of the Division of County Operations who are involved in certification processes may not be an AR. (See exception below.)
2. Retailers authorized to accept food stamp benefits may not be an AR with the following exception.

Exception: Either DCO employees or retailers may act as authorized representatives if the ES supervisor determines that no one else is available to serve as an AR and gives that individual specific written approval.

3. Individuals disqualified for an intentional program violation (IPV) may not act as an AR during the period of disqualification with the following exception.

Exception: The disqualified individual is the only adult member of the household able to act on the household's behalf. Once this has been established, the county office must determine whether this individual is needed to apply on behalf of the household or to use the food stamp benefits to purchase food for the household. For example, the household may be able to find someone else to make application for food stamp benefits but be unable to find anyone to purchase food regularly with the food stamp benefits. If the county office is unable to find someone to serve as an AR to purchase food with the food stamp benefits, the disqualified individual will be allowed to do so.

4. A homeless meal provider may not be an AR. (A homeless meal provider is an establishment such as a soup kitchen or a temporary shelter that feeds homeless persons. A full definition of a homeless meal provider may be found in the Glossary.)

930

### Liability

The county office worker will inform the household that all members will be held liable for any overpayments resulting from erroneous information given by the AR.

Exception: A private non-profit organization, institution or group living arrangement that serves as an AR will be responsible for any misrepresentation or fraud knowingly committed as facility residents are certified to receive food stamp benefits. See FSC 980 for details on centers as AR's.

Since household is liable for the information provided by the AR, a household member should either complete the application or review the

information on the application before the application is submitted. Since organizations or institutions serving as AR's are liable for erroneous information, the individual from the institution who will be interviewed will be advised to carefully review the application with the resident before it is submitted to the county office.

940 Records of AR's

The county office will ensure that AR's are properly designated in the household's case record. The *Food Stamp Application* (DCO-220) contains a section for the household to enter the AR's name, address and telephone number. The household may also submit a signed, dated statement containing the AR's name, address and telephone number which clearly states that the household wants this individual to serve as an AR.

If the AR has completed and signed an application and the validity of the application is questioned, the county office worker will obtain a note signed by the casehead spouse or other responsible household members indicating that the household wants this individual to serve as an AR. If the case head spouse or other responsible household member is unable to complete and/or sign the note, the worker will attempt to contact the household by telephone to confirm the AR. If telephone contact cannot be made, an interview with the AR in the household's home may be considered.

950 Controls on AR's

Limits may not be placed on the number of households that an AR may represent. However, county offices should be alert for situations where AR's have access to large amounts of food stamp benefits. For example, when a farmer employs migrant and seasonal farm workers and serves as their AR, the situation may be questionable. In such situations the county office should attempt to assure that:

1. The household has freely requested the assistance of the AR;
2. The household's circumstances are correctly represented;
3. The household is receiving all of food stamp benefits authorized;  
and
4. The authorized representative is properly using the benefits.

An assessment of the situation may be made by contacting the households involved. If it is not possible to contact these households or if the households fear reprisal, the county office will contact collateral contacts with knowledge of the situation.

FOOD STAMP CERTIFICATION MANUAL 950 - 970 DATE: 12-1-98	SECTION: GENERAL PROVISIONS SUBJECT: AUTHORIZED REPRESENTATIVES
---	--

If a DHS county office worker suspects an AR is using a household's food stamp benefits improperly, he or she will report the circumstances to the Central Office, Food Stamp Section, who will relay the report to Food and Nutrition Services.

No formal control procedures are mandated for county offices. If a county office has historically had problems with AR abuse of the Food Stamp Program, or if a problem appears to be developing in this area, a control procedure may be advised by the DCO County Administrator.

#### 960 Verifying the Identity of an AR

If an AR applies on behalf of a household, the identity of both the AR and the head of the household must be verified. Any document which reasonably establishes the identity of the AR must be accepted. Examples of such documents are a driver's license, a work or school ID, an ID for health benefits or other assistance, voter registration card, wage stubs, or birth certificate. A collateral contact may be made if documentary evidence is unavailable.

#### 970 Disqualifying AR's

IF a DHS county office obtains evidence that an AR has misrepresented a household's circumstances and has knowingly provided false information about the household, or has used the household's food stamp benefits improperly, the ES supervisor may disqualify that individual. If disqualified, that individual may not serve as an AR in the Food Stamp Program for a period of up to one year. The exact period of time will be left to the discretion of the ES supervisor so long as it does not exceed one year.

To disqualify an AR, the county office will send a letter to both the AR and the household that the AR has been representing. The letter will be sent 30 days prior to the date of the disqualification and will contain:

1. The proposed action (disqualification);
2. The reason for the disqualification;
3. The household's right to request an administrative hearing;
4. The telephone number of the county office; and
5. If possible, the name of the person to contact for additional information.

NOTE: This provision does not apply to residential treatment centers or group homes which act as AR's for the residents. See FSC 986 for information on disqualification of these facilities.

980

Residential Facilities as Authorized Representatives (AR's)

Residents of certain classes of residential facilities may choose to participate in the Food Stamp Program if the facility has been authorized by FNS or the appropriate state agency. The agency or agencies authorizing the facility must have determined that the facility is a non-profit organization.

\*\* Any organization, institution, or group living arrangement that serves as an AR is responsible for any misrepresentation or fraud knowingly committed when resident households are approved for food stamp benefits. For this reason, the employee designated to serve as the AR must be familiar with each resident's household situation and must carefully review each *Food Stamp Application* (DCO-220) with the household before submitting the application to the county office.

A facility will also be strictly liable for all misuse of food stamp benefits received on behalf of resident households and for all overissuances that occur while households are residing in the facility and are represented by the facility. There are two exceptions:

Exception 1 - Residents of group living arrangements applying on their own behalf are responsible for overissuances as would be any other household.

Exception 2 - Residents of shelters for battered women and children are responsible for any misinformation and/or overissuances even if they were certified through the use of an AR.

When it is determined administratively or judicially that a facility has misappropriated or used food stamp benefits for purposes not contributing to a certified household's meals, the facility may be penalized.

The county office will promptly notify the Central Office Food Stamp Section in writing when it believes that a facility is misusing food stamp benefits. The Food Stamp Section will, in turn, notify FNS when it has reason to believe that the facility is misusing food stamp benefits. FNS will determine whether a facility will be disqualified.

No action will be taken by the state against the facility before FNS takes action. If FNS disqualifies an organization or institution as a result, the county office will be notified of this action by the Food Stamp Section. The County Office will then suspend the violator's status as an AR for the same time period as instructed in FSC 970.

If a group living arrangement has its status as an AR suspended, residents applying on their own behalf may still participate.

A claim will be established against the facility for overissuances of food stamp benefits held for resident households if such overissuances are discovered during an FNS investigation or hearing.

FOOD STAMP CERTIFICATION MANUAL 981 - 981.2 DATE: 12-1-98	SECTION: GENERAL PROVISIONS SUBJECT: AUTHORIZED REPRESENTATIVES
---	--

\*\* 981 Alcoholic and/or Drug Addiction Treatment Centers

Residents of alcoholic and/or drug addiction treatment centers may participate in the Food Stamp Program if one of the two following conditions has been met:

- The center has been certified as a treatment center by the Bureau of Alcohol and Drug Abuse, or
- The center has been authorized by the Department of Agriculture, Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) to use food stamp benefits to purchase food through a wholesale outlet.

Residents of alcoholic and/or drug addiction treatment centers must apply for food stamp benefits through an authorized representative (AR) who is an employee of the treatment center. The treatment center will maintain control of the food stamp benefits as long as the customer continues to reside at the center.

When a county office receives an inquiry from alcoholic and/or drug addiction treatment center about participating in the Food Stamp Program, the center should be provided with a copy of FSC 981.5. All applicable policy should be provided to participating treatment centers. This includes the policy at FSC 1820-1825 and FSC 980-981.5.

\*\* 981.1 Treatment Center's Responsibilities

Each alcoholic and/or drug addiction treatment center must maintain a Daily Census Report (DCO-254). A copy of the DCO-254 must be provided to the county office at the end of each month.

At least once each year, the county must make an on site visit to each treatment center to compare the center's records to the information submitted on the DCO-254. (The center's records for at least one month must be compared to the information submitted on the DCO-254.) A form, Alcoholic and/or Drug Addiction Treatment Center Record of On-Site Visit, (DCO-263) may be used to record these visits.

The DCO-263 is not a mandatory form. However, any record of an on site visit prepared by the county should contain at least the information provided on the DCO-263.

\*\* 981.2 Accessing EBT Benefits

Alcoholic and/or drug addiction treatment centers that have only Bureau of Alcohol and Drug Abuse certification will purchase food for the residents by using the residents' EBT cards at retail outlets.

In treatment centers that have been authorized by FNS to use food stamp benefits at a wholesale outlet, a point of sale (POS) device may be installed. In centers with a Point of Sale (POS) device, the authorized representative will swipe the resident's EBT card through the center's

POS device to obtain benefit authorization. When the EBT card authorization occurs, the food stamp benefits will be debited from the resident's account and transferred through the settlement process to the treatment center's bank account. The treatment center will use the funds in the bank account to purchase food for the center.

\*\* 981.3 Special Procedures for Authorizing Authorized Representatives (AR)

For residents of alcoholic and/or drug addiction treatment centers, an EBT card is issued for both the AR and the resident. The AR's EBT card does not have the resident's name on it. In order to identify each resident's EBT card, the county must have a special way of entering the AR's name on the WFSM. For example, if the AR's name is Robert Johnson and the resident's name is Bill Smith, the AR's name could be entered on the WFSM as Rjohnson Bsmith.

There is no mandated method of entering the AR's name; however, only 23 spaces are available in the field where the AR's name is entered. Any method selected by the county should be used consistently for all treatment centers and all residents.

\*\* 981.4 When a Resident Leaves a Treatment Center

When a resident leaves an alcoholic and/or drug addiction treatment center, the treatment center must report the departure to the DHS county office and destroy the AR's EBT card immediately. The treatment center will provide his or her EBT card to the resident, if possible. If the resident leaves without notifying the treatment center, both the resident's and the AR's EBT card will be destroyed immediately by burning the card or by cutting the card into at least three pieces.

When a treatment center reports that a resident has left, the county office will deactivate the EBT account. If a former treatment center resident contacts the county office, the county office will determine if the resident left the center on or before the 15th of the month. If so, the county office worker will reactivate the account and will, if necessary, authorize the issuance of an EBT card and PIN for the former resident.



FOOD STAMP CERTIFICATION MANUAL 981.5 - 981.5 DATE: 12-1-98	SECTION: GENERAL PROVISIONS SUBJECT: GUIDELINES FOR TREATMENT CENTERS
---	---

\*\*

## 981.5 Treatment Center Guidelines for Food Stamp Program Participation

- Residents of an alcoholic and/or drug addition treatment center will be allowed to participate in the Food Stamp Program only if the center has been: 1) certified by the Bureau of Alcohol and Drug Abuse; or 2) authorized by the Department of Agriculture, Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) to use food stamp benefits at wholesale food outlets.
- Treatment centers that wish to be certified by the Bureau of Alcohol and Drug Abuse must contact the Bureau of Alcohol and Drug Abuse, 5800 West 10th, Suite 907, Little Rock, AR 72204. The telephone number is (501) 280-4500.
- Treatment centers that wish to be authorized by FNS to use the food stamp benefits at wholesale outlets must contact FNS at 700 West Capitol, Room 3319, Little Rock, AR 72201. The telephone number is (501) 324-5851.
- A treatment center must agree to be responsible for any misrepresentation or fraud knowingly committed when resident households are approved for food stamp benefits.
- A treatment center must designate an employee in writing to serve as an authorized representative (AR) for all residents. The AR will make application for food stamp benefits on behalf of center residents. The AR will be designated as the alternative payee for each resident who is eligible to receive food stamp benefits and will receive an EBT card for each eligible resident. The AR will be the only person who can access the food stamp benefits while the individual is residing in the center.
- Only treatment centers authorized by FNS to use food stamp benefits at wholesale outlets will be allowed to have an EBT point of sale (POS) device at the center.
- When a resident leaves a treatment center, the center must notify the DHS county office immediately so the AR can be removed as the resident's alternative payee. If possible, the resident's EBT card will be given to the resident. The AR's EBT card must be destroyed.
- A treatment center must insure that residents who leave on or before the 15th of the month have access to one-half of their monthly food stamp benefit amount. Residents who depart on or before the 15th of the month will be directed by the treatment center to contact the county office to have their remaining food stamp benefits activated. In treatment centers where the EBT cards are used to shop, the center will insure that one-half the resident's monthly benefit amount remains in the resident's account until the 16th of the month. In treatment centers that utilize an EBT point of sale (POS) device, the center may do a food stamp purchase refund if the resident departs on or before the 15th of the month. Or, the center may swipe the EBT card through the POS on a weekly or biweekly basis to cover the costs of the resident's meals for that period.
- A treatment center must maintain a Daily Census Report (DCO-254) and provide a copy to the appropriate county office at the end of each month.
- The DHS county office will conduct a yearly on-site visit to each treatment center to compare the Daily Census Report to the center's records.

\*\*  
982 Group Living Arrangements

A resident of a group living arrangement as defined in the Glossary under "Group Living Arrangement" has three options in applying for food stamp benefits. They are:

1. Apply and be certified as a one person household through an AR employed by and designated in writing by the group living arrangement;
2. Apply themselves and be certified on their own behalf if they are capable; or
3. Apply and be certified through an AR of their choice.

The group living arrangement will have the discretion of deciding if a resident may apply for food stamp benefits on his or her own behalf. This decision will be based upon the resident's physical and mental ability to handle his or her business.

\*\*  
982.1 Accessing EBT Benefits

A resident of a group living arrangement may receive their own EBT card and PIN or may designate an authorized representative (AR). A resident of a group living arrangement may also receive benefits through an AR designated as an alternate payee. The alternate payee designated by the resident (or a guardian) will have a separate card, card number and PIN. The resident may or may not have an EBT card if there is an alternate payee. This decision will be made by the group living arrangement on a case-by-case basis.

983 Shelters for Battered Women and Children

A woman or a woman with children who is temporarily residing in a shelter for battered women and children may apply for food stamp benefits and be certified without the use of an AR. Shelter residents do have the option of appointing an AR. The AR may be an individual of the resident's choice. If the resident cannot appoint an AR and will be endangered by leaving the shelter, the shelter may appoint a shelter employee or a volunteer to act as an AR.

\*\*  
983.1 Accessing EBT Benefits

A resident of a shelter for battered women and children will retain control of their food stamp benefits and EBT cards even if certified through an AR.

1720 Determining Resources for Households with Striking Members

To determine the household's resource level, the county office worker must consider all countable resources available to the household at the time of the interview.

Since many strikers have recent long-term, regular employment, emphasis must be placed on determining countable resources. In particular, the possibility that the household owns several late model cars or recreational equipment such as boats or campers will be explored.

Vehicles normally exempt from a determination of equity value because they are used for transportation to the job site where the strike has occurred do not lose this exemption during the strike. However, the vehicle's fair market value in excess of \$4,650 will continue to be considered a resource.

Resources, including allowable resource levels, are fully explained in FSC 4100-4310.

1730 Determining Eligibility Based Upon Income

When a household with a striking member applies for food stamp benefits, the household's prestrike income eligibility will be determined first. If the household's income was within the applicable gross and net limits as of the day before the strike, the household's current eligibility will be determined. A description of this process follows:

- Step 1 Determine the household's prestrike income eligibility by considering the day before the strike as the date of application and assuming the strike did not occur. All allowable deductions will be applied when determining net income. If the household was ineligible as of the day before the strike, the food stamp application will be denied. If the household was eligible as of the day before the strike, go to step 2 below.
- Step 2 Determine the household's current eligibility by comparing the striking member's current income to his or her income as of the day before the strike. The higher of these two amounts will be added to the current income of all non-striking household members. All applicable deductions such as the earned income deduction will be allowed. The household must meet the gross and (if applicable) net income limits for the appropriate household size.

Example: Mr. Green applies for food stamp benefits on May 1. Mr. Green, age 45, is employed by ABC Inc. He is a member of the union and is participating in a strike against ABC Inc. He has four members in his household. His income as of the day before the strike was \$10 per hour for a 40 hour week. There was no other income in the home. Mr. Green reported a house payment of \$375 per month including taxes and insurance. He reported utility expenses as listed:

Electricity (for cooling	\$75.00 per month
Gas	15.00 per month
Water	10.00 per month
Telephone	15.00 per month

1. Prestrike income is determined

Gross Income Pretest

\$ 10.00	per hour
X 40	hours
\$ 400.00	
X 4.334	conversion factor
\$1,733.60	(\$1,734 rounded) gross income

Based upon the October 1998 gross income limits of \$1,783, Mr. Green's household passed the gross income pretest.

Net Income Eligibility is determined.

\$ 1,734	gross earned income
X 20%	
\$ 346.80	(\$347 rounded) earned income deduction

\$ 1,734	gross earned income
- 347	earned income deduction
\$ 1,387	net earned income
- 134	standard deduction (as of October 1998)
\$ 1,114	adjusted gross income

Shelter

\$375 house payment  
+175 utility standard (as of October 1998)  
\$550 total shelter

\$ 1,114 adjusted gross income  
X 50%  
\$ 563

\$ 550 total shelter  
- 557 50% adjusted gross income  
0 excess shelter

\$1,114 is the adjusted gross income  
\$1,371 is the maximum net income allowable for a  
household of four as of October 1998.

Mr. Green was eligible as of the day before the strike.

2. Current income is determined. Mr. Green's current income is \$50 per week in strike benefits. In addition, his wife is now working 40 hours per week earning \$6.00 per hour. The worker compares Mr. Green's current income of \$217 per month ( $\$50 \times 4.334 = \$216.70$  rounded to \$217) to his prestrike income of \$1,734 per month. His prestrike income is greater and will be added to Mrs. Green's current income to determine eligibility.

Mrs. Green's monthly income is calculated.

\$ 6.00 per hour  
X 40 hours per week  
\$ 240.00 per week  
X 4.334 conversion factor  
\$1,040.16 (\$1,040 rounded) gross earned income

Mr. and Mrs. Green's income is added together.

\$1,734 Mr. Green's income  
+1,040 Mrs. Green's income  
\$2,774 total gross income

The household's current total gross income is \$2,774. This figure is compared to the gross limit for a household of four. This figure (as of October 1998) is \$1,783. The household is not eligible to participate in the Food Stamp Program.

1740 Verification/Documentation

The county office worker must verify and document the income of all household members from all sources. Both the prestrike and current income of striking members must be verified.

All income (prestrike and current) must be documented in sufficient detail to determine if the correct income was used in the budget. All calculations pertaining to prestrike and (if applicable) current eligibility must appear and must be adequately labeled.

1800 Institutions

In the Food Stamp Program, an institution is an established organization that offers meals and lodging as a part of normal operation. Examples of institutions are schools and colleges with dormitories, prisons, rehabilitation and treatment centers (including certain mental health centers), group living arrangements, shelters for the homeless, shelters for battered women, extended care hospitals and nursing homes.

An individual is a resident of an institution when an institution provides an individual with the majority (over 50% of three meals daily) of his or her meals as part of the institution's normal services.

Residents of institutions are not eligible to participate in the Food Stamp Program except as listed below:

1. Residents of federally subsidized housing for the elderly as built under either Section 202 of the Housing Act of 1959 or Section 236 of the National Housing Act (FNS).
2. Narcotic addicts or alcoholics who reside at a facility, treatment center or certain mental health centers for the purpose of regular participation in a drug or alcoholism treatment and rehabilitation program.
3. Disabled (as defined in the Glossary, definition of Aged/Disabled Household) residents of group living arrangements.
4. Women or women with their children who are temporarily residing in a shelter for battered women and children.
5. Residents of shelters for the homeless.

FOOD STAMP CERTIFICATION MANUAL 1800 - 1821 DATE: 12-1-98	SECTION: HOUSEHOLD INFORMATION SUBJECT: INSTITUTIONS - HOUSING FOR ELDERLY/TREATMENT CENTERS
---	--

Shelters for the homeless include:

- a) Supervised shelters such as welfare hotels or congregate shelters;  
or
- b) Halfway houses or similar institutions that provide temporary accommodations for individuals as an alternative to institutionalization.

Generally, residents of institutions are certified under the provisions that apply to all other households. Such residents are also entitled to the same rights (notices of adverse action, administrative hearings, restoration of lost benefits, etc.) as other food stamp households.

#### 1810 Residents of Federally Subsidized Housing for the Elderly

There are no special provisions for the certification of residents of federally subsidized housing for the elderly. Housing residents may use food stamp benefits to purchase delivered meals or communally prepared meals. A resident may also purchase food and prepare their own meals if meal preparation facilities are available.

#### 1820 Residents of Drug Addiction and/or Alcoholism Treatment Centers

Residents of treatment centers must apply and be certified for food stamp benefits through an authorized representative (AR) who is an employee of the treatment center. Each treatment center will designate in writing an employee to serve as an AR for food stamp purposes. The county will keep these designations on file and will update the files when a new AR is named by the center.

See FSC 980 for the responsibilities of a treatment center serving as an AR.

#### 1821 Processing Standards

All income and resources of treatment center residents must be reported, verified as mandated by policy, and counted when a food stamp budget is calculated. If a resident incurs a cost for a room at the center, the room cost may be allowed as a shelter cost. Medical costs are allowable as specified in FSC 6500 if the household is aged or disabled. See the Glossary definition of "Aged/Disabled Household."

Each initial application submitted by the treatment center will be evaluated for eligibility as described in FSC 8000, *Initial Case Actions*.

FOOD STAMP CERTIFICATION MANUAL  
1821 - 1825  
DATE: 12-1-98

SECTION: HOUSEHOLD INFORMATION  
SUBJECT: INSTITUTIONS - TREATMENT  
CENTERS

Expedited applications will be processed under the standards in FSC 9000.

Changes in household circumstances will be processed by the standards that apply to all other households. See FSC 11000 and 12000 for instructions on reporting and processing changes.

Applications for recertifications submitted by resident households will be processed using the standards that apply to all other households. See FSC 10600 when processing timely recertifications and FSC 10700 when processing untimely recertifications.

1822 Household Composition

Normally, treatment center residents are one person households. However, children who live with a parent in a treatment center may be included in the parent's food stamp case. Meals served to the children by the treatment center may be purchased with food stamp benefits.

1823 Work Registration

Treatment center residents undergoing treatment and/or rehabilitation for drug and/or alcohol abuse are not subject to the work registration requirements.

1824 Monthly Reports and On-Site Visits

Each treatment and rehabilitation center must maintain a *Daily Census Report* using form DCO-254. A copy will be provided to the appropriate county office at the end of each month. Daily and monthly totals must be shown.

County offices will make random on-site visits to each participating treatment and rehabilitation center located in that county. At least one such visit will be made each year. The purpose of the visit will be to ensure the accuracy of the *Daily Census Report* by comparing it to the center's records. Centers found to be out of compliance during the on-site visit will be reported in writing to the Manager, Food Stamp Section, Slot 1240. Copies of all pertinent documents will be attached.

1825 When Residents of Treatment Centers Leave

A center may no longer act as an AR for a resident after the resident leaves the treatment center. See FSC 985.1 for specific procedures.



FOOD STAMP CERTIFICATION MANUAL 1830 - 1832 DATE: 11-1-98	SECTION: HOUSEHOLD INFORMATION SUBJECT: INSTITUTIONS - GROUP LIVING ARRANGEMENTS
---	--

### 1830 Residents of Group Living Arrangements

A group living arrangement is a public or private nonprofit residential setting serving no more than sixteen residents that is certified by Developmental Disabilities Service (DDS) as a residence for disabled individuals. To be eligible for food stamp benefits, a resident of a group living arrangement must be disabled as defined in the Glossary, items 2-15 under "Aged/Disabled Households."

A resident of a group living arrangements may:

- . Apply and be certified as a one-person household through an authorized representative (AR) designated in writing by the group living arrangement;
- . Apply and be certified on his or her own behalf if the group living arrangement has determined the resident is capable of handling the application process; or
- . Apply and be certified through an AR of his or her own choice as determined permissible by the group living arrangement.

An organization, institution, or group living arrangement that applies on behalf of each resident will receive and spend these food stamp benefits for food to be prepared by and/or served to the resident. An eligible resident may also be allowed to use all (or any portion) of the food stamp benefits on his or her own behalf.

A resident may use his or her food stamp benefits to:

1. Purchase meals prepared by the facility and served either individually or communally;
2. Purchase and prepare food for his or her own use; or
3. Purchase meals prepared and served by members of the group living arrangement.

See FSC 982 for additional information on the responsibilities of a group living arrangement that serves as an AR.

### 1831 Processing Standards

Processing standards for group living arrangements are the same as for Drug Addiction and Alcoholism Treatment Centers. See FSC 1821 for an explanation of these standards.

### 1832 Household Composition

Food stamp applications will be accepted for an individual applying as a one person household or for any grouping of residents applying as a household.

Applications for groups of residents will be made either through an AR or through direct application by the household.

1833 Work Registration

Residents of group living arrangements are not subject to work registration.

1834 When Residents of Group Living Arrangements Leave

A group living arrangement will no longer act as AR for a resident when the resident leaves the arrangement. See FSC 985.2 for specific procedures.

1840 Residents of Shelters for Battered Women and Children

Only residents of shelters for battered women and children which meet the following definition may participate in the Food Stamp Program.

Definition: A public or private non-profit residential facility that serves battered women and their children. If such a facility serves other individuals, a portion of the facility must be set aside on a long-term basis to serve only battered women.

The name of the shelter must be documented in the case record.

NOTE: Shelters having FNS authorization to redeem food stamp benefits at wholesale operations will be considered as having met this definition and no further determination will be necessary.

1841 Certifying Residents of Shelters for Battered Women and Children

The resident may elect to make application for food stamp benefits or to have an AR of their choice apply on their behalf. If a resident's children live with the resident in a shelter, the children must be included in her food stamp household.

Resources will be considered inaccessible to residents if:

1. The resources are jointly owned by the resident and members of the former household; and
2. The resident's access to the resources is dependent upon the agreement of the joint owner who still resides in the former household.

FOOD STAMP CERTIFICATION MANUAL 1841 - 1841.1 DATE: 12-1-98	SECTION: HOUSEHOLD INFORMATION SUBJECT: INSTITUTIONS - SHELTERS FOR BATTERED WOMEN
---	--

A shelter resident will be certified based solely upon his or her current income and allowable expenses without regard to the income and expenses of the former household. Room payment incurred at the shelter will be considered a shelter expense.

Shelter residents entitled to expedited service will be processed in accordance with the postponed verification procedures explained in FSC 9071.

Shelter residents are subject to the work registration requirements unless otherwise exempt.

#### 1841.1 Certifying Residents Who Have Already Participated in the Current Month

A resident of a shelter for battered women and children currently included in a food stamp household with the person who abused them may be allowed to apply for and (if determined eligible) additional food stamp benefits for the current month as a separate household.

Example 1: Mr. and Mrs. Smith and their two children were certified to participate in the Food Stamp Program for the period of October through December. Benefits were issued on October 1st. On October 10th, Mrs. Smith and the two children left the home and entered a shelter for battered women and children. On October 11th, Mrs. Smith applied as a separate household and was determined eligible on October 14th as a three person household. None of Mr. Smith's income was considered.

Proration of food stamp benefits will apply. See FSC 8610 for proration procedures.

Example 2: Benefits for Mrs. Smith would be prorated to the date of application - October 11th.

Shelter residents may receive an additional issuance of benefits as a separate household only once a month.

Example 3: If Mrs. Smith left the center on October 18th, moved back in with Mr. Smith, and then entered the center again on October 25th, she would not be eligible to receive additional food stamp benefits as a separate household in October.

In some instances, the shelter resident who applies for additional benefits was the head of the original household. In these instances, no additional benefits will be issued. Instead, the original EBT card will be voided, and a new EBT card and PIN will be issued as instructed in FSC 14134.

1841.2 Action on Former Households

The worker must take prompt action to change the former household's food stamp benefit amount or to close the case if necessary. A notice of adverse action will be issued. If sufficient information is not available, the period of certification of the former household will be shortened as instructed in FSC 11430.

The former household will be responsible for any overissuances which occur due to failure to timely report that the battered members have left the home.

See FSC 12450 for information on case adjustments based on information made known to the Agency.

See FSC 15400 for overissuances due to failure to report changes in a timely manner.

1850 Homeless Households

A homeless individual is an individual who lacks a fixed and regular nighttime residence or an individual whose primary nighttime residence is:

1. A supervised shelter designed to provide temporary accommodation - e.g., a welfare hotel or a shelter for the homeless;
2. A halfway house or a similar institution that provides temporary accommodations for individuals as an alternative to institutionalization;
3. A temporary accommodation (lasting no longer than 90 days) in the residence of another individual; or
4. A place not designed for, or ordinarily used as, a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings. Examples are a hallway, a bus station, a lobby or similar places.

Households composed entirely of homeless individuals are considered to be homeless households.

Homeless households, including residents of temporary shelters for the homeless, may be certified to receive food stamp benefits if otherwise eligible. This is true even if the shelter does not participate in the program as a homeless meal provider. Homeless households are subject to all eligibility factors (see summary in FSC 7200-7210) and have the same rights as any other household. See FSC 1330 for the procedures for verifying residency for homeless households.

Eligible homeless households may use food stamp benefits in the same manner as any other eligible household. See FSC 120. However, eligible homeless households may also use food stamp benefits, on a voluntary basis, to purchase prepared meals from authorized homeless meal providers.

#### 1851 Authorized Homeless Meal Providers

A homeless meal provider is an establishment that has been authorized by the Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) to accept food stamp benefits in payment for meals. A public or private, non-profit establishment which feeds homeless individuals may submit an *Application for Homeless Meal Provider Status* (DCO-223) to the DHS County Office in the county where the establishment is located. Approved applications will be forwarded by DHS to FNS for the necessary authorization to accept food stamp benefits in payment for meals. See FSC 1852. Homeless meal providers must abide by the following policies:

1. The meal provider must serve meals that include food purchased by the provider. Meal providers serving meals prepared wholly from donated foods will not be eligible for authorization.
2. Only homeless food stamp households determined to be homeless will be permitted to use food stamp benefits to purchase meals prepared by the meal provider. The meal provider must establish the household's right to use food stamp benefits to purchase meals.
3. The use of food stamp benefits to purchase meals from the meal provider must be voluntary on the part of food stamp households.
4. Food stamp households must continue to be given the option of using cash if the meal provider requires payment for a meal.

FOOD STAMP CERTIFICATION MANUAL 1851 - 1852 DATE: 12-1-98	SECTION: HOUSEHOLD INFORMATION SUBJECT: HOMELESS MEAL PROVIDERS
---	--

5. If others have the option of eating free or making a monetary donation, food stamp households must be given this same option - eat free, or donate money or food stamp benefits.
6. The amount requested from food stamp households to purchase meals may not exceed the average cost of the food contained in a meal served by the meal provider. This refers to the direct cost of food used in preparation of meals. It does not include the value of food donated by USDA or private individuals or companies. Neither does it include the costs of transportation, storage or preparation of the food. Average costs will be determined by averaging allowable food costs over a period of up to one calendar month.
7. Meal providers will not be allowed to serve as authorized representatives. See FSC 920.

1852

#### Disposition of Homeless Meal Provider Applications

Organizations interested in accepting food stamp benefits from the homeless in payment for prepared meals will be referred to the local county DHS office. The ES Supervisor or designee will issue an *Application for Homeless Meal Provider Status* (DCO-223) to the organization. The organization must complete this form and return it to the county office. After the form has been returned, the ES Supervisor or a designee will visit the feeding site to determine that meals are being served to homeless households. A *Meal Provider Visit Record and Disposal* (DCO-224) will be completed during the visit and routed according to the instructions on the form.

No organization will be authorized as a meal provider if:

1. The organization does not prepare and serve meals as part of normal service;
2. The organization serves meals prepared wholly from food donated by U.S.D.A., private companies or individuals; or

- PLEASE GO TO THE NEXT PAGE -

14000 Summary

Issuance of food stamp benefits in the State of Arkansas operates in the following sequence:

- The county office authorizes issuance of food stamp benefits through input to the Food Stamp Automated Customer Tracking System (FACTS) via the Food Stamp Master File (WFSM).
- The FACTS system analyzes the input, makes final assessments about eligibility and benefit level, and extracts eligible cases for issuance. At the time of extract, the case is listed on the County/Name Listing (FS-147) and the Food Stamp History Screen (WFTD) is updated. Benefits for initial applicants are extracted by FACTS on a daily basis. Monthly benefits for currently certified cases are extracted by FACTS at the end of each calendar month.
- Benefits are issued through an Electronic Benefits Transfer (EBT) system utilizing a device similar to a credit card.
- The food stamp household receives the EBT card and a personal identification number (PIN) via the mail.
- To activate the EBT card, the food stamp household calls the customer Help Desk and verifies his or her identity.
- After the card is activated the food stamp household takes the EBT card to any grocery store authorized by the Department of Agriculture, Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) to accept food stamp benefits.
- At the grocery store, the merchant swipes the EBT card through a point of sale (POS) device.
- The EBT contractor electronically credits to the merchant's bank account an amount equivalent to the food stamp purchase. The household's food stamp EBT account is electronically debited for the amount of the purchase.

14100 Types of Issuance

On each monthly and daily County/Name Listing (FS-147) a three digit code, representing the transaction type, appears in the first column. The same transaction types appear on the History Screen (WFTD). The following chart lists each transaction type and briefly describes the transaction.

FOOD STAMP CERTIFICATION MANUAL 14100 - 14121 DATE: 12-1-98	SECTION: ISSUANCE OF BENEFITS SUBJECT: TRANSACTION TYPES/ MONTHLY & DAILY EXTRACT
---	---

TRANSACTION TYPE	DESCRIPTION
000	A regular monthly or daily extract which may include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Prorated benefits (FSC 14122)</li> <li>• Restorations and retroactive benefits (FSC 14110)</li> <li>• Recoupments (FSC 14110)</li> <li>• Aggregate benefits (FSC 14120)</li> </ul>
001	Second authorization of benefits for individual residing in a battered women's shelter (FSC 14134)
002	Retroactive only benefits (FSC 14121)
100	Benefits released from hold status (FSC 14131)
200	Reissue of current month's benefits (Code not presently in use)
300	Supplemental benefits (FSC 14133)
400	Replacement of food purchased with food stamp benefits and then later lost in a disaster (FSC 14132)
500	Special situations (FSC 14135)
600	Restored benefits (FSC 14133.2)

#### 14110 Monthly Extract

Food stamp benefits are extracted for issuance from the FACTS system on a monthly basis for all households currently participating in the Food Stamp Program. At monthly extract, food stamp benefits may be withheld (recouped) as a result of an overpayment claim against the household. Recoupments are identified on the Food Stamp History Inquiry Screen (WFTD) by the appearance of a code C in the TSCF column. See FSC 15531 for additional information. At monthly extract, restored benefits may be issued to the household. Restorations are identified on the Food Stamp History Inquiry Screen (WFTD) by the appearance of a code S in the TSCF column. See DCOUM 8370 for additional information.

#### 14120 Daily Issuance Extract

Extract for daily issuance occurs when information is keyed to either the Food Stamp Master File (WFSM) or the Food Stamp Automated 248 Screen (WFMO).

#### 14121 Retroactive Benefits

Retroactive food stamp benefits are issued via daily issuance at the time of application approval if:



1. The household's application was filed in a month prior to the month of application approval; and
2. The household was eligible for benefits during the retroactive month or months; and
3. The county office was at fault for the delay in processing the application.

When a household is entitled to retroactive benefits, these benefits must be authorized via the RETRO fields of WFSM. More than one month of retroactive benefits may be authorized via one entry. Under certain conditions, retroactive benefits will be approved for a household that is not currently eligible for food stamp benefits. These transactions must also be authorized via the RETRO fields of WFSM. The Daily Report of Messages (PO-0792) will list retroactive benefits that extract on daily issuance. Retroactive benefits will be identified on the Food Stamp History Inquiry Screen (WFTD) by the appearance of a code T in the TSCF column.

See FSC 8650 for additional information about retroactive benefits. See FSC 8520 for instructions on determining fault when an application is delayed. See DCOUM 7300-7303 for instructions on authorizing retroactive benefits via WFSM.

#### 14122 Prorated Benefits

Benefits for households that file an initial application for food stamp benefits as defined in FSC 8100 are prorated to the date of application and issued via daily issuance. Normally, the FACTS system calculates prorated benefits. FSC 8610-8612 contains instructions for manually determining prorated benefits.

#### 14123 Aggregate Benefits

Aggregate benefits are benefits for the month of application and the following month. Aggregate benefits are automatically extracted and authorized via daily issuance when an initial application is filed after the 15th day of the month and is approved on or before the last day of the same month. Aggregate benefits will be identified on the Food Stamp History Inquiry Screen (WFTD) by the appearance of a code F in the TSCF column. See FSC 8651 for additional information.

#### 14130 Benefits Authorized Via WFMO

The following benefits must be authorized via the WFMO screen and extracted via daily issuance: (1) releases from hold; (2) replacement of food purchased with food stamp benefits and lost in a disaster; (3) reissue of benefits to residents of shelters for battered women; (4) supplemental issuances; and (5) restored benefits issued to households currently participating in the Food Stamp Program.

**14131    Release from Hold**

Cases are placed on hold when a household's food stamp benefits are canceled by the Food Stamp Section as explained in FSC 14350 and are not released prior to the next month extract. The Daily Cancellation Report (FS-0783) provides information about canceled benefits. A report is generated for a specific county only if there is a cancellation.

The Hold Printout (FS-0155) provides a list of the cases placed on hold at the time of the monthly extract.

To release food stamp benefits from hold, the county office worker must complete the following steps:

- Step 1    Complete the form *Food Stamp Adjustment* (DCO-248). Do not enter a serial number. Use the transaction type 100. Go to Step 2.
- Step 2    Enter the information from the DCO-248 via the Food Stamp Automated 248 Screen (WFM0) using a transaction code 100. Go to Step 3.
- Step 3    If the household requested the release from hold, notify the household via a *Notice of Action* (DCO-1) of the date of the release and the approximate date the benefits will be available to the household.

**14132    Replacement of Food Lost in a Household Misfortune**

Households may request a full or partial replacement of food purchased with food stamp benefits and subsequently destroyed in a household misfortune such as, but not limited to, a fire, flood or tornado. When a household indicates part or all of the food the household purchased with food stamp benefits was destroyed in a misfortune, the county office must take the following steps:

- Step 1    Determine if the misfortune was reported within 10 days of the date of the occurrence. If yes, go to Step 2. If not, deny the household's claim and provide the household with the form *Notice of Action* (DCO-1) explaining the reason for the denial.
- Step 2    Interview a responsible member of the household or the authorized representative (AR) by telephone or in person to determine the exact amount of food lost in the misfortune. Consider both the date the household last purchased food and the amount of benefits still available to the household. THE AMOUNT AUTHORIZED MAY NOT EXCEED THE CURRENT MONTH'S FOOD STAMP BENEFIT AMOUNT. Go to Step 3.

- Step 3 Ask the household via DCO-1 to provide verification of the misfortune. Examples of acceptable verification include, but are not limited to, copies of police or fire department reports. Allow the household 10 days to provide the requested verification. If verification is provided, go to Step 4. If not, deny the household's claim. Provide the household with a DCO-1 explaining the reason for the denial of the claim.
- Step 4 Complete a *Food Stamp Adjustment* (DCO-248) using the serial number of the current month's benefit amount and the transaction type 451. Go to Step 5.
- Step 5 Issue to the household a DCO-1 specifying the amount of the replacement and the approximate date the benefits will be available.

#### 14133 Supplemental Benefits / Restored Benefits

Supplemental benefits or restored benefits are issued by the agency to correct an error made by the agency. This includes, but is not limited to, case processing errors, system errors, and contractor errors. The distinction between a supplemental benefit and a restored benefit depends on the month of issuance. Supplemental benefits are authorized in the same month as the incorrect benefits while restored benefits are issued in a month after the incorrect benefits were issued.

This section provides only instructions on authorizing issuance of supplemental and restored benefits. See FSC 13000 for instructions on determining the correct amount of supplemental or restored benefits to be authorized.

##### 14133.1 Authorization of Supplemental Benefits

The benefits to be supplemented must have been extracted in the current month unless the benefits were issued as aggregate benefits as instructed in FSC 8651. Aggregate benefits must have been issued in the month before the current month.

The following instructions must be followed to authorize supplemental benefits:

- Step 1 Complete a *Food Stamp Automated Adjustment* (DCO-248). Use the serial number of the benefits to be supplemented. For aggregate benefits, use the serial number of the benefits identified with a code F in the TSCF column of the Food Stamp History Screen (WFTD). Use one of the following transaction types:

- 321 Arithmetic error
- 324 Incorrect calculation of income
- 325 Incorrect calculation of deduction

FOOD STAMP CERTIFICATION MANUAL 14133.1 14133.2 DATE: 12-1-98	SECTION: ISSUANCE OF BENEFITS SUBJECT: RESTORED BENEFITS
---	---

- 327 Incorrect household size
- 328 Input not correct or not processed correctly after entry
- 329 Failed to process change timely
- 333 Failed to increase benefits as a result of an increase in household size or decrease in income of \$50 or more
- 334 Other or combination of two or more listed above

Enter the number of new household members. If there are no new household members, enter zero. Enter the amount of the supplement. Go to Step 2.

Step 2 Enter the information from the DCO-248 via the Food Stamp Automated 248 Screen (WFMO). See DCOUM 8340.

## 14133.2 Authorization of Restored Benefits

Restored benefits may be authorized via the Food Stamp Master File (WFSM) or the Food Stamp Automated 248 (WFMO) Screen. Restorations will be authorized via WFMO when the household's monthly benefits have already extracted via regular monthly extract or daily issuance and issuance of the restoration should not be delayed until the household's next regular issuance. Restorations will be authorized via WFSM when the food stamp case is closed or has expired or when the restoration may be issued with the next month's regular benefits.

To authorize restored benefits via WFSM, the worker must key an RO transaction. Refer to Appendix L of the DCO User's Manual for an explanation of the minimum requirements for an RO transaction. If an RO transaction is entered for a case already on the Food Stamp Master File, restored benefits will extract on the next daily issuance. If an RO transaction is entered for a case not currently on the Food Stamp Master File, restored benefits will extract at the next monthly extract.

The following instructions must be followed to authorize restored benefits via WFMO:

Step 1 Complete a Food Stamp Automated Adjustment (DCO-248). Use the serial number of the benefits that have already extracted in the current month. (Call the Food Stamp Section for assistance if authorizing restored benefits when aggregate benefits were issued.) Use one of the following transaction types:

- 601 Arithmetic error
- 602 Failure to give retroactive benefits
- 603 County decision reversed by administrative hearing
- 604 Incorrect calculation of income
- 605 Incorrect calculation of deduction
- 606 Incorrect calculation of resource

- 607 Incorrect household size
- 608 Input not keyed or not keyed timely
- 609 Failed to process change timely
- 610 Failed to increase benefits as a result of an increase in household size or decrease in income of \$50 or more
- 611 Case closed, denied, or benefits reduced due to other misapplication
- 614 Other or combination of the above

Enter the amount to be restored. Go to Step 2.

Step 2 Enter the information from the DCO-248 via the Food Stamp Automated 248 Screen (WFM0). See DCOUM 8370-8380.

The Daily Report of Messages (PO-0792) contains a listing of restored benefits that extract on daily issuance.

#### 14134 Issuance to Residents of Battered Women's Shelters

Individuals who enter a shelter for battered women and children, as defined in FSC 1840, may be entitled to receive an additional issuance of benefits if this individual is currently included in an active food stamp case with the person who abused them.

An additional issuance of benefits will not be authorized if the abused individual is the casehead. If the casehead does not have the EBT card in their possession, the original card will be deactivated and replaced as instructed in FSC 14400.

If the abused individual is not the case head, a food stamp application will be processed with the abused individual as the casehead. See FSC 1841. Benefits will be prorated to the date of application. See FSC 8610 for information about proration.

To authorize an additional issuance of benefits to a resident of a battered women's shelter, the county office will:

Step 1 Complete the form *Food Stamp Automated Adjustment* (DCO-248). Use the serial number of the benefits to be supplemented. For aggregate benefits, use the serial number of the benefits identified with a code F in the TSCF column of the Food Stamp History Screen (WFTD). Use transaction code 001. Enter the number of household members residing in the shelter. Enter the benefit amount after proration. Go to Step 2.

Step 2 Enter the information from the DCO-248 via the Food Stamp Automated 248 Screen (WFM0). See DCOUM 8310.

FOOD STAMP CERTIFICATION MANUAL 14135 - 14300 DATE: 12-1-98	SECTION: ISSUANCE OF BENEFITS SUBJECT: ISSUANCE BY EBT
---	---

#### 14135 Code 500 - Special Transactions

The 500 transaction is used when the county cannot authorize food stamp benefits due the household through a normal WFSM or WFMO transaction. No 500 transaction can be keyed unless the transaction has been authorized by the Central Office Food Stamp Section at (501) 682-8189 or 682-8190.

#### 14200 Failure to Extract on Daily Issuance

At times, food stamp benefits authorized via daily issuance will fail to extract. Benefits that fail to extract are listed on the *Daily Report of Messages* (PO-0792). A message on the report indicates the reason for failure to extract. A listing of each message, its explanation, and an explanation of the corrective action, if any, appears in DCOUM 8400.

#### 14300 Electronic Benefits Transfer (EBT)

Food stamp benefits are issued via the Electronic Benefits Transfer (EBT) system through the use of a magnetic stripe plastic card at a point of sale (POS) device in a grocery store or other outlet. All locations that accept food stamp benefits are authorized by the Department of Agriculture, Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) to do so. Each EBT card contains the cardholder's name and a Primary Account Number (PAN) which is unique to the card.

Generally, only one card will be issued to each household. The person in whose name the card is issued will be the primary payee. The primary payee may be the casehead, spouse or other responsible household member. The primary payee must be designated by entering a code "P" in the CT field on the member page of the Food Stamp Master File (WFSM).

A household may name an alternate payee. The alternate payee, who has a separate EBT card, card number and PIN, has access to all the benefits in the food stamp account. An alternate payee may or may not be a household member. An alternate payee is designated by keying a code "A" in the CT field on the member page of WFSM. An alternate payee who is not a household member must be designated by the household as an authorized representative. See FSC 14330 and FSC 900-983.1 for additional information about authorized representatives. If the alternate payee is not a household member, his or her name must be listed on the member page of WFSM with a code 12 in the member status field and a code "A" in the CT field.

Households receiving both Transitional Employment Assistance (TEA) and food stamp benefits will use the same EBT card to access both accounts if the primary payee is the same for both cases. If not, two cards will be issued--one to be used for the food stamp account and one to be used for the TEA account. (Two cards are also issued when there is a difference in the SSN's or dates of birth keyed to the FACTS system and the ACES system.)

FOOD STAMP CERTIFICATION MANUAL 14310 - 14330 DATE: 12-1-98	SECTION: ISSUANCE OF BENEFITS SUBJECT: CARD ISSUANCE/PIN
---	---

#### 14310 Issuance of Cards

Except for Jefferson County, EBT cards are issued through the mail by a contractor. EBT cards are mailed by 3:00 p.m. the first work day following the day an application is approved or a replacement card is requested. The PIN follows in a separate envelope the next day. The card will not be activated until the food stamp benefit recipient calls the Customer Service Help Desk at 1-800-997-9999 and verifies his or her identity.

##### Jefferson County

In Jefferson County, both the EBT card and the PIN are issued at the DHS county office. County office workers provide assistance to the customer with the PIN selection process. The county office also provides training material and, if necessary, a brief orientation of the POS device, ATM machines, the PIN pad, and the printed receipt.

#### 14320 Personal Identification Number

The four-digit personal identification number (PIN) that is used with the EBT card to access benefits is assigned whenever an EBT account is created. The PIN does not change unless the household requests a change. It is important that the household not share the PIN with anyone or write the PIN anywhere that an unauthorized person could see it.

If a cardholder forgets their PIN or believes an unauthorized individual has learned their PIN, a new PIN must be assigned. Except for Jefferson County, the cardholder must call the Customer Service Help Desk at 1-800-997-9999 to report problems with the PIN. After the Help Desk verifies the customer's identity, the original PIN will be erased and a new PIN will be mailed to the household. The EBT card cannot be used until the new PIN is received.

##### Jefferson County

In Jefferson County, the cardholder must go to the DHS county office to report problems with the PIN. At the county office, the identity of the cardholder must be verified. Once the identity of the cardholder is verified, a county office worker will erase the original PIN and assign a new one via the administrative terminal. (The card holder selects the PIN using a PIN select device.) The EBT card can be used immediately.

#### 14330 Authorized Representative

A food stamp household may name an authorized representative to access food stamp benefits on behalf of the household. See FSC 900-983.1 for additional information.

FOOD STAMP CERTIFICATION MANUAL  
14330 - 14360  
DATE: 12-1-98

SECTION: ISSUANCE OF BENEFITS  
SUBJECT: AVAILABILITY OF BENEFITS

An authorized representative may or may not serve as an alternate payee. The distinction between an alternate payee and an authorized representative is that the alternate payee has a separate EBT card, card number and PIN. The authorized representative does not. The food stamp casehead should be aware that an alternate payee has access to all the benefits in the food stamp account. See FSC 14300 for additional information.

#### 14340 Availability of Benefits

Food stamp benefits are available twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week. Monthly food stamp benefits are credited to the recipient's account at 6:00 a.m. CST on the calendar dates shown below.

LAST DIGIT OF RECIPIENT'S SSN	AVAILABILITY DATE
0-3	5th calendar day of the month
4-6	10th calendar day of the month
7-9	15th calendar day of the month

#### 14350 Cancellation of Benefits

Monthly benefits may be canceled when the county office receives reliable information that all members of the food stamp household are deceased or when the entire household has moved from the state. In other situations, monthly benefits will not normally be canceled after extract.

Daily benefits may be canceled when an incorrect amount extracts, when the authorized amount is excessive for the household size or if the transaction will otherwise cause an imbalance in the accounting process.

All cancellations must be authorized through the Office of Program Planning and Development, Food Stamp Section, (501) 682-2448.

If benefits are canceled for any month, the county office must take the proper corrective action prior to the next issuance. For example, if the household has moved out of state, the food stamp case must be closed.

#### 14360 Account Balances

An EBT food stamp benefit account does not close when a food stamp case closes. The former recipient remains entitled to the account balance. As long as benefits remain in the EBT food stamp account, the former recipient may still change payees, have cards issued or reissued and select or change PINs.

An EBT food stamp benefit account that is accessed by the cardholder at least once every three months remains an active account. The EBT contractor will notify the State, not the recipient, when an account has not been accessed for 30, 60 and 90 day periods. Benefits in aged accounts will be restored to a food stamp recipient upon request.



14400 Replacing Lost, Stolen or Damaged Cards

Food stamp households must call the CUSTOMER SERVICE NUMBER 1-800-997-9999 to report lost, stolen or damaged cards. Replacement cards will be issued through the mail in every county except Jefferson County. There is no charge for replacement of lost, stolen, damaged or malfunctioning cards.

Jefferson County

Households receiving food stamp EBT benefits must go to the county office to get a replacement card. When a cardholder arrives at county office to get the replacement card, he or she must provide positive identification before any replacement is made.

Damaged or malfunctioning cards may be destroyed and then replaced immediately. The status of the original card will be changed via the administrative terminal to "card damaged." Before a lost or stolen card is replaced, the county office worker must verify via the administrative terminal that the household has reported the card was lost or stolen. If not, the county office worker will help the household call the customer service number and report the card was lost or stolen. Then, the replacement card may be issued.

Whenever an EBT Help Desk customer service representative (CSR) receives a call from an Arkansas food stamp benefit recipient, he or she first verifies the name and address of the cardholder. If either is incorrect, no action will be taken to replace a card. The caller will be told that the name/address information must be updated before a replacement card can be mailed. In most cases if there is a discrepancy in the name/address information, the CSR will deactivate the card and only the EBT Unit can authorize issuance of a new card. The name/address information must be updated on FACTS/ACES before the EBT Unit will authorize a replacement card.

In some cases, a recipient's card status will be changed to "deactivate/cancel" in error. When that occurs due to a miscommunication between the caller and the Help Desk or a CSR mistake, the county office must contact the EBT Unit to have a new card issued.

If, after following these procedures, a recipient or county office experiences problems with a card reissue, the county must call the EBT Unit at 682-1504 and provide the following information:

- 1) Name and social security number of individual reporting the problem.
- 2) Casehead's name and social security number, if different.
- 3) Date and approximate time of call to the Help Desk.

FOOD STAMP CERTIFICATION MANUAL 14400 - 14600 DATE: 12-1-98	SECTION: ISSUANCE OF BENEFITS SUBJECT: TREATMENT CENTERS
---	---

- 4) Customer service representative's name, if possible.
- 5) An explanation of the problem.

The EBT Unit will work with the Help Desk to resolve the problem.

#### 14500 Alcoholism and Drug Addiction Treatment and/or Rehabilitation Centers

Narcotic addicts or alcoholics who reside at a facility, treatment center or certain mental health centers for the purpose of regular participation in a drug addiction or alcoholism treatment and/or rehabilitation program must be certified using an authorized representative (AR) who is an employee of the center.

The AR is the only person who can access the food stamp benefits while the customer is a resident of the facility. Therefore, the AR must be classified as an alternate payee. An EBT card will be issued to the alternate payee and to the resident. See FSC 981.3 for instructions. Once the customer leaves the facility, the county office must be so notified immediately. The county office must then take action to remove the center employee as the customer's alternate payee, and the center must destroy the alternate's EBT card.

The center may install a point of sale (POS) device to allow the AR to access the EBT benefits. Before a point of sale device may be installed, the facility must be approved by the USDA, Food and Nutrition Service, as an authorized food retailer. See FSC 980.

When a customer leaves a treatment center that utilizes a POS device and is entitled to part of their benefits as explained in FSC 985.1, the facility will do a food stamp purchase refund. This will debit the center's daily transactions and credit the customer's food stamp benefit account.

Another way for the facility to access the food stamp benefits is to determine a prorated daily amount based on that individual's food stamp benefit amount. The facility will then swipe the card each week or every other week based on the cost of the customer's meals for that period.

Centers not approved by Food and Nutrition Service as an authorized food retailer must shop with the individual cards. In these centers, the ARs must carefully monitor the use of the cards to insure that one-half of the regular monthly benefits are left in the customer's account until the 16th of the month.

#### 14600 Group Living Arrangements

Eligible food stamp customers residing in a group living arrangement are certified as a one person household. In these facilities the customer may or may not be certified through an authorized representative (AR) who is an employee of the group living arrangement. (See FSC 982.) The AR may or may not be classified as an alternate payee and/or the primary payee. If the AR is classified as a alternate payee, the customer may or may not have his or her own EBT card. These decisions will be made by the group living arrangement on a case by case basis.

14700 Homeless Households

Jefferson County

EBT cards are issued at the county office for all households. The instructions in this section will not apply to homeless households that participate in the Food Stamp Program in Jefferson County.

For all counties but Jefferson County, EBT cards are delivered by the U.S. Postal Service. In these counties, a homeless household's EBT card and PIN will be mailed if the household has an address considered deliverable by the U.S. Postal Service. For example, the EBT card and PIN could be mailed to a general delivery address or sent to a homeless shelter.

If the household does not have an address, the EBT card and PIN may be sent to the county office. Any time the county office's address is used by a homeless household to receive an EBT card and PIN, the receipt of the EBT card and PIN must be recorded in a *County EBT Card and PIN Log*. A sample of this log is provided in *The Arkansas Benefits Transfer Handbook*.

NO EBT CARD RECEIVED IN A COUNTY OFFICE IS ACTIVE. THE CARD MUST BE ACTIVATED BY THE HOUSEHOLD BEFORE IT CAN BE USED. Any EBT card or PIN received in a county office must be held in a safe or in a locked file cabinet that is in a secure location within the office. County office staff must not have routine access to the safe or file cabinet where EBT cards and PINS are held.

If an envelope containing either an EBT card or a PIN is opened at any time before the envelope is delivered to the household, a supervisor or designee must destroy both the EBT card and the PIN. The destruction of the EBT card and PIN will be recorded on the *Affidavit of Destruction for EBT Card and PIN Log*. A sample of this log is provided in *The Arkansas Benefits Transfer Handbook*. The household must call the Help Desk at 1-800-997-9999 to request another EBT card.

If a homeless household fails to pick up the EBT Card and PIN within 90 days, the EBT Card and PIN must be destroyed. All destroyed EBT Cards and PINs must be recorded on the *Affidavit of Destruction for EBT Card and PIN Log*. The destruction of the EBT Card and PIN must also be recorded in the food stamp case record. Any household that appears in the county office after the destruction will be instructed to call the Help Desk at 1-800-997-9999 to request a new EBT Card and PIN.

14800 Food Stamp Coupon Conversion

When a food stamp household leaves an EBT project area either temporarily or permanently, EBT benefits can be converted to food stamp coupons upon the customer's request. Any requests for conversion to food stamp coupons solely for the purpose of shopping outside the State will be denied.

FOOD STAMP CERTIFICATION MANUAL 14800 - 14800 DATE: 12-1-98	SECTION: ISSUANCE OF BENEFITS SUBJECT: COUPON CONVERSION
---	---

The county office will use the administrative terminal to authorize the conversion. Food stamp benefits remaining in an EBT account will be automatically rounded down by the FACTS system to the nearest dollar amount suitable for coupon issuance. The smallest allotment which can be issued is \$2.00. The household should spend any remaining balance that cannot be converted to coupons (\$1.99 or less).

Food stamp coupons lost in the mail will be reissued using a code 452 (full allotment lost in mail) or code 453 (partial allotment lost in mail). The Food Stamp Section must authorize all such replacements.

FOOD STAMP CERTIFICATION MANUAL 17000 - 17200 DATE: 12-1-98	SECTION: DISASTER PROCEDURES SUBJECT: DETERMINATION OF A DISASTER
---	--

## 17000 Disaster Procedures

### 17100 Summary

The Food Stamp Act of 1977 authorizes the Food & Nutrition Service (FNS) to declare a need for temporary food assistance for victims of a disaster. Under the disaster certification procedures, a household must complete and submit an abbreviated application, be interviewed and provide limited verification.

This section covers the procedures used by DCO when temporary food assistance is provided as the result of a disaster.

### 17110 Disaster Plan

This agency has formulated a disaster plan that has been approved by Food and Nutrition Service (FNS). Under this plan the Agency may choose to provide food assistance under the terms of a series of waivers approved by FNS or to operate a full program as described in FSC 17200 - 17700. Should a disaster occur in Arkansas that warrants the need for emergency food assistance, the Agency will decide, in conjunction with FNS, what type of disaster program to operate.

### 17200 Determination of a Disaster

DCO may make application to FNS for authorization to implement temporary food assistance when a storm, fire, flood, or other catastrophe has disrupted normal commercial channels of food distribution and affected so many households that the regular Food Stamp Program cannot respond to their temporary food needs. If the disaster has caused one or more of the following conditions, the condition will be considered a disruption of the normal commercial channels.

1. Community transportation to retail and wholesale food outlets has been severely hampered.
2. Retail and wholesale food outlets are closed.
3. Delivery of commodities to food outlets has been significantly hampered.
4. The normal operating hours of food outlets have been significantly shortened restricting normal opportunities to purchase food supplies.
5. The normal opportunity to purchase food is significantly hampered by an unusually heavy demand on food outlets due to households replacing food supplies damaged or destroyed in the disaster.
6. A power failure has significantly restricted the operation of food outlets.

FOOD STAMP CERTIFICATION MANUAL 17200 - 17300 DATE: 12-1-98	SECTION: DISASTER PROCEDURES SUBJECT: THE APPLICATION PROCESS
---	--

Commercial channels of food distribution must be restored prior to a disaster determination by FNS.

Commercial channels of food distribution will be considered restored when conditions have improved to the extent that households have reasonable access to food outlets.

Conditions under which disaster designations may be permitted include, but are not limited to, one or more of the following:

1. The damage is of sufficient severity and magnitude to warrant major disaster assistance under the Disaster Relief Act of 1974.
2. Federal emergency assistance is needed to supplement state and local efforts to save lives and protect property, public health and safety.
3. Alternative certification and/or issuance procedures, physical facilities, and/or sites are needed to provide service on a mass scale when such service is beyond the capability of normal certification and issuance procedures, physical facilities, and/or sites.
4. Additional certification and/or issuance staff are needed to timely handle the volume of applicants.

#### 17210 FNS Authorization

If an application for a disaster designation is approved, FNS will authorize DCO to use disaster certification and issuance procedures. The counties, or parts of counties where such procedures are authorized will be specified. The period of time during which applications for disaster assistance may accepted will also be specified. This will be the designated disaster period.

FNS authorization will be made in person or by telephone and will be followed by written information. Denials will be handled in the same manner. FNS must approve temporary certification and issuance arrangements. If the assistance of a disaster relief agency is needed to provide temporary food assistance during a disaster, FNS must authorize the disaster relief agency designated by DCO and specify the functions that the agency may perform.

Emergency benefits will also be provided to eligible households to replace food destroyed in a disaster. Replacement benefits will be equal to the value of the food actually lost in the disaster not to exceed the applicable maximum monthly benefit amount for the household size.

#### 17300 The Application Process

Appropriate DCO personnel will determine eligibility for emergency food stamp benefit assistance during a disaster. Volunteers and/or other

FOOD STAMP CERTIFICATION MANUAL 17300 - 17330 DATE: 12-1-98	SECTION: DISASTER PROCEDURES SUBJECT: HOUSEHOLD COOPERATION/ INTERVIEWS
---	---

State personnel may be designated by DCO to assist with determining eligibility for affected households. Certification and issuance points will generally be the regular county offices. However, other sites may be designated if deemed necessary.

#### 17310 Filing an Application

To request emergency food stamp assistance, a household must submit a completed application for assistance to a certification site in person or through an authorized representative during the designated disaster period. Designated personnel at the certification site will record the date of receipt on the application. Applications submitted outside of this period will be processed in accordance with normal Food Stamp Program procedures.

#### 17320 Household Cooperation

The application must be completed and signed, the household or the authorized representative must be interviewed, and certain information on the application must be verified as required in FSC 17354. If the household refuses to cooperate with DCO in completing this process, the application will be denied at the time of refusal. Refusal to cooperate is fully defined and explained in FSC 8300.

#### 17330 Interviews

An interview must be conducted with a member of each applicant household. The interview will be an official discussion of household circumstances. The interview may be conducted by certification workers, volunteers, or others such as representatives of an authorized disaster relief agency designated by DCO. The casehead, spouse, any other responsible member of the household or an authorized representative (AR) may be interviewed. Anyone may accompany the household member or AR to the interview. At the beginning of the interview, the interviewer will advise the applicant either orally or in writing of:

1. The household's rights and responsibilities (See FSC 8120);
2. The civil and criminal provisions and penalties for violation of the Food Stamp Act (See FSC 16600);
3. That the household may be subject to a post-disaster review; and
4. The availability of the regular Food Stamp Program.

If the household also wishes to file an application for the regular Program, the interviewer will advise the applicant of the address and telephone number of the selected county office.

NOTE: Group sessions may be used to initially screen applicant households under the eligibility criteria explained in FSC 17350-17355, to explain household rights and responsibilities, and to explain how to complete an application.

FOOD STAMP CERTIFICATION MANUAL 17330 - 17350 DATE: 12-1-98	SECTION: DISASTER PROCEDURES SUBJECT: PROCESSING STANDARDS
---	---

The interviewer will review the information on the application with the applicant. Any unclear or incomplete information will be resolved. Verification will be obtained as specified in FSC 17354. The household's eligibility and food stamp benefit amount will be determined using the guidelines in FSC 17350-17355.

Upon completion of the interview, the interviewer will advise the applicant orally and via *Notice of Action* (DCO-1) of the disposition of the household's application. Each eligible applicant will be advised of the proper use of food stamp benefits.

#### 17340 Processing Standards

Eligible households that complete the emergency assistance application process will be provided an opportunity to obtain food stamp benefits the same day unless restrictions such as curfews make it impossible for the office to meet this standard. In these situations, eligible households will be provided an opportunity to obtain food stamp benefits no later than the day after the date the application was filed. All disaster applications must be processed within the designated disaster period.

#### 17350 Determining Eligibility

Households who make application for emergency food stamp benefit assistance during disasters must meet all of the following criteria:

1. The household must have resided within the geographical area authorized for disaster procedures at the time the disaster struck. Such a household may be certified for disaster issuance while occupying temporary accommodations outside the disaster area.
2. The household must purchase food and prepare meals during the designated disaster period.
3. The household must have experienced at least one of the following adverse affects of the disaster:
  - a. Loss or inaccessibility of income;
  - b. Inaccessibility of liquid resources; or
  - c. Disaster related expenses.

Loss or inaccessibility of income involves a reduction or termination of income or a significant delay in receipt of income due to the destruction or inaccessibility of the work place or other disaster related problems.



Liquid resources are considered inaccessible if a household has funds deposited in a financial institution that is expected to be closed during most of the designated disaster period. Resources are also inaccessible if the household is unable to reach the financial institution as a result of the disaster.

Disaster related expenses are those expenses resulting from the disaster that the household has paid or is expected to pay during the designated disaster period.

4. The household's take home pay for the designated disaster period added to the household's accessible cash resources (cash on hand and accessible funds in checking and savings accounts) must be less than or equal to the maximum income limits for the household size after disaster related expenses are deducted.

#### 17351 Calculating the Budget

Calculating the disaster budget will include the following processes:

1. Determining the household's total income for the designated disaster period;
2. Determining the household's total accessible liquid resources;
3. Adding together the income and the household's total accessible liquid resources; and
4. Comparing the resulting figure to the maximum income limit for the appropriate household size.

The household is eligible if this figure is less than or equal to the appropriate maximum income limit.

NOTE: Maximum income limit charts will be issued to all certification sites upon determination of a disaster by FNS.

#### 17352 Determining Income

Only income which the household has received or can reasonably expect to receive during the disaster period will be considered. Income will include the following:

1. Take Home Pay - Wages received by a household member after taxes or other deductions are withheld.
2. Self-Employment Income - Self-employment income earned by a member during the designated disaster period less personal and social security taxes and the allowable costs of producing the income. See FSC 5622 for an explanation of allowable costs.
3. Other Income - Net income other than earnings received by a household member.

17353 Determining Liquid Resources

All liquid resources (cash on hand and all funds in savings and checking accounts) will be counted unless the county office determines that such funds will be inaccessible to the household for most of the disaster benefit period. See FSC 17350 for additional details.

17354 Determining Allowable Disaster Related Expenses

Disaster related expenses are limited to:

- . The cost of repairing damage to the household's residence;
- . The cost of repairing damage to any property that is essential to the employment or self-employment of a household member;
- . The cost for temporary shelter if a household's residence is not habitable or a household cannot reach its residence;
- . The cost of moving out of an area evacuated due to a disaster;
- . Costs related to protecting property from disaster damage; and
- . The cost of medical expenses for disaster-related injury to a person who was a household member at the time of the disaster. This includes funeral and burial expenses in the event of death due to the disaster.

Other expenses will not be considered.

The household must have paid or must expect to pay the expense during the designated disaster period. Such expenses are not deductible if the household has received or expects to receive full reimbursement for the expense during the designated disaster period. If partial reimbursement is expected during the designated disaster period, only the portion of the expense not covered by the reimbursement will be allowed.

If reimbursement is expected but the household cannot be reasonably certain that the reimbursement will be received during the designated disaster period, the full amount of the expense will be deductible.

FOOD STAMP CERTIFICATION MANUAL 17355 - 17360 DATE: 12-1-98	SECTION: DISASTER PROCEDURES SUBJECT: VERIFICATION/CERTIFICATION PERIOD
---	--

#### 17355 Verification

To expedite certification of emergency assistance, only the applicant's identity and residence at the time of the disaster will be verified. Examples of acceptable verification include, but is not limited to, a driver's license, work or school ID, voter registration card or rent receipts and utility bills.

Since documents may be destroyed or inaccessible due to the disaster, residency may also be verified through sources such as telephone books or city directories when necessary. A collateral contact may be used as a source of verification if the household's identity and residency cannot be verified through documentary evidence or if the use of a collateral contact would expedite the household's certification.

In some unusual situations (such as in the case of a household that arrived in the area just prior to the disaster), verification of residency may not be possible. If residency cannot readily be verified despite the efforts of the worker and the household, the household will not be denied solely for this reason.

Applicant households must provide estimates of income, cash resources, and allowable disaster-related expenses. The household will be requested to itemize individual expenses as well as the different sources of income and resources.

#### 17360 Certification Period

Certification periods of one month or one-half month will be assigned to coincide with the designated disaster period. If the disaster period is one month, then income received during the full month period will be counted, disaster-related expenses that are paid or expected to be paid during this full month period will be deducted, and the monthly maximum income limit for the appropriate household size will equal the disaster eligibility limit. If the disaster benefit period is for one-half month, income received during the half-month period will be counted, disaster related expenses paid or expected to be paid during this period will be deducted, and the disaster eligibility limit will be one-half of the disaster eligibility limit. The Office of Program Planning and Development will advise county offices of the length of the benefit period.

FOOD STAMP CERTIFICATION MANUAL  
17370 - 17500  
DATE: 12-1-98

SECTION: DISASTER PROCEDURES  
SUBJECT: BASIS OF ISSUANCE/  
TRANSITION TO REGULAR PROGRAM

17370     Benefit Amount

Eligible households will receive the maximum amount of benefits authorized by the basis of issuance tables unless the household is currently certified under the regular program (See FSC 17510). Food stamp benefits will be issued in half-month or full month increments, whichever coincides with the designated disaster period. Proration will not apply.

17380     Notices

A *Notice of Action* (DCO-1) will be issued to the household. The DCO-1 will specify the household's eligibility or ineligibility and, for eligible households, the benefit amount.

17400     Administrative Hearings

Households denied disaster benefits may request an administrative hearing. Households requesting hearings will be offered immediate supervisory reviews due to the time that is likely to pass before a hearing decision can be rendered. The supervisory review will not replace the administrative hearing.

17500     Transition to the Regular Food Stamp Program

Food stamp benefits issued to a household under emergency program rules will be used to offset benefits issued under regular Program rules. For example, a household applies for food stamp benefits under an emergency program on March 6. On March 20, the household applies under regular Program rules and is determined eligible. The household's March benefits will be offset by the benefits certified under the emergency program.

FOOD STAMP CERTIFICATION MANUAL 17510 - 17510 DATE: 12-1-98	SECTION: DISASTER PROCEDURES SUBJECT: HOUSEHOLDS CERTIFIED UNDER REGULAR PROGRAM
---	--

## 17510 Treatment of Households Certified Under the Ongoing Food Stamp Program

The following rules apply to households certified under the regular program that request emergency assistance:

Rule 1 Households currently certified for the ongoing Program may also be eligible for temporary emergency food stamp assistance during disasters. These households will be allowed to apply for disaster food stamp assistance and their eligibility will be determined in the same manner as any other disaster victim. To the extent possible, the worker will reduce the amount of disaster benefits issued to currently certified households by the amount of food stamps issued to the household under the ongoing Program for the same period - one month or one-half month.

Exception: If the household's food was damaged by the disaster and the household must replace the food, then the food stamp benefit amount authorized under the Disaster Program will not be reduced by the benefits issued under the ongoing program.

When it is not practical to determine, verify or otherwise take into account ongoing Program benefits, DCO may, with the approval of FNS, issue full disaster allotments to households who are certified under the ongoing Program.

Rule 2 Households requesting a replacement of food purchased with food stamp benefits and subsequently destroyed will be referred to the county office for a normal replacement. Households will not be given replacements if they have received or will receive disaster food stamp benefits for the same period.

Rule 3 Households certified under regular Program procedures who report changes during the application process for emergency assistance will be referred to the county office. The household is responsible for reporting the required information directly to the office which handles the regular case.

FOOD STAMP CERTIFICATION MANUAL 17510 - 17600 DATE: 12-1-98	SECTION: DISASTER PROCEDURES SUBJECT: CONTROLS TO MINIMIZE DUPLICATE PARTICIPATION/ISSUANCE
---	--

17520      Controls to Minimize Duplicate Participation During Disasters

Each county office will develop controls to insure no household participates twice in the disaster program.

17600      Program Monitoring and Review

Supervisory personnel will closely monitor the disaster program, identify problem areas and take immediate corrective action. These include problems with crowds, work flow, physical facilities, media information and prevention of multiple issuance.

DCO will conduct a post disaster review of disaster certification activities by reviewing a sample of cases certified for disaster issuances. FNS will determine the number of cases to be reviewed on an operation by operation basis. The review will include a case record review, an interview with the recipient, verification of declared information, a determination of eligibility for disaster assistance and an analysis of errors. The Director of County Operations will designate the unit to conduct such reviews.

Based upon case review information, DCO will determine what, if any, corrective action should be taken to improve disaster certification procedures. Claims will be established against any household which received more disaster assistance than it was entitled to receive. Benefits will be restored to households that received less benefits than the household was entitled to receive due to agency error.

All emergency disaster records will be maintained for the same period as other records and will be available for review and audit as well as for any other purpose specified by FNS.

## Glossary

### Addict/Alcoholic Representative

An individual employed by an alcoholism and/or drug addiction treatment center and appointed by the center to act on behalf of resident households in the process of applying for food stamp benefits. The representative is also authorized to use food stamp benefits on behalf of the center's resident households.

### Addict/Alcoholic Resident

A resident of an institution approved under Public Law 91-616 as an alcoholism and/or drug addiction treatment center. This includes private, nonprofit centers and certain centers operated by Mental Health.

\*\*

### Administrative Hearing

An administrative procedure during which a claimant and/or a representative of the claimant has an opportunity to present any grievance about an action or proposed action of the DHS County Office or its agents. The claimant may show why he or she believes the action is not fair and should be corrected. The agency must prove whether the action taken was correct according to policy.

### Aged/Disabled Household

Aged/disabled households may deduct medical expenses incurred for the aged/disabled member(s) and are allowed unlimited excess shelter costs. Aged/disabled households are not subject to the gross income eligibility pretest. Any household, including one person households, that contains an aged individual will be allowed up to \$3,000 in countable resources.

An aged/disabled household must contain one of the following:

1. An individual who is age 60 or older or who turns age 60 in the month of application.
2. An individual who receives SSI under Title XVI of the Social Security Act or who receives disability or blindness payments under Titles I, II, XIV, or XVI of the Social Security Act.
3. An individual who receives federally or state-administered supplemental benefits under section 1616 (a) of the Social Security Act if eligibility to receive these benefits is based upon the disability or blindness criteria used under Title XVI of the Social Security Act.
4. An individual who receives a federal or state-administered supplemental benefit under section 212 (a) of Public Law 93-66, that is commonly called a state supplement.
5. An individual who receives disability retirement benefits from a governmental agency because of a disability considered permanent under Section 221-(i) of the Social Security Act.

6. A veteran with a service-connected disability rated by the Veteran's Administration (VA) as total or paid by the VA as total under Title 38 of the United States Code.
7. A veteran who is considered by the VA to be in need of regular aid and attendance or permanently housebound under Title 38.
8. A surviving spouse of a veteran if the spouse is considered by the VA to be in need of regular aid and attendance or permanently housebound.
9. A surviving child of a veteran if the child is considered by the VA to be permanently incapable of self-support under Title 38.
10. A surviving spouse or child of a veteran if the spouse or child is entitled to a VA payment under Title 38 due to the death of the veteran so long as the spouse or child has a disability considered permanent under Section 221(i) of the Social Security Act. "Entitled" as used in this definition refers to those surviving spouses and children of veterans who are actually receiving such payments or who are entitled to such payments but are not yet receiving them.
11. An individual who receives an annuity payment under section 2 (a)(1)(iv) of the Railroad Retirement Act of 1974 and is determined to be eligible to receive Medicare by the Railroad Retirement Board.
12. An individual who receives an annuity payment under section 2 (a)(1)(v) of the Railroad Retirement Act of 1974 and is determined to be disabled based upon the criteria used under Title XVI of the Social Security Act.
13. Recipients of interim assistance benefits pending the receipt of Supplemental Security Income (SSI).
14. Recipients of permanent disability-related medical assistance benefits under Title XIX of the Social Security Act. This includes individuals found eligible for Medicaid through a decision of the Medical Review Team but does not include individuals eligible for Medicaid under any category not related to a permanent and total disability.
15. Recipients of disability-based state general assistance benefits. (There is no disability-based state general assistance program in Arkansas.)



Verification Tables for Disability

Type of Disability	Required Verification
Individual receives SSA disability or SSI.	Proof that the individual is receiving such payments.
Veteran with a service connected disability.	A statement from the VA which clearly indicates that the veteran is receiving benefits for a service-connected disability rated as total or paid at the total rate.
Veteran in need of a regular aid and attendance or housebound.	Proof that the veteran is in receipt of VA disability benefits.
Surviving spouse of veteran if spouse is in need of regular aid and attendance or housebound.	Proof that the individual is in receipt of VA disability benefits.
Surviving child of veteran if child is permanently incapable of self support.	Proof that the individual is in receipt of VA disability benefits.
Surviving spouse or child of veteran if spouse or child is in receipt of death benefits but is actually disabled as defined by the Social Security Act.	None, if the individual obviously has a disability appearing on the Social Security Administration's most current list of disabilities considered permanent under the Social Security Act. If the disability is not obvious, a statement from a physician or licensed or certified psychologist stating that the individual has one of the non-obvious disabilities listed will be required.
Recipient of Railroad Retirement disability annuity from the Railroad Retirement Board who is eligible for Medicare.	Proof that the individual receives such benefits and is eligible for Medicare.

**\*\* Alcoholism and/or Drug Addiction Treatment and Rehabilitation Program**

Any drug addiction or alcoholic treatment rehabilitation program conducted by a private, nonprofit organization or institution, or a publicly operated community mental health center, under part B of Title XIX of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 300x et seq.). Private, nonprofit organizations who choose to use food stamp benefits at a retail store must receive authorization from the Office of Alcohol and Drug Abuse Prevention. Community mental health centers and private nonprofit organizations who use a point of sale device at the center to access food stamp benefits must receive authorization from FNS.

**Application Form (DCO-220)**

A form used to make application to participate in the Food Stamp Program. The application form must be completed by the casehead, a responsible household member or an authorized representative and submitted to a DHS county office.

**Attendant**

An individual who is necessary for medical, housekeeping, or child care reasons but who is not part of the household.

**Authorized Representative (AR)**

A person designated by the casehead, spouse, or another responsible household member to make application for food stamp benefits or to use food stamp benefits on the household's behalf. Drug addicts or alcoholics participating in a nonprofit residential treatment or rehabilitation program will be represented by an employee of the facility. A resident of nonprofit group living arrangements may be represented by an employee of the facility or an AR of their own designation.

**Boarder**

A person to whom a household furnishes lodging and meals for compensation. Boarders may not participate in the Food Stamp Program.

**Boarding House (Commercial)**

A commercial establishment that offers meals and lodging for compensation with the intention of making a profit. The statement of the proprietor or owner will be sufficient to determine that an establishment does or does not fit this definition.

**Capital Gains**

Proceeds from the sale of capital goods or equipment in a self employment enterprise.

**Casehead**

The household member in whose name the case record will be maintained. The case will be filed in the county office under the name of the casehead and all notices will be sent to the casehead.

Categorically Eligible Household

Any household in which all members receive or are authorized to receive TEA and/or SSI benefits with the following exceptions:

Exception 1 - The entire household is institutionalized.

Exception 2 - At least one household member has been disqualified.

Categorically eligible households are not subject to the resource and income limitations of the Food Stamp Program.

Certification

Authorization of eligibility for a household to participate in the Food Stamp Program.

Certification Period

Length of time in calendar months a household is eligible to receive food stamp benefits.

Certification Date

The date the county office worker completes and signs the document authorizing a household to participate in the Food Stamp Program.

Collateral Contact

A person or agency designated to provide oral or written verification of information provided by a household.

The household normally designates the collateral contact. The county office worker will designate a collateral contact if:

1. The household fails to designate a collateral contact; or
2. Designates a collateral contact that is not acceptable.

An acceptable collateral contact can be expected to provide accurate, unbiased verification of the household's statements or circumstances.

If the worker chooses to designate the collateral contact, the household will be given prior written or oral notice. The household will be advised of three options:

1. To consent to the contact;
2. To provide acceptable verification in another form; or
3. To withdraw the application.

If the household refuses to select one of these options, the application will be denied or the household's case will be closed for failure to cooperate.

When advising a household of the designation of a collateral, the worker need not name a specific individual. A general designation such as "one of your neighbors" may be used.

NOTE: The worker may use records such as Bendex, SDX, or the ESD online screens without the household's consent. The records of other agencies are not considered collateral contacts when a routine access agreement exists.

### Communal Diner

An aged individual or SSI recipient who lives alone or only with a spouse and who uses food stamp benefits to purchase meals prepared at communal dining facilities authorized by FNS.

### Communal Dining Facility

Facilities authorized by FNS to accept food stamp benefits for meals prepared at the site and served to eligible communal diners. Examples of such facilities are:

1. Senior citizen centers;
2. Apartment buildings occupied primarily by elderly people;
3. A public establishment or a nonprofit, tax exempt private establishment that prepares meals especially for elderly persons during special hours; or
4. A private establishment under contract with a state or local agency to offer concessionally priced meals for the elderly.

### Customarily

A majority of the time. Judgments will be made on a case by case basis when a majority of the time is applicable.

### Destitute Household (Expedited Case Action Policy)

A migrant or seasonal farmworker household in the job stream who meets one of the income criteria in FSC 9200. Such households are entitled to expedited application processing.

### Disability

Inability to engage in any substantially gainful activity by reason of a medically determinable physical or mental impairment.

### Documentation

Written statements entered in the food stamp case record to substantiate the action taken. For example, documentation of verification obtained will be entered in the case record. Each case action should be documented so a reviewer can determine the reason for each action taken.

Documentary Evidence

Written confirmation of a household's circumstances. Some examples of documentary evidence include wage stubs, rent receipts, utility bills, recent award letters and letters from employers confirming wages.

Acceptable documentary verification will not be limited to any single type of document. Any reasonable documentary evidence will be accepted as long as it provides adequate confirmation of the household's circumstances. The household may provide the required documentary evidence or the County Office may obtain the evidence through other sources.

Example - If residency is verified through utility bills or rent receipts provided by the household as proof of shelter costs, no additional documentary evidence to confirm residency is necessary.

Elderly Person

A person 60 years of age or older.

Eligible Foods

1. Any food or food product intended for human consumption except alcoholic beverages, tobacco, or hot foods and hot food products prepared for immediate consumption.
2. Seeds and plants to grow foods for the personal consumption of eligible households.
3. Meals prepared and delivered by an authorized meal delivery service to households eligible to use food stamp benefits to purchase meals.
4. Meals served by an authorized communal dining facility to households eligible to use food stamps benefits for communal dining.
5. Meals prepared and served by an alcoholism and/or drug addiction treatment and/or rehabilitation center to eligible households.
6. Meals prepared and served by a group living arrangement facility to residents who are blind or disabled recipients of benefits under Title II or Title XVI of the Social Security Act.
7. Meals prepared by and served by a shelter for battered women and children to eligible residents.
8. Meals prepared and served by an approved homeless meal provider to eligible members of homeless food stamp households.

Eligible Households

A household that meets the standards of eligibility.

Emancipated Minor

A minor who has been given the right to manage his or her own affairs. The two basic types of emancipation are explained below:

1. Judicial Emancipation -

A judicially emancipated minor has been given the right by a court to manage his or her own affairs.

2. Common Law Emancipation -

A minor emancipated through common law has been given the right to manage his or her own affairs by voluntary agreement of parent and child. Common law emancipation may also be implied from acts of conduct which import consent. For example, the establishment of a separate household or, if living in the parent's household, actually paying an equal share of the household expenses of all family members would import consent.

NOTE: A voluntary agreement to emancipation that exists between a parent and a child under age 18 does not impart real emancipation.

The child must be actually responsible for and managerial of his or her own affairs as stipulated in the agreement before he or she may be considered emancipated.

Encumbrance

Debt owed on property.

Equity

Fair market value of property, less any encumbrances on the property.

Expedited Services

The provisions under which certain households are entitled to receipt of food stamp benefits within seven calendar days of application if otherwise eligible.

Federal Fiscal Year

A period of 12 calendar months beginning October 1 and ending September 30th of the following calendar year.

Field Investigation

An investigation into a household's circumstances. A field investigation may be performed by either a county office worker or a field investigator. The investigation may include an unannounced visit to the household's residence and/or collateral contacts such as household's neighbors.

Food and Nutrition Service (FNS)

The division of the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) that administers the Food Stamp Program.

Food Stamp Act

The Food Stamp Act of 1977 (P.L. 95-113), including subsequent amendments. This law authorizes the Food Stamp Program.

Food Stamp Benefit Amount

The total value of food stamp benefits a household is eligible to receive each month.

Group Living Arrangement

A public or private nonprofit residential setting that serves no more than sixteen (16) residents and that is certified by the appropriate agency or agencies of the State (DDS and FNS.) To be eligible for food stamp benefits, a resident of such a group living arrangement must be disabled as defined in this *Glossary*, items 2-15 under "Aged/Disabled Household."

Home Visit

An on site visit to an applicant's residence by a county office worker during the application process. The purpose of a home visit is to verify the household's circumstances when documentary evidence cannot be obtained or is insufficient to make a firm determination of eligibility or benefit level. Home visits must be scheduled in advance with the household.

Homeless Household

A household composed entirely of homeless individuals.

Homeless Individual

An individual who lacks a fixed and regular nighttime residence or an individual whose primary nighttime residence is:

- 1) A supervised shelter designed to provide temporary accommodations - e.g. a welfare hotel or a shelter for the homeless; or
- 2) A halfway house or a similar institution that provides temporary accommodations for individuals as an alternative to institutionalization; or
- 3) A temporary accommodation in the residence of another individual limited to 90 days; or
- 4) A place not designed for, or ordinarily used as a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings. Examples are a hallway, a bus station, a lobby or similar places.

Homeless Meal Provider

A public or private nonprofit establishment such as a soup kitchen or a temporary shelter that feeds homeless persons. Homeless meal providers may accept food stamp benefits in payment for meals served to homeless persons if the provider has received approval through the Department of Human Services and the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

Household

Individuals or groups of individuals determined to be a household for purposes of applying for and/or receiving food stamp benefits. See FSC 1630 for a full explanation.

Household Cooperation

Willingness of the household to work with the Agency in establishing eligibility for the program at application or during any subsequent case review.

At application, the application form must be completed and signed, the household or the authorized representative must be interviewed, certain information must be verified, and the household must comply with any applicable work registration requirements. If a household refuses to cooperate with the county office in completing this process, the application will be denied at the time of the refusal. Before a determination of refusal can be made, a household must be able to cooperate but clearly demonstrate that no member will take the required actions. If there is a question about whether a household has refused or failed to cooperate, the household's application will not be denied.

Example: To be denied for refusal to be interviewed, a household must clearly refuse to be interviewed rather than simply fail to appear at the scheduled time.

No household will be denied food stamp benefits solely because someone outside the household failed to cooperate with a request for verification. The term "outside the household" will not apply to ineligible students, ineligible aliens, or to individuals disqualified for one of the following reasons: a) intentional program violation; b) failure to provide a social security number; c) noncompliance with the work registration requirements; d) noncompliance with the workforce requirements; or failure to comply with the requirement to work.

A household's case will be closed if the household refuses to cooperate during any subsequent eligibility reviews including any review generated by a reported change, field investigation or recertification.

Once denied or terminated for refusal to cooperate, a household cannot be determined eligible until the household does cooperate in the process of determining eligibility.

Immigrant

A lawfully admitted alien who entered the U.S. with the expressed intention of establishing permanent residence.

Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS)

A division of the U.S. Department of Justice.

Ineligible Alien

An alien who does not meet the eligible alien status requirement.



Institution of Higher Education

Any public or private institution that normally requires a high school diploma or equivalency certificate for enrollment. This includes, but is not limited to, colleges, universities, and vocational or technical schools at the post-high school level. See FSC 1622.1 for additional information.

Institution of Post Secondary Education

Any public or private educational institution that admits persons beyond the age of compulsory school attendance for the state in which the institution is located. Such institutions must be legally authorized or recognized by the state to provide an education in the state or must provide a program of training that prepares students for gainful employment.

Meal Delivery Service

A private organization that prepares and delivers meals and is authorized by FNS to accept food stamp benefits in payment for such meals.

Migrant

An individual who travels away from home on a regular basis with a group of laborers to seek employment in an agriculturally related activity.

Mixed Household

Food Stamp households in which at least one, but not all members, receive SSI and/or Transitional Employment Assistance (TEA) benefits. Mixed households are not considered to be "categorically eligible" and must meet all applicable income and resource limits.

Narrative

An entry in the case record to explain any situation needing clarification or further documentation.

Net Monthly Income

Gross nonexempt income minus the allowable deductions. Net monthly income is used to determine eligibility and food stamp benefit amount.

Nonprofit Meal Delivery Service

A political subdivision or a private nonprofit organization that prepares and delivers meals and has been approved by FNS to accept food stamp benefits in payment for meals.

Nonpublic Assistance (NA) Household

Any household that does not meet the definition of a PA (Public Assistance) household. This includes households composed of a single SSI member or SSI recipients and essential person.

Notice of Action

Any notice issued to advise a household of an action or impending action on the food stamp case. Notices of action are issued:

1. At approval or denial of an application;
2. To notify a household of an impending increase or decrease in food stamp benefits;
3. To notify a household of an impending case closure;
4. To notify a household of information that must be supplied or of a requirement that must be met in order for the household to continue participating in the Program; or
5. To notify a household of entitlement to restored or supplemental benefits.

Notices of action are automatically issued in most instances when approval or denial of an application occurs or when supplemental benefits are issued. See Appendix C for information about when automated notices are sent.

Notices of action must be manually issued in all other instances using a *Notice of Action* (DCO-1). The DCO-1 will either be an advance notice or an adequate notice.

An advance notice is issued at least ten days before the effective date of the action. Day one of the advance notice period is the date after the notice is issued. Advance notices are used when an adverse action such as case closure or reduction in benefits is going to occur. For this reason, such DCO-1's are referred to as an advance notice of adverse action.

Advance notices of adverse action must be issued when:

- a. The county office is acting on a change in circumstances not reported by the household;
- b. The household reported the change but all conditions in FSC 11440 were not met; or
- c. The household must provide some information or meet a requirement in order to continue participating in the Program.

No action may be taken until the notice has expired. The household may elect to continue receiving benefits at the same level if an administrative hearing is requested during this ten day period.

An adequate notice is issued to be received on or before the date the household's food stamp benefits became available.

An adequate notice will be manually issued:

1. To notify any household of an impending increase in benefits; or
2. To notify any household of entitlement to a restoration.

An adequate notice may serve as a notice of adverse action when a household has reported the information resulting in a decrease in benefits or case closure and all conditions in FSC 11440 are met. When an adequate notice is issued as a notice of adverse action, the household retains the right to continue receiving benefits at the same level if the adverse action is appealed within ten days of the date of issuance of the notice.

Neither an advance nor an adequate notice is required when:

1. All household members die;
2. A household moves from the county or state;
3. The food stamp benefit amount decreases because all installments of a restoration have been authorized;
4. A household was notified at certification of an expected decrease in benefits; or
5. A household requests case closure.

The county office may always issue an adequate notice as a courtesy or when requested by the household.

Specific information about the issuance and contents of notices of action appear in individual sections of policy.

#### Occasional Reporting

Food stamp households not subject to quarterly reporting are required to report changes within 10 days of the date the change becomes known to the household. This method of reporting changes is called occasional reporting.

#### Outreach Notice

Any communicative effort performed cooperatively or singularly by Federal, State or local agencies and organizations, or by individuals, to inform low-income households of the availability of the Food Stamp Program and to encourage the participation of eligible households.

#### Overissuance

The amount by which food stamp benefits issued to a household exceed the amount the household was actually eligible to receive.

#### Program

The Food Stamp Program as conducted under the Food Stamp Act and regulations.

#### Prospective Budgeting

The process of calculating a food stamp budget based on a household's anticipated monthly income and expenses for the upcoming budgeting period.

#### Prospective Eligibility

Determining eligibility based on a household's anticipated circumstances.

#### Public Assistance (PA)

Transitional Employment Assistance (TEA) as authorized by the Social Security Act of 1935, as amended.

Public Assistance (PA) Household

A household in which all members are receiving TEA Cash Assistance and/or SSI benefits. Households receiving public assistance from other states will be classified as nonpublic assistance (NA) until the household either applies for or begins receiving TEA Cash Assistance from Arkansas.

**\*\*** Quality Assurance Reviews

An administrative tool used to identify deficiencies in the eligibility process.

Quarterly Reporting

Households that are given a 12 month certification period and required to submit a report every third month during the certification period. Other reporting requirements are waived for these households.

Reasonable Compensation

Boarder payments made to food stamp households that meet the minimum payment requirements specified by policy.

Recipient

A member of a household that receives food stamp benefits.

Refugee

A lawfully admitted alien granted conditional entry into the U.S. because he or she has fled a foreign country due to:

- A. persecution or fear of persecution on account of race, religion or political opinions; or
- B. a natural disaster.

Report Month

The month during which a quarterly report is submitted to and processed by the county office to affect the food stamp benefit amount for the following quarter.

Restored Benefits

Food stamp benefits a household should have received in a previous month that were not issued due to an agency error.

Residency

Residing within the county. Does not include persons in the county solely for vacation purposes.

Retail Food Store

An establishment approved by FNS to accept food stamp benefits for eligible foods to be used for home consumption. The following establishments may be considered retail food stores:

1. An establishment, or a recognized department of an establishment, or a house-to-house trade route whose eligible food sales volume is more than 50 percent staple food items for home preparation and consumption;
2. Public or private communal dining facilities and meal delivery services; private non-profit alcoholism and/or drug addiction treatment and rehabilitation programs; publicly operated community mental health centers that conduct residential programs for drug addicts and/or alcoholics, or an approved public or private non-profit establishment that feeds homeless persons;
3. Any private non-profit cooperative food purchasing venture, including those whose members pay for food prior to receipt; and
4. A farmer's market.

#### Retroactive Benefits

Food stamp benefits due a household as a result of the certification of an application held pending more than one calendar month. For example, a household applies in June and is approved in July. June benefits are issued as retroactive benefits.

#### Roomer

A person to whom a household furnishes lodging, but not meals, for compensation.

#### Seasonal Farmworker

An individual who travels away from home to seek employment in an agriculturally related activity.

#### Secretary

The Secretary of the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

#### Self-Employed Individual

An individual who engages in an enterprise to produce income for himself or herself. See FSC 5610.

#### Self-Employed Household

A household in which the primary source of income is self-employment.

#### Shelter for Battered Women and Children

A public or private non-profit residential facility that serves battered women and their children. If such a facility serves other individuals, a portion of the facility must be set aside on a long-term basis to serve only battered women and children.

#### Simplified Food Stamp Program (SFSP)

The SFSP is a special set of rules that apply to households composed solely of TEA recipients (including children affected by the family-cap provision) or TEA

and SSI recipients. In the SFSP, income and resources are determined under TEA guidelines. Participating households are not required to submit a separate *Food Stamp Application* (DCO-220) and have no reporting requirements in addition to the TEA requirements.

#### Single Language Minority Household

A household in which all members speak the same non-English language and which does not contain an adult fluent in English as a second language.

#### Sponsored Aliens

Aliens lawfully admitted into the United States for permanent residence who are being sponsored by a U.S. citizen during the period required for the alien to become a permanent resident (3 years from the date of entry).

#### Spouse

Either of:

1. Two individuals legally married to each other; or
2. Two individuals who are living together and holding themselves out to the community as husband and wife by representing themselves as such to relatives, friends, neighbors or trades people.

#### State

Any one of the 50 states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, Guam and the Virgin Islands of the United States.

#### Striker

Anyone involved in a strike or unified stoppage of work by employees including a stoppage by reason of the expiration of a collective bargaining agreement. Any concerted slow down or other concerted interruption of operations by employees is also considered a strike.

#### Student

A household member who is enrolled in an institution of post secondary education. This includes household members who are enrolled to take correspondence courses. It does not include household members who are attending a high school or a course of study for a GED.

#### Supplemental Benefits

An additional issuance of food stamp benefits provided in the same month as the original issuance to correct an agency error or to process a change in a timely fashion.

#### Thrifty Food Plan

The diet required to feed a family of four persons as determined in accordance with the Secretary's calculations. The cost of such a diet is the basis for

uniform benefits for all households regardless of the actual composition, except that the Secretary shall make household size adjustments in the Thrifty Food Plan taking into account economies of scale.

#### Transitional Employment Assistance (TEA)

This program, which replaced the AFDC Program in July 1997, helps economically needy families become more responsible for their own support and less dependent on public assistance. Through employability assessments, employment planning, and the provisions of employment related services, the TEA Program helps recipients recognize their employment possibilities and helps them into jobs as soon as possible.

#### Unlawful Strike

The definition of unlawful strike is provided in FSC 1700.

#### Verification

The use of third party information or documentation to establish the accuracy or validity of information provided by an applicant for food stamp benefits or a recipient of food stamp benefits. The types of verification are documentary evidence, collateral contact and home visit.

At initial application (See FSC 8100), households are required to furnish verification of actual utilities, medical costs, income, and resources. Alien status, identity, residency, and social security numbers will be verified if not previously verified. Household composition, citizenship, utility standard entitlement, dependent care costs, excluded income, and work registration exemption will be verified if questionable.

When processing timely recertifications (See FSC 10300) and untimely recertifications (See FSC 10900), changes in income or actual utility expenses will be verified if the source has changed or the amount has changed by more than \$25. Previously unreported medical expenses and total unrecurrent medical expenses that have changed by more than \$25 will also be verified. Income, total medical expenses or actual utility expenses that the household claims have changed by \$25 or less will not be verified unless this information is incomplete, inaccurate, inconsistent or outdated. Alien status, identity, residency, and social security numbers will be verified if there has been a change. (For example, if a new household member is added, that member would be required to furnish verification of his or her SSN in compliance with FSC 2200.) Unchanged information will not be verified unless the reported information is incomplete, inaccurate, inconsistent or outdated.

Changes reported during the certification period are subject to the same verification procedures that apply at initial application except that reported income, total medical expenses or actual utility expenses which are unchanged or changed by \$25 or less will not be verified unless reported information is incomplete, inaccurate, inconsistent, or outdated.

When a quarterly report is submitted, households must report and verify all earned income. Otherwise, the verification requirements for reported changes will apply.

When a midpoint review is submitted from a household certified for longer than 12 months, all medical expenses must be reported and verified. Otherwise, the verification requirements for reported changes will apply.

General definitions of the terms incomplete, inaccurate, inconsistent, and outdated appear below.

Incomplete - Information will be considered incomplete when vital dates, names, figures or other information is missing. For example, information about actual utility costs is incomplete if the household has reported costs for gas, lights and water and has only furnished a gas bill as verification of actual utility costs.

Inaccurate - Information will be considered inaccurate when the worker has some reason to question the validity of the household's statements. For example, a household reports that medical expenses are unchanged, yet the worker is aware that the household member with the deductible medical expenses has been approved for SSI and should now be receiving a Medicaid card.

Inconsistent - Information will be considered inconsistent when a review of the case file reveals a conflict between the reported information and the information already documented in the case file. For example, a household reports a \$300 per month rent expense. A review of the case record shows that the household has not moved and the last reported rent amount was \$50 because the household was receiving rental assistance from HUD.

Outdated - Information about fluctuating earned income is usually considered outdated if a month or more have elapsed since the household last furnished current verification. Information about stable earned income, unearned income received on a weekly or a biweekly basis, actual utility costs and medical expenses is outdated if three months or more have elapsed since the household last submitted current verification. Information about unearned income received on a monthly basis or received periodically is considered outdated if eleven months or more have elapsed since the household last submitted current verification. Information about liquid resources is considered outdated if eleven months or more have elapsed since the household last submitted current verification.

When verification is needed, the household has the primary responsibility for providing documents or other suitable information. The household must also provide the name of a collateral contact if necessary. (See the definition of "Collateral Contact" for additional information.)

The county office worker has the following responsibilities:



1. Advising the household what must be verified and how it must be verified. Recommended sources of verification may be found in the section of policy dealing with the item to be verified. For example, recommended sources of verification for earned income may be found in FSC 5514.

The *Food Stamp Application* (DCO-220) contains a general list of items that must be verified. When an interview is scheduled on the *Notice of Delayed Application* (DCO-206) the lower portion of the form will be completed to advise the household of the verification requirements. If it is determined at the interview that additional verification is required, the worker will issue to the household a DCO-206 which clearly indicates the information to be provided. If verification is needed from a currently certified household, a *Notice of Action* (DCO-1) will be issued. See the definition of "Notice of Action" in the Glossary for additional information about the requirements for requesting verification from a currently certified household.

When information from another source contradicts statements made by the household, the household must be so advised and given a reasonable opportunity to resolve the discrepancy.

2. Assuring that required verification is accomplished and documented. (See FSC 314 for instructions on documentation.) Households may supply documentary evidence in person, through the mail, or through an authorized representative. Households will not be required to present verification in person at the County DHS Office. The worker must accept any reasonable documentary evidence provided by the household and will be primarily concerned with how adequately the verification proves the statements on the application.
3. Assisting the household when it is difficult or impossible for the household to obtain the necessary documentary evidence in a timely manner or when the documentary evidence presented by the household is insufficient. Such assistance may include making a collateral contact or making a home visit. Assistance with the verification process must be provided to any household upon request; however, at any time a worker becomes aware that a household needs help complying with the verification requirements, the worker must assist the household even if such assistance has not been specifically requested.

For example, if a household turns in an income statement that has been improperly completed, the worker would contact the employer directly to verify earnings. Or, if a household turns in an outdated statement to verify SSA benefits, the worker would access the WQRY screen. Or in the case of an elderly client, a worker might assist in obtaining verification of medical expenses by contacting providers directly.

NOTE - ASSISTANCE TO HOUSEHOLDS WILL NOT BE LIMITED TO SITUATIONS THE SAME AS OR SIMILAR TO THESE SITUATIONS. ASSISTANCE WILL BE PROVIDED WHEN NEEDED.

11

11