

ARKANSAS REGISTER

Transmittal Sheet



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

For Office Use Only: Effective Date 8/29/99 Code Number 016.20.99-014

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 1996

TEA 99-9

Date

Intended Effective Date

Legal Notice Published 7-20-99

☐ Emergency

Final Date for Public Comment 8-18-99

☒ 10 Days After Filing

Filed With Legislative Council 7-20-99

☐ Other

Reviewed by Legislative Council

Adopted by State Agency 9-1-99

CERTIFICATION OF AUTHORIZED OFFICER

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

Signature

682-8375

Phone Number

Director

Title

7/12/99
Date

FILED
REGISTER DIV.
CLERK OF THE
COURT
LITTLE ROCK, ARK.
SEP 19 4 58 PM '99

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

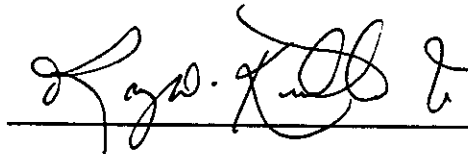
NUMBER AND TITLE: TEA 99-9, Revision to the Simplified Food Stamp Program (SFSP) Policy.

PROPOSED EFFECTIVE DATE: September 1, 1999

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

NECESSITY AND FUNCTION: Revision to the Simplified Food Stamp Program (SFSP) Policy. The Policy has been updated to incorporate recent rule changes in the regular Food Stamp Program policy, to provide additional instructions for processing SFSP applications and changes, and to incorporate changes in the methods of imposing sanctions in the TEA Program. Only TEA recipients participate in the SFSP.

PAGES FILED: A total of 33 pages were filed.



**Roy D. Kindle, Jr.
Assistant Director
Office of Program Planning and Development**

PROMULGATION DATE: September 1, 1999

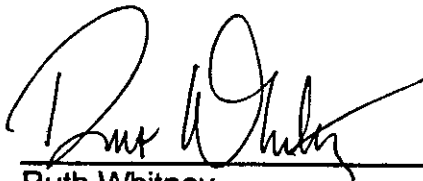
CONTACT PERSON: Roy D. Kindle, Jr.
Assistant Director
Office of Program Planning and Development
P.O. Box 1437, Slot 1220
Little Rock, AR 72203-1437

(501) 682-8251

NOTICE OF RULE MAKING

Pursuant to the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996, Revision to the Simplified Food Stamp Program (SFSP) Policy. The policy has been updated to incorporate recent rule changes in the regular Food Stamp Program policy, to provide additional instructions for processing SFSP applications and changes, and to incorporate changes in the methods of imposing sanctions in the TEA Program. Only TEA recipients participate in the SFSP.

Copies of the revised policy may be obtained by writing to the Division of County Operations, Attention: Food Stamp Policy Section, P. O. Box 1437, Slot 1241, Little Rock, AR 72203-1437. All comments must be submitted within 30 days of the date of publication of this notice. If you need any material in a different format, such as large print, contact our Americans with Disabilities Act Coordinator at 682-8920 (Voice) or 682-8933 (TDD). The Arkansas Department of Human Services is in compliance with Titles VI and VII of the Civil Rights Act and operates, manages and delivers services without regard to political affiliation, religion, disability, age, veteran status, sex, race, color or national origin.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ruth Whitney", is written over a horizontal line.

Ruth Whitney
Director
Division of County Operations

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR FILING PROPOSED RULES AND REGULATIONS

DEPARTMENT/AGENCY HUMAN SERVICES

DIVISION **COUNTY OPERATIONS**

DIVISION DIRECTOR **Ruth Whitney**

CONTACT PERSON Roy D. Kindle, Jr.

ADDRESS Donaghey Plaza South, P.O. Box 1437, Slot 1220, Little Rock, AR 72203-1437

PHONE NO. (501) 682-8251

INSTRUCTIONS

- A. Please make copies of this form for future use.
- B. Please answer each question completely using layman terms. You may use additional sheets if necessary.
- C. If you have a method of indexing your rules, please give the proposed citation after "Short Title of this Rule" below.
- D. Submit two (2) copies of this questionnaire attached to the front of two (2) copies of your proposed rule and mail or deliver to:

Donna K. Davis
Subcommittee on Administrative Rules and Regulations
Arkansas Legislative Council
Bureau of Legislative Research
Room 315, State Capitol
Little Rock, AR 72201

1. What is the short title of this rule?
TEA 99-9
2. What is the subject of the proposed rule? *This rule is a general update to the 10000 Section of the Transitional Employment Assistance (TEA) Manual. The 10000 section provides information about the Simplified Food Stamp Program (SFSP). Only TEA recipients participate in the SFSP.*
3. Is this rule required to comply with federal statute or regulations? XX YES _____ NO
If yes, please provide the federal regulation and/or the statute citation. *The SFSP is operated under a State Plan as authorized by the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996 (PRWORA).*
4. Was this rule filed under the emergency provisions of the Administrative Procedure Act? YES XX NO

If yes, what is the effective date of the emergency rule? _____

When does the rule expire?

Will this emergency rule be promulgated under the regular provisions of the Administrative Procedure Act? YES NO

5. Is this a new rule? ☐ YES ☒ NO

Does this repeal an existing rule? ☐ YES ☒ NO

Is this an amendment to an existing rule? ☒ YES ☐ NO

Is this an amendment to an existing rule? If yes, please attach a markup showing the changes in the existing rule and a summary of the substantive changes.

6. What state law grants the authority for this proposed rule? If codified, please give Arkansas Code citation.

7. What is the purpose of this proposed rule? Why is it necessary?

The policy has been updated to incorporate recent rule changes in the regular Food Stamp Program policy, to provide additional instructions for processing SFSP applications and changes, and to incorporate changes in the methods of imposing sanctions in the TEA Program.

8. Will a public hearing be held on this proposed rule? ☐ YES ☒ NO

9. When does the public comment period end?

August 18, 1999

10. What is the proposed effective date of this proposed rule

September 1, 1999

11. Do you expect this rule to be controversial?

If yes, please explain.

☐ YES ☒ NO

12. Please give the names of persons, groups, or organizations which you expect to comment on these rules. Please provide their position (for or against) if known.

NAME	GROUP/ORGANIZATION	ADDRESS
David Manley Attorney at Law	Legal Services of Arkansas	209 West Capitol Little Rock, AR 72203

PLEASE ANSWER ALL QUESTIONS COMPLETELY.

DEPARTMENT HUMAN SERVICES

DIVISION COUNTY OPERATIONS

PERSON COMPLETING THIS STATEMENT Betty Helmbeck

TELEPHONE NO. 682-8284

FAX NO. 682-1469

FINANCIAL IMPACT STATEMENT

To comply with Act 884 of 1995, please complete the following Financial Impact Statement and file with the questionnaire and proposed rules.

SHORT TITLE OF THIS RULE TEA 99-9

1. Does this proposed, amended, or repealed rule or regulation have a financial impact? YES XX NO
2. If you believe that the development of a financial impact statement is so speculative as to be cost prohibited, please explain.
3. 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.

1999-2000 Fiscal Year		2000-2001 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-

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

1999-2000 Fiscal Year \$ -0- 2000-2001 Fiscal Year \$ -0-

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

1999-2000 Fiscal Year \$ -0- 2000-2001 Fiscal Year \$ -0-

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STATE
OF ARIZONA

MANUAL TRANSMITTAL

Arkansas Department of Human Services

Division of County Operations



☒ Policy ☐ Form ☐ Policy Directive

Issuance Number TEA 99-9

Transitional Employment Assistance Manual

Issuance Date 9/1/99

From: Ruth Whitney
Director

Expiration Date Until
Superseded

Subj: Revisions to the Simplified Food Stamp Program Policy

<u>Pages to be Deleted</u>	<u>Dated</u>	<u>Pages to be Added</u>	<u>Dated</u>
TEA 10000 – 10700 (13 Pages)	8/1/98	TEA 10000 – 10700 (17 Pages)	9/1/99

Summary of Changes

TEA 10100 – A paragraph has been added to clarify the procedures for handling individuals disqualified under regular Food Stamp Program rules.

TEA 10101 – This section has been updated. Under the new provisions, additional non-citizens will be allowed to receive food stamp benefits. Also, the period during which some non-citizens will be allowed to receive food stamp benefits has been lengthened from 5 years to 7 years.

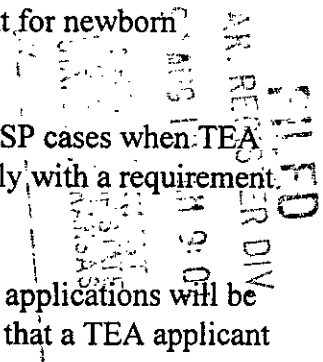
TEA 10102 – This section has been updated to explain the documentation to be provided by the non-citizens who may receive benefits under the new provisions.

TEA 10104 – The policy allowing the postponement of the SSN requirement for newborn children has been updated.

TEA 10108 – This is a new section. It contains instructions for handling SFSP cases when TEA or SSI benefits are reduced because the TEA or SSI recipient failed to comply with a requirement of that program.

TEA 10200 – This section has been rewritten. It now states that food stamp applications will be approved as quickly as all the needed information is available. It also states that a TEA applicant may decline to participate in the Food Stamp Program.

TEA 10201 – This section now contains instructions for certifying a TEA applicant to receive food stamp benefits under SFSP rules.



Manual Transmittal

TEA 99-9

Page 2

TEA 10202 – This section now contains instructions for certifying a TEA applicant who is entitled to expedited service.

TEA 10203 – This section now contains instructions for certifying a TEA applicant to receive food stamp benefits under the regular rules.

TEA 10210 – A statement has been added to clarify that households allowed to claim their actual shelter costs may claim all or part of their actual costs.

TEA 10211 – Instructions for handling actual shelter costs at the time of conversion from the regular Food Stamp Program to the SFSP have been added.

TEA 10221 – Additional information about extending certification periods has been added.

TEA 10310 – Specific instructions have been added for shortening the certification period when a household will no longer be participating in the SFSP.

TEA 10400 – Specific instructions have been added for converting cases from the regular Food Stamp Program to the SFSP.

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

**Simplified Food Stamp Program
Program Intent**

**TEA 10000-10020
Household Composition**

10000 *Intent of Simplified Food Stamp Program*

The Simplified Food Stamp Program (SFSP) provides TEA Cash Assistance Program participants with their basic food needs while the parent or other adult relative works toward increasing his or her earnings potential.

10010 *Program Design*

The following SFSP requirements will be based on TEA policy: residency, Social Security Numbers, income and resources. (NOTE: The TEA Cash Assistance payment must be counted as income in the SFSP budget.)

NOTE: Some income is excluded when determining TEA eligibility but is used to determine whether a household will receive a full TEA Cash Assistance grant or one-half a grant. Any income, except child support, that is used to determine either eligibility or grant amount will be counted as income in the SFSP. Child support will not be counted as income in the SFSP unless received by a family cap child.

Households that participate in the SFSP will not have to meet any work requirements in addition to the TEA Cash Assistance Program work requirements. TEA Cash Assistance recipients who are students will not have to meet the Food Stamp Program student requirements. SFSP participants will have no change reporting requirements in addition to the TEA Cash Assistance reporting requirements.

**CITIZENSHIP REQUIREMENTS FOR FOOD STAMP PROGRAM
RECIPIENTS ARE BASED ON LAW AND CANNOT BE WAIVED. ANYONE
WHO IS NOT A U.S. CITIZEN MUST MEET THE REGULAR FOOD STAMP
PROGRAM CITIZENSHIP REQUIREMENTS AS SPECIFIED IN TEA 10101
BEFORE HE OR SHE IS ALLOWED TO PARTICIPATE IN THE SFSP.**

10020 *Household Composition*

A household participating in either the regular or the SFSP must meet one of the following descriptions:

- An individual who lives alone.
- A group of individuals who live together and customarily purchase food and prepare meals together.

**Simplified Food Stamp Program
Household Composition**

**TEA 10020-10100
Households to be Served**

- An individual or a group of individuals who live with others and customarily (more than 50% of the time) purchase food and prepare meals for home consumption separate and apart from the others.
- An individual who is living with others but is unable to purchase and prepare meals due to a permanent disability such as, but not limited to, senility. This type of household may include the individual and his or her spouse regardless of the physical condition or age of the spouse. All income of the individual or the spouse will be counted in the food stamp budget. The income of all other household members will be disregarded; however, the total gross non-excludable income of all other household members may not exceed 165% of the maximum net income standard as shown on the Food Stamp Basis of Issuance Charts, Exhibit A.

Separate household status will not be granted under any circumstance to:

- The spouse of a household member;
- Children under the age of 22, regardless of marital status, who live with a natural, adoptive, or stepparent;
- Siblings, regardless of marital status, who live together if one sibling is age 17 or younger; or
- Children under the age of 17, regardless of marital status, who are under the parental control of another household member even if that household member is not a parent or a sibling.

Individuals under the age of 22 who do not meet one of these restrictions may participate in the Food Stamp Program as a separate household if otherwise eligible.

10100 *Households to be Served in the Simplified Food Stamp Program*

Only households where all household members receive TEA Cash Assistance or a combination of TEA Cash Assistance and SSI benefits will participate in the SFSP. Households with children not added to the TEA Cash Assistance grant solely due to the family cap provisions of TEA 4131 will participate in the SFSP. These children will be included in the SFSP household.

Households with children not added to the TEA Cash Assistance grant solely due to the family cap provisions are not categorically eligible to receive food stamp benefits. These households must meet the Food Stamp Program resource limits and the gross income limits for the SFSP household including the child affected by the family cap provisions. See TEA 10104-10106 for additional information.

**Simplified Food Stamp Program
Households to be Served**

**TEA 10100-10101
Citizenship**

Households, except those households with a child containing a family cap child, that participate in the SFSP will be classified on the Food Stamp Automated Customer Tracking System (FACTS) as public assistance (PA) households. Households that contain a family cap child are classified as non-public assistance (NA) households.

Recipients of TEA Diversion Assistance as specified in TEA 2010 will not participate in the SFSP. Diversion Assistance recipients will be classified as NA households on the Food Stamp Automated Customer Tracking System (FACTS).

- * A household with a member disqualified under regular Food Stamp Program rules for a reason such as, but not limited to, an intentional program violation (IPV), may participate in the SFSP if the disqualified member receives TEA Cash Assistance or SSI. However, the disqualified member will continue to be disqualified. See FSC 1623.1 – 1623.3 for additional instructions.

* **10101 *Citizenship Requirements for SFSP***

Participation in the SFSP is limited to U.S. citizens and to the non-citizens described in this section.

For up to seven years from the date of admission under one of the specified criteria, any alien who:

- Was granted asylum under Section 208 of the INA;
- Was granted status as a refugee under Section 207 of the INA;
- Had deportation withheld under Section 243 (h) or, after April 1, 1997, Section 241 (b) (3) of the INA;
- Was admitted as an Amerasian immigrant pursuant to Section 584 of the Foreign Operations, Export Financing and Related Programs Appropriations Act of 1988; or
- Is a Cuban or Haitian entrant under 501(e) of the Refugee Assistance Act of 1988.

For refugees admitted under Section 207 of the INA, the seven year count begins the date the refugee entered the country. For other aliens, the seven year count begins the date the alien was granted the particular status.

For an unlimited period:

1. Any alien who is currently admitted for permanent residence as defined in Section 101(a)(2) of the INA and who:

- Can be credited with 40 quarters of qualified work (their own, a spouse's or a parent's); or
 - Is a veteran of or is on active duty in the U.S. armed forces; or
 - Is the spouse or dependent child of an individual who is a veteran of or who is on active duty in the U.S. armed forces.
2. Any alien who is a veteran of or is on active duty in the U.S. armed forces OR any alien who is the spouse and/or dependent child of an individual with a military connection if the alien:
- Was granted asylum under Section 208 of the INA;
 - Was granted status as a refugee under Section 207 of the INA;
 - Had deportation withheld under Section 243(h) or, after April 1, 1997, Section 241(b)(3) of the INA;
 - Is a Cuban or Haitian entrant under Section 501 (e) of the Refugee Assistance Act of 1988;
 - Is a conditional entrant under Section 203(a)(7) of the INA; or
 - Has been a parolee for at least one year under Section 212 (d)(5) of the INA.
3. Under certain conditions, an alien who is a battered spouse or battered child of a veteran or a person who is on active duty in the U.S. armed forces. The nonabusive parent of a battered child or the dependent child of a battered spouse may also meet the citizenship requirements under this provision.
4. Any alien who was lawfully present in the United States on August 22, 1996, and:
- Is currently under 18 years of age; or
 - Was age 65 or older on August 22, 1996; or
 - Is currently receiving one of the payments for blindness or disability listed in the Glossary to the *Food Stamp Certification Manual* under the definition of "Aged/Disabled Household."
5. Any American Indian born in Canada who is entitled to cross the United States border into Canada or Mexico.
6. Any individual who was a member of a Hmong or Highland Laotian tribe at the time the tribe rendered assistance to United States personnel during the Vietnam era beginning August 5, 1964, and ending May 7, 1975. This provision includes any such individual's current spouse or surviving spouses unless the spouse has remarried. It also includes the individual's unmarried dependent children.

**Simplified Food Stamp Program
Citizenship**

**TEA 10101-10102
Verification of Citizenship**

A qualifying quarter of work includes: one worked by the alien; one worked by a parent (natural adoptive or step) while the alien was under the age of 18; and one worked by a spouse during the marriage if the alien remains married to the spouse or the spouse is deceased. Any quarter during which the alien received SSI, Medicaid or TEA is not a qualifying quarter of work.

Ineligible aliens include aliens such as, but not limited to: visitors and tourists; students; diplomats; aliens admitted under color of law; aliens who have applied for eligible status but have not yet been approved (except for battered spouses and/or children with a military connection); and aliens whose status is questionable or unverified.

10102 *Verification of Citizenship*

One of the following documents may be presented by the alien to establish that he or she is legally present in the United States:

- **Alien Lawfully Admitted For Permanent Status** - INS Form I-551, *Alien Registration Receipt Card*, OR unexpired temporary I-551 stamp in foreign passport or on INS Form I-94, *Arrival/Departure Record*.
- **Asylee** - INS Form I-94, *Arrival/Departure Record*, annotated with stamp showing grant of asylum under Section 208 of the Immigration and Nationality Act (INA) OR INS Form I-688B, *Employment Authorization Card*, annotated with stamp showing admission under Section 207 of the INA.
- **Refugee** - INS Form I-94, *Arrival/Departure Record*, annotated with stamp showing admission under Section 207 of the INA.
- **Alien Paroled Into The U.S. For At Least One Year** - INS Form I-94, *Arrival/Departure Record*, with stamp showing admission for at least one year under Section 212(d)(5) of the INA.
- **Alien Whose Deportation or Removal Was Withheld** - Order from an immigration judge showing deportation withheld under Section 243(h) of the INA as in effect prior to April 1, 1997, or removal withheld under Section 241(b)(3) of the INA after April 1, 1997.
- **Alien Granted Conditional Entry** - INS Form I-94, *Arrival/Departure Record*, with stamp showing admission under Section 203(a)(7) of the INA.
- **Cuban/Haitian Entrant** - INS Form I-551, *Alien Registration Receipt Card*, with the code CU6, CU7 or CH6, OR unexpired temporary I-551 stamp in foreign passport or on INS Form I-94, *Arrival/Departure Record*, with stamp showing parole as Cuban/Haitian Entrant under Section 212(d)(5) of the INA.
- **Amerasian Immigrant** - INS Form I-551, *Alien Registration Receipt Card*, with the code AM6, AM7, or AM8, OR unexpired temporary I-551 stamp in foreign passport or on INS form I-94, *Arrival/Departure Record*, with the code AM1, AM7, or AM3.

- **Battered Alien** - Evidence of having petitioned INS for permanent resident status and reasonable proof of battery. Reasonable proof of battery includes, but is not limited to, police reports, information from medical or school personnel, and/or photographs. A collateral statement may be accepted to verify that the battered individual no longer lives with the batterer
- **Alien Lawfully Present on August 22, 1996** - Proof of lawful presence on August 22, 1996, and proof of age or proof of receipt of disability payment.
- **American Indian Born in Canada or Mexico** - Proof of membership in one of the tribes entitled to cross the U.S. border.
- **Hmong or Highland Tribe Member** - Proof of lawful presence and proof of membership in a tribe that rendered assistance to U.S. personnel.

Aliens who are applying to participate in the SFSP based on military service must first provide documentation that he or she meets the citizenship requirements of TEA 10010. Then he or she must provide verification that he or she meets minimum active duty service requirements. Veterans must provide documentation of an honorable discharge for reasons other than alienage.

A surviving spouse of a deceased veteran must provide verification that the marriage meets the requirements of Section 1304 of Title 38 U.S.C. Battered aliens must provide documentation of being battered and of having petitioned INS for permanent resident status.

The Social Security Administration is the primary source of verification of qualifying quarters of work. An automated system has been developed to provide an array, by year, beginning with 1937, of all qualifying quarters of work. Appendix Q to the Food Stamp Certification Manual provides complete information about verifying qualifying quarters of work through the automated system.

10103 *Special Income and Resource Guidelines - Ineligible Aliens*

Some aliens may be eligible to participate in the TEA Program but not eligible to participate in the SFSP. The resources of these ineligible aliens will be counted in their entirety. A prorata share of the income of these ineligible aliens will be counted in the SFSP budget. If the alien is the payee for the TEA Cash Assistance, a prorata share of the TEA Cash Assistance will be counted in the SFSP budget.

To calculate the prorata share of the income to be counted:

- Determine the alien's gross countable income as instructed in TEA 2330 - 2341.
- Divide the gross income among all household members including the ineligible alien to obtain the prorata amount for each member.
- Multiply the number of eligible members by the prorata amount.
- Count the result as income in the SFSP budget.

Medical expenses and dependent care costs are not deductible. Other deductible expenses will be allowable. These expenses will not be prorated unless the ineligible alien incurs part or all of the expense. If the ineligible alien does incur part or all of the expense, the expense will be prorated using the same method as the method used for proration of income.

*

10104 *Special SSN Requirements - Family Cap Households*

Children who are not included in the grant due to the family cap provisions must provide a social security number (SSN) or apply for an SSN before they can receive food stamp benefits. If the child cannot provide an SSN, the county office worker will complete an Application for an SSN (SS-5) and an Enumeration Referral (DCO-12). A pseudo SSN will be entered on the DCO-12 to insure enumeration occurs. Both forms must be mailed to local SSA office.

When the parents of a newborn cannot supply either an SSN or the birth proof needed to apply for an SSN, the SSN requirement may be delayed for six months or until the household is recertified (or extended in lieu of a recertification), whichever is later. The child may participate in the SFSP while the SSN requirement is postponed.

Postponement of the SSN requirement will not apply if a form SSA-2853 was completed for a newborn by a hospital. When the parent provides a copy of the SSA-2853, the county office will complete an SS-5 and DCO-12. When these documents are sent to SSA, the household has complied with the SSN requirement.

If the SSN requirement is postponed, the household must be notified that proof of compliance with the SSN requirements must be provided when the household's current certification period is extended. (This includes recertification or reapplication if the household no longer participates in the SFSP.)

To disqualify a member for non-compliance with the SSN requirements:

- Use a household status code "9" in the member segment of the WFSM screen.
- Include all of that member's resources.
- Count a prorata share of the member's income.
- Do not allow any expense incurred entirely by the disqualified member.
- Allow a prorata share of any shared expense.
- Do not include the disqualified member when determining the food stamp benefit amount.

10105 *Special Resource Guidelines - Family Cap Households*

The resource limits for SFSP households with a child not added to TEA Cash Assistance due to the family cap provision are \$3,000 for any household with an aged member, regardless of household size, and \$2,000 for all other households. If the household's countable resources exceed the resource limits, the household will be ineligible to receive food stamp benefits.

Only the resources owned solely or jointly by a child who was not added to the grant due to the family cap provision will be counted in determining the household's countable resources for food stamp eligibility. (Resources owned solely by an SSI and/or TEA recipient are excluded in their entirety.) If one of these children has resources, see TEA 2270 - 2277.6 for instructions on determining countable resources.

10106 *Special Income Guidelines - Family Cap Households*

Households with at least one child not added to TEA Cash Assistance due to the family cap provisions must meet the Food Stamp Program gross income limits in order to participate in the SFSP. See the *Food Stamp Basis of Issuance Charts, Exhibit A*, for the current gross income limits. Any income received by children who are not included in the grant due to the family cap provision will be considered when the food stamp benefit amount is determined. TEA policy 2330 - 2341 will be used to determine the amount of countable income. Child support received by family cap children will be counted in the food stamp budget since it will not be turned over to the Office of Child Support Enforcement to maintain TEA eligibility.

10107 *Special Income and Resource Guidelines - SSI Recipients*

The income of any SSI recipient who participates in the SFSP will be counted as income to determine food stamp benefit level. If there is a child in the home affected by the family cap provision, the household is not categorically eligible; therefore, the household must meet the Food Stamp Program gross income limits in order to participate in the SFSP. Any SSI payment received will be counted as income in the SFSP budget.

See TEA 2330-2341 for instructions on determining countable income. Resources owned by the SSI recipient will be excluded.

*** 10108 *The Effect of TEA Sanctions on Food Stamp Benefits***

Food stamp benefits will not be increased when benefits received under another means-tested federal, state, or local welfare or public assistance program (i.e., TEA or SSI) are reduced, suspended or terminated due to intentional failure to comply with a requirement of that program. The prohibition against increasing benefits will last no longer than the duration of the penalty imposed by the TEA Program or the SSI Program and will be applied concurrently with the TEA or SSI sanction. Should the TEA or SSI sanction end because the household has complied, the prohibition against increasing food stamp benefits will also end. The prohibition against increasing food stamp benefits follows the individual who intentionally failed to comply. If this person leaves the household, the prohibition will end.

This provision will not apply:

- When TEA recipients are not allowed to add newborn children to an existing TEA cash assistance grant.
- When there is a reduction, termination, or suspension in benefits paid under the Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) Program regardless of the reason for the reduction.
- When the agency that administers the other program will not cooperate in providing the necessary information.

To prevent food stamp benefits from increasing as a result of an intentional failure to comply with a program requirement, an amount equal to the reduction in the TEA or SSI benefits must continue to be counted in the food stamp budget. This amount will be calculated by subtracting the reduced amount of the assistance from the original amount. This amount will be shown in the budget as "other" income and will continue to be

**Simplified Food Stamp Program
Sanctions**

TEA 10108-10108

shown until the sanction ends regardless of subsequent changes to the assistance amount. If the case was closed, the full amount of the grant will be shown in the budget for the sanction period. If an adverse change to an SSI check is due to a readily identified change such as, but not limited to, receipt of additional income, SSA need not be contacted for information about the reason for the change. In other instances the worker should contact SSA to determine the reason for the decrease. If an adverse action to an SSI benefit is not specifically identified as resulting from an intentional failure to comply, the reduced benefit amount will be shown in the budget so long as there has been a good faith effort to get information about the reason for the action.

Failure to comply with a TEA Program requirement will not include:

- Failure to appear for the initial assessment interview;
- Failure or refusal to complete the TEA application process; or
- Requesting that the TEA case be closed.

The following chart provides information about when a sanction is to be applied for failure to comply with a TEA Program requirement:

REASON FOR SANCTION	ACTION IN TEA CASE	LENGTH OF TIME TO COUNT INCOME EQUAL TO SANCTION AMOUNT
Failed to cooperate with the Office of Child Support Enforcement	25% reduction in payment amount	Until adult complies or case closes
Failed to comply with immunization requirement	25% reduction in payment amount	Until adult complies or case closes
Failed to participate in a work activity	25% reduction in payment amount	Until adult complies or case closes
Minor parent failed to comply with a work activity	25% reduction in payment amount	Until minor parent complies or case closes
Failed to participate in an employability assessment	25% reduction in payment amount	Until adult complies or case closes
Failed to accept employment or terminated employment	25% reduction in payment amount	Until adult complies or case closes
Failed to cooperate with Quality Assurance	Case closed	Three months
Intentional Program Violation (IPV)	Case closed	For duration of IPV penalty period

* **10200** ***Applying to Participate in the Simplified Food Stamp Program***

Households that submit an application to participate in the TEA Cash Assistance Program will also have submitted an application to participate in the SFSP. Page one of The TEA Cash Assistance application contains the information necessary to determine food stamp eligibility and to screen for expedited services.

When a household that is not currently participating in the Food Stamp Program submits a *TEA Application* (DCO-180), the county office will use the DCO-180 to determine food stamp eligibility if possible. The DCO-180 may not be used to determine food stamp eligibility if some household members already receive food stamp benefits under the regular Food Stamp Program and the TEA applicants cannot be a separate household as per TEA 10020.

Example: A 19 year old woman applies for TEA Cash Assistance for herself and her child. She lives in the home with her parents. Her parents receive food stamp benefits. The woman and her child must be added to her parent's food stamp case.

The food stamp portion of the TEA application must be approved or denied, under either regular Food Stamp Program rules or SFSP rules, within 30 days of the date of application. (For eligible households, food stamp benefits must be available within 30 days of application so the application must be keyed by the 27th day of the application processing period. If the application is denied, the effective date of the denial must always be the 30th day of the application processing period.)

An interview must be conducted by a county office worker before food stamp eligibility can be established. Pages one and two of the TEA application, along with the information on the remainder of the TEA application, should contain adequate information to determine eligibility under the SFSP policy or regular Food Stamp Program policy for both expedited and non-expedited households. The TEA interview will be sufficient to meet the interview requirements of both the SFSP and the regular Food Stamp Program.

When a TEA applicant misses an appointment, the TEA portion of the application may be denied at the end of 10 days. However, the food stamp portion of the application must be held for the full 30-day period. If the household requests another appointment, one will be scheduled. The appointment will be scheduled before the 30th day of the food stamp application period if at all possible. If not, the household will be scheduled for an interview as quickly as possible and all delays in application processing beyond the 30th

day of the application period will be the fault of the county office. If the household appears for the interview, provides all needed information and is otherwise eligible to participate in the regular Food Stamp Program, the food stamp portion of the application will be approved. The household will not be required to submit a *Food Stamp Application* (DCO-220). Any certification period assigned must not exceed three months.

If the TEA applicant does not wish to receive food stamp benefits, it is not necessary to process the food stamp portion of the application.

Example: A 19 year old woman applies for TEA Cash Assistance for herself and her child. She lives in the home with her parents. Her parents do not wish to receive food stamp benefits. It is not necessary to process the food stamp portion of the application.

The TEA applicant is allowed, but not required, to sign a written statement that he or she does not wish to receive food stamp benefits at the present time. Declining food stamp benefits at the time of application will have no affect on a household's future eligibility. The household will be allowed to apply for food stamp benefits at any time.

Nutrition assistance is a valuable asset to TEA applicants. The receipt of food stamp benefits may give a family the support they need to survive while the TEA application is being processed. This means that the county should process the food stamp application as quickly as all needed information is available. If TEA applicants can be certified under regular Food Stamp Program before the county can make a determination on the TEA portion of the application, then the household's receipt of food stamp benefits should not be delayed.

*** 10201 *Certifying Households Under SFSP Rules***

Households will be certified to receive food stamp benefits under SFSP rules when:

- Eligibility for food stamp benefits can be determined more quickly under SFSP rules than under regular Food Stamp Program rules; or
- The household is not eligible to participate in the regular Food Stamp Program but, based on receipt of TEA benefits, will be eligible to participate in the SFSP.

When a household is not eligible to participate in the regular Food Stamp Program but will be eligible to participate in the SFSP based on receipt of TEA Cash Assistance, food stamp benefits will not be authorized until the TEA portion of the application is approved. Since eligibility for food stamp benefits is dependent on receipt of TEA

benefits, food stamp benefits for the first month of eligibility will be prorated to the date on which the TEA application was approved.

If eligibility for food stamp benefits is delayed due to a request for additional information and the TEA application is approved prior to receipt of the requested information, eligibility for food stamp benefits will be determined at the time the TEA application is approved. The rules applicable to the SFSP will be applied when the food stamp application is approved.

*** 10202 Certifying SFSP Applicants Under the Expedited Provisions**

The following SFSP applicants must be provided with food stamp benefits within seven calendar days of the date of application:

- Households with \$100 or less in countable liquid resources and less than \$150 in gross monthly income;
- Eligible households whose total combined gross monthly income and liquid resources are less than the amount incurred by the household for its utilities and rent or mortgage payment; or
- Destitute households with \$100 or less in countable liquid resources. A household may not be considered destitute unless it contains migrant or seasonal farmworker members in the job stream.

There are questions on page 1 of the TEA Application (DCO-180) that are designed to help identify households entitled to expedited service.

Verification of the following items may be postponed for households entitled to expedited service: residency, income, liquid resources, actual utilities, medical costs, and alien status. Identity must be verified. When verification is postponed, expedited households will be assigned a one month period of certification unless the application was submitted after the 15th of the month and approved the same month. If so, the household will be assigned a two month period of certification.

There is no limit to the number of times a household may be certified under the expedited service provisions. However, prior to each subsequent expedited certification, the household must either complete the verification requirements that were postponed or be certified under normal processing standards.

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10203

Certifying Households Under Regular Food Stamp Program Rules

Food stamp benefits will be authorized under regular Food Stamp Program rules for TEA Cash Assistance applicants when:

- The household is entitled to expedited service for food stamp benefits;
- The household is not entitled to expedited service, but eligibility for food stamp benefits can be determined more quickly than eligibility for TEA benefits;
- The TEA Cash Assistance portion of the application is denied, but the household is eligible for food stamp benefits under regular Food Stamp Program rules.
- One or more household members are not included in the TEA assistance grant for reasons other than the family cap provisions or receipt of SSI.

If additional information is needed to establish eligibility under regular Food Stamp Program rules, this information may be requested via the Notice of Delayed Food Stamp Application (DCO-206). This information must be provided on or before the end of the 30 day food stamp application processing period. The household must be allowed at least 10 days to provide this information. If the application must be held beyond the end of the 30 day processing period in order to allow the household 10 days to provide the information, the delay in processing will be the fault of the household.

Decision Point In order to insure the household receives food stamp benefits quickly, the county office may instruct the worker to immediately process the food stamp portion of the TEA Application if all information is available. If all information is not available, the worker may immediately issue a Notice of Delayed Application (DCO-206) requesting the needed information. As soon as this information is available, the food stamp portion of the application can be approved.

Food stamp applications processed under regular Food Stamp Program rules will be registered and, if the household is ineligible, denied using the area provided on page 1 of the TEA application. The date of the TEA application is also the date of the food stamp application. When a food stamp application is approved, the food stamp benefits will be prorated from the date of the TEA application. The household will not be considered to be at fault for any application processing delays past 30 days.

Any household that submitted only a TEA application but was certified under regular Food Stamp Program rules will be assigned a certification period no longer than three months. (Expedited households certified pending verification will be assigned a one or two month certification period as explained in TEA 10202.) The household will not be placed on quarterly reporting.

If a household is certified under regular Food Stamp Program rules and the TEA application is later approved, the household will be converted to the SFSP as instructed in TEA 10400. When the household is converted to the SFSP, the certification period will be extended to a maximum of 12 months with no additional interview required. See TEA 10500.

If the household is not converted to the SFSP for any reason, a normal recertification must occur at the end of the certification period. At recertification, a Food Stamp Application (DCO-220) must be completed and submitted by the household and an interview must be conducted.

<p><u>DECISION POINT</u> <i>General guidelines have been provided for determining food stamp eligibility for TEA applicants based on regular Food Stamp Program rules. Each county will apply these procedures in accordance with the county's internal procedures for processing both regular and expedited food stamp applications. For example, if there is a Unit in the office which determines food stamp eligibility for NA households, that Unit could work with a copy of the TEA application to determine food stamp eligibility under regular Food Stamp Program rules.</i></p>

10204 *Work Registration Requirements - Regular Food Stamp Program*

Food Stamp Program work registration exemptions are allowed for the following household members:

1. Age 15 or younger
2. Age 16 or 17 and living with a parent or attending a school or training program on at least a half-time basis
3. Age 60 or older
4. Disabled
5. Caring for a dependent child under age 6 or an incapacitated person of any age
6. Receiving unemployment benefits
7. Participating in a treatment program for alcoholism or drug addiction
8. Employed or self-employed on a full-time basis
9. Enrolled full-time in a high school or an institution of higher education
10. Receiving TEA Cash Assistance

All other household members are subject to the work registration requirements.

When the household signs the TEA Application, DCO-180, non-exempt household members are automatically registered for work. If the TEA Application is denied after the household has been certified for food stamp benefits and not all household members are exempt from work registration, a Notification of Work Registration (DCO-260) will be issued to the household. A DCO-260 will also be issued if the TEA Application is approved, the household is not eligible to participate in the SFSP, and some household members will be subject to work registration under Food Stamp Program rules.

10205 *Medical Deductions - Regular Food Stamp Program*

Since most individuals who participate in the SFSP have Medicaid coverage, no medical deduction will be allowed in the SFSP. However, in some instances, a medical deduction must be calculated for TEA applicants certified under regular Food Stamp Program rules. Under regular Food Stamp Program rules, a deduction will be given for allowable medical costs in excess of \$35 per month when such costs are incurred by a household member who is age 60 or older or who is in receipt of disability benefits based on permanent and total disability.

The following medical costs are allowable:

- The cost of attendants, home health aides, disabled child care services, or homemakers when such services are required due to the disability or illness of the aged or disabled member.
- Corrective devices such as, but not limited to, dentures, braces, eye glasses, hearing aids, or prosthetic devices.
- Hospital and nursing home care.
- Health and hospitalization policy premiums not to include health and accident policies payable in lump sum settlements.
- Medical and dental care.
- Medical equipment and supplies.
- The purchase, maintenance and training of seeing eye dogs and other service animals for the disabled.
- Prescription drugs including over the counter medication recommended or prescribed by a health care professional.
- Transportation and lodging incurred to obtain medical treatment.

Monthly expenses will be anticipated based on the best information available. Monthly expenses will be allowed. Periodic expenses will be allowed if the expense is regularly recurring and can be reasonably anticipated. If a periodic expense is allowed, the household may choose to use the entire expense in the month incurred or to average the expenses over the period of use. A one-time expense may be allowed if the expense was incurred within the 30 calendar day period prior to the month of application or if payment on the expense will otherwise become due in the month of application. The household may choose to allow the entire one-time expense in the month incurred or to average the expense forward over the assigned certification period. Past due medical costs are not allowed. Any portion of the medical expense to be reimbursed will not be allowed. All medical expenses must be verified.

10206 *Dependent Care Deduction - Regular Food Stamp Program*

Since child care costs will be paid for individuals who receive TEA Cash Assistance, no dependent care deduction will be allowed in the SFSP. However, in some instances, a dependent care deduction must be calculated for TEA applicants certified under regular Food Stamp Program rules. Under regular Food Stamp Program rules, a deduction will be given for costs for the actual care of a child or other dependent person incurred to allow a household member to work or to pursue education preparatory to work. Dependent care costs are limited to \$200 per month for a dependent under age 2 or \$175 per month for a dependent age 2 or older.

10210 *Authorizing Food Stamp Benefits*

The following deductions will be allowed in the SFSP.

<u>Earned Income Deduction</u>	This is 20% of the household's gross earned income.
<u>Standard Deduction</u>	This is \$134.
<u>Child Support Deduction</u>	This is an average of the legally obligated child support payments made in the last three months by a household member to an individual who is not a household member.
<u>Excess Shelter Deduction for TEA Households With No Aged/Disabled Members</u>	This is the household's total allowable shelter cost in excess of 50% of the household's income after all other allowable deductions. A standard shelter cost will be assigned to each household <u>that incurs a shelter cost</u> . The only households not allowed the standard will be those households with no shelter costs. The standard shelter cost includes the rent (or mortgage payment, taxes and insurance) and the utility costs. Households that pay only their long distance telephone costs are not entitled to the standard shelter cost. The standard shelter cost differs from county to county. A standard shelter cost table appears in TEA 10213.
<u>Excess Shelter Deduction for TEA Households With Aged/Disabled Members</u>	This is the household's total allowable shelter cost in excess of 50% of the household's income after all other allowable deductions. There are special shelter cost provisions that apply to SFSP households with a member who receives SSI. These households will be allowed to choose between using the standard shelter cost or the

**Simplified Food Stamp Program
Authorizing Food Stamp Benefits**

**TEA 10210-10211
Actual Shelter Costs**

- * household's actual verified shelter costs in the food stamp budget. The household may use all or any portion of its actual verified shelter costs. TEA 10211 contains a list of allowable shelter costs. TEA 10213 contains a standard shelter cost table.

10211 *Actual Shelter Costs*

Only the following items will be an allowable shelter cost:

- Continuing, not past due, charges for the shelter occupied by the household.
- Current property taxes on the household's shelter.
- Current, not past due, insurance charges on the household's shelter not to include separate identifiable costs for insuring furniture or personal belongings.
- Current, not past due, utility costs for cooking fuel, heating fuel, cooling, electricity, water, sewer, garbage, trash collection and fees for installation of utilities.
- Current, not past due, basic service fee for one telephone including tax on the basic fee, installation charges and line access charges.
- Current, not past due, shelter costs for a home temporarily unoccupied by its owners because of employment or training away from home, illness, a natural disaster, or casualty loss.
- Current, not past due, unreimbursed charges for repair of a home damaged or destroyed due to a natural disaster or casualty loss.
- For homeless households, a shelter estimate of \$143 unless the actual costs are higher.

The county office worker may accept any documentation that establishes the household's current actual shelter costs. Such documentation includes, but is not limited to, current receipts or bills or statements from the provider.

Households with SSI recipients or aged members who participate in the SFSP are not restricted from switching between actual shelter costs and the county shelter standard at any time. If a household provides verification of only part of its shelter costs and these costs are higher than the county standard, the actual costs verified by the household may be used. If none of the actual costs are verified, the county shelter standard will be used.

- * For households with SSI recipients or aged members, when a case is being converted from the regular Food Stamp Program to the SFSP and the utility standard is used in the current food stamp budget, a notice must be issued to the household. The notice should specify that the household may use either the county shelter standard or their actual shelter costs to calculate their food stamp benefit amount. The notice should also specify that if the household wishes to use their actual costs, they must provide verification of their most recent shelter costs. (It would be helpful to the household for the worker to specify the allowable shelter costs.)

The household must be allowed ten days to provide this verification. If verification is not provided, the county shelter standard will be used in the budget. If verification of actual costs is later provided, the budget may be changed at any time. It is important to document the household's decision about the use of the county standard or actual utility costs.

10212 *Authorizing the Correct Benefit Amount*

In order to authorize the correct amount of food stamp benefits, the county office worker must prepare a budget. The budget may be prepared on a Food Stamp Authorization Document (DCO-233), or the worker may print a copy of the current Food Stamp Master File (WFSM) screen and indicate the new budget in red on this copy.

SIGNED COPIES OF ALL AUTHORIZATION DOCUMENTS ARE ESSENTIAL.
THE INITIAL ACTION TO AUTHORIZE SFSP BENEFITS AND EVERY
BUDGET CHANGE MUST BE DOCUMENTED IN THE TEA CASE RECORD.

A copy of any document used to authorize any subsequent changes in the food stamp benefit amount must appear in the TEA case record. If the SFSP case is closed, a copy of the document used to close the SFSP case must appear in the TEA case record. **THESE DOCUMENTS WILL SERVE AS THE COUNTY'S RECORD OF WHEN BENEFITS WERE AUTHORIZED AND WHO AUTHORIZED THEM.**

DECISION POINT *Each county will designate how the SFSP documents will be filed in the TEA case record. The county may designate a special section for SFSP documents or may intermingle SFSP documents with the TEA documents in a certain specified order. No matter what method of filing SFSP documents is chosen by the county, the same method must be used consistently throughout the county office. Also, the method must allow a reviewer to determine when food stamp benefits were authorized for the household and what figures were used to calculate the current benefit amount. If a household's food stamp benefits are ended, the reviewer must be able to determine when the benefits were ended and whether this was a valid decision.*

In field 12 of the WFSM screen, one of the following codes must appear:

- REG** Not participating in the SFSP (default code)
- SO** SFSP with all household members receiving TEA Cash Assistance
- SFC** SFSP with at least one household member affected by the family cap provision
- SSI** SFSP with at least one household member receiving SSI benefits

To prepare a budget, the worker will complete the following steps on either the DCO-233 or the copy of the WFSM screen:

- Step 1** Determine gross monthly earned income as per TEA 2343-2344. Include any income received by household members prohibited from receiving TEA Cash Assistance benefits solely due to the family cap provision. Round individual earned income amounts up or down to the nearest dollar. Add individual rounded amounts together. Enter total in field 35.
- Step 2** Calculate the earned income deduction by multiplying total gross earned income by 20%. Round this figure up or down to the nearest dollar. Enter the rounded figure in field 36.
- Step 3** Subtract the earned income deduction from the gross earned income. The result is called the net earned income. Enter this figure in field 37.
- Step 4** Determine gross unearned income as per TEA 2330-2331. **TEA CASH ASSISTANCE AND SSI PAYMENTS ARE TO BE COUNTED AS UNEARNED INCOME.** Enter individual amounts (rounded up or down to the nearest dollar) in fields 38-48. Enter the total in field 49.
- Step 5** Add together the net earned income and the gross unearned income. The result is called the household's gross income. Enter this in field 51.
- Step 6** Subtract the standard deduction of \$134. Enter the standard deduction (or perhaps, for households with aged members or SSI recipients, the household's actual shelter costs) in field 52 and then subtract field 52 from field 51. Enter the result in field 53.
- Step 7** If a household member makes child support payments, enter the child support deduction (rounded up or down to the nearest dollar) in field 55a and then subtract field 55a from field 53. Enter the result in field 56. If there is no child support deduction, bring the figure in field 53 down to field 56. The result is called the adjusted income.
- Step 8** If the household has shelter costs, enter the applicable shelter standard from TEA 10211 or (for households with an aged or disabled member) the actual shelter costs (unrounded) in field 61. Enter a code A in field 59.
- Step 9** Calculate 50% of the adjusted income from Step 7. (Round resulting figure up or down to the nearest dollar.) Enter this in field 62.

**Simplified Food Stamp Program
Authorizing Correct Benefit Amount**

TEA 10212-10212

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- Step 10** Subtract field 62 from field 61. If the result is greater than 0, the household has an excess shelter deduction. Enter this in field 64. This is the excess shelter deduction. An excess shelter deduction may not exceed \$250 unless there is a household member age 60 or older or an SSI recipient in the home. If there is a household member age 60 or older in the home, enter a code 1 in field 63. If there is an SSI recipient in the home, enter a code 2 in field 63. (Only if a code 1 or 2 appears in field 63 will the food stamp system allow shelter costs in excess of \$250.)
- Step 11** Subtract any excess shelter deduction in field 66 from field 65. The result is the net monthly income. Enter the result in field 67.
- Step 12** Enter the number of eligible household members in field 68.
- Step 13** Enter the maximum food stamp benefit amount for the household size as specified in the Food Stamp Basis of Issuance Tables in field 69 or go to Step 14.
- Step 14** Multiply the net monthly income in field 67 by 30%. The result is the reduction rate. Enter the reduction rate in field 70.
- Step 15** Subtract the reduction rate in field 70 from the maximum benefit amount in field 69. The result is the household's food stamp benefit amount. Enter the food stamp benefit amount in field 71

**Simplified Food Stamp Program
Shelter Standard by County**

**TEA 10213-10220
Certification Periods**

10213 *Shelter Standard by County*

COUNTY	standard	COUNTY	standard	COUNTY	standard
01 - Arkansas	\$155	26 - Garland	\$196	51 - Newton	\$221
02 - Ashley	\$167	27 - Grant	\$219	52 - Ouachita	\$176
03 - Baxter	\$245	28 - Greene	\$184	53 - Perry	\$224
04 - Benton	\$224	29 - Hempstead	\$191	54 - Phillips	\$183
05 - Boone	\$210	30 - Hot Spring	\$183	55 - Pike	\$145
06 - Bradley	\$133	31 - Howard	\$188	56 - Poinsett	\$172
07 - Calhoun	\$145	32 - Independence	\$231	57 - Polk	\$165
08 - Carroll	\$208	33 - Izard	\$217	58 - Pope	\$202
09 - Chicot	\$151	34 - Jackson	\$146	59 - Prairie	\$151
10 - Clark	\$174	35 - Jefferson	\$168	60 - Pulaski	\$167
11 - Clay	\$186	36 - Johnson	\$182	61 - Randolph	\$237
12 - Cleburne	\$230	37 - Lafayette	\$172	62 - Saline	\$183
13 - Cleveland	\$183	38 - Lawrence	\$218	63 - Scott	\$165
14 - Columbia	\$175	39 - Lee	\$170	64 - Searcy	\$199
15 - Conway	\$215	40 - Lincoln	\$166	65 - Sebastian	\$183
16 - Craighead	\$173	41 - Little River	\$223	66 - Sevier	\$207
17 - Crawford	\$200	42 - Logan	\$219	67 - Sharp	\$195
18 - Crittenden	\$157	43 - Lonoke	\$170	68 - St. Francis	\$164
19 - Cross	\$222	44 - Madison	\$262	69 - Stone	\$225
20 - Dallas	\$187	45 - Marion	\$248	70 - Union	\$185
21 - Desha	\$146	46 - Miller	\$214	71 - Van Buren	\$157
22 - Drew	\$175	47 - Mississippi	\$197	72 - Washington	\$239
23 - Faulkner	\$218	48 - Monroe	\$157	73 - White	\$226
24 - Franklin	\$208	49 - Montgomery	\$198	74 - Woodruff	\$178
25 - Fulton	\$212	50 - Nevada	\$190	75 - Yell	\$180

10220 *Certification Periods*

Households participating in the SFSP will be assigned a 12 month certification period. Certification periods shorter than 12 months may be assigned if TEA Cash Assistance eligibility will cease before the end of the 12 month period. Also, certification periods shorter than 12 months may be assigned at the discretion of the county administrator.

The household will not be required to submit an application for a certification period to be extended in the SFSP. However, an application approval must be keyed in order to extend the certification period. SEE TEA 10201 FOR INFORMATION ON ASSIGNING CERTIFICATION PERIODS TO TEA APPLICANTS CERTIFIED UNDER REGULAR FOOD STAMP PROGRAM RULES.

10221 *Extending Certification Periods*

At any periodic review described in TEA 4101.1 or 4101.2, the certification period for a SFSP household may be extended for up to 12 additional months if the household still meets the criteria to participate in the SFSP. Even if no periodic review is conducted, each SFSP household's certification period must be extended so that there is no loss of food stamp benefits.

Although the county is not required to do a recertification to extend a SFSP household's certification period, they are required to have some contact with the household. It is not necessary to extend the certification period each time the worker has some contact with the household so long as the certification period is not allowed to expire.

Each county must devise a method of tracking when certification periods end for SFSP participants and for insuring that each SFSP household's certification period is properly extended. For example, each county receives a Notice of Food Stamp Certification Expiration (DCO-239) or an equivalent report for each household whose certification period is expiring. The county may use these documents to identify households participating in the SFSP whose certification will be expiring. The county may also develop an internal tracking system for these cases.

- * Each county must also devise a method of contacting these households to insure that the household is still eligible to receive food stamp benefits through the SFSP. Such a method may be as simple as contacting the household by telephone to insure that there has been no change in income, resources or household composition which will affect the household's entitlement to participate in the SFSP. The county may also choose to bring the household into the office for an interview.

Any extension must be fully documented. Documentation must include a copy of the *Food Stamp Authorization Document* (DCO-233) or its equivalent showing the certification period and any budget changes. If the household's food stamp benefit amount will change as a result of the extension, a notice must be issued to the household. Instructions on issuing notices appear in TEA 10500.

**Simplified Food Stamp Program
Proration of Benefits**

TEA 10230-10230

10230 *Proration of Benefits*

When a household who is not currently participating in the regular Food Stamp Program makes a TEA Cash Assistance application, benefits for the first month of participation in the SFSP will be prorated to the date on which the TEA Cash Assistance application was filed. If a prorated food stamp benefit is less than \$10.00, no benefits will be issued.

The Food Stamp Automated Customer Tracking System (FACTS) automatically calculates prorated initial food stamp benefits based on the date of application. When a TEA Cash Assistance applicant's eligibility for the SFSP is authorized, the date of application keyed to the FACTS system must be the date the TEA Cash Assistance application was submitted to the county office. In some instances, it may be necessary to manually calculate prorated benefits. For example, if retroactive benefits are authorized as instructed in TEA 10261, prorated benefits must be calculated manually.

Should it be necessary for any reason to calculate prorated benefits manually, the following table may be used. To use this table, locate the date of application, then multiply the full monthly benefit amount by the corresponding multiplication factor.

DATE OF APPLICATION	MULTIPLICATION FACTOR	DATE OF APPLICATION	MULTIPLICATION FACTOR
1	1.0000	17	.4667
2	.9667	18	.4334
3	.9334	19	.4000
4	.9000	20	.3667
5	.8667	21	.3334
6	.8334	22	.3000
7	.8000	23	.2667
8	.7667	24	.2334
9	.7334	25	.2000
10	.7000	26	.1667
11	.6667	27	.1334
12	.6334	28	.1000
13	.6000	29	.0667
14	.5667	30	.0334
15	.5334	31	.0334
16	.5000		

10240 *Minimum Benefit Amount*

In the SFSP, the minimum food stamp benefit for eligible one and two person households in the SFSP is \$10.00. The minimum benefit for households with three or more members is \$2.00.

10250 *Aggregate Benefits*

An aggregate food stamp benefit amount includes the family's food stamp benefits for the month of application and the following month. An aggregate food stamp benefit amount will be issued when a TEA Cash Assistance application is approved if the TEA Cash Assistance application was submitted after the 15th of the month and is approved before the end of the same month. If the prorated food stamp benefit amount for the month of application is less than \$10, only the household's benefits for the following month will be issued. However, these benefits will be issued when the application is approved.

Aggregate benefits are authorized via the RETRO fields of the *Food Stamp Authorization Document* (DCO-233). See DCOUM 7300 for additional instructions.

10260 *Issuance*

Food stamp benefits will be issued via the Electronic Benefits Transfer (EBT) system.

In the EBT system, food stamp benefits are accessed through a point-of-sale (POS) device by using a magnetic stripe plastic card. Families who participate in the SFSP may receive either one or two EBT cards to access their TEA Cash Assistance and food stamp benefits. Each EBT card contains the cardholder's name and a Primary Account Number (PAN) which is unique to each individual card.

A personal identification number (PIN) is assigned to each food stamp benefit recipient. The PIN is known only to the recipient. The PIN can only be changed at the recipient's request.

Except for Jefferson County, EBT cards are issued through the mail by a contractor. Issuance of an EBT card occurs automatically when eligibility for the SFSP is approved. The EBT card will be mailed by 3:00 p.m. the following day. 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 NUMBER at 1-800-997-9999 and verifies his or her identity. Food stamp recipients must also call the CUSTOMER SERVICE NUMBER at 1-800-997-9999 to report lost, stolen or damaged cards.

**Simplified Food Stamp Program
Issuance**

TEA 10260-10260

In Jefferson County, both the EBT card and the PIN are issued at the DHS county office. Jefferson County issues original EBT cards and replacement cards at the county office. County office personnel 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, the PIN pad, and the printed receipt. If the EBT card is lost or stolen in Jefferson County, the customer must call the CUSTOMER SERVICE NUMBER at 1-800-997-9999 to report the problem and then go to the county office to receive the replacement card.

A food stamp recipient may name an authorized representative. If an authorized representative is named, the authorized representative will have a separate card, card number and PIN. The food stamp recipient may choose not to have an EBT card if there is an authorized representative.

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 5:00 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

Cancellation of monthly benefits will occur when the county office receives reliable information that all adult members of the SFSP are deceased or when the entire household has moved from Arkansas. In other situations, benefits will not normally be canceled after the end-of-month extract.

Cancellation of daily benefits will occur in the Food Stamp Section when the authorized amount is excessive for the household size, when the wrong transaction code is keyed or if the transaction will otherwise cause an imbalance in the accounting process. Benefits may also be canceled in the Food Stamp Section if a keying error has occurred and the county requests the cancellation.

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

An EBT food stamp benefit account does not close when a SFSP 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. The FACTS system will send an automatic notice to the food stamp recipient on the 60th day to advise the recipient that the account will become aged (inaccessible) unless there is at least one access by the recipient before the 90th day. Benefits in aged accounts may be restored to a food stamp recipient. See TEA 10262 for instructions on restoring benefits.

When a household moves from Arkansas to another state where EBT is not used to issue food stamp benefits or where the state's EBT system will not interact with the Arkansas EBT system, a contractor will issue any remaining food stamp benefits to the household via mail. The EBT Unit in the Central Office will coordinate this issuance.

10261 *Retroactive Benefits*

At the time a food stamp application is approved, food stamp benefits will normally be authorized back to the date of the TEA Cash Assistance application. If the date of application is in a month prior to the month of the TEA Cash Assistance application approval, retroactive food stamp benefits are authorized for the month (or months) prior to the approval month. Retroactive benefits are subject to proration as explained in TEA 10230. For example, if a food stamp application is submitted on June 23 and approved on August 2, food stamp benefits for the months of June and July will be authorized as retroactive benefits. See DCOUM 7300 for additional information.

10262 *Restorations and Supplemental Benefits*

Supplemental benefits and restored benefits are food stamp benefits issued to a household to correct:

- An error made by the agency;
- An error which occurred in the automated system;

The failure or inability of the county office worker to process a reported change in accordance with TEA Cash Assistance guidelines.

Either supplemental benefits or restored benefits will be calculated by:

1. Preparing a budget as instructed in TEA 10210 to calculate the correct amount of food stamp benefits due;
2. Subtracting the original food stamp benefit amount from the correct amount of benefits due; and
3. Authorizing the supplemental or restored benefit amount via the Automated Adjustment Screen (WFMO) by preparing a Food Stamp Adjustment - Automated 248 System (DCO-248).

See DCOUM 8340 for instructions on authorizing supplemental benefits.

See DCOUM 8370 for instructions on authorizing restored benefits.

NOTE: If a household has an unpaid food stamp overpayment, the amount of restored benefits (BUT NOT SUPPLEMENTAL BENEFITS) must be offset by the amount due on the overpayment. Food stamp benefit overpayments are listed on the WCLM screen. Instructions for offsetting restored benefits may be found in FSC 13320.

10263 *Recoupments*

A household's food stamp benefit amount may be reduced prior to issuance to recover an overpayment. Such action is called "recoupment." A food stamp recoupment can only be applied to a food stamp overpayment.

A recoupment will be initiated against each new overpayment claim processed by the Overpayment Unit if an adult member of the household against which the claim was established is currently certified to receive food stamp benefits. A recoupment will be initiated against the household that includes the individual in whose name the overpayment was reported and established.

Inadvertent household errors and agency error claims will be recouped at the rate of 10% of the household's monthly benefit amount or \$10.00, whichever is greater. Intentional program violation (IPV) claims will be recouped at the rate of 20% of the household's monthly benefit amount or \$10.00, whichever is greater.

10300 *Changes*

Households participating in the SFSP will be required to report changes as explained in TEA 4000 - 4440. There are no additional reporting requirements particular to the SFSP. Any change reported to the TEA worker which is effective in the TEA Cash Assistance case must be reflected in the food stamp benefits also.

When a change affects the household's income or household size, a new food stamp budget must be calculated in order to determine the effects of the change on the household's food stamp benefit amount. See TEA 10212 for instructions on calculating a budget. (NOTE: Changes in income disregarded for TEA purposes because they are not significant changes will also be disregarded in the SFSP budget.)

When a household's SFSP benefits change, a notice will be issued to the household. If the household's SFSP case will close or the household's food stamp benefits will decrease as a result of the change, an advance notice of adverse action will be issued to the household. See TEA 10500 for additional information about notice requirements.

10310 *Households No Longer Entitled to Participate in the SFSP*

A household is no longer entitled to participate in the SFSP when:

- The TEA Cash Assistance case is closed; or
- When one or more household members are no longer included in a TEA Cash Assistance case and/or are no longer receiving SSI.

* When a household is no longer entitled to participate in the SFSP, the household's certification period will be shortened to end as quickly as possible, but no later than two months following the current month. To shorten a certification period, the new ending certification date must be entered in field 76 of the Food Stamp Master File (WFSM).

Any changes in household circumstances must be reflected in the SFSP budget. For example, if a family member went to work and the TEA case is being closed as a result, the earned income will be counted in the SFSP budget. Income and resources will continue to be determined under TEA rules. The category will remain SO or SFC SSI. If the county shelter standard was used in the budget, this standard will remain in the budget until the household is recertified.

**Simplified Food Stamp Program
May No Longer Participate in SFSP**

**TEA 10310-10400
Converting Cases**

A Notice of Food Stamp Certification Expiration (DCO-239) will be completed and issued to the household using the local office procedures for NA food stamp applications. A Food Stamp Application (DCO -220) will be enclosed with the DCO-239. The household must receive the DCO-239 on any day during the next to the last month of the shortened certification period. For example, if the certification period is being shortened to end in August, the household must receive a DCO-239 some time during July.

10400 *Converting Active Cases to the SFSP*

When a household is approved to participate in the TEA Cash Assistance Program, the household's records must be examined to determine if there is a food stamp case. If the household is currently participating in the regular Food Stamp Program, the food stamp record and the TEA Cash Assistance record will be examined to determine if the household is eligible to participate in the SFSP. See TEA 10100.

If the household is not eligible to participate in the SFSP, no action is required. Food stamp eligibility will continue to be handled through the county office's normal procedures.

If the household is eligible to participate in the SFSP, the household's food stamp eligibility will be established under the SFSP through the conversion process. This will not require the submission of a food stamp application.

* When a case is converted from the regular Food Stamp Program to the SFSP, the following actions must be completed:

- Adjust the budget. Do not continue to allow either medical costs or dependent care costs. If the household does not have a SSI recipient or aged member and declares any sort of shelter cost, use the county shelter standard. If the household has an SSI recipient or aged member, use the highest of the county shelter standard or the household's actual costs. Instructions for allowing actual shelter costs at conversion may be found at TEA 10211.
- If the household will lose benefits under the SFSP, send an advance notice of adverse action. See TEA 10500.
- Extend the household's certification period to 12 months. See TEA 10221.
- If the certification period is extended, key an application approval.

10500 *Notices*

In the SFSP, a Notice of Action (DCO-1) will be issued:

- At initial approval to advise the household of the food stamp benefit amount;
- To notify a household of an impending increase or decrease in the food stamp benefit amount;
- To notify a household of an impending closure of its case; and
- To notify a household when a restored benefit or a supplemental benefit is being issued.

Notices of action issued to advise the household of a decrease in benefits or case closure must be in the form of an advance notice of adverse action. That means the notice must be issued at least ten calendar days before the effective date of the action. Day one of the ten day advance notice period will be the day after the notice is issued. No action will be taken to decrease benefits or to close the case until the ten day period has ended.

Notices of action issued to advise the household of an increase in benefits or the issuance of restored benefits or supplemental benefits must be in the form of an adequate notice. An adequate notice is issued to be received on or before the date the household normally receives its food stamp benefits. (This is the date benefits are normally credited to the household's EBT account. See TEA 10260.)

No notice is required when:

- All household members die;
- The household moves from the State; or
- The case is closed at the household's written request.

The notice of action for the SFSP will be combined with the TEA notice of action whenever this is practical.

10600 *Hearings*

Any household whose benefits under the SFSP are adversely affected by an action of the agency must be provided an opportunity to appeal this action through the hearing process.

See TEA 8000 - 8014 for a full explanation of the administrative hearing process.

10700 ***Quality Assurance Reviews***

The cases of households participating in the SFSP will be subject to quality assurance (QA) reviews in both the positive and the negative universe. Reviews will be based on the TEA Cash Assistance rules of eligibility. Any SFSP participant who refuses to cooperate in the QA review process will be ineligible to participate in the SFSP until the household cooperates with the QA reviewer or until January 3 of the year following the end of the review period.