

**NORTH DAKOTA DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES
BISMARCK, NORTH DAKOTA
June 10, 2019**

IM 5349

TO: County Social Service Directors
Economic Assistance Policy Regional Representatives
Economic Assistance Policy Quality Control Reviewers

FROM: Michele Gee, Director, Economic Assistance

SUBJECT: Action on reported changes

PROGRAMS: Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)

EFFECTIVE: Immediately

SECTIONS

AFFECTED: Application Use for Beginning Months
430-05-20-50-20-05
Review Use for Beginning Months 430-05-35-20-30
Unclear or Insufficient Information to Make a Benefit
Determination 430-05-67-15-20

On October 1, 2019, reacting to all reported changes was implemented. The following policies are being updated because future changes can be acted on.

Application Use for Beginning Months 430-05-20-50-20-05

An application is used to process the initial month, second beginning month and in some cases three beginning months. In order to process the application, mandatory verifications are required for all beginning months.

When household is interviewed and anticipates changes in the second or third beginning month, the application must be pended for verification of those changes. If the household provides the requested verifications and reports an additional change(s) prior to the application being processed, the F301-Additional Information must be sent to the household allowing the household an additional ten days to provide the verifications. If the ten

days extends beyond the processing timeframes, the worker must narrate why the application was processed beyond the processing timeframes.

If the household fails to provide verification necessary to process all beginning months, the application must be denied for failure to provide verification.

Because of anticipated changes, a household may be eligible for the month of application or month of application and second beginning month (if processing in the second month), but ineligible for the following months. In this instance the worker must process the application, approve benefits and send an approval notice for the initial month or initial and second beginning month.

The worker must then enter the anticipated changes for the second or third beginning month (if processing in the second month) and issue a closing notice. This must be done on the same day the initial month is processed to avoid sending a 10-day advance notice. If the second or third beginning month (if processing in the second month) is not processed on the same day as the first month, a 10-day advance notice is required to close the case.

Similarly, a household may be ineligible for the month of application, but eligible for the following month due to anticipated changes. The worker must deny the month of application and use the same application to pend or approve the second month.

If a household applies and indicates they are not interested in benefits for the month of application, the month of application must be denied using the F214 - Application /Review Withdrawn notice. The same application is then used to pend or approve the second month.

A household may be eligible for a zero benefit due to proration for the initial month. The worker must approve the application and a zero benefit must be authorized.

If the initial month is denied, the second month becomes the initial month. If the second month is denied and eligibility is anticipated for the third month, a new application is required.

Exception:

If processing the application in the second beginning month and there is no eligibility for the initial month and second beginning month, but anticipated eligibility for the third month, the same application can be registered and used to process the third month.

If a household verifies a change for a future month (not an application processing month) that change must ~~not~~ be acted on.

Review Use for Beginning Months 430-05-35-20-30

A review may be used to process one, two or up to three months of the new review period. In order to process the review, mandatory verifications are required for all beginning month.

When a household is interviewed and anticipates changes in the second or third beginning months, the review must be pended for verification of those changes. If the household provides the requested verifications and reports an additional change(s) prior to the review being processed, the F301-Additional Information must be sent to the household allowing the household an additional ten days to provide the verification. If the ten days extends beyond the processing time frames, the worker must narrate why the application was processed beyond the processing time frames.

If the household fails to provide verification necessary to process all beginning months, the review must be denied for failure to provide verification.

Because of anticipated changes, a household may be eligible for the first month of the review period or first two months of the review period (if processing in the second month), but ineligible for the following months. In this instance the worker must process the review, approve benefits and send an approval notice for the first month or first and second beginning months.

The worker must then enter the anticipated changes for the second or third beginning month (if processing in the second month) and issue a closing notice. This must be done on the same day the first month is processed to avoid sending a 10-day advance notice. If the second or third beginning month (if processing in the second month) is not processed on the same day as the first month, a 10-day advance notice is required to close the case.

A household may be eligible for a zero benefit due to proration for the first month of the review period. The worker must approve the review and a zero benefit must be authorized.

If a household verifies a change for a future month (not an application for review processing month) that change must ~~not~~ be acted on.

If the first month of the review period is denied a new application is required.

Examples:

1. A household files a review due in June on June 28. During the interview on July 3rd, the household reports and verifies they will have no income in the month of August. The review is processed for July using the verified anticipated income and the income is removed when processing August benefits.
2. A household files a review due in June on June 28. During the interview on July 3rd, the household reports and verifies they will have a new source of income in the month of August. (The review is processed for July and the verified new source income is added when processing August benefits.) If July and August are not processed on the same day, a ten-day advanced notice is required to decrease August benefits.

Unclear or Insufficient Information to Make a Benefit Determination 430-05-67-15-20

If a worker receives unclear or insufficient information from a household and the worker is unable to determine the effect on the benefit, the worker must pursue clarification and verification of household circumstances if the change occurred within 60 days of the current month of participation using the following procedures:

1. The worker must send Notice - F419 "Request for Verification" to the household clearly advising the household of the verification it must provide or the actions it must take to clarify its circumstances. The household must be allowed 10 days from the mailing date of F419 to respond and to clarify its circumstances either by telephone or by correspondence.
2. If the household responds and provides sufficient verification within the 10-day period, the worker must act on the reported change within 10 days and send the household the appropriate notice. If the change results in a decrease in benefits or case closure, a 10-day advance notice must be sent. If the change was reported and signed by the household, adequate notice is required.

If the household fails to provide verification within the 10-day period, the case is closed. The worker must send the F401 – Failure to Provide Information. A 10-day advance notice is required.

If a worker receives unclear or insufficient information that a change occurred more than 60 days from the date of report, the worker must not act on this information or request verification until the next review unless the information should have been reported at the time of application or review.

Examples:

1. 20-year-old single individual is approved for SNAP and informed to report if her income exceeds the 130% GIL for a household size of one. During the review period, the 20-year-old moved in with mom. The 20-year-old must include mom's income in determining if her income exceeds the 130% GIL for a household size of one.

The 20-year-old reports the move in the same month she moved. The worker must send the F419 for the information needed to add mom to the 20 year olds case. If the household responds, mom is added to the 20 year olds case. The worker must then send the F741 –Household Over Gross Income Limit and Eligible- Reporting Requirement (Ongoing Case) or F742 – Household Under Gross Income Limit Reporting Requirement (Ongoing Case), whichever is appropriate, informing the household of their new reporting requirement based on the increased household size.

If the household fails to provide verification within the 10-day period, the case is closed. The worker must send the F401 – Failure to Provide Information. A 10-day advance notice must be sent. If the change was reported and signed by the household, adequate notice is required.

2. Boyfriend and girlfriend living in the same home apply for SNAP and are determined to be separate households and were approved for benefits. Since separate household status was established at the time of application, they do not need to include each other's income in determining if their income exceeds the 130% GIL.

During the review period, the girlfriend reports they were married. The report was made the same month they were married. The worker must send the F419 for the information needed to add boyfriend to girlfriend's case. The F419 also must be sent to the boyfriend since a source other than the household reported a change.

If either of the households respond, the boyfriend is added to the girlfriend's case after allowing for advance notice to close the boyfriend's case. If the change was reported and signed by the household, adequate notice is required. The worker must then send the F741 or F742, whichever is appropriate, informing the household of their new reporting requirement based on the increased household size.

If the households fails to respond, both cases are closed. The

worker must send the F401 and a 10-day advance notice is required.

3. A household applies and is approved for SNAP in April. In August, the household reports they received a pay raise which began in May. This new income increase did not cause the household to exceed the GIL for their household size. The F419 must not be sent to the household to request verification of the pay raise.

When the worker has information indicating a household has moved and verification has not been provided or receives returned mail **with** a forwarding address, the worker must update the address and send Notice F419- Request for Verification requesting any verification needed, including residency and new shelter and utility expenses. The household has 10 days from the mailing date of the F419 to provide the verification.

If the requested verification(s) are received, the worker must act on the verified ~~reported~~ change(s) within 10 days and send the household the appropriate notice. If the change(s) result in a decrease in benefits, advance notice is required. If the verified change is signed by the household, then adequate notice is required.

If the requested verification(s) are not received, the worker must send the F401. If it is prior to advance notice deadline the F401 must be sent and the case will close at the end of the month.

If it is after advance notice deadline and the household fails to provide the requested verification(s) the F401 cannot be sent until the first working day of the following month in TECS. Benefits are authorized the same as the previous month.

~~If it is after advance notice deadline and the household provides verification of one or more of the reported changes but not all of the changes the F401 cannot be sent until the first working day of the following month in TECS. The worker must act on all verified information within 10 days and send the appropriate notice. If the changes result in a decrease in benefits, advance notice is required unless the change is signed by the household, then adequate notice is required.~~

If the household provides verification of one or more of the reported changes but not all of the changes and it is:

- prior to advance notice deadline, the F401 must be sent and the case will close at the end of the month.
- after advance notice deadline, the F401 cannot be sent until the first working day of the following month. The worker must act on all verified information within 10 days and send the appropriate notice. If the changes result in a decrease in benefits, advance notice is required unless the change is signed by the household, then adequate notice is required.

If the worker receives returned mail without a forwarding address, ~~the case must be closed for residency using adequate notice.~~ the case must remain open and the change is not acted on. The worker must not ask for verification or follow-up on the change as insufficient information has been received. The worker must document what additional information is needed and the change is acted on at review.