Economic Security Administration (ESA) Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) Policy Manual

Version FY2026-1

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Government of the District of Columbia
Department of Human Services
64 New York Avenue, NE, Washington DC

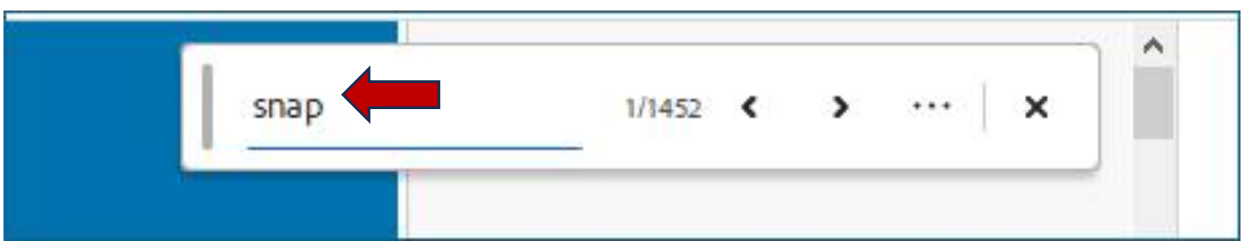
Navigation

Searching Within the Policy Manual

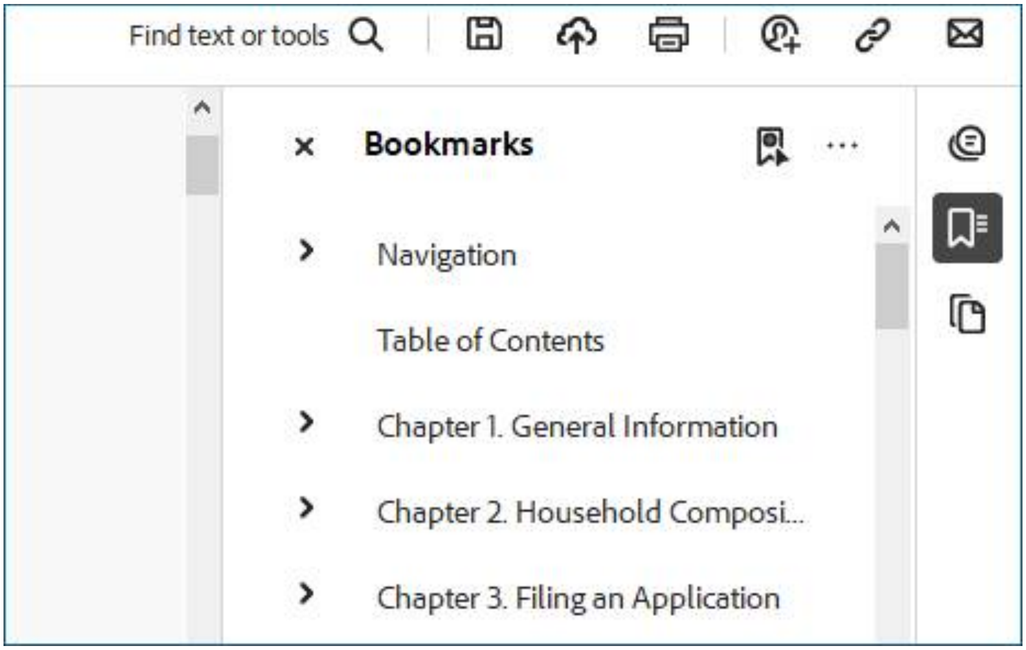
Once the PDF version is open (either on the web or Adobe Reader), use the following to search for specific sections, topics or words.

- Open the search bar
  - Press **Ctrl + F** to open the search bar
  - Or click the Search icon (typically a magnifying glass) in the toolbar

- **Enter a search term** (word or phrase) in the search bar
- **Navigate through the results**
  - Click the Previous and Next buttons (or arrows) to move between instances of the search term in the document
  - Matches will be highlighted, making it easier to spot the relevant sections



- **Browse headings or subheadings**
  - Click Bookmark or the Contents icon in the toolbar on the right
  - Click on any heading to jump directly to it
- **Expand or collapse headings**
  - Click small triangles to expand or collapse sections



Policy Manual Layout Overview

The policy manual is structured for easy navigation and understanding. Below is an outline of its main components:

- **Chapters:** Each chapter provides general guidance on specific SNAP program categories or eligibility steps.
- **Sections and subsections:** Within each chapter, detailed policy content is divided into sections and subsections for clarity.
- **Headings:** Chapters and sections are numbered and organized for quick reference, allowing for easier navigation through the content.
- **Appendix:** The appendix chapters include key charts and tables, such as income limits, verification charts, deductions and reporting thresholds, updated annually as necessary.
- **Examples:** Blue boxes are used throughout the manual to illustrate complex policies with practical examples.
- **Links:** Bold red links within the text provide quick access to relevant policies, minimizing duplication and enhancing user experience (e.g. see ***Chapter 1, General Information***).
- **Revisions:** Revisions from the previous version of the manual are highlighted in yellow.

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1

Chapter 1. General Information

1.1 General Purpose

The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) is federally funded and administered under the provisions in the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 (as amended). The SNAP rules are set forth in Title 7, Code of Federal Regulations, Parts 271 through 284. SNAP is administered by the US Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Food and Nutrition Administration (FNA). SNAP is intended to promote general welfare and protect the health and well-being of the nation's people by increasing nutrition levels in low-income households.

The District of Columbia ("District" or "DC") Department of Human Services' ("DHS" or "the Department") Economic Security Administration (ESA) SNAP Policy Manual is the primary resource used by social service representatives (SSRs) to obtain guidance on determining eligibility and the amount of SNAP benefits for which individuals may potentially be eligible. The manual is designed to provide the policy guidance necessary to make correct eligibility decisions but may not include specific guidance for every possible situation. Additional questions and guidance may be obtained by contacting ESA's Division of Policy, Training and Quality Assurance's (DPT&QA) Policy Office at ***ESAPolicy@dc.gov***.

To participate and be determined eligible for SNAP, individuals and families must:

- Apply for benefits, including being screened for expedited service.
- Provide proof of identity.
- Provide Social Security numbers (SSNs).
- Meet citizenship or noncitizenship requirements.
- Reside in the District of Columbia.
- Provide all information necessary to determine eligibility.
- Provide verification when requested.
- Meet appropriate income and asset limits, unless categorically eligible (see ***Chapter 4, Categorically Eligible Households***).
- Be registered for work and meet work requirements if applicable.

- Meet the able-bodied adults without dependents (ABAWD) work requirements if applicable (see ***Section 9.2, ABAWD Work Requirement and Time Limit***).
- Report changes as required under simplified reporting.
- Cooperate with the Quality Control (QC) review process.
- Repay benefits received in error.

Some people are not eligible to receive SNAP benefits:

- Students enrolled in postsecondary or higher education at least half time who do not meet certain eligibility requirements
- Fleeing felons and parole violators
- Strikers who would not be income-eligible for SNAP before they went on strike
- Persons who are disqualified for an intentional program violation (IPV)
- Persons convicted of certain crimes who are not complying with the terms of their sentence or parole
- Persons subject to the ABAWD work requirements who are not meeting their work requirements, have exhausted their three countable months, are not exempt, and not living in a waived area (see ***Section 9.2, ABAWD Work Requirement and Time Limit***)
- Households that receive lottery or gambling winnings in a single game equal to or greater than the maximum resource limit currently in effect for households with members who are 60 years or older or disabled (see ***Table 25.3.g., Asset Limits***).

ESA determines SNAP benefits for an eligible household by using the following process:

- Use the household's gross countable income to determine income eligibility.
- Subtract allowable income deductions for certain living expenses.
- Calculate the monthly benefits using the net countable income and the maximum monthly allotment for the number of eligible people in the household.

1.2 Use of SNAP Benefits

SNAP benefits may only be used to purchase food from FNS-authorized food stores or farmers markets. Households may use SNAP to buy the following items:

- Breads and cereals
- Fruits and vegetables
- Meats, fish and poultry
- Dairy products
- Seeds and plants that produce food for the household to eat
- Other foods such as snack foods, prepared foods and nonalcoholic beverages

1.2.1 Households With Special Circumstances

- In some areas, restaurants may be authorized to accept SNAP benefits from qualified individuals experiencing homelessness, older individuals or individuals with disabilities in exchange for low-cost meals.
- Eligible individuals aged 60 or older or those receiving Supplemental Security Income (SSI), disability or blindness benefits may use SNAP to pay for meals prepared by and served in eligible federally subsidized centers and residences.
- Eligible individuals aged 60 or older or those who have physical or mental disabilities may have meals prepared and delivered to them at home by a public or private nonprofit agency or through a contract with ESA.
- Residents of drug addiction or alcohol treatment programs or residential facilities may use SNAP benefits for their food needs.
- Residents of domestic violence shelters may use SNAP to pay for meals prepared by and served in the domestic violence shelters.
- Homeless individuals may use SNAP to pay for meals prepared and served by a public or private nonprofit agency or through a contract with ESA.
- Recipients of SNAP benefits who live in an institutional setting, including residential drug addiction and alcohol treatment facilities, may receive their SNAP benefits indirectly. ESA issues SNAP benefits directly to the residential institution providing nutritious meals to eligible recipients.

1.2.2 When SNAP Benefits May Not Be Used

- Buying hot food or prepared food that is ready to eat
- Buying nonfood items such as cigarettes, tobacco, beer, wine, liquor, household supplies, soaps, paper products, vitamins, medicine or pet food
- Exchanging SNAP benefits for anything of value (trafficking)

1.3 Operation of SNAP

DHS is responsible for the administration of SNAP within the District, including:

- Certifying applicant households
- Issuing, controlling and accounting for SNAP benefits
- Developing and maintaining complaint procedures
- Developing, conducting and evaluating training
- Conducting performance reporting reviews
- Keeping the records necessary to determine whether the program is being conducted in compliance with regulations
- Submitting correct and timely reports on finances and program performance

- Determining the amount of and resolving, adjusting, compromising or denying all or part of any claim(s) that are the result of fraudulent or nonfraudulent overissuances to participating households

1.4 General Terms and Conditions

This section outlines the general terms and conditions of the state agency participation in SNAP:

- SNAP benefits do not count as income to reduce benefits:
  - The SNAP benefit allotment an eligible household receives will not be considered income or resources for any purpose under any federal, state or local laws, including laws on taxation, welfare and public assistance programs.
- SNAP purchases are not subject to sales tax:
  - No local sales taxes or other taxes or fees, including excise taxes, can be collected within the state on purchases made with SNAP benefits. In cases where the value of eligible foods exceeds the presented SNAP benefits, only the portion of the sale made in exchange for SNAP benefits must be exempt from taxation. Although a SNAP recipient may use a combination of cash and SNAP benefits in making a food purchase, only the dollar amount represented by the SNAP benefits is required to be exempt from taxation.
- Use or disclosure of information obtained from SNAP applicant or recipient households will be restricted.
- ESA will not require a household to present photographic identification as a condition of eligibility and must accept any document that reasonably establishes the applicant's identity.
- Recipients of information must adequately protect the information against unauthorized disclosure to persons or for purposes not specified in this section. In addition, information received through the Income and Eligibility Verification System (IEVS) must be protected from unauthorized disclosure as required by regulations established by the information provider.
- If there is a written request by a responsible member of the household or the currently authorized representative to review the material and information contained in the household's case file, the material and information contained in the case file will be made available for inspection during normal business hours. However, ESA may withhold confidential information, such as the names of individuals who have disclosed information about the household without the household's knowledge or the nature or status of pending criminal prosecution.
- Information available to the public upon request includes the following:
  - Federal regulations, federal procedures embodied in FNS notices, policy memos, State Plans of Operation and corrective action plans will be available upon request for examination by members of the public during office hours at ESA as well as at USDA FNS Regional and National Offices.
  - The SNAP Policy Manual will be available for examination upon request at each local ESA Service Center as well as at the ESA SNAP Policy Unit at the DHS Main Office and FNS Regional Offices. The SNAP Policy Manual may also be accessed online.
- Records and reports:
  - ESA will keep such records and submit such reports and other information as required by USDA FNS.

- Retention of records:
  - ESA will retain all SNAP program records in an orderly fashion. For audit and review purposes, all information used to determine eligibility will be retained in accordance with the approved DHS Record and Retention Schedule, DCRS 19-0002. Records are retained for three years after the current calendar year and then destroyed.
  - ESA will retain fiscal records and accountable documents for three years from the date of fiscal or administrative closure. Fiscal closure means that obligations for or against the federal government have been liquidated. Administrative closure means that ESA has determined and documented that no further action to liquidate the obligation is appropriate. Fiscal records and accountable documents include claims and documentation of lost benefits.
  - Records concerning IPV disqualifications and the corresponding notices to the household will be kept indefinitely. This retention will continue until the state agency either confirms the death of the individual associated with the record or receives advice from FNS through the disqualified recipient database system edit report. The advice will indicate that all records linked to a specific individual, including the disqualified recipient database record, can be permanently deleted due to the individual reaching their 80th birthday.
  - The state agency is responsible for removing disqualification records from the disqualified recipient database when the supporting documents become inaccurate, irrelevant or incomplete. To fulfill this obligation, the state agency must adhere to a specified records management program. Details about this program must be accessible for review by FNS.

1.5 Rights and Responsibilities

1.5.1 Applicant Rights

All SNAP applicants and recipients (customers) have rights under various District and federal laws. Applicants have the right to:

- Apply for SNAP without delay, including the following rights:
  - File an incomplete application as long as it includes a name, address and signature.
  - Receive and file an application for benefits the same day they contact ESA.
  - Be informed of the verification requirements and that the household has 10 days to provide the information.
  - Have an application mailed or emailed on the same business day to individuals requesting an application.
  - Apply for benefits at any time, including while a fair hearing request is pending or after a hearing decision has been made.
  - Receive help in making appropriate accommodations for completing both an application and interview when required.
  - Request a face-to-face interview when needed.

- Receive an eligibility determination of their application within the following timelines (if ESA received information in a timely manner):
  - Seven days for expedited SNAP
  - Thirty days for SNAP
- Receive a timely and adequate written notice that their application for benefits has been approved or denied.
- Request a fair hearing within 90 days of a Notice of Denial or Notice of Adverse Action.
- Be informed verbally and in writing of their rights, obligations, responsibilities, potential risks and penalties under SNAP.
- Receive free language assistance services to help customers communicate with ESA. This includes providing customers verbal interpretation in their primary language and written translations in the Department's threshold languages.
- Receive information in other accessible formats (e.g. for those individuals who are blind, deaf, hard of hearing or have speech disabilities).
- Register to vote through ESA. A customer's decision to register or not register to vote is completely voluntary.
- Have information collected kept private by ESA. The information ESA collects and maintains is private unless a law specifically classifies the information otherwise. Customers or their representatives may review their private records. Parents may view records of their minor children, unless ESA decides that the request is not in the best interests of the children.
- Examine their case record. ESA will provide a customer their case record for review during normal business hours or make copies available at the cost of reproduction. ESA may withhold confidential information about the customer obtained without their knowledge, confidential information about other individuals in the household's shared case record or information on pending criminal prosecutions. ESA will release all information used when deciding to take an adverse action.
- Be represented, accompanied or assisted by an individual of their choice to the extent allowable under the law and regulations, in all contacts with ESA, including during application, eligibility determination, recertification or redetermination, administrative review and fair hearing.
- Be free from discrimination in the application and recertification process.
- Be determined eligible for District SNAP even if they are experiencing homelessness and do not have a fixed address.
- Apply for SNAP benefits when applying for DC Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) or apply separately for SNAP.
- Sign an application electronically or in writing; other forms of unwritten signatures are accepted when needed to meet civil rights laws.
- Be screened for expedited service. If the applicant is eligible for expedited service, ESA must provide the benefits and an electronic benefits transfer (EBT) card to access them within seven calendar days.
- Receive a copy of their completed application if requested.

- Withdraw an application at any time before ESA determines eligibility.
- Reapply for benefits at any time after withdrawing an application or termination of benefits.
- Be given a reasonable opportunity to resolve differences when unverified information conflicts with statements the household made.
- Not have benefits suspended, reduced or terminated or the manner of payment changed until one of the following actions occurs:
  - The advance notice period has expired, when one is required, and the customer has not requested a hearing.
  - A hearing decision is reached, if one was requested before the effective date of the adverse action or later if certain requirements are met.

The public has the right to review handbooks, manuals and supplemental instructions issued by ESA regarding ESA programs and policies. ESA will make these documents available to the public during normal business hours within 10 days of the date ESA receives a request.

Customers do not forfeit or compromise any rights by applying for benefits, receiving benefits, requesting a fair hearing or administrative review, requesting a judicial review or reporting discriminatory or unfair practices.

Legal Authority

Rights of applicants and recipients (Federal): SNAP: 7 United States Code (USC) § 2011, *et seq.;* 7Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) § 271.1, *et seq.*

1.5.2 Applicant Responsibilities

Individuals applying for or receiving ESA benefits must meet certain responsibilities to remain eligible for benefits. Failure to meet any of these responsibilities may result in the customer being ineligible for current and future benefits or reduction, suspension or termination of benefits. Violation of District or federal laws and regulations regarding ESA programs may also result in prosecution for fraud, fines and imprisonment. Applicants are expected to:

- Answer all questions and requests for information completely, honestly and accurately (to the best of their ability).
- Provide the following:
  - An SSN for SNAP applicants: under federal and District law, an SSN must be provided (or applied for) for each household member to receive SNAP benefits
  - Financial and nonfinancial information submitted in a timely manner
  - Submission of proof in a timely manner when ESA requests verification
- Report changes in household circumstances based on the reporting requirements for SNAP.
- Follow all program rules. By signing the application for benefits, customers agree that they, and all household members, will follow all program rules or face the penalties explained on the

application, such as termination of benefits, overissuances, fines, imprisonment or disqualification from future benefits.

- Cooperate as follows:
  - With ESA in determining and recertifying eligibility and benefits
  - With ESA and federal staff conducting QC reviews or audits of SNAP programs; households that refuse to cooperate may lose all or part of their SNAP benefits
- Not engage in SNAP trafficking, including trading or selling SNAP benefits or EBT cards.
- Not use SNAP benefits to buy items not allowed, such as alcohol, drugs and firearms, or pay off credit accounts.
- Not allow a person who is not approved as an authorized representative to use the customer's EBT personal identification number (PIN).
- Not use someone else's EBT card without being designated as an authorized representative on their case.
- Not alter, sell, trade or transfer any ESA benefits or privileges, including EBT cards or other documents or cards that remain ESA's property.

Legal Authority

Responsibilities of applicants and recipients (Federal): SNAP: 7 USC § 2011, et seq.; 7 CFR § 271.1, *et seq.*

1.5.3 Authorized Representative Responsibilities

Authorized representatives are subject to the same requirements and responsibilities as the SNAP household they are designated to represent.

See ***Section 3.1.1.2, SNAP Authorized Representative***, for more information on authorized representatives.

1.5.4 Department Rights

ESA must ensure that customer rights and responsibilities are respected and enforced. Additional Department rights and responsibilities are detailed in the federal and local legislation governing ESA-administered programs and in the policies in this manual.

ESA has the right to use and assign volunteers, community workers or contractors to assist in administering ESA programs. However, only ESA staff employed in accordance with the current standards for a merit system of personnel administration can conduct interviews and determine eligibility for ESA programs.

ESA has the right to recover SNAP benefits provided in error, even if ESA was responsible for the overpayment.

1.5.5 Department Responsibilities

- Provide excellent customer service to each District resident who contacts ESA by offering prompt and courteous assistance.
- Inform customers as follows:
  - About ESA programs' scope and benefits; conditions of eligibility; requirements; opportunity to register to vote; rights and responsibilities; and potential risks, fines and consequences if customers violate program rules
  - That ESA will regularly match some information customers provide and information about eligibility and benefits with information from various databases, including those maintained by the DC Department of Employment Services (DOES), US Internal Revenue Service (IRS), the US Social Security Administration (SSA) and other states
- Screen customers between the ages of 16 and 64 for exemptions from the work requirements at application, recertification, and when a new household member is added (see ***Section 9.3, Work Requirements Screening***).
- Comply with and respond to written requests from law enforcement officials investigating alleged violations of program requirements.
- Comply with and respond to written requests from law enforcement agencies on fleeing felons and parole violators.
- Request data on the race and ethnicity of the customer's household but inform the customer that providing this information is voluntary and that it will not affect the eligibility or the level of benefits, and that the reason for the information is to ensure that program benefits are distributed without regard to race, color or national origin. Although household race and ethnicity will be self-determined, ESA must classify household race and ethnicity according to federally defined categories. The applicant's race and ethnicity will represent the race and ethnicity of the entire household.
- Determine an applicant's eligibility for program benefits in accordance with the appropriate program-specific timeliness standards. ESA must notify applicants in writing of ESA's eligibility determination. If an applicant is denied benefits, ESA must inform the applicant of the reason for the denial and the right to appeal the determination.
- Give timely and adequate Notice of Adverse Action.
- Make case records available to a customer.
- Publicize the procedures for handling civil rights complaints, ESA's policies of nondiscrimination, the procedures for reporting a civil rights violation and the policies and procedures regarding fair hearings and administrative reviews.
- Do not discriminate against any customer in the application or recertification process on any legally protected basis.

Legal Authority

Responsibilities of the Department (Federal): SNAP: 7 USC § 2011, et seq., and implementing regulations at 7 CFR § 271.1, et seq.; FNS Instruction 113-1

Data collection (Federal): SNAP: 7 USC § 2020, 7 CFR § 272.6

1.6 Confidentiality of Customer Information

ESA holds all customer information confidential and will not disclose this information to anyone without the prior notification and authorization of the individual or the individual's authorized representative, except when permitted or required by law. ESA, its staff and official agents must disclose the following information, with or without prior authorization or notification of the individual:

- Information necessary to assist the DC Child Support Services Division (CSSD) or the US Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) in establishing or verifying eligibility or benefits concerning parental child support
- Information to the US Department of Homeland Security, US Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS, formerly known as the Immigration and Naturalization Service, or INS) and District, state and federal law enforcement officials; all such requests are to be directed to the Office of the Administrator; no information from USCIS or a law enforcement entity may be released without approval from the administrator
- Information for audit examinations authorized by provisions of law to the US Office of the Comptroller General, DHHS Office of the Inspector General, DC Office of the Inspector General and other appropriate Inspectors General
- Some individual employment, income and benefits information to the IRS, SSA, DHHS, USDA and other state and federal authorities as authorized or required by law

ESA staff are not considered mandatory reporters required to make reports of suspected abuse or neglect. Nonetheless, ESA staff are not prohibited from reporting such suspected or known information to the appropriate authorities. Although all information and records about an applicant or recipient are privileged and confidential, suspected or known instances of abuse may be disclosed without the applicant's or recipient's consent. ESA's confidentiality law permits the agency to take the following actions:

- Report to the DC Metropolitan Police Department any information on known or suspected instances of physical or mental injury, sexual abuse or exploitation.
- Report to the DC Child and Family Services Agency any information on known or suspected instances of negligent treatment or maltreatment of a child receiving aid under circumstances that indicate the child's health or welfare is threatened.
- Report to the DC Department of Aging and Community Living, Adult Protective Services Division any information on known or suspected instances of negligent treatment or maltreatment of a vulnerable adult receiving aid under circumstances that indicate the adult's health or welfare is threatened.

1.6.1 Customer Information for Official Use Only

All customer information must only be used for official ESA functions. The use of customer information for any purpose not directly related to ESA business is strictly prohibited. Supervisory staff must make reasonable efforts to limit access to and use of protected health information by staff to the minimum necessary to perform their duties.

Staff who violate ESA's privacy policies or other applicable federal or state law are subject to adverse action in accordance with ***Chapter 16 of the District Personnel Manual*** and respective collective bargaining agreements. Staff must report any violations of ESA's privacy policies and should contact the Policy Unit, which will refer the matter to the ESA Privacy Officer. Staff may make a report anonymously, and retaliation for reporting violations or cooperating with investigations is prohibited.

1.6.2 Informing the Applicant of Their Privacy Rights

ESA must inform the customer about the protection of their personal information.

1.6.3 Protecting the Confidentiality of Customer Records

All staff have a responsibility to protect the confidentiality of all customer information, including the information within the case record. Within each Service Center and in the Document Imaging Management System (DIMS), case records are stored in a secure, employees-only area or with restricted electronic access. Staff may not leave any customer information within public view. Security personnel at ESA ensure that unauthorized persons do not enter these areas without an escort. This requirement applies to all visitors, including federal auditors.

1.6.4 Disclosing Information to the Customer or Authorized Representative

- A customer, or their authorized representative, may request to review their case record.
- A customer's representative must produce an authorization for release signed by the customer.
- Requests from someone other than the customer or authorized representative will be referred to an administrator and granted to comply with authorities only in certain circumstances.
- ESA may only disclose the minimum necessary information to meet the purpose of the disclosure or request. ESA will not disclose information that is peripheral, incidental or unrelated to the specific request or inquiry. Staff should contact the ESA Policy Unit for further guidance on whether releasing specific information is appropriate.
- If the request is for fewer than 100 pages, ESA will make copies available for the cost of reproduction.
- ESA will refer requests of more than 100 pages to the ESA Policy Unit.
- ESA must record all disclosures in the case narrative. Staff will not disclose any customer information to an unidentified individual or an unauthorized person.
- Before disclosing any such information to the customer, ESA must conclusively identify the customer by asking them to provide their correctly spelled name, date of birth, SSN and other information for identification purposes. If the request is in writing, staff must compare the customer's electronic signatures from online applications and recertifications.
- To disclose information to an authorized representative, ESA must conclusively identify the representative as an individual listed as an authorized representative on one of the following documents:
  - Most recent application or recertification form

    - Authorization of release—signed by the customer—from an attorney, legal advocate or other representative
    - Authorization for Release of Information (DHS Form 495-ARI)
- If the request from the authorized representative is in writing, ESA may need to contact the customer to confirm the identity of the person requesting the customer's information. The following information must be recorded in the case record:
    - The date of the disclosure
    - The name of the entity or person who received the information and, if known, the address of such entity or person
    - A brief description of the information disclosed
    - A brief statement of the purpose of the disclosure that reasonably documents the basis for the disclosure or, in place of such statement, a copy of a written request for a disclosure, if any
- ESA must refer requests for deceased customers to the ESA Policy Unit for assistance.
- ESA will forward any request by a customer for an accounting of all disclosures to the ESA Policy Unit, which will refer the matter to the ESA Privacy Officer as appropriate.

1.6.5 Requests for Information From All Other Parties

ESA will refer requests to review a customer's case record from an individual other than the customer or their authorized representative to the administrator. ESA will never disclose information to such persons in the absence of a signed, verified request from the customer.

1.6.6 Nonroutine Disclosures of Customer Information

Only the administrator, or the administrator's designee, may authorize the disclosure of customer information to a requester who is not an authorized representative of a customer. This policy includes all requests from law enforcement officials, unauthorized neighbors, subpoenas or any other source.

The Office of the Administrator must maintain a log of all requests and copies of the correspondence between the administrator and the requester. The log must include the following information:

- The date of the disclosure
- The name of the entity or person who received the information and, if known, the address of such entity or person
- A brief description of the information disclosed
- A brief statement of the purpose of the disclosure that explains the basis for the disclosure or a copy of a written request for a disclosure

The administrator must deny all requests unless the requester can provide proof that they are an authorized representative of the customer.

If the request is in the form of an administrative or judicial subpoena, the administrator must immediately contact the Office of the General Counsel. If the subpoena is upheld, the administrator must provide only the information specified in the subpoena and note the disclosure in the case record.

1.6.7 Safeguarding Information

As required by the Federal Information Security Management Act, District of Columbia Access System (DCAS) staff must participate in initial and annual trainings that emphasize the safeguarding of privileged information. Staff must sign a security disclosure compliance statement at the conclusion of the training. Any staff with access to DCAS who do not satisfactorily complete the training or submit a signed disclosure statement will be restricted from accessing DCAS until the requirements are met. A signed disclosure statement for all DCAS staff must be on file with DPT&QA before access to the DCAS system is granted.

ESA provides safeguarding awareness training classes for appropriate agencies, facilities, clinics, contractors or outreach centers that have access to privileged and vital customer information.

1.6.8 Nondisclosure and Authorized Official Use

As required by regulations under the IRS, personally identifiable information (PII) or Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) and related regulations, ESA staff must not disclose privileged government or customer information. This policy includes the following:

- Verbal or written disclosure
- Causing information to be disclosed
- Unauthorized use or disclosure

ESA must protect personal information of customers by safeguarding the information and not leaving documentation unsecured in staff workstations for anyone to see, obtain or take from the work area. Department staff may only share sensitive information with those who need it to perform their duties to conduct official business of determining eligibility for public benefits in the District. DCAS access is monitored and tracked to ensure appropriate use of the system.

Example

Molly and Sue are friends. Molly is a DCAS user. Sue calls Molly and asks her to verify or look up information about her estranged husband’s income status. Molly looks up the husband’s information because she has access to it at her center. By following through on Sue’s request, Molly is engaging in unauthorized and unofficial case access. Molly is subject to penalties, including loss of wages, loss of job and imposed fines, and she can be held personally liable in a civil action for her unauthorized use and disclosure of privileged information.

1.6.9 Nonreproduction Requirements

Staff are not to print information from DCAS screens with strictly confidential information under any circumstance. These screens have the statement “Do not print.”

1.6.10 Handling of Federal Tax Information

Department staff must not include or cause to be copied, transmit via means such as email and fax (see ***Section 1.6.10.3, Prohibition of Transmitting FTI by Email or Fax***) or transcribe any federal tax information (FTI) received from the IRS into the customer’s file or the case narrative. ESA can only use information that is independently verified to take a case action. Additionally, ESA must not identify FTI, Beneficiary Earnings Exchange Records (BEERS) or National Directory of New Hires (NDNH) as data sources when requesting additional information from the customer or a third party to verify the information.

1.6.10.1 Need-to-Know Disclosure

FTI, SSA, PII, HIPAA or NDNH information is permissible to disclose to other staff when collaborating on a case and the information is needed to perform official job duties. Only disclose privileged information with other staff on a need-to-know basis.

1.6.10.2 Penalties for Noncompliance

Unauthorized disclosure means to make tax return, SSA or NDNH information known to anyone in any unauthorized manner. Department staff, current or former, will be penalized for disclosure of information related to confidential tax information or SSA, PII, HIPAA or NDNH information to anyone who is not entitled or authorized to access the information.

Pursuant to local and federal law, penalties for unauthorized disclosure of tax return or tax return information may include monetary fines up to $5,000.00 and five years’ imprisonment. Additionally, the penalty for each unauthorized disclosure of HIPAA information is from $100.00 to $50,000.00. Under Internal Revenue Code Section 7431, a taxpayer can sue an individual in a civil action case, and they can be held personally liable for unauthorized use and disclosure of a customer’s information or inappropriate disclosure of the information.

1.6.10.3 Prohibition of Transmitting FTI by Email or Fax

FTI, BEERS or NDNH data are received or held in paper form or in an electronic format. Staff are prohibited from transmitting FTI or causing it to be transmitted, including FTI related to hearings and appeals, for any reason via any means, including email or fax. Regardless of the format of the document received, anything from IRS, NDNH and BEERS must be treated as confidential.

1.7 Complaints

The purpose of the complaint system is to improve service by reviewing all complaints, recommending corrective action where warranted, recording, analyzing the nature and types of complaints and achieving an informal solution to case processing and service complaints.

Customers may also report complaints about the quality of service provided by ESA.

1.7.1 Processing Customer Complaints for SNAP

The Office of Administrative Review and Appeals (OARA) is responsible for handling SNAP program complaints filed by applicants, recipients or other concerned individuals or households. Complaints involving processing standards and service to customers will be reviewed and resolved within the complaint process. Complaints involving legal or policy issues will be handled as fair hearing requests. Any complaint alleging discrimination on a legally protected basis will be forwarded to the DHS Office of Program Review, Monitoring and Investigation (OPRMI).

1.7.2 Federal SNAP Reporting Requirements for Complaints

Federal SNAP regulations mandate that ESA maintain records of complaints received and their disposition and review records at least annually to determine whether any pattern of problems exists in local offices. The results of these reviews are provided to the general counsel and the administrator of ESA for appropriate action and inclusion in the State Corrective Action Plan.

The information provided to the general counsel and administrator will identify any potential or actual patterns of deficiencies and the causes of these problems.

OARA has the following responsibilities:

- Maintain a computerized ledger of all complaints with the date, the Service Center where the complaint arose and the staff member interacting with the customer at the time in question.
- Code all complaints so the most frequently occurring issues can be identified.
- Prepare a monthly report of the findings pertaining to program complaints including, at a minimum, the nature or categories of complaints, origination of complaints and staff involved.
- Analyze the monthly report to determine whether patterns exist and transmit the analysis to the general counsel and the administrator.
- Develop an annual statistical report that includes an analysis of the monthly reports and any overall impressions derived from discussions with staff, program participants and other interested parties or advocates. The report is transmitted to the general counsel and the administrator.

1.7.3 Complaints of Discrimination

ESA may not discriminate against any customer in the application or recertification process, when providing services, during receipt of benefits or during the fair hearings and grievance process on the basis of any status protected under federal law or the District Human Rights Act. As of August 2024, protected status includes actual or perceived race; color; religion; national origin; sex; age; marital status; gender identity or expression; personal appearance; sexual orientation; familial status; family responsibilities; matriculation; political affiliation; genetic information; disability; source of income; status as a victim or a family member of a victim of domestic violence, a sexual offense or stalking; place of residence or business; or homeless status.

A customer who believes that they have been discriminated against may file a complaint with the offices listed below. Complaints about discrimination on the basis of marital status, personal appearance, family responsibilities, source of income, matriculation, place of residence or business or homeless status must be filed with one of the DC agencies listed below.

Agency	Address	Contact Information
DC Department of Human Services, Customer Service (ESA Service Center Ombudsman)	Each ESA Service Center location has an ombudsman	(202) 727-5355
DC Office of Human Rights	441 4th Street, NW Suite 570 North Washington, DC 20001	(202) 727-4559 ***File a Discrimination Complaint | OHR (dc.gov)***
DHS Office of Program Review, Monitoring and Investigation	64 New York Avenue, NE Washington, DC 20002	(202) 673-4464 (anonymous calls for fraud) ***Suggestions and Complaints | DHS***
Office of the Attorney General, Public Advocacy Division	400 6th Street, NW Washington, DC 20001	(202) 724-6610 ***About the Public Advocacy Division | Office of the Attorney General for the District of Columbia (dc.gov)***

1.7.3.1 SNAP Discrimination Complaints Procedures

Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication for program information (e.g. Braille, large print, audiotape, American Sign Language) should contact the agency (state or local) where they applied for benefits. Individuals who are deaf, hard of hearing or have speech disabilities may contact the USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339.

To file a program complaint of discrimination, individuals must complete the Program Discrimination Complaint Form (AD-3027) found online at ***https://www.usda.gov/sites/default/files/documents/ad-3027.pdf*** or obtained from any USDA office or by calling (866) 632-9992 or by writing a letter addressed to USDA. The letter must contain the complainant's name, address, telephone number and a written description of the alleged discriminatory action in sufficient detail to inform the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights about the nature and date of an alleged civil rights violation. The completed AD-3027 form or letter must be submitted to:

- **mail**: Food and Nutrition Service, USDA
  1320 Braddock Place, Room 334,
  Alexandria, VA 22314
- **fax**: (833) 256-1665 or (202) 690-7442
- **phone**: (833) 620-1071
- **email**: ***FNSCIVILRIGHTSCOMPLAINTS@usda.gov***

This institution is an equal opportunity provider.

Legal Authority

Rights of applicants and recipients (Federal): SNAP: 7 USC § 2011, *et seq.*; 7 CFR § 271.1, *et seq.*

Nondiscrimination (Federal): SNAP: 7 USC § 2020(c), 7 CFR § 272.6, FNS Instruction 113-1

Nondiscrimination: All: The Age Discrimination Act of 1975 (PL 94-135), the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (PL 93–112 §504), Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (42 USC § 12101) and Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (42 USC § 2000d)

Nondiscrimination (District): All: The District of Columbia Human Rights Act of 1977 as amended, DC Official Code § 2-1401.01, et seq., and its implementing regulations, 4 DC Municipal Regulations (DCMR) 100, et seq.

Chapter

2

Chapter 2. Household Composition

To create a SNAP household and determine who is nonfinancially eligible for SNAP, follow this process:

- Start with everyone who lives together.
- Determine who purchases and prepares food together.
- Determine relationship status.
- Apply nonfinancial eligibility requirements to determine who is an eligible or excluded member.

No one can be an eligible member of two or more SNAP households in any month, except residents of shelters for battered individuals when the battered individual was a member of the same household as the person who abused them.

2.1 Purchase and Prepare Together

In general, people who purchase and prepare food together must be in the same household. Individuals disqualified from participating in SNAP for failing to meet a financial or nonfinancial eligibility requirement are not eligible for SNAP benefits even if they are household members.

The phrase "purchase and prepare food together" describes people who normally share food in common. People normally share food in common if they do one of the following:

- They each share in the cost of purchasing the food.
- They share in preparing food, no matter who paid for it.
- They eat from the same food supply, no matter who paid for it.

2.2 Relationships

2.2.1 Mandatory Household Members

Some individuals who live together must be included in the same SNAP household even if they do not purchase and prepare food together. The relationships of the people who live together affect whether they must be included or excluded from the household. This applies to the following:

- **Spouses** are legally married couples, including same-sex couples. Spouses who live together must be in the same household.
- **Parents and their children (natural, adopted or step) under age 22** who live together must be in the same household.

2.2.2 Separate Households

Individuals who are not married to each other, are not under age 22 and living with their parents and purchase and prepare food separately are separate households.

Example

Ms. Day (age 54) lives with her brother, Mr. Earl (age 53), who receives SSI. Ms. Day purchases and prepares food separately from Mr. Earl. Ms. Day and Mr. Earl are separate SNAP households. Both may apply for SNAP benefits separately.

2.2.3 Parents With Shared Custody of a Child

Customers can only receive benefits in one household during a given month. A child may receive SNAP in the household where they are living.

If a child stays with their parents who do not live together, ESA determines where the child lives as follows:

- If the child lives in one home 51 percent of the time, they can receive SNAP only in the home where they live the majority of the time.
- If a child lives with two people for an equal amount of time, the child can get benefits with the parent who applies for benefits first.

ESA may use any number of documents, such as custody orders, parenting plans, visitation schedules, school records or other collateral statements, to verify where a child lives the majority of the time.

Example

Mr. Hawkins and Ms. Steele have shared custody of their daughter, Shonda, and live in separate apartments. The court order indicates 50/50 custody, with neither parent identified as the primary custodian. ESA looks at which parent Shonda actually spends the majority of her time with to determine the SNAP household where she would be included.

2.2.3.1 Clarifying Information

- If a child lives in one home 183 days or more in a calendar year, that is where they live the majority of the time. The days do not need to be consecutive.
- A child aged 22 or older who cooks and eats separately from their parents in the residence may apply for and receive benefits as a separate household.
- Parenting children (age 21 or younger) who live at home with one or both parents must be included in the same household with their parent. If the parenting minor is married, their spouse must also be in the same household if the spouse lives in the home.
- Children not living with a parent: If a child under age 18 lives with an adult and that adult exercises parental control (care and supervision), the child must be in the same household as the adult. However, any person under 18 who lives with a nonparent adult, including those who have spouses and/or children, can still form their own SNAP household if they demonstrate that they are financially and otherwise independent or have been emancipated.
- An individual at least 60 years old and their spouse may choose to be a separate household from those they live with, even if they purchase and prepare food together, if they meet the following criteria:
  - The person aged 60 or older cannot purchase and prepare meals due to a permanent disability as determined by SSA or permanent non-disease-related severe disability.
  - The countable income of all the other people the impaired senior lives with (other than their spouse) is not more than 165 percent of the federal poverty guidelines for the number of people in their household.
  - ESA only needs to verify that a disability prevents the person from purchasing and preparing food if the disability is not obvious.

2.3 Foster Children

Households can choose to include or exclude children receiving foster care payments from the SNAP household as follows:

- If a foster child is included in the household, ESA counts all of the foster child's income and assets when determining the household's eligibility and benefits.
- If a foster child is excluded from the household, ESA excludes the foster child's income and assets.

2.4 Roomers and Boarders

2.4.1 Roomers

A roomer is an individual who lives in a home and pays the household rent but does not eat with or pay the household for food. A roomer is not considered a household member.

Rent paid by roomers ("roomer income") is considered unearned income for the household providing the room if no services are provided. Roomer income is considered self-employment (earned income) if services are provided.

Gross rent payments should be counted, minus expenses. Expenses must be clearly associated with the rental unit (i.e. expenses the household would incur as a result of renting out part of the home). If expenses are greater than the gross rent payment, the gross rental income should be reduced to zero.

2.4.2 Boarders

A boarder is someone who pays a fee to a commercial entity, individual or household for meals or meals and housing.

2.4.2.1 Residents of Commercial Boarding Houses

Boarders in a commercial boarding house are ineligible to participate in SNAP. A commercial boarding house is an establishment licensed to offer meals and housing for compensation. Commercial boarding houses are not institutions discussed in ***Section 2.5, Persons Living in an Institution***.

2.4.2.2 Other Boarders

Individuals or groups of individuals not residing in a commercial boarding house but paying a reasonable amount for meals or meals and lodging are considered boarders. These individuals cannot participate in SNAP as a separate household from the household providing the meals or meals and lodging.

2.4.2.2.1 Determining if a Boarder Pays a Reasonable Amount for Compensation

If the boarder gets more than two meals a day, they must pay at least as much as the SNAP maximum allotment for their household size for meals or meals and housing. If the boarder gets two or fewer meals a day, the reasonable compensation means the boarder pays at least as much as two-thirds of the SNAP maximum allotment for their household size:

- If the boarder pays a reasonable amount for meals or meals and housing, the household that provides the meals or meals and housing can choose if they include the boarder in their household. The boarder cannot be a separate SNAP household.
- If the boarder does not pay a reasonable amount for meals or meals and housing, they do not meet the definition of a boarder for SNAP. The household that provides the board must include the boarder in their SNAP household.

ESA cannot consider a mandatory household member as a boarder for SNAP (see ***Section 2.2.1, Mandatory Household Members***). If a boarder is excluded from the SNAP household, the amount the boarder pays the household providing boarder services minus reasonable expenses is counted as self-employment income for the household.

Example

Laverne and James Watkins take boarders into their home to help with their expenses. Leslie Smith stays at the Watkins' home and pays $250 a month for room and board, which includes two meals a day.

Because the $250 Leslie pays is more than the maximum SNAP allotment for a one-person household, she is considered a boarder. The Watkins can choose whether to include Leslie in their SNAP household. If they choose to exclude her, Leslie cannot receive SNAP while boarding with the Watkins.

2.4.3 Live-in Attendants

A live-in attendant who lives in the SNAP household's home to provide housekeeping, medical care, childcare or similar personal services may form a separate household if they purchase and prepare food separately from other household members.

The following individuals may not be considered live-in attendants:

- A person living with their spouse
- A person under age 22 who is living with their natural or adoptive parent(s) or stepparent(s)
- A child (other than a foster child) under age 18 who lives with and is under the parental control of a household member other than their parent

2.5 Persons Living in an Institution

If a customer lives in a facility that provides more than 50 percent of three meals daily as a part of the facility's normal services, ESA considers them to be living in an institution.

- In general, people living in an institution cannot receive SNAP benefits. Examples of institutions where a resident is ineligible for SNAP include jails, prisons and boarding schools.
- Residents of nonprofit homeless shelters, residents of federally subsidized housing for the elderly, individuals with addiction and their children living in drug addiction or alcohol treatment facilities, residents in group living facilities for disabled or blind persons or individuals and their children temporarily living in a shelter for battered individuals may be eligible to receive SNAP.

2.6 Residents of Drug Addiction and Alcohol Treatment Facilities

Persons residing in a licensed chemical dependency treatment facility, a rehabilitation facility or facilities eligible for funding (even if they do not actually receive such funding) under Part B of Title XIX of the Public Health Service Act (42 USC § 300x, *et seq.*) to provide such treatment may apply for SNAP but must do so through an authorized representative. For more information, see ***Section 14.3, Residents of Drug Addiction and Alcohol Treatment Facilities***.

- Residents must be certified as one-person households unless their children are living with them, in which case the children must be included in the household.
- The authorized representative must be a designated employee of the treatment facility and must apply on behalf of the resident and receive and spend the EBT allotment for food prepared by or served to the resident.
- Residents in these facilities are not ineligible based on living in an institution.
- ESA applies the same rules in determining eligibility and benefits for SNAP, except that these individuals must apply through the authorized representative.

Legal Authority

Residents of drug addiction and alcohol treatment facilities (Federal): 7 CFR § 273.11(e)

2.7 Ineligible Household Members

Some individuals are ineligible to participate in SNAP as a separate household or as a member of any household. Examples of ineligible household members are:

- Ineligible noncitizens (see ***Section 5.4.2, Noncitizenship***)
- Individuals failing to provide an SSN without good cause (see ***Section 5.5, SSN Verification***)
- Fleeing felons and parole violators (see ***Section 8.5, Fleeing Felons, Probation and Parole Violators and Certain Convicted Criminals***)
- Ineligible students (see ***Section 5.10, Student Status and Exemption Verification***)
- IPV disqualified persons (see ***Chapter 21, Disqualification for Intentional Program Violation***)
- Nonexempt work registrants who quit a job or fail to meet work requirements (see ***Chapter 9, SNAP Work Requirements***)
- Strikers who would be over income for SNAP if they were not on strike (see ***Section 2.7.1, Strikers***)
- Individuals convicted of certain crimes who are not complying with the terms of their sentence or parole
- Individuals who are not exempt, have reached ABAWD time limits, and are not meeting the ABAWD work requirements ~~time limits~~ (see ***Section 9.2, ABAWD Work Requirements and Time Limit***)

Even if a household member is ineligible for SNAP, ESA may need to consider their income and assets to determine whether the rest of the household is eligible for benefits.

2.7.1 Strikers

Households with a striking member are ineligible for SNAP unless the household was eligible to receive benefits the day prior to the strike and is otherwise eligible at the time of application.

Legal Authority

Strikers (Federal): 7 USC § 2015 (d)(3), 7 CFR § 273.1(e), 7 CFR § 273.7(j)

A strike is defined as the following:

- A planned stoppage of work by employees, including a stoppage due to the expiration of a collective bargaining agreement
- Any planned slowdown
- Other planned interruption of operations by employees

A striker is anyone participating in a strike. A person on strike is not considered to have voluntarily quit their job without good cause unless they were an employee of the federal government or state or local government and were dismissed from their job because of participating in a strike. Participating in a strike means an individual has agreed to cooperate with others to stop work. Participating in a strike is not good cause to refuse to seek or accept employment.

2.7.2.1 Clarifying Information

- When determining the eligibility of a household that includes a striker, ESA must consider the applicant's circumstances on the day prior to the strike.
- A SNAP applicant or recipient who goes on strike and is exempt from work registration the day prior to the strike, for a reason not based solely on employment, is not considered to be a striker.
- For households with strikers, ESA must determine eligibility at the time of application by comparing the striking member's income before the strike with the striker's current income and adding the higher of the two to the current income of nonstriking members during the month of application. To determine eligibility and benefits, ESA must calculate deductions for the month of application using allowable income disregards and deductions.
- A participating household with a striker cannot receive an increase in SNAP benefits due to a decrease in income caused by the strike.
- Strikers whose households are eligible for benefits must meet work registration requirements unless exempt.
- Individuals affected by a strike but not participating in the strike are not considered to be strikers, including in the following situations:
  - Employees whose workplace is closed by an employer to resist demands of employees (this is referred to as a lockout)
  - Employees who are unable to work as a result of striking employees
  - Employees who are not part of the bargaining unit on strike but do not want to cross a picket line due to fear of personal injury or death

Legal Authority

Household concept (Federal): 7 USC § 2012(m)(1), 7 CFR § 273.1

Chapter

3

Chapter 3. Filing an Application

3.1 Submitting an Application

To apply for benefits, a customer must submit an application with a minimum of name, address and signature using one of the following methods:

- **Online:** Visit District Direct at ***https://districtdirect.dc.gov/*** and submit the application electronically
- **Mobile:** Download the District Direct Mobile App to your phone from the Apple or Google Play stores and use it to submit an application electronically
- **Mail an application form to the following address:**

  DC Department of Human Services
  Case Record Management Unit
  P.O. Box 91560
  Washington, DC 20090
- **Fax an application form to DHS ESA** at (202) 671-4400
- **In person, submit an application form at one of the ESA Service Centers:**
  - Anacostia — 2100 Martin Luther King Jr. Avenue, SE
  - Fort Davis — 3851 Alabama Avenue, SE
  - Congress Heights — 4049 South Capitol Street, SW
  - H Street — 645 H Street, NE
  - Taylor Street — 1207 Taylor Street, NW

ESA uses the information on the application and the verification customers provide as follows:

- As ESA's basis for approving or denying benefits
- To determine the amount of benefits a household receives
- As the primary tool in ESA beginning a fraud case or claim against a household

Legal Authority

Application processing (Federal): SNAP: 7 USC § 2020, 7 CFR §§ 273.2 and 273.10

A SNAP inquiry is a face-to-face, telephone or written request by an individual for information about SNAP or in which an individual expresses concerns about food insecurity. ESA encourages customers to file an application on the day they contact ESA with a SNAP inquiry.

For telephone inquiries, ESA will inform the caller of the following:

- They can apply for benefits at any Service Center on the day of the telephone call.
- If the caller does not wish to come to the office in person, ESA can mail them the application.
- They can apply online at ***SNAP Benefits | DHS (dc.gov)***.

For written inquiries for assistance, ESA will mail the application and related forms, including information about expedited SNAP, the same day ESA receives the request.

3.1.1 Application Filing Date

Households have the right to file an application on the same day they contact ESA. An application is considered filed based on the following program requirements:

- The application must contain the applicant's name, address and signature of a responsible household member or the household's authorized representative.

The application for SNAP is considered filed when it is received online; via the mobile app; in person at any ESA center; or by mail, fax or phone. ESA uses a combined application that allows individuals to apply for multiple food, cash and medical assistance programs.

ESA must accept all applications presented at a Service Center during regular business hours.

A signature must be provided by the customer or authorized representative for ESA to establish a filing date and process the application. This signature could be an unwritten signature, such as a recorded gesture or telephonic signature, if necessary, to comply with civil rights law.

Legal Authority
Head of household (Federal): 7 CFR §273.1(d)
Authorized representative (Federal): 7 CFR §273.2 (b)-(c), (f)(1)(vii) and (n)

3.1.2 Who May File an Application

This section explains who may file a SNAP application.

3.1.2.1 Head of Household

Generally, the head of the household files the application for benefits and receives correspondence and notices from ESA. The head of household may be any adult member of the household; if the household includes a minor child, the head of household must be an adult who has parental control of the child.

- If all adults agree on who should be the head of household, ESA accepts the selection. If the adults do not agree, ESA will select the head of household.
- If a child (either a minor child or an adult child) resides in the household, ESA will generally select the child's parent to serve as the head unless the parent is incapacitated and cannot provide information. If there is no child in the household and the household adults cannot agree on who should serve as the head, ESA will select an adult it determines is most able to provide the needed information.
- A child under age 18 who does not live with a parent, relative or other responsible adult and is not under parental control may apply for SNAP on their own as the head of household or with others they regularly purchase and prepare food with.

3.1.2.1.1 Death of a Household Member

- If an individual in a one-person household dies before completing the application process, ESA denies the application.
- If an individual in a household of more than one dies, ESA processes the application. In determining eligibility and benefits for the month of application and the following month, ESA includes the deceased person in the household for each month when they were present for at least one day. The household is certified for ongoing benefits without including the deceased individual.

3.1.2.2 SNAP Authorized Representative

The household may designate an adult nonmember who is sufficiently aware of relevant household circumstances as the authorized representative to act on behalf of the household for application processing purposes. The authorized representative must be designated in writing by the head of household, spouse or another responsible member of the household.

- Authorized representatives who act on behalf of the household for application processing purposes may apply for program benefits, complete the household application interview, provide documentary evidence to meet verification requirements and carry out household responsibilities, such as reporting changes, during the certification period. Authorized representatives may also be authorized to obtain and use benefits, as discussed in ***Section 22.2, Who May Use the EBT Card***.
- ESA must verify the identity of the authorized representative and the head of the household applying for benefits.
- The head of the household or their spouse should prepare or review the application whenever possible, even if the authorized representative will actually be interviewed. ESA must emphasize to the household that it is responsible for any overpayment resulting from incorrect information the authorized representative provides.
- If someone does not have sufficient information to complete an application (knowledge of SSN, date of birth, residence address), they cannot act as the authorized representative.

Persons living in a drug addiction and alcohol treatment facility must have a designated employee of the facility as the household's authorized representative for SNAP, who will apply for SNAP on behalf of those individuals. The representative also uses the customer's benefits to purchase food for the household while at the facility. Residents of group living arrangements have the option to apply and be certified through the use of authorized representatives employed by the group living arrangement or of their choice.

These entities **may not** be authorized representatives:

- ESA employees who are involved in certifying or issuing SNAP benefits, unless they have written approval from an ESA designated authority (i.e. administrator or DPT&QA deputy administrator) after determining that no one else is available to serve
- Retailers authorized to accept SNAP benefits unless they have the specific written approval of an ESA designated authority (i.e. administrator or DPT&QA deputy administrator) after determining that no one else is available to serve
- Organizations that provide meals for homeless recipients
- Individuals who served as an authorized representative and knowingly provided false information about household circumstances or made improper use of SNAP benefits
- Individuals disqualified for an IPV that are still in their disqualification period, unless the designated ESA authority determines that no one else is available to serve as an authorized representative for the household. The ESA designated authority (i.e. administrator or DPT&QA deputy administrator) must separately determine whether the individual is needed to apply on behalf of the household or obtain benefits on behalf of the household.

3.1.3 Who May Sign an Application

The following individuals may sign a SNAP application:

- An adult household member or the authorized representative
- A child under age 18 who does not live with a parent, relative or other responsible adult and is not under parental control

Legal Authority
Definitions (District): DC Official Code § 4–201.01(1A) and § 4–201.01(5A)

3.2 Household's Rights to Apply

Every applicant has the following rights:

- Apply for assistance without delay, including the following rights:
  - Receive and file an application for benefits the same business day they contact ESA.
  - Receive help to complete the application and obtain needed verification, provided the household is cooperating with ESA.
  - Have an application mailed or emailed on the same business day to individuals requesting an application.

- Apply for benefits at any time, including while a fair hearing request is pending or after a hearing decision has been made.
- Request a face-to-face interview and be provided a face-to-face interview in lieu of a telephone interview.
- Receive free language assistance or other aids and services to complete the application and interview if the applicant has limited English proficiency or a disability.

- Receive a determination of eligibility within the following timelines from the date the application is filed if the applicant has completed the application, interview and verification requirements in a timely manner:
  - Seven days for expedited SNAP
  - Thirty days for SNAP

3.3 Assisting Customers

If a customer cannot read or write and does not want to have another family member or acquaintance help them with the application process, ESA must assist the customer in completing the application if the customer requests assistance.

- **Note:** ESA staff are not permitted to sign the application or act as the authorized representative for the customer they assist.

If ESA assists the customer by entering the customer's responses into the application, a staff member must do the following:

- Read the contents of the application and each completed response aloud to the customer.
- Review the information with the customer in the presence of a second ESA staff person, preferably a supervisor or center manager.
- Perform these tasks in a location that ensures the confidentially and privacy of the customer and customer's information on the application.

3.3.1 Applying for SNAP Through the SSA Office

SSA informs SSI customers at an SSA office of their right to apply for SNAP benefits either at the SSA office without going to an ESA Service Center or at an ESA Service Center if they choose. If a member of a household consisting only of SSI customers or recipients chooses to apply for SNAP at the SSA office:

- SSA will accept the application, help the customer complete the SNAP application and forward the signed application to the ESA SSI Processing Unit within one day.
- ESA must make an eligibility decision and issue SNAP benefits to eligible SSI households within 30 days following the date SSA received a signed application. The expedited time standard begins on the date ESA receives a SNAP application.

- ESA will not contact the household to obtain information for certification for SNAP benefits except in the following cases:
  - The application is completed improperly.
  - Mandatory verification is missing.
  - Information on the application is questionable.

The customer does not need to appear at an ESA Service Center for ESA to make a final eligibility decision. If all household members are applying for or receiving SSI, the household does not need to have an additional interview with ESA.

SSA prescreens all applications for eligibility for expedited service on the day the agency receives the application at the SSA office and marks "Expedited Processing" on the first page of applications that appear to be eligible. SSA informs households that appear to meet the criteria for expedited service that benefits may be issued sooner if they apply directly at an ESA Service Center.

SSA will distribute an ESA-provided information sheet and a brochure to all households processed under the SSI and SNAP joint application provision. These materials include the following details:

- The address and telephone number of the ESA Service Centers
- The remaining actions to be taken in the application process
- A statement that ESA must notify the household of SNAP eligibility within 30 days
- The customer's rights and responsibilities, including administrative reviews, fair hearings, authorized representatives, out-of-office interviews, reporting changes and timely reapplication
- Information on how and where to get and use benefits, including items customers may buy with benefits

When ESA receives an application from SSA, ESA staff must do as follows:

- Review the application to ensure it is complete.
- Determine whether any household member currently receives SNAP.
- Determine whether the documentation and verification are sufficient and adequate.
- Contact the household for additional information to determine SNAP eligibility, if needed.
- Determine eligibility for **expedited** service and, if eligible, meet **expedited timeframes.**
- *Not* request the household to come to an ESA Service Center.

If SSA takes an SSI phone application or redetermination from a member of a household in which all members are SSI recipients, the household member will also complete a SNAP application during the phone interview. SSA mails the SNAP application to the household for signature to return to the SSA office. SSA forwards any SNAP applications it receives to the ESA SNAP Branch, SSI Processing Unit.

3.4 Date of Application

The date that an application is filed establishes the length of time ESA has to deliver benefit determinations and initial benefit issuance.

ESA considers an application filed on the date it receives an application that includes the customer's name, address and signature.

How and when ESA receives the application can affect the date of the application, as described below.

3.4.1 Applications Received During Business Hours

The day ESA receives the application is the date of application.

3.4.2 Applications Received Outside Normal Business Hours

The next business day is the date of application for applications received outside normal business hours. This applies to applications received in the evenings, on weekends and during holidays.

3.4.3 Online Applications

- If the customer submits the application during business hours, the day they submit the application is the date of application.
- If the customer submits the application outside business hours, the next business day is the date of application.

3.4.4 Applications Received From SSA Offices

For SNAP, if the SSA forwards an application for an SSI customer from an SSA office, ESA considers the application filed for expedited processing when ESA receives the signed application from SSA. The application is filed for standard processing when the signed application is received by SSA.

3.4.5 Applications for Residents of a Public Institution

For a resident of a public institution who applies for benefits before they are released from the institution, the date of filing of their SNAP application is the date of the individual's release from the institution.

3.5 Interview

An interview with the customer, any responsible household member or authorized representative is required to complete the initial application process for SNAP. Interviews are conducted for the following reasons:

- To explore and clarify the household's circumstances and identify information that needs to be verified

- To screen the household for circumstances that pertain to special SNAP rules, such as expedited service, work requirement exemptions and student requirements
- To provide information to the applicant household regarding its rights and responsibilities under the SNAP regulations and explain SNAP program requirements

During the interview, SSRs must cover the following:

- If the customer requires accommodations to complete the interview, SSRs will work with their manager to make the required accommodations.
- Inform the customer of their rights and responsibilities. See ***Section 1.5.1, Applicant Rights***, and ***Section 1.5.2, Applicant Responsibilities***.
- Explain the programs and related services.
- Explain the application processing time standards.
- Explain the conditions of eligibility and the information and verification necessary to determine eligibility.
- Explain the household's responsibility to report changes under simplified reporting.
- Advise the applicant of the opportunity to register to vote.
- Inform the applicant of the availability of early and periodic screening, diagnostic and treatment services for Medicaid-eligible children under 21.
- Notify the applicant of the requirement that the information they provide must be regularly matched by computer with information from DOES, IRS, SSA and other states.
- Explore and resolve unclear and incomplete information.
- Explain the fair hearing process.
- Inform SNAP applicants that all household members between the ages of 16 and 59 must be registered for work at the time of application and once every 12 months after initial registration unless they are exempt from work registration.
- Explain the applicable work requirements for each household member subject to the general work requirements and/or ABAWD work requirements. See ***Section 9.4, Work Requirements Verbal Notification***.
- Ensure all household members between the ages of 16 and 64 are screened for exemptions from the general work requirements and ABAWD work requirement using the SNAP Work Requirements Screening Form. See ***Section 9.3, Work Requirements Screening***.
- Advise households applying for or receiving public assistance benefits that the time limits and requirements for public assistance do not apply to SNAP benefits. Inform them that even if they stop receiving public assistance benefits due to reaching a time limit, starting work or other reasons, they may still be eligible for SNAP benefits.
- Explain the requirement to attest to whether any member of the household has been convicted of certain crimes as an adult.
- Provide the applicant a Change Report Form.
- Explain the QC process and the applicant's responsibility to cooperate.

During interviews with individuals entitled to expedited SNAP, ESA must make every effort to obtain as many verifications as possible to ensure timely and accurate processing.

3.5.1 Same-Day Interviews

ESA must attempt to complete the interview with the applicant household or authorized representative on the same day the household applies.

- For applicants applying in person at a Service Center, ESA should attempt to complete an in-person interview on the same day.
- For applications not submitted in person (e.g. mail, fax, online), ESA should attempt two cold calls to complete the interview over the telephone. All contact attempts must be documented in the case record.

3.5.2 Scheduling Interviews

If an interview for a SNAP application cannot be completed on the day an applicant or their authorized representative submits the application, the system will generate a Notice of Interview Requirement (see ***Section 16.8, Notice of Interview Requirement***). This notice will inform the household of the requirement to complete the SNAP interview and provide the following information:

- The option to contact the call center or visit a Service Center during normal business hours to complete the interview
- The date by which the interview must be completed
- The consequences of not completing the interview
  - The application may be denied if the interview is not completed within 30 days.

The timing of the Notice of Interview Requirement is as follows:

- **Expedited**: sent the day after the application is registered
- **Nonexpedited**: sent no later than two days after the application is registered

3.5.3 Applicant's Right to Face-to-Face Interviews

Applicants have the right to request a face-to-face interview with ESA instead of completing the interview over the phone. If a customer or their authorized representative asks to be interviewed face-to-face, ESA will advise the household to visit a Service Center during normal business hours.

3.5.4 Telephone Interviews

When an applicant or their authorized representative submits a SNAP application but does not complete a face-to-face interview on the same day, the system generates a Notice of Interview Requirement. This notice provides the applicant or their authorized representative with the option to contact ESA by phone or visit a Service Center within a specified timeframe to complete the interview.

3.5.5 Missed Interview

If the household does not complete the interview within 10 days of receiving the Notice of Interview Requirement, the system will generate a Notice of Missed Interview (see ***Section 16.9, Notice of Missed Interview***). This notice reminds the applicant of the following:

- The requirement to complete the SNAP interview
- The final date by which they must complete the interview to receive an eligibility determination
- The consequence of not completing the interview
- The point at which they will need to reapply

3.5.5.1 Delay of Interview

If the household missed its initial interview but then contacts ESA and the interview is completed within 10 days before the end of the processing deadline, ESA must document the reason for the delay in conducting the interview. See ***Section 7.3, Delay in Processing***, to determine the cause of the delay.

ESA must not deny the application if it caused the delay but must notify the household by the 30th day that it is being held pending and inform the household of any action it must take to complete the application process.

3.5.6 Failure to Complete the Interview

If the applicant does not complete the interview due to household fault, the application will remain pending until the 30th day, and then the system will automatically deny the application.

If the applicant refuses to complete the interview, ESA will document the refusal to complete the interview in the case record.

3.5.7 Limited English Proficiency

If a SNAP household member does not speak English or has limited English proficiency, ESA is responsible for obtaining a qualified interpreter. Family members, friends or the authorized representative should not be used as interpreters.

3.5.8 Privacy and Confidentiality

During the interview, the interviewer must maintain an official and confidential discussion about the household's situation. ESA is responsible for safeguarding the applicant's privacy rights throughout the interview. The facilities used must be sufficient to ensure the privacy and confidentiality of the conversation.

Legal Authority
Interviews (Federal): 7 CFR §273.2(e)

Chapter

4

Chapter 4. Categorically Eligible Households

4.1 Categorically Eligible Households

Categorically eligible households are those that are conveyed eligibility for SNAP based on their participation in TANF, SSI or receipt of a noncash TANF-funded service. These households are automatically considered to meet SNAP asset limits, net income limits, gross income limits, SSN information, sponsored noncitizenship information and residency. Any benefit determination factors for SNAP not verified by the conferring program must be verified for SNAP prior to certification.

If the household composition or the circumstances of household members change, ESA must assess whether the household remains categorically eligible.

Categorical eligibility may be conveyed in one of two ways:

- All members receive, or are authorized for, TANF cash assistance or SSI benefits.
- The household is authorized to receive a TANF-funded brochure on domestic violence services, and its monthly income is at or below 200 percent of federal poverty guidelines.

4.2 Households Where All Members Receive TANF or SSI

A TANF or SSI recipient is a person who meets the following criteria:

- Receives TANF or SSI payments
- Is eligible for benefits, but benefits are suspended or being recovered for an overpayment
- Is eligible for TANF benefits of less than $10 monthly and does not receive a payment
- Is authorized for benefits but has not received a payment

Residents of public institutions who apply jointly for SSI and SNAP benefits prior to their release from the institution are not categorically eligible based upon a finding by SSA of potential SSI eligibility prior to their release. These individuals become categorically eligible when SSA makes its final SSI eligibility decision and the individual is released from the institution.

To be included in the SNAP household, a TANF or SSI recipient must meet the citizenship or noncitizenship status requirements of SNAP.

4.3 Expanded Categorically Eligible Households

SNAP regulations allow agencies to expand categorical eligibility to households that are eligible to receive TANF-funded services. ESA provides a TANF-funded brochure telling SNAP applicants and recipients about the availability of domestic violence services. Entitlement to receipt of this brochure makes households with income at or below 200 percent of federal poverty guidelines categorically eligible for SNAP even if they do not receive TANF or SSI cash benefits.

The ESA requirements for households to qualify as expanded categorically eligible are:

- Give the domestic violence brochure to all households applying or recertifying for SNAP benefits.
- Record in the dictation that the household received the domestic violence brochure.

ESA provides the domestic violence brochure to all households applying or recertifying for SNAP benefits in person, through the mail, online or by any other electronic means. However, only households whose gross income is at or below 200 percent of federal poverty guidelines receive expanded categorical eligibility based on receipt of the TANF-funded brochure.

4.4 Exceptions to Categorical Eligibility

4.4.1 Households Prohibited From Being Categorically Eligible

The entire household cannot be categorically eligible for SNAP benefits if one of the following conditions applies:

- Any member of the household is disqualified for an IPV (see ***Chapter 21, Disqualification for Intentional Program Violation***), being a fleeing felon or probation or parole violator or having a conviction of certain crimes and not being in compliance with the sentence (see ***Section 8.5, Fleeing Felons, Probation and Parole Violators and Certain Convicted Criminals***).
- The head of the household is disqualified for failure to comply with SNAP work requirements.
- The entire household is institutionalized or disqualified from receiving SNAP for any reason.

Households disqualified for substantial lottery or gambling winnings remain ineligible for SNAP until they meet applicable asset limits, net income limits and gross income limits, regardless of whether they are categorically eligible.

4.4.2 Individuals Prohibited From Being Considered Categorically Eligible

Persons ineligible for SNAP do not become eligible for benefits by being in a categorically eligible household. This policy includes people ineligible due to the following:

- Their immigration status

- Failure to provide an SSN
- Being an ineligible student
- Living in an institution ineligible for SNAP
- Failure to meet SNAP work requirements
- Disqualification for an IPV

In these cases, the ineligible household members are excluded, but the remaining household members may be categorically eligible.

Legal Authority

Categorical eligibility (Federal): 7 USC § 2014(a), 7 CFR § 273.2 (j)

Categorical eligibility (District): DC Official Code § 4-261.02

Chapter

5

Chapter 5. Verification

Verification is the use of documentation or contact with a third party to confirm the accuracy of statements or information SNAP households provide. ESA must allow households at least 10 days to provide required verification.

In general, ESA must have verification or proof that a household meets financial and nonfinancial eligibility requirements for ESA-administered programs. The specific items households are required to verify depend on the program the household is applying for, whether ESA obtained proof of these items in the past and whether the item being verified is likely to change over time.

Legal Authority

Verification (Federal): SNAP: 7 CFR § 273.2(f), 7 CFR § 273.2(c)(5), 7 CFR § 273.2(d)

5.1 Requesting Verification

ESA must request verification from the household and provide at least 10 days for the household to provide the verification.

ESA must provide the household with a Notice of Required Verification (see ***Section 16.2, Notice of Required Verification***). If the household fails to provide all verification necessary for an eligibility determination, ESA must request the particular verification that is still missing and give the household at least 10 days to provide the specific missing verification.

ESA must only request verification that is needed to determine financial and nonfinancial eligibility and optional deductions when verification is not already in the case file. Some verification documents can be used to verify multiple eligibility factors. For example, a rent receipt can verify monthly rent payments and residency if the receipt includes the address of the apartment.

5.1.1 Verification Less Subject to Change

Some elements of eligibility rarely change. ESA does not need to reverify these items unless the household reports a change or ESA otherwise learns of a change in circumstances that would need to be verified. Examples of permanent verification that is unlikely to change follow:

- Identity
- SSN
- Status as a US citizen

If ESA has reason to believe the evidence provided to verify any of the above examples was falsified, it must submit an Unusual Incidents Report Form for investigation through the DHS OPRMI.

5.1.2 Verification Subject to Change

Other elements of eligibility can change regularly. Depending on program requirements, these elements may need verification at application, change of circumstance or recertification. Circumstances that are more likely to change and may need to be verified include the following:

- Income
- Household composition
- School attendance
- Student status
- Immigration status
- Shelter costs
- Assets
- Residency
- Physical or mental barriers to employment
- Dependent care costs
- Child support payments

5.1.3 Responsibilities in Gathering and Submitting Verification

The household has primary responsibility for providing documentary evidence (see ***Section 5.12.1, Documentary Evidence***) to support statements on their certification forms and resolve any questionable information.

ESA is required to offer assistance to households in obtaining verification as long as the household has not refused to cooperate with ESA.

The household must be allowed to submit verification in person, via fax or mail, online or through an authorized representative. ESA cannot require the household to submit verification in person.

5.2 Income Verification

ESA must verify all household countable earned and unearned income prior to initial certification.

If all attempts to verify income have been unsuccessful because the employer or source of income is unresponsive to the household and ESA and all other sources of verification are unavailable, ESA must determine the income to be used based on best available information. ESA cannot deny an application for failing to provide verification in situations where the employer or source of income is uncooperative.

For additional types of income verification not listed below, see ***Table 25.2.c, Verification Chart***.

For income verification requirements after initial application, see the following sections:

- ***Section 5.14, Verification of Changes During Certification***
- ***Section 5.15, Verification Required at Mid-Certification***
- ***Section 5.16, Verification at Renewal/Recertification***

5.2.1 Earned Income

Gross nonexempt earned income must be verified for all households prior to certification.

5.2.1.1 Wages and Salaries

Verification of wages and salaries should include the total gross income (before any paycheck deductions). Examples include the following:

- Pay stubs from the last 30 days
- Written statement or verbal statement from the employer
- Third-party verification sources, such as The Work Number if earnings are similar to what the household reports or confirms
  - The Work Number must be checked for all adult household members at initial application. Verification of income discovered by The Work Number should only be requested from the household if the information does not match what is reported by the household or confirmed by the household verbally and documented in case notes.

5.2.1.1.1 Tips

Examples of tips include the following:

- Pay stubs, if the employer confirms that they reflect actual tips (tips shown on pay stubs are usually a percentage for tax purposes)
- Client's statement if pay stubs are not available

5.2.1.2 Self-Employment Income

ESA must verify income from self-employment and allowable self-employment expenses (see ***Section 11.2.1.2, Allowable Self-Employment Expenses***). Examples include the following:

- Tax returns
- Profit and loss statements
- Business receipts
- Accounting or other business records
- Statements from business clients

Self-employment income from child or dependent care:

- Statement from the person receiving the service
- Written statement from the worker who authorizes payment for the service
- Bills or statements from the provider listing the cost of care, the period for which the care was provided and the nature of the care

Rental and room and board income:

- Written statement from the boarder or renter
- Accounting or other business records
- Lease or contract
- Rent receipt book
- Request for rental information statement if the boarder or renter receives public assistance

5.2.2 Unearned Income

Gross nonexempt unearned income must be verified for all households prior to certification.

Common types of unearned income can be verified using information available to ESA through data matches or case records. Verification of the following unearned income should not be requested from the household unless the information is questionable.

- ESA-administered cash assistance programs such as TANF; Program on Work, Employment and Responsibility (POWER); General Assistance for Children (GC); Interim Disability Assistance (IDA); and Refugee Cash Assistance (RCA)
- DOES unemployment compensation benefits
- SSA benefits such as federal retirement, survivors, disability, SSI, Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) and related SSA benefits

If unearned income must be verified by the household, verification may be in the form of the following:

- Documents (such as award notice)
- Written statements from persons with knowledge of the household’s income (such as the agency issuing benefits)

Most types of unearned income may be verified by a written statement from the agency, organization or person administering the payment. The verification must confirm the following:

- The gross benefit amount and frequency of the benefit payment to the household (e.g. monthly)
- Amount of any deductions from the benefit amount and whether the deductions are mandatory

For all unearned income, a copy of the benefits check or direct deposit receipt is adequate in the following situations:

- The copy clearly shows the benefit amount and any deductions.
- The copy is dated within the past 60 days.
- ESA has no reason to believe the amount has changed.

A recipient award notice is acceptable if it is dated within the past 60 days and there is no reason to suspect the amount has changed.

Educational income can be verified through the educational institution. A student financial aid award notice can also verify educational benefits.

Court-ordered child support and spousal support the household receives can be verified by information from the court (verification of public records, other written statement or contract). The DC Office of the Attorney General (OAG) CSSD may also be able to provide verification of support received.

Voluntary child support a household member receives can be verified by any of the following:

- Written statement from the absent parent
- Payment records
- Client's statement if the absent parent refuses to cooperate and the payments are in cash

Property-related income (may be earned or unearned income, depending on the extent to which the individual serves in a property management capacity):

- Mortgage or land contract
- Bills or receipts

5.3 Verification of SNAP Expenses

ESA must verify the following expenses if they would result in an income deduction:

- Medical expenses
- Shelter costs
- Legally obligated child support paid by the household
- Dependent care expenses

Utility costs do not need to be verified for SNAP. ESA can accept the customer's statement regarding utility costs.

- If the household wishes to claim expenses for an unoccupied home, ESA must verify the household's actual utility expenses for the unoccupied home in every case and must not use the standard utility allowance.

Verification of expenses that result in an income deduction cannot be treated as required verification. If the household fails to provide verification of expenses, the case should be processed without the deduction:

- If the household does not provide needed verification for an income deduction but has provided all verification to determine eligibility for SNAP, ESA will determine the household's eligibility and benefits without the deduction for the unverified expenses.
- ESA will explain to households that they must provide proof of the expenses within 10 days to receive the deduction for these expenses. ESA will process the case with the known information and proof at the time of application or recertification. ESA must not hold the case as pending to verify a deductible expense.
- ESA will send a notice giving the customer 10 days to return the needed proof of the expenses, informing them that they may provide the proof of these expenses even after ESA has determined the household's eligibility for benefits.
- ESA will document the case actions in the case record, including the fact that the customer did not provide the needed verification at the time of application or recertification and was informed at the time to submit verification of these costs.
- In instances where ESA has processed the application or recertification without the income deduction because all other factors of eligibility have been verified:
  - If the household provides verification for an income deduction within the 10 days provided in the notice, ESA must redetermine eligibility and benefit levels back to the date of initial application or new certification period at recertification and issue a supplement as needed.
  - If the household provides verification for an income deduction after the 10 days provided in the notice but within the 30-day processing timeframe, ESA will provide the expense back to the date of application or new certification period (see ***Section 15.5, Action on Reported Changes***).

Example

Tina applied for SNAP on June 1 and was interviewed that day. At the interview, Tina did not provide proof of her shelter costs, and ESA was unable to contact the landlord for proof of this expense.

ESA informed Tina that she needed to provide proof of her shelter expenses by June 11 to receive a deduction for these expenses. ESA took the following actions:

- Processed the application without using the shelter costs for the income deduction
- Documented in the case record that the customer did not provide the proof of shelter costs, that she was asked to provide proof by June 11 and that the case was processed without the expense
- Sent Tina a notice to inform her of the need to provide verification of her shelter costs by June 11

5.3.1 Verification of Medical Expenses

Households with members who are 60 years old or older or who meet the SNAP criteria for being disabled (refer to ***Table 25.1.a, Glossary of Terms,*** for SNAP's definition of disabled) and have allowable out-of-pocket medical expenses that total $35 or more each month can receive a medical expense deduction.

At initial application, ESA must verify all medical expenses that result in a deduction. Verification of whether a medical expense is allowable should only be conducted if the expense is questionable.

At recertification or when a change is reported, ESA must verify the expense only if it results in a deduction and meets one of the following criteria:

- The expense is new.
- The total recurring amount of the medical expenses has changed by more than $25 monthly.
- The information provided is incomplete, inaccurate, inconsistent or outdated.

ESA reverifies age, disability or whether a medical expense can be allowed as an income deduction only if it is questionable.

Examples of acceptable verification include the following:

- Bills from providers of health insurance, services and products
- Receipts for prescriptions and medically necessary medication
- Statements from providers
- Health insurance policies

For more information, see ***Section 12.6, Medical Deduction***.

5.3.2 Verification of Dependent Care Expenses

For households claiming a dependent care deduction, ESA must verify dependent care expenses billed by the person or service providing the care at initial application.

If the household reports a change in the amount of dependent care expenses after initial application, ESA must verify the expense before continuing the deduction.

The provider cannot be a member of the SNAP household requesting the deduction but can be living at the same address.

Allowable expenses include the following:

- The costs of care given by an individual care provider or care facility
- Transportation costs to and from the care facility

- Activity or other fees associated with the care provided to the dependent that are necessary for the household to participate in the care

Examples of acceptable verification include the following:

- Bills or statements from the provider stating the cost, nature and period of time care was provided
- Cancelled checks showing payment

For more information, see ***Section 12.4, Dependent Care Deduction***.

5.3.3 Verification of Child Support Payments

For households claiming a child support deduction, ESA must verify legally obligated child support paid by a household member to someone outside the SNAP household at initial application.

If the household reports a change in the amount of legally obligated child support payments after initial application, ESA must verify the expense before continuing the deduction. Table 5.3.3.a lists the factors that must be verified.

Table 5.3.3.a. Verification of Child Support Payments

Verification Factors	Examples of Acceptable Verification
Actual amount the household member pays	■ Cancelled checks ■ Written statement from custodial parent or person receiving child support ■ Receipts/documentation confirming payments made to a third party (e.g. landlord, utility company, health insurance) as part of support order
Legal obligation to pay child support	■ Court or administrative order ■ Legally enforceable separation agreement (e.g. divorce degree)
Legally obligated amount (which may differ from the actual amount paid)	
Payment by the household member provided to a nonhousehold member	■ Household's SNAP case record: verify the child is not part of the SNAP household

Documents that are accepted as verification of the household's legal obligation to pay child support cannot be accepted as verification of the household's actual monthly child support payments.

Example

Henrick provides a court order showing a $500 legal obligation to pay child support to his daughter, Crissy, who is living with her mother (custodial parent). While the court order verifies the legal obligation and legal obligation amount, it does not verify the actual amount Henrick pays each month. Additional verification is required, such as a written statement from Crissy's mother confirming the monthly payment amount received each month from Henrick or a cancelled check showing payments made.

For more information, see ***Section 12.5, Child Support Deduction***.

5.3.4 Verification of Shelter Expenses

5.3.4.1 Excess Shelter Deduction

For households claiming a shelter deduction, ESA must verify shelter expenses (other than heat, utilities and telephone) the household pays when reported at initial application.

At recertification, mid-certification or when a change is reported, ESA must verify the expense when any of the following conditions are met:

- The source of the expense (i.e. who is responsible for paying the expense) has changed.
- The household moved to a new address.
- The amount of the expense has changed by more than $25 monthly.
- The information provided is incomplete, inaccurate, inconsistent or outdated.

If a household has a shelter deduction and reports a new address, ESA must ask for verification of shelter costs at the new address before allowing the deduction to continue.

Examples of acceptable verification include the following:

- Rent or mortgage
  - Statement from the institution holding the mortgage
  - Rent receipt
  - Cancelled rent or mortgage checks
  - Statement by the lender, landlord or manager
  - Current lease
- Property tax
  - Bills or statements from the taxing authority
- Property insurance
  - Bills or statements from the insurance company
  - A copy of a current receipt

For verification of utility expenses (heat, electricity, telephone, etc.), see Section 5.3.4.3, Utility Expenses, for additional information.

For more information, see ***Section 12.7.1, Excess Shelter Deduction.***

5.3.4.2 Homeless Shelter Deduction

Households in which all members are experiencing homelessness and pay shelter and/or utility expenses may qualify for the standard homeless shelter deduction or opt to receive the excess shelter deduction (see ***Section 5.3.4.1, Excess Shelter Deduction***).

If the household chooses the standard homeless shelter deduction, ESA must verify that the household incurs an allowable shelter and/or utility expense. If a household has difficulty obtaining traditional types of verification, a client's statement documented in the case file is acceptable verification of the expense.

Because the homeless shelter deduction is a standard amount, ESA does not need to verify the total amount of shelter and/or utility expenses the household incurs. At least one allowable expense the household incurs is sufficient to qualify for this deduction.

- **Note**: If the household opts to receive the excess shelter deduction in lieu of the homeless shelter deduction, follow verification requirements in ***Section 5.3.4.1, Excess Shelter Deduction.***

At recertification, mid-certification or when a change is reported by the household, ESA must verify the expense when one of the following criteria is met:

- The source of the expense has changed.
- The household moved to a new address or shelter.
- The amount of the expense has changed by more than $25 monthly.
- The information provided is incomplete, inaccurate, inconsistent or outdated.

Depending on the total amount of shelter expenses the household incurs, the household may qualify for a larger income deduction under the excess shelter deduction. When a change in shelter and/or utility costs is reported, ESA must determine if the household wants the excess shelter deduction in lieu of the homeless shelter deduction.

Allowable expenses to qualify for the homeless shelter deduction include the following:

- Payments to a homeless shelter
- Payments to a hotel or motel for temporary lodging
- Payments to friends or family in exchange for temporary housing
- Payments on client's vehicle if residing in their vehicle
- Utility expense such as a cell phone

For more information, see ***Section 12.7.2, Homeless Shelter Deduction***.

5.3.4.3 Utility Expenses

Verification is not required unless the information is questionable or the household is claiming expenses for an unoccupied home (see ***Section 5.13, Questionable Information***).

Legal Authority

Expenses (Federal): SNAP: 7 CFR § 273.2(f)(1)(iii), 7 CFR § 273.2(f)(1)(iv), 7 CFR § 273.2(f)(1)(xii), 7 CFR § 273.2(f)(3), 7 CFR § 273.2(f)(4), 7 CFR § 273.2(f)(8), 7 CFR § 273.9(d)(4), 7 CFR § 273.12(c)(4)

5.4 Verification of Citizenship/Noncitizenship

An individual must be a US citizen or an eligible noncitizen to participate in SNAP. Nationals of Puerto Rico, Guam, US Virgin Islands, Northern Mariana Islands, American Samoa or Swain's Island are equivalent to US citizenship. Other individuals are ineligible to participate until they become US citizens or meet exemption criteria. See ***Section 8.6, Citizenship and Noncitizenship,*** for additional information on exemptions.

5.4.1 Citizenship

Verification of citizenship is a mandatory eligibility requirement for SNAP. The household's statement is acceptable, unless questionable. If questionable, ESA must ask the household to provide verification of citizenship. For acceptable forms of verification, see ***Table 25.2.c, Verification Chart.***

5.4.2 Noncitizenship

ESA must verify eligible immigration status of all noncitizen household members applying for SNAP.

Households are required to submit US Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) documentation for each noncitizen applying for SNAP benefits as a condition of eligibility.

ESA is then required to verify the validity of these documents through the Systematic Alien Verification for Entitlements (SAVE) program.

Table 5.4.2.a contains examples of acceptable forms of documents to verify noncitizenship through some of the SAVE categories.

Table 5.4.2.a. Acceptable Documents to Verify Noncitizenship

Category	Acceptable Verification
~~Asylees~~ ~~Granted asylum into the US under Section 208 of the Immigration and Nationality Act (INA)~~	▪ ~~USCIS Form I-94 annotated with stamp showing admission under Section 208 of INA~~ ▪ ~~USCIS Form I-688B annotated with 274A.12(a)(5)~~ ▪ ~~USCIS Form I-766 annotated A5~~ ▪ ~~Grant letter from the Asylum Office of USCIS~~ ▪ ~~Order of an immigration judge granting asylum~~
Citizens of the Compact of Free Association (COFA) Nations	▪ An Unexpired Foreign Passport issued by the FSM, RMI, or Palau. ▪ Form I-94 (Arrival/Departure Record) showing a valid Class of Admission (COA) code tied to COFA status (such as *CFA/FSM*, *CFA/MIS*, *CFA/RMI*, *CFA/PAL*, or *FSM*, *RMI*, *PAL*).

Category	Acceptable Verification
	▪ Form I-766 (Employment Authorization Document / EAD). ▪ Form I-797 (Notice of Action) receipt or approval notice indicating COFA-related admission or status
Cuban or Haitian Entrants (CHE) Granted entry into the US as defined in section 501(e) of the Refugee Education Assistance Act of 1980	▪ USCIS Form I-551 with the code CU6, CU7 or CH6 ▪ Unexpired temporary I-551 stamp in foreign passport or on USCIS Form I-94 with the code CU6 or CU7 ▪ USCIS Form I-94 with stamp showing parole as Cuban/Haitian Entrant under Section 212(d)(5) of the INA
~~Deportation (or removal) withheld~~ ~~Deportation is withheld under §243(h) of the INA as in effect prior to April 1, 1997, or removal is withheld under §241(b)(3) of the INA~~	▪ ~~USCIS Form I-688B annotated 274a.12(a)(10)~~ ▪ ~~USCIS Form I-766 annotated A10~~ ▪ ~~Order from an immigration judge showing deportation withheld or removal withheld~~
▪ ~~Iraqi and Afghan special immigrants~~ ~~*Granted special immigrant status under §101(a)(27) of the INA*~~ ▪ ~~Principal Iraqi/Afghan special immigrant~~ ▪ ~~Spouse of principal Iraqi/Afghan special immigrant~~ ▪ ~~Unmarried child under age 21 of principal Iraqi/Afghan special immigrant~~ ▪ ~~Principal applicant Iraqi/Afghan special immigrant adjusting status in the US~~ ▪ ~~Spouse of principal applicant Iraqi/Afghan special immigrant adjusting status in the US~~ ▪ ~~Unmarried child under age 21 of principal applicant Iraqi/Afghan special immigrant adjusting status in the US~~	▪ ~~Iraqi or Afghan passport with an immigrant visa stamp noting that the individual has been admitted under IV (Immigrant Visa) category SI1 or SQ1 and Department of Homeland Security stamp or notation on passport or I-94 showing date of entry~~ ▪ ~~Iraqi or Afghan passport with an immigrant visa stamp noting that the individual has been admitted under IV category SI2 or SQ2 and Department of Homeland Security stamp or notation on passport or I-94 showing date of entry~~ ▪ ~~Iraqi or Afghan passport with an immigrant visa stamp noting that the individual has been admitted under IV category SI3 or SQ3 and Department of Homeland Security stamp or notation on passport or I-94 showing date of entry~~ ▪ ~~Department of Homeland Security Form I-551 ("green card") showing Iraqi nationality (or Iraqi/Afghan passport), with an IV category SI6 or SQ6~~ ▪ ~~Department of Homeland Security Form I-551 showing Iraqi nationality (or Iraqi/Afghan passport), with an IV category SI7 or SQ7~~ ▪ ~~Department of Homeland Security Form I-551 showing Iraqi nationality (or Iraqi/Afghan passport), with an IV category SI9 or SQ9~~
Lawful Permanent Resident (LPRs, also known as Green Card holders)	▪ Form I-551: Permanent Resident Card or Alien Registration Receipt Card, commonly known as a green card. ▪ Foreign Passport: Unexpired foreign passport containing a temporary I-551 stamp or printed notation. ▪ Form I-327: Re-entry Permit. ▪ Form I-181: Memorandum of Creation of Lawful Permanent Residence with an approval stamp. ▪ Official Orders: Orders issued by USCIS, an Immigration Judge, the Board of Immigration Appeals (BIA), or a federal court granting adjustment of status

Category	Acceptable Verification
~~Refugees~~ ~~Admitted as a refugee into the US under §207 of the INA~~	■ ~~USCIS Form 1-551 with the code RE-6, RE-7, RE-8 and RE-9~~ ■ ~~USCIS Form I-94 annotated with stamp showing admission under Section 207 of INA~~ ■ ~~USCIS Form I-688B annotated 274a.12(a)(3)~~ ■ ~~USCIS Form I-766 annotated A3~~ ■ ~~USCIS Form I-571~~
U.S. Nationals	■ U.S. Passport or Passport Card ■ Birth Certificate showing birth in the U.S. or its outlying possessions. ■ Consular Report of Birth Abroad (Forms FS-240, FS-545, or DS-1350). ■ Certificate of Naturalization (Forms N-550 or N-570). ■ Certificate of Citizenship (Forms N-560 or N-561). ■ U.S. Citizen I.D. Card (Forms I-197 or I-179). ■ Northern Mariana Islands primary or secondary ID card (for individuals born prior to November 1986).

I-94 = Arrival-Departure Record; I-551 = Permanent Resident Card or Alien Registration Receipt Card, commonly known as a green card; I-571 = Refugee Travel Document; I-688B = Employment Authorization Card; I-766 = Employment Authorization Document

A noncitizen is ineligible until acceptable documentation is provided unless one of the following conditions has been met:

- ESA has submitted a copy of a document provided by the household to USCIS for verification. Pending such verification, ESA cannot delay, deny, reduce or terminate the individual's eligibility for benefits on the basis of the individual's immigration status.
- The applicant or ESA has submitted a request to SSA for information regarding the number of quarters of work that can be credited to the individual, SSA has responded that the individual has fewer than 40 quarters, and the individual provides documentation from SSA that SSA is conducting an investigation to determine if more quarters can be credited. If SSA indicates that the number of qualifying quarters that can be credited is under investigation, ESA must certify the individual pending the results of the investigation for up to six months from the date of the original determination of insufficient quarters.
- The applicant or ESA has submitted a request to an applicable federal agency for verification of information to determine if the individual has an eligible noncitizen status. ESA must certify the individual pending the results of the investigation for up to six months from the date of the original request for verification. ESA must provide a noncitizen applicant with a reasonable opportunity to submit acceptable documentation of their eligible noncitizen status as of the 30th day following the date of application.
  - A reasonable opportunity must be at least 10 days from the date of the ESA request for an acceptable document. When ESA fails to provide a noncitizen applicant with a reasonable opportunity as of the 30th day following the date of application, ESA must provide the household with benefits no later than 30 days following the date of application, provided the household is otherwise eligible.

ESA cannot request verification or attempt to verify citizenship for household members not seeking SNAP benefits—for example, noncitizen parents submitting an application for SNAP for their children.

5.4.2.1 SAVE

Section 1137 of the Social Security Act (***42 USC § 1320b-7***) requires the verification of immigration status of noncitizens applying for benefits. SAVE is a program operated by USCIS to electronically verify immigration status. ESA will use SAVE to reverify the initial documentation of immigration status the household provides. Any applicant who is not a US citizen is required to carry immigration documentation that contains an Alien Registration Number (A-Number) or an I-94 Admission Number. ESA will use these numbers to access SAVE.

- SAVE electronically verifies immigration status using a process that can take up to three steps: 1) initial verification, 2) additional verification and 3) third-step verification. For additional information on the SAVE process, visit ***SAVE Verification Process | USCIS***.
- If a noncitizen does not wish for ESA to contact USCIS to verify their immigration status, ESA must give the household the option of withdrawing its application or participating without that member.

The SAVE process must be completed within 30 calendar days of initial application. ESA should complete the SAVE process only once for immigrants who have permanent resident status. For all other immigrants, the SAVE process must be repeated at every recertification or until the immigrant receives permanent resident status.

ESA must thoroughly document all actions taken during the SAVE process.

Legal Authority
SAVE (Federal): SNAP: 7 CFR § 272.11, 7 CFR § 273.2(b)(2), 7 CFR § 273.2(f)(1)(ii)(A-C), 7 CFR § 273.2(f)(10)

5.5 SSN Verification

ESA must verify the SSN reported by the household for each household member applying to receive SNAP benefits. SSNs must also be verified when a new household member is being added. Once verified, SSNs are not to be reverified.

Household members applying to receive SNAP benefits that do not provide an SSN because they cannot remember it or have not yet received an SSN may only receive SNAP for a limited time until they provide ESA with an SSN that ESA then verifies. These households must provide verification that they have applied for a replacement SSN or a new SSN or establish good cause for not being able to apply for an SSN before they can participate for a limited time. See ***Section 8.2, SSNs***, for additional information on limited participation and good cause for these households.

ESA cannot request SSNs from household members not applying to receive SNAP.

5.5.1 Verifying SSN

SNAP household members' SSNs are verified by submitting the SSNs to SSA's State On-Line Query/State On-Line Query-Internet (SOLQ/SOLQ-I) or State Verification & Exchange System (SVES), **except:**

- If a SNAP household member's SSN has already been verified by an ESA program that participates in IEVS, such as the District's TANF and Medicaid programs, ESA must verify the SSN reported by the household for each household member applying to receive SNAP benefits, unless the household is categorically eligible.

Once the SSN has been verified, ESA must mark the SSN as verified in the case file to prevent it from attempting to reverify the SSN.

An SSN is **not** considered verified using documentary evidence such as a copy of an individual's SSN card or ID card with an SSN. SSNs must be verified directly through the appropriate SSA interface, as discussed above.

5.5.2 Verifying Application for SSN

Household members who are applying to receive SNAP benefits or being added as a new household member and do not know their SSN or do not yet have an SSN must provide verification that they have applied for an SSN or replacement SSN card (except for newborns; see ***Section 5.5.4, Verifying SSNs of Newborns***).

- Household member must provide proof that they applied with the SSA to receive an SSN or replacement card.
  - Members can request from SSA a receipt that they have submitted the Application for a Social Security Card (Form SS-5) for a new or replacement SSN.
  - SSA can provide the member with Form SSA-5028 (Receipt for Application for a Social Security Number). ESA must accept this form as verification that the member has applied.
- Once the household member receives their SSN, they can report it to ESA. ESA must verify the reported SSN in accordance with ***Section 5.5.1, Verifying SSN***.

ESA must assist the household in applying for a new or replacement SSN if the household is otherwise cooperating with ESA. Assistance must include the following:

- Advise the household where it can find the Application for a Social Security Card (Form SS-5) on SSA's website or provide the address of the nearest SSA local office.
- Advise the household what information SSA will need as part of the SSN application process.
  - ESA can find this information on the current Form SS-5, which can be accessed on SSA's website.
- Advise the household to provide ESA with a receipt of application (e.g. Form SSA-5028).
- Advise the household to provide ESA with the SSN as soon as issued.

5.5.3 Verifying Good Cause for Not Applying for SSN

Household members applying to receive SNAP benefits or being added as a new household member who have not applied for an SSN (or replacement) may have good cause.

Good cause may be because the member cannot timely secure a specific document required by SSA to apply for an SSN (see ***Section 8.2, SSNs***, for additional information). Good cause does not include delays in applying for an SSN because of illness, lack of transportation or temporary absences.

ESA must work with the household to determine if good cause exists and document the good cause reason in the case file.

See ***Section 5.5.2, Verifying Application for SSN***, once the member has applied for an SSN.

5.5.4 Verifying SSNs of Newborns

If the SNAP household is unable to provide proof of application for an SSN for a newborn, the household must provide an SSN or proof of application at its next recertification or within six months following the month the baby is born, whichever is later.

If the household is unable to provide an SSN or proof of application for an SSN at the next recertification within six months following the baby's birth, ESA must determine if good cause exists.

Legal Authority
SSN (Federal): SNAP: 7 CFR § 273.2(f)(1)(v), 7 CFR § 273.6, 7 CFR § 272.8

5.6 Residency Verification

ESA must verify that the SNAP household lives in the District of Columbia. Residency means the household is physically present in the District of Columbia. For more information on residency requirements, see ***Section 8.1, Residency***.

- There is no minimum length of time requirement.
- There is no fixed residence or residence address requirement.
- Households are not required to live in a house or apartment, nor are they required to provide a residence address.
  - **Note**: An address is required to consider a SNAP application filed, but the address does not have to be a residence address. Examples of a nonresidence address would be a shelter or P.O. Box.

At initial application, ESA must verify household residency.

At mid-certification, recertification or when a change is reported, residency is not reverified unless ESA has information that indicates the customer may no longer be physically present in the District.

- Residency should not be reverified for the sole reason that the verification document used previously for residency verification has expired. For example, if a driver's license was used at initial application to verify residency and has expired at recertification, ESA cannot request that the household reverify residency. The only time ESA should request reverification is if ESA has information that the customer is no longer residing in the District.

Examples of acceptable verification include the following:

- Any verification that reasonably establishes residency
  - ESA cannot request separate documentation to verify residency if proof of residency can be determined through any other required verification.
- Rent receipt or agreement showing address
- Mortgage payments showing address
- Utility bill showing address
- Current identification cards
- Written statement from a shelter
- The Work Number showing an active employment status and the employee's address in the District
- Any other document showing name and address
- Collateral contact if no other documentary proof is available (see ***Section 5.12.2, Collateral Contact***)
- For households experiencing homelessness, households composed of migrant or seasonal farmworkers or for other unusual circumstances where documentary evidence or a collateral contact cannot verify residency:
  - Household self-attestation of residency is sufficient when combined with the ESA documentation in the case file of all efforts made to independently verify the household's residency.

Legal Authority

Residency (Federal): SNAP: 7 CFR § 273.2(f)(1)(vi), 7 CFR § 273.3

5.7 Identity Verification

ESA must verify the identity of the person applying for SNAP. The identity of only the head of household (primary individual) must be verified. If an authorized representative has been designated by the household, the authorized representative's identity must be verified in addition to the identity of the head of household. For more information on identity requirements, see ***Section 8.3, Identity***.

At initial application, ESA must verify the identity of the head of household. When an authorized representative applies on behalf of a household, the identities of **both** the head of the household and the authorized representative must be verified. Identity must be verified prior to authorizing benefits, including for households entitled to expedited processing.

At mid-certification, recertification or when a change is reported, identity is not reverified unless there is a new head of household or authorized representative and their identity has not been previously verified.

Examples of acceptable verification include the following:

- Any verification that reasonably proves identity
  - ESA cannot request a specific type of document to verify identity
- Government-issued ID card (e.g. driver's license, state ID card)
- Voter registration card
- Student identification card
- Employee identification card
- Passport
- Birth certificate
- Public housing–issued photo ID
- Collateral contact if no other documentary proof is available (see ***Section 5.12.2, Collateral Contact***)

Identity previously verified: If the household member participated (or is currently participating) in SNAP, cash assistance or Medicaid in the last **36 months** and their identity was verified and proof of identity can be located in the ESA systems (regardless of whether the proof has expired) or through a case narrative if verified via a collateral contact, ESA should consider identity verified and document in case notes. For example, the note may indicate, "Identity verified through prior participation in SNAP; DC driver's license in DIMS from 9/2020."

Legal Authority

Identity (Federal): SNAP: 7 CFR § 273.2(f)(1)(vii)

5.8 Disability Verification

ESA must verify disability for SNAP household members claiming to be disabled. For more information on disability, see ***Section 8.7, Disability***.

At initial application, ESA must verify disability for any household members claiming to be disabled.

At mid-certification, recertification or when a change is reported, disability is not reverified unless questionable. ESA must verify disability for household members newly claiming disability or newly added household members claiming disability.

ESA must attempt to verify disability through data matches (see ***Section 5.12.3, Data Matches***) before requesting verification from the household.

Examples of acceptable verification include the following:

- Receipt of the following disability benefits:
  - SSA-administered disability or blindness payments, such as SSI or SSDI, as verified through SOLQ/SOLQ-I, SVES or Beneficiary & Earnings Data Exchange (BENDEX) (see ***Section 5.12.3, Data Matches***)
  - IDA as verified in the ESA eligibility system
- Pension award notice
- Doctor's statement
- Railroad Retirement Board notice or letter
- Military documents
- US Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) disability benefits award notice
- SSI award notice
- SSA award notice

Legal Authority

Disability (Federal): SNAP: 7 CFR § 271.2, 7 CFR § 273.2(f)(1)(viii)

5.9 Household Composition Verification

ESA must **not verify** the following household composition factors unless questionable:

- Who is in the SNAP household
- Who is separate from the SNAP household (i.e. not purchasing and preparing food together)
  - If this is questionable, the individuals claiming to be a separate household are responsible for proving they are a separate household.
- Relationship of SNAP household members
- Age of SNAP household members

Questionable factors include the following:

- Shared custody of a child when the child's parents who live in separate households include the child in their SNAP household. Acceptable verification to determine where the child lives the majority of the time may include the following:
  - Custody orders
  - Parenting plans

- Visitation schedules
- School records
- Collateral contact

For more information on household composition, see ***Chapter 2, Household Composition***.

Legal Authority
Household composition (Federal): SNAP: 7 CFR § 273.1, 7 CFR § 273.2(f)(1)(x)

5.10 Student Status and Exemption Verification

ESA may require verification of the enrollment status for certain students. ESA may also require verification to determine if a student attending an institution of higher education meets a student exemption to be eligible for SNAP.

If verification of student enrollment status or exemption is required per this section, ESA must verify at initial application, at recertification, when a new household member who is a student is added or if the status or exemption becomes questionable.

5.10.1 Student Enrollment Status

A head of household aged 16 or 17 and attending school or enrolled in an employment and training program at least half time must provide verification to exempt them from the SNAP work requirements (see ***Section 9.2, Exemptions From Work Requirements***). Acceptable verification of enrollment status includes the following:

- School records showing enrollment
- Documentation from the employment and training program confirming participation

Household members who claim to attend an institution of higher education at least half time are not required to provide verification of their enrollment or status (e.g. if half time) unless questionable.

5.10.2 Student Exemptions

Household members who claim to attend an institution of higher education at least half time are not eligible for SNAP unless they meet a student eligibility exemption (see ***Section 8.4, Students***).

ESA should not request verification of an exemption for the following individuals because this information should be apparent in the case file or verified using information ESA has access to in the case file:

- Under age 18 or 50 and older
- Attending high school

- Receiving TANF as verified in the ESA eligibility system
- Disabled (see ***Section 5.8, Disability Verification***)
- Responsible for the care of a dependent household member under age 6
- Enrolled in an institution of higher education on a full-time basis (as determined by the institution) and is a single natural, adoptive or stepparent of a dependent household member under age 12
  - If no natural, adoptive or stepparent is in the same SNAP household as the child, another full-time student in the same SNAP household as the child may qualify for eligible student status under this provision if they have parental control over the child and are not living with their spouse.
- Employed and paid for at least 20 hours per week as determined by earned income verification
  - If earned income verification does not include hourly rate or hours worked, ESA must request verification, such as a letter from the employer.
- Self-employed for a minimum of 20 hours per week and paid the equivalent of working at least 20 hours per week at the current federal minimum hourly wage as determined by earned income verification

Request verification if the household member claims any of the following exemptions:

- Physically or mentally unfit (if not already determined to have a disability per ***Section 5.8, Disability Verification***). Verification may include documentation showing receipt of temporary or permanent disability benefits issued by government or private sources or a statement from a physician or licensed or certified psychologist.
- Participation in a federally or state-funded work study program. Verification may include a Financial Award Letter of Work Study or any other documents from the school demonstrating participation in work study during the school year.
- Participation in an on-the-job training program. A person is considered to be participating in an on-the-job training program only during the period of time the person is being trained by the employer. Verification may include a letter from the program or employer.
- Enrollment in a SNAP Employment and Training (E&T) program subject to the condition that the course or program of study is limited to remedial courses, basic adult education, literacy or English as a second language or is part of a program of career and technical education, as defined in section 3 of the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act of 2006 (20 USC §2302) designed to be completed in not more than four years at an institution of higher education, as defined in section 102 of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 USC §2296). Verification may include a letter from the program.
- Assignment to or placement in an institution of higher education through an employment and training program under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), a program under Section 236 of the Trade Act of 1974 or a SNAP-equivalent local employment and training program. Verification may include a letter from the program.
- Responsibility for the care of a dependent household member under age 6.

- Responsibility for the care of a dependent household member who has reached age 6 but is under age 12 when ESA has determined that adequate childcare is not available to enable the student to attend class and work a minimum of 20 hours or participate in a federal or state work study program. ESA must only request verification if questionable.

Legal Authority

Students (Federal): SNAP: 7 CFR § 273.2(f)(1)(xi), 7 CFR § 273.5

5.11 ABAWD Verification

5.11.1 Mandatory ABAWD Verification Requirements

The District has elected to mandate verification of the following factors at initial application and recertification to ensure proper recordation of eligibility factors impacting a household member's ABAWD status should the household member become subject to the ABAWD time limits.

Like other mandatory verification requirements such as income or residency, households with an ABAWD member are denied for failing to provide any of the following verifications if requested:

- Countable months from other states

Only for household members between the ages of 18 and 64. Usually only at initial application and when a new household member is added and there is evidence that the customer was receiving SNAP in another state. This information is used to determine how many countable months have been used by the customer within the District's 36-month clock.

  - Verification is required even if the customer is exempt from the ABAWD work requirements.

- Working hours
  - **Initial application**: if the customer is not exempt and is subject to the ABAWD work requirements, and working (including self-employment, in-kind or working in exchange for good or services, unpaid word) to determine if they are currently meeting the work requirements.
  - **Recertification**: if the customer is not exempt and is subject to the ABAWD work requirements (ABAWD work requirements). Verification is required for each month in the prior certification period to determine if the customer was meeting the ABAWD work requirements.
- Qualifying work activity hours
  - **Initial application**: if the customer is not exempt and is subject to the ABAWD work requirements and is participating in a qualifying work activity. Used to determine if they are currently meeting the work requirements.
  - **Recertification**: if the customer is not exempt and is subject to the ABAWD work requirements. Verification is required for each month in the prior certification period to determine if the customer was meeting the ABAWD work requirements.
- Combination of working hours and qualifying work activity hours

- Workfare hours

Workfare hours can only be verified at recertification for customers who are not exempt and are subject to the ABAWD work requirements. Verification is required for each month in the prior certification period to determine if the customer was meeting the ABAWD work requirements.

5.11.2 Optional ABAWD Verification Requirements

Verification of exemption status is considered optional verification. This means a household cannot be denied SNAP solely because it does not provide verification of an exemption. If verification is required and not provided, ESA will determine the customer does not qualify for that exemption and will not apply it.

Certain exemptions must always be verified because they are linked to other mandatory verification requirements. These include:

- Receipt of disability benefits, which affects the household's unearned income (see ***Section 5.2, Income Verification***).
- Working 30 hours per week or earning a weekly wage equivalent to the federal minimum wage multiplied by 30 hours, which affects the household's earned income (see ***Section 5.2, Income Verification***).
- Receipt of unemployment compensation, which affects the household's unearned income. Before requesting verification from the household, attempt to verify through data match (see ***Section 5.2, Income Verification***).
- Student at least half-time, which may affect eligibility as the student must meet the student status requirements (see ***Section 5.10, Student Status and Exemption Verification***, and ***Section 8.5, Students***) .

Legal Authority

Option to mandate verification (Federal): SNAP: 7 CFR § 273.2(f)(3)

5.12 Verification Sources

ESA must verify information provided by the household using the sources described below.

5.12.1 Documentary Evidence

Documentary evidence consists of a written confirmation of a household's circumstances. Examples of documentary evidence include wage stubs, rent receipts and utility bills.

Although documentary evidence will be the primary source of verification, acceptable verification will not be limited to any single type of document and may be obtained through the household or another source.

- Accept any reasonable documentary evidence the household provides that proves the statements on the application.
- Do not limit verification to a specific document or source. For example, ESA can ask for income verification but cannot limit verification to paystubs.

Whenever documentary evidence cannot be obtained or is insufficient to make a firm determination of eligibility or benefit level, ESA may require collateral contacts. For example, documentary evidence may be considered insufficient when the household presents pay stubs that do not represent an accurate picture of the household's income (such as outdated pay stubs) or identification papers that appear to be falsified.

5.12.2 Collateral Contact

A collateral contact is an oral confirmation of a household's circumstances by a person outside the household. The collateral contact may be made either in person or over the telephone. ESA may select a collateral contact if the household fails to designate one or designates a collateral contact unacceptable to ESA.

Examples of acceptable collateral contacts may include employers, landlords, social service agencies, migrant service agencies and neighbors of the household who can be expected to provide accurate third-party verification.

Collateral contacts may be used as the primary source of verification for residency and household size.

Generally, ESA will rely on the household to provide the name of any collateral contact. The household may request assistance in designating a collateral contact. ESA is not required to use a collateral contact designated by the household if the collateral contact cannot be expected to provide accurate third-party verification. When the collateral contact designated by the household is unacceptable, ESA will either designate another collateral contact or ask the household to designate another collateral contact or to provide an alternative form of verification. ESA is responsible for obtaining verification from acceptable collateral contacts.

When using a collateral contact to verify information, ESA **must** document their name, relationship to the applicant (e.g. neighbor, relative, employer), the date of contact, phone number and information discussed during the contact.

Legal Authority
Sources of verification (Federal): SNAP: 7 CFR § 273.2(f)(4)

5.12.3 Data Matches

Data matches can be used to verify factors of eligibility and benefit amounts. Information from data matches is considered verified upon receipt if the provider of the data match is the primary source of the information. Information from data matches is not considered ~~not~~ verified upon receipt if the provider of the data match is not the primary source of the information or is the primary source of information but the information from the data match is questionable, incomplete, outdated or inconsistent.

Table 5.12.3.a lists sources and related information that are considered verified upon receipt.

Table 5.12.3.a. Sources and Related Information Considered Verified Upon Receipt

Data Match	Source Agency	Information
IEVS	DOES	Unemployment insurance/compensation benefits
IEVS	SSA via SOLQ/SOLQ-I, SVES or BENDEX	Federal retirement, survivors, disability, SSI and related SSA benefits
IEVS	DHS	Relevant factors of eligibility verified for the following DHS programs: ▪ TANF ▪ Medicaid
SOLQ/SOLQ-I or SVES	SSA	SSN*
SAVE	USCIS	Noncitizen status

*DHS must also accept an SSN as verified if the applying SNAP household member's SSN has already been verified by a DHS program that participates in IEVS; this includes TANF and Medicaid.

ESA does not need further verification of the above information unless it is questionable, incomplete, outdated or inconsistent.

Table 5.12.3.b lists sources and related information that are not considered verified upon receipt.

Table 5.12.3.b. Sources and Related Information Not Considered Verified Upon Receipt

Data Match	Source Agency	Information
IEVS	DOES	Quarterly wage data
IEVS	SSA	Net earnings from self-employment, wages and payments of retirement income from federal tax returns
IEVS	IRS	Unearned income from federal tax returns
The Work Number	Equifax	Employment and income
Prisoner Verification System (PVS) via Prisoner Update Processing System (PUPS)	SSA	Prisoner status
Deceased Matching System (DMS) via SVES	SSA	Deceased persons
National Directory of New Hires (NDNH)	Administration for Children and Families	Newly hired employees (from IRS Form W-4)
Electronic Disqualified Recipient System (eDRS)	FNS	SNAP disqualified persons

ESA cannot use information that is not considered verified upon receipt until it has been verified. Federal regulations require ESA to run the Prisoner Verification System (PVS), Deceased Matching System (DMS), National Directory of New Hires (NDNH) and Electronic Disqualified Recipient System (eDRS) data matches and act on any matches in accordance with federal requirements.

5.12.3.1 Verifying Data Match Information

Information from a data match that is considered verified upon receipt but is questionable, incomplete, outdated or inconsistent or information from a data match not considered verified upon receipt must be independently verified by ESA. Federal law, regulations and ESA data matching agreements generally stipulate independent verification requirements.

5.12.3.1.1 Independent Verification Requirements of IEVS Information

Independent verification of IEVS information can be completed by contacting the household or the agency/entity that is the primary source of the information.

If contacting the household to verify, ESA must issue a written notice informing the household of the information it has received and requesting the household to respond within 10 days. If the household fails to respond in a timely manner, ESA will send a Notice of Adverse Action, as specified in ***Section 16.6, Notice of Adverse Action***.

When the household or appropriate source provides the independent verification, ESA will properly notify the household of the action it intends to take and provide the household with an opportunity to request a fair hearing (see ***Chapter 19, Administrative/Fair Hearings***) for any adverse action.

5.12.3.1.2 Independent Verification Requirements of SSNs

ESA must verify each SNAP household member's SSN through SSA's SOLQ/SOLQ-I or SVES. If the SSN of a household member has already been verified by another ESA program participating in IEVS, such as TANF or Medicaid, ESA must accept the SSN verification from the other program.

Once an SSN has been verified through SOLQ/SOLQ-I, SVES or another District program participating in IEVS, ESA must make a permanent annotation to the household's file to prevent the unnecessary reverification of the SSN in the future.

ESA should not request applicants or households to provide verification of an SSN. Instead, the household should be provided the opportunity to include each member's SSN on the application or certification form. Once the application or form is submitted, ESA must use the appropriate SSA interface to verify the reported SSN with the SSA. If an SSN cannot be verified with SSA, ESA must contact the household to ensure the SSN was reported correctly on the application or certification form.

5.12.3.1.3 Independent Verification Requirements of SAVE Information

See ***Section 5.4, Verification of Citizenship/Noncitizenship***.

5.12.3.1.4 Independent Verification Requirements for The Work Number

The Work Number must be checked for each adult household member at the time of application and at recertification. If The Work Number returns employment and income information that is reasonably consistent with what the household reported on its application or recertification, ESA must consider the information provided by the household verified.

If The Work Number returns employment and income information that was not reported by the household or is not reasonably consistent with what the household reported on its application or recertification, verification from the household is required:

- The household can choose to confirm The Work Number orally to ESA (i.e. during the interview, through a telephone call), provided ESA fully **documents** the conversation and confirmation in the case file.
- ESA can also send a written notice requesting verification of income to the household and allow at least 10 days for the household to provide verification of employment and income.

5.12.3.1.5 Independent Verification Requirements for PVS and DMS

Federal regulations require ESA to run the PVS data match for all adult SNAP household members at:

- Initial application
- Recertification

Federal regulations require ESA to run the DMS data match for each SNAP household member at:

- Initial application

- No less frequently than once a year

Prior to taking action on a PVS or DMS result, ESA must issue a Notice of Data Match Results (see ***Section 16.4, Notice of Data Match Results***) and follow procedures for unclear information (see ***Section 15.6, Unclear Information***).

5.12.3.1.6 Independent Verification Requirements for NDNH Match

Federal regulations require ESA, at minimum, to run the NDNH data match for all adult SNAP household members at:

- Initial application
- Recertification

NDNH provides IRS W-4 data to identify specific employers of adult household members.

If an NDNH match confirms information reported by the household (name of employer matches), no additional verification is required. ESA must clear the match and document in the household's case file that the NDNH matches the information the client reported (information already known to ESA).

At initial application~~, mid-certification~~ or recertification, if an NDNH match provides new employment information or conflicts with what the household reported, ESA must independently verify the NDNH information. ESA must issue a Notice of Data Match Results (see ***Section 16.4, Notice of Data Match Results***) allowing at least 10 days to provide verification of employment and income.

For NDNH matches that occur outside the initial application or recertification, follow procedures for unclear information in ***Section 15.6, Unclear Information***.

5.12.3.1.7 Independent Verification Requirements for eDRS

Federal regulations require ESA to check eDRS for all adult SNAP household members at:

- Initial application
- Each time a new household member is added

ESA must check eDRS to ensure individuals disqualified from receiving SNAP are not certified for SNAP.

Independent verification will take place separate from and prior to issuing a Notice of Adverse Action—a two-step process. Independent verification for disqualification purposes means contacting the applicant or recipient household and/or the SNAP state agency that originated the disqualification record immediately to obtain corroborating information or documentation to support the reported disqualification information in eDRS.

Documentation may be in any form of electronic or hard copies of court decisions, administrative disqualification hearing (ADH) determinations, signed disqualification consent agreements or ADH waivers.

ESA may accept a verbal or written statement from another SNAP state agency attesting to the existence of the documentation.

ESA may accept a verbal or written statement from the household affirming the accuracy of the disqualification information if such a statement is properly documented and included in the case record.

If a SNAP state agency is not able to provide independent verification to ESA because of a lack of supporting documentation, ESA or the SNAP state agency will advise FNS and follow FNS guidance.

Once independent verification has been received, ESA will review and immediately enter the information into the case record. ESA must ensure the SNAP eligibility and benefit levels are determined without including the disqualified individual pursuant to ***Section 14.1.1, IPV, Fleeing Felon and Work Requirement Sanctions***.

Legal Authority

IEVS (Federal): SNAP: 7 CFR § 272.8, 7 CFR § 273.2(b)(2), 7 CFR § 273.2(f)(9)

SSN verification (Federal): SNAP: 7 CFR § 273.2(f)(1)(v), 7 CFR § 273.6(b)(1)

SAVE (Federal): SNAP: 7 CFR § 272.11, 7 CFR § 273.2(b)(2), 7 CFR § 273.2(f)(10)

Prisoner Verification System (Federal): SNAP: 7 CFR § 272.13, 7 CFR § 273.12(c)(3)(iii)

Deceased Matching System (Federal): SNAP: 7 CFR § 272.14, 7 CFR § 273.12(c)(3)(iii)

National Directory of New Hires (Federal): SNAP: 7 CFR § 272.16

Electronic Disqualified Recipient System (Federal): SNAP: 7 CFR § 273.2(f)(11), 7 CFR § 273.16(i)

5.12.4 Evaluating Verification

To be used as verification, a document or statement must meet the following criteria:

- Reasonably show the eligibility factor it is being used to verify.
- Be from a person, business or organization that would have knowledge of the information.
- Be current and unaltered. Verification of information that can change that is over 60 days old is considered outdated, and current verification must be obtained unless the verification, currently in the case record, is dated specifically for the application time period.

Example

Mr. Knowles' case discontinued June 10, 2023. He reapplies on September 18, 2023. The case record contains a lease dated January 1, 2023, through December 31, 2023. The lease can be used because it is for the current time period.

5.12.5 No Requirement for Specific Forms of Verification

ESA cannot require customers to provide a specific document to verify the household's circumstances as long as the documents or statements provided reasonably show these circumstances.

Example

Mr. Sparin has applied for SNAP for himself, his wife and his child. To allow an income deduction for his shelter costs, he needs to provide proof of these expenses. During the interview, ESA attempts to verify Mr. Sparin's costs over the phone but is unable to contact the landlord.

ESA must accept any document that provides proof of Mr. Sparin's costs, such as a rent receipt, a statement from his landlord or a copy of his lease agreement.

5.13 Questionable Information

ESA must verify questionable information that could affect a customer's eligibility and benefit amounts.

Questionable information includes the following:

- Contradictory statements on a certification form (e.g. application, mid-certification, recertification)
- Information on the certification form inconsistent with other information received by ESA, known in the case record, presented during the interview or discovered from other sources

When determining whether information is questionable, ESA must base the decision on each household's circumstances before requesting verification.

Example

Cassandra, Heros and their school-aged child apply for SNAP. Heros receives about $450 biweekly from a job. The household does not report any other income. The application indicates monthly rent of $960 a month.

Because the household's monthly gross income is less than the household's reported rent, it is appropriate to explore the household's circumstances to determine if there are other income sources. During the interview, Heros explains that his employer recently cut hours, and the family has been unable to pay rent. Heros' explanation is plausible, and ESA has no other information that contradicts Heros' statements. ESA would not consider this information questionable.

Verifying questionable information includes resolving inconsistencies between the certification form and statements the customer makes, validating the accuracy of documents that appear to conflict with each other and confirming information the customer provides when it conflicts with information ESA receives through interfaces or other sources such as a third-party or a computer match.

The household has the primary responsibility of providing verification to resolve any questionable information. If it is difficult for the household to obtain the needed proof in a timely manner, ESA must offer assistance to get the needed verification.

ESA is prohibited from deciding that information is questionable based on race, color, national origin, sex (including gender identity and sexual orientation), religious creed, disability, age, political beliefs or as reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity.

Legal Authority
Verification of questionable information (Federal): SNAP: 7 CFR § 273.2(f)(2)

5.14 Verification of Changes During Certification

Verification requirements for changes discovered during the certification period vary based on how ESA became aware of the change and the type of change.

5.14.1 Changes Reported by the Household

For changes reported by the household, ESA must follow verification procedures that apply at initial certification, with the following exceptions. ESA will not verify:

- Changes in income if the source (e.g. employer) has not changed and if the amount has changed by $50 or less, unless the information is incomplete, inaccurate, inconsistent or outdated
  - **Note**: The Work Number will not be checked to verify a household's reported change in income during the certification period. Instead, verification of a reported change in income must be requested from the household.
- Changes in actual utility expenses by $25 or less, unless the information is incomplete, inaccurate, inconsistent or outdated
  - **Note**: ESA has opted to implement a mandatory standard utility allowance (SUA) for households instead of using and verifying actual utility expenses.
- Changes in total medical expenses by $25 or less, unless the information is incomplete, inaccurate, inconsistent or outdated

If the household reports a change adding a new SNAP household member, the following information must be verified for the new household member:

- SSN, noncitizen status (if applicable) and disqualification status through eDRS (see ***Section 5.12.3, Data Matches***)
- Relevant factors of financial eligibility (i.e. income, expenses) and nonfinancial eligibility (i.e. student status)

ABAWD countable months from another state if the customer is between the age of 18 and 64 and indicates they received SNAP in another state (see ***Section 5.11, ABAWD Verification***).

5.14.2 Changes Discovered Through a Source Other Than the Household

For changes discovered through a source other than the household, ESA must consider the source of the information and whether additional information is needed from the household to act on the change.

If the source of the information is considered verified upon receipt and no additional information is needed from the household, ESA will act upon the change without requesting additional verification from the household. Examples of sources considered verified upon receipt include the following:

- SSA for changes in Social Security benefits like SSI and Retirement, Survivors and Disability Insurance (RSDI)
- DOES for changes in unemployment insurance
- ESA for changes in TANF or other cash assistance programs administered by ESA

If the source of the information is not considered verified upon receipt or additional information is needed from the household to confirm details of the change, ESA can only pursue clarification or verification (if applicable) using procedures in ***Sections 15.6, Unclear Information***, and ***16.5, Request for Contact***, of the following changes if the information is less than 60 days old relative to the current month:

- The household's monthly gross income exceeds the monthly gross income limit for its household size.
- ABAWD who is subject to the ABAWD time limit experiences a decrease in work hours, resulting in less than 20 hours per week, averaged monthly.
- A member of the household wins substantial lottery or gambling winnings.

ESA must seek clarification or verification (if applicable) from the household if the information received significantly conflicts with the details provided during the household's last certification action (e.g. initial certification, mid-certification or recertification). This indicates that ESA has reason to believe the household's circumstances at the time of the previous certification differ from what was originally reported. Follow notice procedures in ***Sections 15.6, Unclear Information***, and ***16.5, Request for Contact***.

For changes discovered through a source that does not meet any of the above criteria (other than the household), the information must be noted in the case file. ESA must pursue clarification or verification of this information during the household's next certification action (i.e. mid-certification or recertification).

For changes received during the certification period from federally required data matches, see ***Section 5.12.3, Data Matches***, and ***Chapter 6, Data Matches***.

Legal Authority

Verification of changes (Federal): SNAP: 7 CFR § 273.2(f)(8)(ii); 7 CFR § 273.12(a)(5)(iii)(G), § 273.12(a)(5)(vi), § 273.12(c)

5.15 Verification Required at Mid-Certification

Changes reported on the mid-certification form by the household are subject to the following verification:

- Earned income changes must be verified if one of the following criteria is met:
  - The source of income (e.g. place of employment) has changed.
  - The monthly amount has changed by more than the current threshold for reporting changes in household income.
    - The threshold for reporting changes in household income may be adjusted each October. See ***Table 25.3.f, Threshold for Required Reporting of Changes in Household Income for Mid-Certification Report***, for the current threshold.
  - **Note**: The Work Number must not be checked to verify a household's reported change in income at mid-certification. Instead, verification of a reported change in income must be requested from the household.
- Unearned income changes must be verified if one of the following criteria is met:
  - The monthly amount has changed by more than the current threshold for reporting changes in household income (see ***Table 25.3.f, Threshold for Required Reporting of Changes in Household Income for Mid-Certification Report***, for the current threshold).
  - A new source of unearned income is reported.
  - **Note**: Before requesting verification from the household, check available data matches.
- Household member changes are verified as follows:
  - Adding a new member:
    - SSN, noncitizen status (if applicable) and disqualification status through eDRS of new members must be verified using available data matches (see ***Section 5.12.3, Data Matches***).
    - Identity of new head of household or authorized representative must be verified if it has not been previously verified.
  - Removing a member: No verification is required.
- Resource/asset changes for households not categorically eligible must be verified.
- Work hour changes for an ABAWD who is subject to the ABAWD time limit must be verified.
- Expenses affecting deductions are verified as follows:
  - Only changes in legally obligated child support payments and shelter expenses resulting from a change in address are requested on the mid-certification form.
  - However, verification must be requested for any reported changes in expenses that affect a deduction (i.e. legally obligated child support payments, shelter expenses, dependent care expenses, medical expenses), **except** verification will not be requested for changes in:
    - Shelter expenses of $25 or less unless the household has new address
    - Total medical expenses of $25 or less

- Follow requirements in ***Section 5.3, Verification of SNAP Expenses***, for verification of expenses affecting deductions.
- The household cannot be terminated for failure to provide expense verification for a deduction. If expense verification is not received timely, benefits must be determined without the deductions while verification is still outstanding.

Any other changes reported by the household or discovered by ESA during the mid-certification must be verified using procedures that apply at initial certification.

For changes discovered prior to the mid-certification that could not be acted upon (see ***Section 5.14.2, Changes Discovered Through a Source Other Than the Household***), ESA must seek clarification from the household or verification (if applicable) during the mid-certification process to resolve these changes.

Legal Authority

Verification at periodic report (Federal): SNAP: 7 CFR § 273.12(a)(5)(iii)

5.16 Verification Required at Renewal/Recertification

ESA will verify the following information at recertification:

- SSNs must be verified as follows:
  - For newly added household members
  - For household members who newly obtained their SSN (e.g. newborns)
- Earned income changes must be verified if one of the following criteria is met:
  - The source of income (e.g. employer) has changed.
  - The monthly amount has changed by more than $50.
  - New income is reported by the household or discovered through The Work Number.
  - **Note**: The Work Number must be checked for all adult household members at recertification. Verification of income discovered by The Work Number should only be requested from the household if the information does not match what is reported by the household or confirmed by the household verbally and documented in case notes.
- Unearned income changes must be verified if one of the following criteria is met:
  - The monthly amount has changed by more than $50.
  - A new source of unearned income is reported.
  - **Note**: Before requesting verification from the household, check available data matches.
- Work hours, participation hours in a qualifying work activity, and workfare hours of an ABAWD who is subject to the ABAWD time limit and who is satisfying the work requirement listed in ***Section 9.2, ABAWD Work Requirement and Time Limit***, must be verified for each month of the prior certification period (see ***Section 5.11, ABAWD Verification***).

- Identity of new head of household or authorized representative if their identity has not been previously verified must be verified.
- Noncitizenship status through SAVE for newly added household members (if applicable) must be verified.
- Expenses affecting deductions are verified as follows:
  - Verification must be requested for any reported changes in expenses that affect a deduction (i.e. legally obligated child support payments, shelter expenses, dependent care expenses, medical expenses). However, verification will not be requested for changes in the following:
    - Shelter expenses of $25 or less unless the household has new address
    - Total recurring medical expenses that changed by $25 or less
  - For changes in legally obligated child support payments, any changes in the legal obligation to pay child support, the obligated amount and the amount of legally obligated child support a household member pays to a nonhousehold member for households eligible for a child support deduction must be verified.
  - Follow requirements in ***Section 5.3, Verification of SNAP Expenses***, for verification of expenses affecting deductions.
  - The household cannot be terminated for failure to provide expense verification for a deduction. If expense verification is not received timely, eligibility and benefits must be determined without the deductions while verification is still outstanding.
- Disqualification status through eDRS for newly added household members must be verified.
- Other information that has changed must be verified. These changes will be subject to the same verification procedures applicable during initial certification.

Unchanged information will not be verified unless the information is incomplete, inaccurate, inconsistent or outdated. Examples of information that should not be reverified include the following:

- SSNs previously verified
- Residency, unless ESA has information that the household no longer resides in the District
- Identity of the head of household or authorized representative, unless they are newly designated and their identity has not already been verified

Legal Authority
Verification at recertification (Federal): SNAP: 7 CFR § 273.2(f)(8)(i), 7 CFR § 273.14(b)(4)

5.17 Documentation

Documentation is the written record of the case history. The goal of documentation is to create a clear and complete record that follows the case actions so any person reading the case record can understand the status of a case, case contacts, information received, decisions made and notices sent on the case.

Good documentation is important for other persons looking at the case to have an accurate view of the case. Fair hearings representatives, investigators, auditors, supervisors, QC reviewers and others use the documentation on a case to understand the case circumstances and reasons for any actions taken.

When ESA has contact with a customer, authorized representative or collateral contact, documentation of the contact typically includes the following information:

- Date and type (office visit, telephone) of contact
- The name of the person ESA had contact with; if not a household member, ESA must indicate who the person is and what significance they have to the case, such as landlord or employer
- Information received during the contact
- Actions taken as a result of the information received and the effective date; if taking an adverse action, the notice being sent
- If the information gained is not used or does not apply to the case, indication of reasons the information is not being used or does not apply
- If no action is taken, indication of reasons for lack of action

See ***Section 25.5, Desk Aids***, and ***Table 25.5.a, Documentation Recommendations***, for additional information on documentation.

Legal Authority

Documentation (Federal): SNAP: 7 CFR § 272.8(e); 7 CFR § 273.1(d)(2); 7 CFR § 273.2(c)(1), (6), (f)(6), (f)(10)(v) and (f)(11)(iii)(C); 7 CFR § 273.7(b)(2) and (c)(1); 7 CFR § 273.8(c); 7 CFR § 273.11(g) and (n)(4); 7 CFR § 273.12(c); 7 CFR § 273.17(d)(2) and (h); 7 CFR § 273.18 (m); 7 CFR § 274.2(h)(3) and (j); 7 CFR § 274.6(a)(7)(i)-(ii)

Chapter

6

Chapter 6. Data Matches

ESA verifies financial and nonfinancial information by matching SNAP applicant and participant information to various national and state data sources to ensure they meet the program's eligibility criteria. ESA uses the following data matching systems.

6.1 Income and Eligibility Verification System (IEVS)

Through the IEVS, ESA can request wage and benefit details from specified agencies and use this information to confirm the eligibility and benefit amount for SNAP households. This information can be requested and used for all household members, including those considered excluded household members, provided their SSNs are available to the state agency.

ESA matches data through the IEVS at each SNAP application, mid-certification, recertification and when adding new members to the household. IEVS includes information from the following sources:

- DOES:
  - Unemployment Income
  - Quarterly wage data
- SSA:
  - SSA-administered retirement and disability benefits
  - Verification of SSNs
  - Net earnings from self-employment, wages and payments of retirement income from federal tax returns
- DC DHS/ESA:
  - TANF and other ESA cash assistance program factors of eligibility, enrollment and benefit amounts
  - Medicaid factors of eligibility and enrollment

For additional information on how to verify matches through IEVS, see ***Section 5.12.3.1.1, Independent Verification Requirements of IEVS Information***, and ***Section 5.12.3.1.2, Independent Verification Requirements of SSNs***.

Legal Authority

State income and eligibility verification system (Federal): SNAP: 7 CFR § 272.8, § 273.2(b)(2), § 273.2(f)(9)

6.2 Systematic Alien Verification for Entitlements (SAVE)

SAVE is used to verify the documentation of immigration status received from the household. Verification of immigration status through SAVE must occur at initial application for household members applying for SNAP who are noncitizens and whenever the household adds a new household member who is a noncitizen (i.e. reported change, mid-certification or recertification). For additional information on how to use SAVE, see ***Section 5.4.2.1, SAVE***.

For additional information on verification requirements for SAVE, see ***Section 5.12.3.1.3, Independent Verification Requirements of SAVE Information***.

Legal Authority

Systematic Alien Verification for Entitlements program (Federal): SNAP: 7 CFR § 272.11, § 273.2(b)(2), § 273.2(f)(10)

6.3 Prisoner Verification System (PVS)

PVS is used to monitor and prevent individuals who are incarcerated for more than 30 days from being included in a SNAP household. ESA compares SNAP household member data against information from SSA's Prisoner Update Processing System (PUPS) to identify individuals who may be incarcerated. PVS matches are required for all adult household members at the time of application and recertification.

For additional information on verification requirements for PVS, see ***Section 5.12.3.1.5, Independent Verification Requirements for PVS and DMS***.

Legal Authority

Prisoner Verification System (Federal): SNAP: 7 CFR § 272.13, § 273.12(c)(3)(iii)

6.4 Deceased Matching System (DMS)

DMS is used to prevent deceased individuals from receiving SNAP benefits. ESA compares SNAP household member data against information received in the SSA Master Death File. DMS matches are required for all household members at the time of application and at least once per year after initial application.

For additional information on verification requirements for DMS, see ***Section 5.12.3.1.5, Independent Verification Requirements for PVS and DMS***.

Legal Authority
Deceased Matching System (Federal): SNAP: 7 CFR § 272.14, § 273.12(c)(3)(iii)

6.5 National Directory of New Hires (NDNH)

NDNH is a national database of wage and employment information, operated by DHHS. ESA only receives new hire information that is reported on the IRS form W-4 from NDNH. This information can be used to determine if a household member is employed and should provide verification of their earned income if the employment is not already known to ESA.

NDNH matches are required for all adult household members at each SNAP application and recertification.

For additional information on verification requirements for NDNH, see ***Section 5.12.3.1.6, Independent Verification Requirements for NDNH Match***.

Legal Authority
National Directory of New Hires (Federal): SNAP: 7 CFR § 272.16

6.6 Electronic Disqualified Recipient System (eDRS)

The eDRS is a nationwide database of persons disqualified from SNAP for IPVs. State agencies are required to report disqualified persons in eDRS and check eDRS to ensure no person in the state is receiving SNAP benefits while currently disqualified. If a person has a disqualification imposed for an IPV in one state and moves to another, the remainder of the disqualification period must be served in the new state. eDRS matches are required for all adult household members at application and when adding a new member to the household.

For additional information on verification requirements for eDRS, see ***Section 5.12.3.1.7, Independent Verification Requirements for eDRS***.

Legal Authority
Disqualifications (Federal): SNAP: 7 CFR § 273.2(f)(11), § 273.16(i)

6.7 The Work Number

The Work Number is a third-party payroll source provided by Equifax to help verify employment and income information for SNAP applicants. The Work Number must be checked for each adult household member at initial application and at recertification, regardless of what the applicant or recipient did or did not report as earned income on their application or at recertification.

For additional information on verification requirements for The Work Number, see ***Section 5.12.3.1.4, Independent Verification Requirements for The Work Number***.

Chapter

7

Chapter 7. Processing Standards

7.1 Normal Processing Standards

ESA must make an eligibility decision and provide benefits to eligible households as soon as possible and within program-specific time standards.

Time standards must not be used as a waiting period or as a basis for denying an application.

ESA must assist applicant households that are cooperating with ESA with completing the application process.

7.1.1 Time Standards

ESA's goal is to make eligibility determinations within 10 calendar days from the date that all information necessary to determine eligibility has been submitted, although ESA is not legally obligated to meet this timeframe.

The amount of time ESA has to determine eligibility for benefits varies by program, as shown in Table 7.1.1.a.

Table 7.1.1.a. Timelines for Determining Eligibility for Benefits

Benefits Applied for	Calendar Days for ESA to Determine Eligibility
SNAP: standard processing	30 days
SNAP: expedited service	7 days

Legal Authority

Time standards (Federal): SNAP: 7 USC § 2020(e), 7 CFR § 273.2(g), 7 CFR § 273.2(c)(1)(vi), 7 CFR § 273.2(k), 7 CFR § 274.2(b)

Household-caused delays (Federal): SNAP: 7 CFR § 273.2(h)

Department-caused delays (Federal): SNAP: 7 CFR § 273.2(h)

ESA must determine eligibility, provide an EBT card and have benefits available for the household to use within 30 calendar days from the date the household filed the application. For applications entitled to expedited service, see ***Section 7.2, Expedited Processing***, for relevant time standards.

For households applying prior to their release from an institution, the 30-day timeliness standard begins on the date of their release.

For households applying at an SSA office, the timeliness standard begins on the date the application is filed with SSA.

7.1.2 Application Disposition

There are two application dispositions: **approved** and **denied**.

Legal Authority

Application withdrawal (Federal): SNAP: 7 CFR § 273.2(c)(6)

Application denial (Federal): SNAP: 7 CFR § 273.2(g), § 273.10(g)(ii)

Application approvals (Federal): SNAP: 7 CFR § 273.2(g), 7 CFR § 273.10(g)(1)(i)

7.1.2.1 SNAP Approved Applications

If the household meets all financial and nonfinancial eligibility conditions, ESA must approve the application and notify the household in writing of its eligibility and the level of benefits it will receive within 30 days of the date of application (see ***Section 16.1, Notice of Eligibility***). In addition to a Notice of Eligibility, ESA must provide the household an active EBT card, PIN and benefits posted on the EBT account for spending within 7 or 30 days.

ESA must also send eligible households a written notice of their requirement to report changes:

- For households under simplified reporting rules, send the Notice of Simplified Reporting.

7.1.2.2 When ESA Must Deny an Application

Households found to be ineligible will be sent a Notice of Denial no later than 30 days following the date the application was filed.

ESA must deny the application on the 30th day after the date of application when:

- The household has failed to appear for a scheduled interview and has made no additional contact with ESA to express interest in completing the application.
- ESA was able to conduct an interview and request all of the necessary verification on the same day the application was filed, no subsequent requests for verification have been made, ESA provided assistance obtaining the verification, but the household failed to provide the verification(s).

7.1.3 Cooperation With Application Process

For ESA to determine eligibility, the household must do the following:

- The household or its representative must complete and sign the application.
- The household or its authorized representative must be interviewed when an interview is required.
- The household must verify certain information on the application.

If the household refuses to cooperate with ESA in completing this application process, ESA will deny the application based on this refusal.

For ESA to determine that the household has refused to cooperate, the household must be able to cooperate but clearly demonstrate that it chooses not to take the actions required to complete the application process.

If a household refuses to be interviewed, ESA will deny the application. If a household fails to keep an appointment for an interview, ESA will not deny the application based on this missed appointment.

If there is any question about whether a household has failed to cooperate or is unable to cooperate, ESA will not deny the application. If information needed to determine eligibility is still missing by the end of the application processing timeframes, ESA must deny the application. For SNAP, when ESA has caused the delay, ESA will consider the application pending.

ESA will not deny a household's application if an individual outside the household fails to cooperate with a request for verification. Household members cannot be treated as outside the household for purposes of failing to cooperate with the application process.

7.1.4 Voluntary Withdrawal

If a customer submits a written withdrawal of their application, ESA must:

- Confirm the withdrawal with the household and document the contact in the case record.
- Advise the household of its right to reapply at any time subsequent to the withdrawal.

When an application is voluntarily withdrawn, ESA does not make an eligibility determination. Rather, ESA sends a Notice of Denial based on the withdrawal.

7.1.5 Failure to Provide Verification

If the customer is at fault for failing to provide the needed verification within 30 days of the date of application, ESA will deny the application based on failure to provide requested information, as long as ESA acted as follows:

- Conducted the intake interview
- Requested all necessary verification

- Provided the household any needed assistance to get the verification
- Gave the household at least 10 days to provide the missing verification from the date of the original request

7.2 Expedited Processing

For households eligible for expedited service, ESA must approve eligible households and provide them their EBT card within seven calendar days from the date they filed the application. For individuals who apply at SSA, this timeliness standard begins on the date ESA receives the application from SSA.

Expedited service applies only to SNAP and provides benefits to the neediest households within seven days from the date of application.

In all cases, the applicant's identity must be verified and an interview must be completed to receive expedited service. Identity must be verified through a collateral contact or readily available documentary evidence.

Legal Authority
Expedited service (Federal): 7 USC § 2020(e)(9), 7 CFR § 273.2(g), 7 CFR § 273.2(i) and § 273.14(f)

7.2.1 Entitlement to Expedited Service

Applicants are eligible for expedited service in each of the following cases:

- Household members have less than $150 in countable monthly gross income and $100 or less in total liquid assets.
- Household members are destitute migrant or seasonal farmworkers with $100 or less in liquid assets.
- Combined monthly gross income and liquid assets are less than the household's monthly shelter expenses (rent or mortgage payments, homeowners insurance or property taxes) plus heat and utilities (using the heating and cooling standard utility allowance [HCSUA]).

7.2.1.1 Screening Applications for Expedited Service

ESA must screen all SNAP applicants, including applicants requesting additional programs, to identify those eligible for expedited service.

The application provides the information needed to identify expedited service cases.

- Households do not have to request expedited service.
- Households cannot waive their right to expedited service.
- ESA cannot deny an applicant the right to apply or to be screened for expedited service.

- ESA must screen **all** applications on the date the household applies to determine whether the household is eligible for expedited service. This must happen even if there is not enough staffing or ESA experiences an unexpected influx of applications.

7.2.1.2 No Limits on Expedited Service

There is no limit to the number of times a household can be approved under expedited procedures. However, prior to the next expedited approval, the household must do either of the following:

- Meet the verification requirements that were postponed at the last expedited approval, regardless of how long ago that approval was (review the checklist for postponed verification).
- Be processed under normal application processing standards after expedited benefits were last issued.

7.2.2 Expedited Timeframes

ESA must process the applications for households eligible for expedited service and provide the household its EBT card within **seven calendar days from the date the application was filed with the agency.** Benefits must be made available on the EBT card by the seventh day; this means ensuring the household has a PIN and benefits loaded for use.

- ESA's practice is to mail all EBT cards; however, if the household wishes, a household member or authorized representative may visit one of the Service Centers to pick up a card.
  - **Note:** The card would be a duplicate.

If a household is ineligible to participate for the month of application, but ESA determines that it meets expedited criteria for the following month, the household must be provided an opportunity to participate within seven days from the date of application or the first working day of the second month, whichever is later.

If a resident of a public institution applies for benefits prior to their release from the institution and is entitled to expedited service, the date of filing for their SNAP application is the date of release of the applicant from the institution. ESA has seven calendar days following the date of release to provide the individual with their EBT card and PIN.

If an SSI customer applying for SNAP benefits at an SSA office meets the expedited criteria, benefits must be made available within seven calendar days from the date ESA receives the application.

ESA must not delay processing expedited benefits pending proof needed for another program.

7.2.2.1 Late Determinations

If the prescreening fails to identify the household as entitled to expedited service and ESA later discovers the household is entitled to expedited service, ESA must process the application and issue benefits within seven days of ESA's discovery that the household is eligible for expedited service.

7.2.3 Expedited Screening

ESA must screen all SNAP applications using the SNAP expedited screening criteria found in ***Section 7.2.1, Entitlement to Expedited Service***, to identify applicants eligible for expedited benefits on the same day ESA receives the application. ESA is required to screen households seeking recertification for expedited benefits, regardless of when they submitted their application. The screening to determine eligibility for expedited benefits includes households submitting applications after their current certification period has ended and those submitting within 30 days following the end of their certification period.

For recertification applications, ESA is not required to screen households for expedited benefits as long as the household applies for recertification before the end of its current certification period.

The information provided by the household is assessed using the criteria in ***Section 7.2.1, Entitlement to Expedited Service***, to determine eligibility for expedited service. Expedited processing does not override program eligibility requirements, although certain processing requirements and actions may be postponed due to the expedited service time standard.

7.2.4 Expedited Interviews

Households eligible for expedited service must participate in an interview.

- If the household files the application in person, ESA must interview it the same day the application is filed, unless the customer asks to postpone the interview.
- For applications filed in other ways, such as via mail, online or dropped off at a Service Center, ESA must attempt to contact the applicant or authorized representative by telephone. If the applicant or authorized representative is reached and able to complete the interview, ESA should document the interview in the applicant's case record.
- If the applicant cannot be reached by phone for an interview on the day ESA receives the application for expedited service, ESA must schedule an interview with the household for a specific date and time. The interview should be scheduled as soon as possible to meet the expedited timeframes. If the applicant does not respond and does not complete an interview, the application can be processed within the normal 30-day processing. ESA must help the household complete the application during the interview if the household needs assistance.

ESA cannot provide expedited SNAP benefits until the household completes an interview. If the customer completes the interview within six calendar days after the date they applied, ESA adheres to the seven-day deadline for making expedited service available.

7.2.5 Expedited Verification

ESA must make reasonable efforts to verify all information within the expedited processing time standard.

- Identity is the **only** verification required before ESA can issue benefits under expedited service. Identity can be verified through readily available documentation, including a current or expired ID card, or a collateral contact, including a verbal confirmation of a household's circumstances by an individual outside the household. The collateral contact may be made in person or over the telephone. ESA will document collateral contacts in the case record.

- Expedited benefits cannot be delayed if assets, income and other facts needed to determine SNAP eligibility or benefit level cannot be verified within the time requirement.

7.2.5.1 Expedited Treatment of Assets

ESA counts only liquid assets when determining if a household is eligible for expedited service.

If a non-categorically eligible household is eligible for expedited service, ESA considers both liquid and nonliquid assets to determine whether the household is eligible for SNAP benefits. If ESA cannot verify the assets during the seven-day processing timeframe, verification can be postponed.

Example

Charles Davis applies for SNAP for himself and his 20-year-old sons, Marcus and Wynton. They are screened as eligible for expedited service based on their housing costs being greater than their income.

Wynton is serving a 12-month disqualification for an IPV, which prevents the household from being categorically eligible for SNAP.

In the interview, Charles indicated he has no liquid assets, but he has an older boat he estimates is worth about $2,000. Charles owes nothing on the boat but does not have proof of the boat's value readily available.

Even though the household must meet the asset test because it is not categorically eligible for SNAP, ESA can postpone proof of Mr. Davis' assets and issue expedited benefits.

7.2.5.2 Expedited Treatment of Income

ESA considers all income requirements, including deeming the income of ineligible household members, when determining benefits provided under expedited service.

While past income may be used to estimate future income, ESA uses only the income it can reasonably expect the household to receive in that month to determine benefits under expedited service.

Example

Dave Smith applies for SNAP for himself; his wife, Sally; and their 9-year-old son. They are screened as eligible for expedited service. Dave was steadily employed for two years but was recently laid off. He is actively applying for jobs and hoping to find a new job soon. Sally is currently employed part time.

During the interview, ESA needs to examine if Dave received any income during the month of application. If so, that income would be used to determine SNAP benefits for that month only and not included in the determination of future months' SNAP benefits. Sally's ongoing income would also be required to determine the household benefits under expedited service.

7.2.6 Expedited Certification Period

Households that are certified on an expedited basis and have provided all required verification prior to certification will be assigned normal certification periods. If verification was postponed, ESA may certify these households for the month of application (the month of application and the subsequent month for those households applying after the 15th of the month).

In all cases, the applicant's identity must be verified and an interview must be completed to receive expedited service. Identity must be verified through a collateral contact or readily available documentary evidence.

7.2.6.1 Postponed Verification

For households applying on or before the 15th of the month, ESA will assign a one-month certification period with the verification requirements postponed until the second month of participation. The Notice of Eligibility must explain that the household must satisfy all verification requirements that were postponed.

For households applying after the 15th of the month, ESA will assign a two-month certification period. The Notice of Eligibility must explain that the household is obligated to satisfy the verification requirements that were postponed.

7.2.6.2 Simultaneous Expedited Benefits

If a household applies for initial benefits on or after the 16th of the month and is eligible for expedited service, it will receive a combined prorated allotment for the month of application plus the next full month's allotment within the expedited timeframe.

Example

Ms. Brown applies for SNAP on October 18 and is eligible for expedited service. She provides proof of her identity but does not have verification of her income, and ESA is unable to contact her employer during the interview.

Ms. Brown is issued expedited benefits for the prorated portion of October and a full month's benefits for November. She is given a notice that this benefit will end on November 30 if she does not provide the required income verification.

7.2.6.3 Ongoing Benefits After Postponed Verification

Households that apply for SNAP prior to the 16th of the month and are eligible for expedited service receive benefits prorated from the date of application to the end of the month of application under the postponed verification requirements. ESA cannot issue benefits for the month after the month of application until the household provides all required verification.

Households that apply for SNAP on or after the 16th of the month and are eligible for expedited service receive benefits simultaneously for the month of application (prorated based on the date of application) and the following month. ESA cannot issue benefits for the third month until the household provides all required verification.

> **Example**
>
> Mr. Hamel applies for SNAP on October 18. He is eligible for expedited service. Mr. Hamel completes an interview on the same day. Mr. Hamel has verification of his identity but does not have all necessary verification for SNAP certification, including the income he will receive from the part-time job he just started.
>
> Mr. Hamel receives prorated SNAP for October and benefits for November. He is given a notice that his benefits will end on November 30 if he does not provide the required verification.

ESA must ensure all nonexempt household members are registered for work following appropriate procedures.

7.2.7 Denial of Expedited Service

If the household is not eligible for expedited processing, ESA will process the application under normal 30-day processing standards.

7.3 Delay in Processing

If ESA cannot make an eligibility determination within 30 days from the application date, ESA must determine the cause of the delay. Delays are either household-caused or Department-caused.

7.3.1 Reasons for Household-Caused Delays

- The household fails to complete the application form, and ESA has offered or attempted to offer assistance in completing the form.
- ESA does not have all verification needed to determine eligibility, and ESA completed the following actions:
  - Gave the household a Notice of Required Verification
  - Offered to assist the household in getting the required verification
  - Allowed the household at least 10 days from the date of request to provide the verification
- The household failed to appear for the first interview. ESA postponed the rescheduled interview at the household’s request or could not reschedule the interview until after the 20th day but before the 30th day from the date of application. The household did not appear for the interview and did not provide all needed verification by the 30th day.
- The household failed to appear for the first interview, failed to schedule a second interview, and/or the subsequent interview was postponed at the household’s request until after the 30th day following the date the application was filed.
- The household missed two scheduled interviews but later contacted ESA to reschedule an interview.

If ESA cannot take further action on the application by the 30th day as a result of household delays, the household loses eligibility for benefits for the month of application.

ESA sends the household a Notice of Denial informing the household that it has an additional 30 days to take the required action without filing another application. Benefits will begin from the date the household provides the required information if it is eligible.

If the household fails to take the required action within 60 days after the date of the application, ESA does not need to take any further action after sending the Notice of Denial.

7.3.2 Department-Caused Delays

Legal Authority
Errors discovered by the state agency (Federal): SNAP: 7 CFR § 273.17(b)

A Department-caused delay occurs when ESA fails to do the following:

- Offer or attempt to offer assistance in completing an incomplete application form.
- Provide a Notice of Required Verification.
- Offer assistance in obtaining required verification.
- Provide at least 10 days for the household to provide missing verification from the date of the original request.
- Schedule the required interview in a timely manner.
- Notify the household that it missed its scheduled interview and that the household is responsible for rescheduling it.
- Determine eligibility for the following:
  - Household's recertification timely enough to issue benefits by the household's next normal issuance when the household provided all required information in a timely manner
  - Household's initial certification timely enough to provide an EBT card and have benefits available within 30 days for standard processing and seven days for expedited service when the household completed all required actions timely

If ESA determines the household is eligible and ESA was at fault for the delay in the initial 30 days, ESA must immediately correct the error and approve the application.

ESA will notify a household by the 30th day after the application date if the application is being held pending. The notice informs the household of any action it must take to complete the application process. If ESA needs additional verification, it must allow the household 10 days from the date ESA requested the missing verification from the household.

If ESA is at fault for not completing the application process by the end of the second 30-day period and the case file is otherwise complete, ESA will continue to process the original application and determine eligibility for benefits. If the household is eligible and ESA was at fault for the delay in the initial 30 days, it will provide the household retroactive benefits from the month of application. ESA always provides lost benefits to the household that result from a Department-caused delay.

If ESA denies the application based on circumstances that changed since the original application date, ESA must inform the household that it may be eligible for benefits lost from ESA-caused delay.

If ESA is at fault for not completing the application process by the end of the second 30-day period (60 days or more), but the case file is not complete enough to reach an eligibility determination, ESA may continue to process the original application or deny the case and notify the household to file a new application. If the case is denied, the household should also be advised of its possible entitlement to benefits lost as a result of ESA-caused delay. If ESA were also at fault for the delay in the initial 30 days, the amount of benefits lost would be calculated from the month of application. However, if the household were at fault for the initial delay, the amount of benefits lost would be calculated from the month following the month of application. Retroactive SNAP and cash assistance program benefits can only be provided up to 12 months prior to the month when ESA discovers a loss of benefits a household was entitled to, had ESA processed the application timely.

Example

The Smith family submitted a combined application on February 4, 2021; however, ESA did not discover the application until April 15, 2022. On May 1, 2022, ESA finishes reviewing the original application and determines the Smith family is eligible for SNAP and TANF. The Smith family is eligible for benefits retroactive to April 15, 2021.

Chapter

8

Chapter 8. Nonfinancial Eligibility

8.1 Residency

Individuals must be a resident of the District of Columbia to be eligible for program benefits. However, no durational residency requirement may be imposed. An individual must not be denied program benefits because they do not reside in a permanent dwelling or do not have a fixed mailing address.

8.1.1 Determining Residency

To participate in SNAP, a household must be a resident of the District of Columbia (the household is not required to verify its address, only that it is a resident). No individual may participate as a member of more than one household, in any month, unless they reside in a shelter for individuals and children who are victims of domestic abuse. Those individuals may be included in more than one household if the individual was a member of a household containing the abuser. ESA will not consider persons in the state solely for vacation purposes as residents.

Individuals currently receiving SNAP benefits in another state may not simultaneously receive SNAP benefits in the District.

SNAP does not require that a household intend to remain in the District, nor does SNAP require any length of residence.

If residency is questionable for anyone reported in the household, ESA may request verification.

8.1.2 Temporary Absence

Temporary absence from the District with intent to return when the purposes of the absence have been accomplished does not interrupt continuity of residency unless another state has determined that the individual is a resident there.

A District resident who is absent from the District for a specified period of time or for a specific reason may be considered “temporarily absent” from the District and will retain residency during the temporary absence.

8.1.3 Residency of Students

Students wishing to file an application for benefits must live in the District of Columbia to be considered meeting residency requirements. This includes students who live in the District but are enrolled in and commute to an institution of higher education elsewhere. For SNAP, students who live and attend school in another state are temporarily eligible for benefits in the District when they return home to the District for breaks.

8.1.4 Temporary Residency

For SNAP, no durational residency requirements exist. Individuals who reside in the District temporarily, such as temporary workers or individuals who reside part of the year in the District, may potentially be eligible for SNAP during the time they are living in the District.

8.1.5 Individuals Experiencing Homelessness

Individuals experiencing homelessness who generally reside within the District borders are considered residents of the District. They are not required to provide a fixed mailing address to meet residency requirements or to receive benefits. However, they must provide a mailing address to receive notices from ESA about their benefits on their benefit application.

An individual experiencing homelessness is one who lacks a fixed and regular nighttime residence or whose primary nighttime residence is one of the following:

- A supervised publicly or privately operated shelter designed to provide temporary living accommodations
- An institution that provides a temporary residence for individuals intended to be institutionalized
- A temporary accommodation in another individual's residence for no more than 90 days
- A public or private place not designed for, or ordinarily used as, a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings, such as tents, boxes or alleys

8.1.6 Incarcerated Individuals

An inmate who is incarcerated in a federal facility outside the District of Columbia does not meet residency requirements and is ineligible.

8.1.7 Verification of Residency

Residency is a mandatory verification for SNAP prior to authorization of benefits, except if verification cannot be obtained because the customer is experiencing homelessness, is a migrant/seasonal farmworker or has other unusual circumstances. Verification for expedited SNAP processing may be postponed if existing documentation is not available. For categorically eligible households, residency is deemed and is not required to be verified.

8.1.7.1 When to Verify Residency

- **Initial:** Residency must be verified except if verification cannot be obtained because the customer is experiencing homelessness, is a migrant/seasonal farmworker or has other unusual circumstance. If verification, including use of a collateral contact, cannot be obtained due to homelessness, status as a migrant/seasonal farmworker or other unusual cases, self-attestation is sufficient. In these rare circumstances, the caseworker must document all efforts made to independently verify the customer's self-attestation of residency.
- **Mid-certification/interim contact:** ESA will not reverify unless it has information that indicates the customer may no longer be a District resident.
- **Recertification:** ESA will not reverify unless it has information that indicates the customer may no longer be a District resident.
- **Changes:** ESA will not reverify unless it has information that indicates the customer may no longer be a District resident.

Residency should not be reverified for the sole reason that the verification document used previously for residency verification has expired. For example, if a driver's license was used at initial application to verify residency and has expired at recertification, ESA cannot request that the customer reverify residency. The only time ESA should request reverification is if ESA has information that the customer is no longer residing in the District.

8.1.7.2 How to Verify Residency

Documentation used to verify other factors of eligibility, such as a rent receipt/agreement, mortgage payments, utility bill or current driver's license, must be used to the greatest extent practicable to verify a customer's residency claim prior to requesting separate verification of residency from the customer.

Prior to holding an application as pending for residency or temporarily approving SNAP on an expedited basis with postponed verification of residency (if applicable), ESA must:

- Check to ensure the household has not already submitted verification that can be used to verify residency. In most cases, documentation used to verify other factors of eligibility is acceptable to verify residency when the documentation indicates a District residence address or place of residency. This includes a recent utility bill, ID card, current rent agreement, written statement from a District shelter, etc.
- If the customer is currently certified for SNAP or cash assistance programs and District residency is verified for the other program, ESA must consider residency verified and document it in case notes. For example: "Residency verified because customer is currently participating in Medicaid and residency was verified for Medicaid on 11/15/2021 under IA# 999999."
- At initial and recertification, the Work Number must be checked for all adult household members.
  - If the Work Number results show an active employment status and the employee address is in the District, ESA will use this as verification of residency as long as the application also indicates the household resides in the District (the street addresses do not have to match).

- If the Work Number results show an active employment status but the employee address is not in the District and no other documentation exists to verify residency, ESA will hold the application as pending for proof of residency.
- The Work Number results must always be uploaded and correctly associated with the household in ESA's document system.

If residency cannot be verified through readily available documentation, ESA will hold the application as pending for proof of residency.

If the customer is unable to provide proof of residency, collateral contact with someone outside the household may be used. The collateral contact must be someone who is outside the household and can provide accurate and reliable information regarding the individual.

- The best collateral contacts would be from employers, landlords or homeless/social service agencies working with the individual.
- Documentation of the collateral contact must be in the case notes. For example:
  - "Customer unable to provide residency verification; SSR reached out to Jane Jones (202-555-5555) on 10/1/2021 at 4:30 pm from N Street Village who verified customer is staying at the N Street Village shelter"

If verification, including use of a collateral contact, cannot be obtained due to homelessness, migrant/seasonal farmworker status or other unusual cases, self-attestation is sufficient. In these rare circumstances, ESA must document all efforts made to independently verify the customer's self-attestation of residency.

8.1.8 Change in Residency

If the applicant has moved from another state and indicates that they did not receive, or did not redeem, benefits from the other state in that month, ESA may accept their declaration, request verification from the other state and issue benefits for the month of application if the household is otherwise eligible.

If the applicant acknowledges receiving benefits, the application may be used to establish eligibility for the first month for which benefits were not received from the other state.

Assistance must terminate at the end of the month in which an individual moves to another state.

Legal Authority
Residency (Federal): SNAP: 7 CFR § 273.3, 7 CFR § 273.2(f)(1)(vi)

8.2 Social Security Numbers

ESA requires that households participating in SNAP must:

- Furnish an SSN for each member seeking SNAP benefits.
- Apply for a number if an SSN has not been issued or is not known and furnish the number when it is received from SSA.

SSNs must be **verified** by ESA with SSA through the appropriate SSA interface. ESA must notify the household that the collection of the SSN is used for the following:

- SSN will be used to verify the accuracy of household information by conducting computer matches with other agencies using IEVS and through DOES.
- The SSN may be disclosed to law enforcement officials for the purpose of apprehending persons fleeing from the law.
- The SSN may be referred to other agencies in an attempt to collect any claims against the household.
- Providing the SSN is voluntary. However, failure to provide, without good cause, will result in the denial of SNAP benefits to each household member failing to provide an SSN.

An individual with more than one SSN must reveal all numbers. ESA must record and document each number provided.

Legal Authority
Social Security number (Federal): SNAP: 7 CFR § 273.6, 7 CFR § 273.2(f)(1)(v)

8.2.1 Obtaining SSNs for Households

Individuals must apply for an SSN with SSA. ESA will assist as needed in completing the application for an SSN. ESA will inform the household where to apply and how to submit an application for an SSN. ESA will advise the household member that proof of the application from SSA will be required to prove that the individual has applied for an SSN.

8.2.2 SSN Exceptions and Good Cause

A household member who has not complied with SSN requirements may be allowed to continue to participate if good cause exists, as determined by ESA. The good cause determination must be noted in the case record.

An example of a good cause reason for failing to provide an SSN is that the individual cannot apply for an SSN because they cannot secure a needed out-of-state birth certificate. Good cause for not complying in a timely fashion does not include delays due to illness, lack of transportation or temporary absences.

- ESA must advise the household that an SSN or proof of application for an SSN must be provided for each member prior to certification.
- A newborn may be added to an open case without provision of an SSN or proof of application for an SSN.
  - If the household cannot provide proof of application for an SSN for a newborn, the household must provide the SSN or proof of application at the household's next recertification or within six months following the month the baby is born, whichever is later.
  - If the household is unable to provide an SSN or proof of application for an SSN at its next recertification within six months following the baby's birth, ESA will review to determine whether the household has good cause for failing to provide the SSN.

SNAP households eligible for expedited service are not required to provide or apply for an SSN prior to receiving their initial benefit. They must do so prior to the issuance of benefits following the issuance of expedited benefits.

- When a household is not eligible for expedited SNAP service and good cause exists for not applying for or providing an SSN, the person is allowed to participate for the month of application and one additional month. Good cause must be shown monthly thereafter. If necessary, ESA will help an individual apply for an SSN.

8.3 Identity

Identity is a mandatory verification for SNAP, including for expedited SNAP, and cash assistance programs. Identity must be verified for the head of the household and authorized representative, if applicable, prior to authorization of benefits. Once identity has been verified, it is considered permanently verified and ESA cannot ask to reverify the information. This means:

- ESA cannot authorize benefits for any program, including expedited SNAP, until identity is verified.
- ESA cannot ask a customer to reverify their identity.
  - If identity was previously verified and ESA later has reason to believe the verification provided was falsified, ESA must submit an Unusual Incidents Report Form for investigation through the DHS OPRMI.

8.3.1 When to Verify Identity

- **Initial:** The identity of the person making the application (head of household) must be verified. When an authorized representative applies on behalf of a household, the identity of **both** the head of household and the authorized representative must be verified.
- **Mid-certification/interim contact:** Do not reverify unless there is a new head of household or authorized representative and their identity has not been previously verified.
- **Recertification:** Do not reverify unless there is a new head of household or authorized representative and their identity has not been previously verified.

- **Changes:** Do not reverify unless the change is for a new head of household or authorized representative and their identity has not been previously verified.

8.3.2 How to Verify Identity

Identity may be verified through readily available documentation. If documentation is not available, a collateral contact outside the household can be used.

- Prior to holding an application as pending for identity verification, ESA must check for readily available documentation that can be used to verify identity:
  - Ensure the household has not already submitted verification.
  - If the customer participated (or is currently participating) in SNAP, cash assistance programs or Medicaid in the last **36 months** and identity was verified **and** proof of identity can be located in DIMS (even if the proof has expired) or through a case narrative if verified via a collateral contact, consider identity verified and document in case notes. For example: "Identity verified through prior participation in SNAP; DC driver's license in DIMS from 9/2020."
- If identity cannot be verified through readily available documentation, hold the application as pending for proof of identity.
- If the customer is unable to provide proof of identity, a collateral contact with someone outside the household may be used. The collateral contact must be someone outside the household who can provide accurate and reliable information regarding the individual.
  - The best collateral contacts are employers, landlords or homeless/social service agencies working with the individual.
  - Documentation of the collateral contact must be included in the case notes. For example: "Customer unable to provide identity verification; SSR reached out to Samia Jones (202-555-5555) on 10/1/2021 at 4:30 pm from N Street Village who verified customer's identity."

Legal Authority

Identity (Federal): SNAP: 7 CFR § 273.2(f)(1)(vii)

8.4 Students

Students who are enrolled at least half time in an institution of higher education must meet certain requirements to be eligible for SNAP. An institution of higher education is any institution that normally requires a high school diploma or equivalent for enrollment and includes colleges, universities and vocational or technical schools above the high school level.

8.4.1 Student Exemptions for SNAP

Students enrolled at least half time in an institution of higher education are not eligible for SNAP unless they meet at least one of the following criteria:

- Are under age 18 or over age 49
- Are physically or mentally unfit
- Currently receive TANF benefits
- Are employed and paid for at least 20 hours per week, including internships and apprenticeships
- Currently participate in their employer's on-the-job training program (for the period of time being trained)
- Are self-employed for a minimum of 20 hours per week and paid the equivalent of working at least 20 hours per week at the federal minimum hourly wage
- Participate in a state or federally financed work study program
- Are responsible for the care of a dependent household member under age 6
- Are responsible for the care of a dependent household member ages 6 through 11 when adequate childcare is not available to attend both class and work
- Are a single parent attending an institution of higher education full time with responsibility for a dependent child under age 12
  - This applies in those situations where only one natural, adoptive or stepparent (regardless of marital status) is in the same SNAP household as the child.
  - If no natural, adoptive or stepparent is in the same SNAP household as the child, another full-time student in the same SNAP household as the child may qualify for eligible student status if they have parental control over the child and are not living with their spouse.
- Are assigned to an institution of higher education through a program under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), the Trade Adjustment Assistance or SNAP E&T or as the result of participation in a TANF work program. These programs are:
  - Program under the Job Training Partnership Act of 1974, currently known as WIOA
  - A program under section 236 of the Trade Act of 1974
  - An employment and training program where one or more of the components of such program are at least equivalent to an acceptable SNAP E&T component
  - An employment and training program under 7 CFR § 273.7, subject to the condition that the course or program of study, as determined by the State agency:

- Is part of a program of career and technical education, as defined in section 3 of the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act of 2006 (20 USC 2302), designed to be completed in no more than four years at an institution of higher education, as defined in section 102 of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 USC 2296) or
- Is limited to remedial courses, basic adult education, literacy or English as a second language

For state or federal work study, the exemption begins the date the person is approved for work study or the beginning of the school year, whichever is later, and continues over the period the work study is intended to cover unless the student rejects or refuses a work study assignment.

8.4.1.1 Clarifying Information

The enrollment status of a student begins on the first day of the school term and continues through normal periods of class attendance, vacation and recess unless the student graduates, is suspended or expelled, drops out or does not intend to register for the next school term, excluding summer school.

If a person is enrolled in a postsecondary program that includes both a classroom and a training component, the person is not considered a student when participating in the training component.

When the person is only attending classes, they are considered a student and are ineligible for the program unless they meet one of the criteria that makes them an eligible student.

Dormitories are considered institutions if they provide students the majority of their meals, and the dormitory is not authorized to accept EBT cards. Residents of institutions are not eligible for SNAP. See ***Section 2.5, Persons Living in an Institution***.

Example

If the dormitory has separate room and board contracts and the student only enters into a “room” contract, the student would not be considered a resident of an institution.

Legal Authority

SNAP student status (Federal): 7 CFR § 273.5; 29 USC § 3101, *et seq.*; 19 USC § 2296, *et seq.*

8.5 Fleeing Felons, Probation and Parole Violators and Certain Convicted Criminals

People who are fleeing to avoid prosecution or custody for a crime, or an attempt to commit a crime classified as a felony (or a high misdemeanor in the state of New Jersey), are not eligible for TANF or SNAP. Individuals who violate a condition of probation or parole under a federal or state law are also not eligible for benefits.

8.5.1 Fleeing Felons

For ESA to consider a person fleeing a felony, the following four conditions must be met:

- There must be an outstanding felony warrant for the individual by a federal, state or local law enforcement agency, and the underlying cause for the warrant must be for committing or attempting to commit a crime that is a felony under the law of the place from which the individual is fleeing or a high misdemeanor under the law of New Jersey.
- The individual must be aware of, or should reasonably have been able to expect, that the felony warrant has already or would be issued.
- The individual has taken some action to avoid being arrested or jailed.
- The federal, state or local law enforcement agency is actively seeking the individual. ESA determines that a federal, state or local law enforcement agency is actively seeking an individual if the law enforcement agency does one of the following:
  - Informs ESA that it intends to enforce an outstanding felony warrant or arrest an individual for a probation or parole violation within 20 days of submitting a request for information about the individual to the state agency
  - Presents ESA with a felony arrest warrant to obtain information on the location of and other information about the individual named in the warrant, and the warrant identifies one of the following National Crime Information Center Uniform Offense Classification Codes:
    - Escape (4901)
    - Flight to Avoid (prosecution, confinement, etc.) (4902)
    - Flight-Escape (4999)
  - States that it intends to enforce an outstanding felony warrant or arrest an individual for a probation or parole violation within 30 days of the date of a request from a state agency about a specific outstanding felony warrant or probation or parole violation

8.5.2 Probation and Parole Violators

An individual determined to be a probation or parole violator is not considered eligible for SNAP.

For an individual to be determined a probation or parole violator, an impartial party, as designated by ESA, must determine that the individual violated a condition of their probation or parole.

8.5.3 Response Time

ESA allows law enforcement agencies 20 days to respond to a request for information about the conditions of a felony warrant or a probation or parole violation and whether the law enforcement agency intends to actively pursue the individual.

- If the law enforcement agency does not state that it plans to enforce the felony warrant or arrest the individual for the probation or parole violation within 30 days of the date of ESA's request for information about the warrant, ESA determines that the individual is not a fleeing felon or a probation or parole violator and documents this in the case record.
- If the law enforcement agency states that it plans to enforce the felony warrant or arrest the individual for the probation or parole violation within 30 days of the date of ESA's request for information, ESA must postpone taking any action on the case until the 30-day period has expired.
- Once the 30-day period has expired, ESA must verify with the law enforcement agency whether it has attempted to execute the felony warrant or arrest the probation or parole violator.
  - If the agency has attempted to execute the warrant or make an arrest, ESA must deny the application or terminate benefits for the participant who is considered a fleeing felon or a probation or parole violator.
  - If the agency has not taken any action within 30 days, ESA does not consider the individual a fleeing felon or probation or parole violator. ESA should document this information in the case record and take no further action.

8.5.4 Application Processing While Awaiting Verification

ESA must continue to process the application while waiting for proof of fleeing felon or probation or parole violator status from law enforcement.

ESA must process the application without considering the fleeing felon or probation or parole violator status if waiting for the proof would cause the application to be processed untimely.

8.5.5 Certain Convicted Felons

The following individuals are not eligible for SNAP:

- The individual who, as an adult, is convicted of:
  - Federal aggravated sexual abuse
  - Murder
  - Sexual exploitation and abuse of children
  - Sexual assault
- The individual who is not complying with their sentence terms

These disqualifications do not apply to convictions for conduct occurring on or before February 7, 2014.

Legal Authority

Action on households with special circumstances (Federal): SNAP: 7 CFR § 273.11(c)(1), 7 CFR § 273.11(n), 7 CFR § 273.11(s); SNAP: 18 USC §§ 2241, 1111, 2251; 34 USC § 12291, *et seq.*

8.6 Citizenship and Noncitizenship

To be eligible for SNAP, individuals must be either a US citizen or a noncitizen in one of three categories. Nationals of Puerto Rico, Guam, US Virgin Islands, Northern Mariana Islands, American Samoa or Swain's Island are considered equivalent to US citizenship. See ***Table 25.5.c, SNAP Immigrant Eligibility Decision Guide***.

Noncitizens eligible for SNAP must also meet other requirements, including income and resource limits.

8.6.1 Noncitizens Eligible for SNAP

The categories of noncitizens outlined in ***Table 8.6.1.a, Qualified Noncitizens by Immigration Category*** can be determined eligible for SNAP. Some of them will be subject to a five (5) year waiting period.

Table 8.6.1.a. SNAP Eligible Noncitizens by Immigration Category

Noncitizen Category	Description
Lawful permanent resident (LPR)	Person granted LPR status (green card holders)
~~Refugee~~	~~Person admitted as a refugee~~
~~Persons with Special Immigrant Visas (SIVs) from Iraq or Afghanistan~~	~~US granted SIV status to certain Iraqi and Afghan translators and interpreters~~
~~Asylee~~	~~Person granted asylum under the Immigration and Nationality Act (INA)~~
~~Deportation or removal withheld~~	~~Deportation is being withheld under section 243(h) of the INA as in effect before April 1, 1997, or withholding of removal under section 241(b)(3)(B) of the INA~~
~~Parolee for a year or more~~	~~Person who has been paroled into the US for at least one year~~
Cuban and Haitian entrant	Person paroled into the US as a Cuban or Haitian entrant or any other national from Cuba or Haiti who is the subject of exclusion or removal proceedings or who has an application for asylum pending
~~Battered noncitizens~~	~~Person battered or subjected to extreme cruelty in the US; under certain circumstances, a battered noncitizen's spouse or child, noncitizen parent of a battered child or a noncitizen child of a battered parent with a petition pending~~
Citizens of nations under Compacts of Free Association agreements who have been admitted under those agreements	Citizens of Palau, Micronesia and the Marshall Islands

Noncitizen Category	Description
~~Conditional entrants~~	~~Granted conditional entry under section 203(a)(7) of the INA as in effect before April 1, 1980~~

- ~~Victims of a severe form of trafficking in persons and some of their family members~~

8.6.1.1 Ineligible Noncitizens

The following noncitizens are ineligible for SNAP benefits:

- Noncitizens who are lawfully present in the US in a nonqualified status, such as students and H-1B visa workers
- Refugee
- Persons with Special Immigrant Visas (SIVs) from Iraq or Afghanistan
- Asylee
- Persons whose deportation or removal is being withheld
- Battered noncitizens
- Conditional entrants
- Victims of a severe form of trafficking in persons and some of their family members
- Certain Native Americans
- Certain Hmong or Highland Laotian tribal members and their surviving spouses
- Undocumented noncitizens (e.g. individuals who entered the country as temporary residents and overstayed their visas or who entered without a visa)
- Individuals granted Temporary Protected Status (TPS) are permitted to remain temporarily in the US because their home nation is suffering under armed conflict, environmental disaster or other extraordinary or temporary conditions. Any noncitizens granted TPS, unless in some other qualifying status, are not eligible to receive SNAP benefits. For example, this exclusion applies to Haitian nationals granted TPS unless they otherwise meet the definition of a Cuban or Haitian entrant under Section 501(e) of the Refugee Education and Assistance Act of 1980
- Most individuals present in the US with a U visa

Legal Authority

Citizenship and alien status (Federal): SNAP: 7 USC § 2015(f), 7 CFR § 273.4(a), 8 USC § 1641(b), 8 USC § 1612(a)(1)

8.6.2 Lawful Permanent Residents (LPRs) and Conditional Requirements

To be eligible for SNAP, some lawful permanent residents (LPRs) need to wait five (5) years. They do not need to wait five (5) years if they meet one of the conditional requirements below:

- **Five years of residence:** LPR who has lived in the US as a qualified noncitizen for five years or more from the date of entry.
- **Forty qualifying work quarters:** LPR with credit for 40 qualifying work quarters.
- **Children under 18:** any LPR under 18 who lawfully resides in the US.
- **Blind or disabled:** blind or disabled LPR receiving benefits or assistance for their condition, regardless of entry date.
- **Older individual born on or before August 22, 1931, who lawfully resided in the US on August 22, 1996:** LPR who was age 65 or older and lawfully resided in the US on August 22, 1996.
- **Military connection:** an LPR who is lawfully residing in a state and is on active duty in the military (excluding National Guard) or is an honorably discharged veteran whose discharge is not because of immigration status (includes spouse, surviving spouse if not married and unmarried dependent children) a discharge of "under honorable conditions," which is different from an honorable discharge, does not meet this requirement.
- **Adjusted from status not subject to 5-year bar:** LPR who adjusted to that status from an immigration category that is not subject to the five (5) year waiting period.

8.6.2.1 Five-Year Residency Requirement

Residing in the US for five years or more is one of the conditional requirements an LPR may fulfill to become eligible to receive SNAP.

The five years in qualified status may be either consecutive or nonconsecutive. Temporary absences of less than six months from the US with no intention of abandoning US residency do not terminate or interrupt the individual's period of US residency. If the resident is absent for more than six months, ESA will presume that US residency was interrupted unless the noncitizen presents evidence of their intent to resume US residency. In determining whether a noncitizen with an interrupted period of US residency has resided in the US for five years, ESA will consider all months of residency in the US, including any months of residency before the interruption.

LPRs who adjusted status from certain other immigration categories, are eligible to receive SNAP benefits and are not subject to the requirement to be in a qualified status for five years in the US. LPRs who adjusted from one of these statuses are exempt from the five-year residency requirement:

- Amerasians
- Cuban or Haitian entrants
- Native Americans born abroad
- Hmong/Laotian individuals
- Individuals part of the Compacts of Free Association
- Refugee
- Asylee
- Deportation withheld

- Iraqi and Afghan special immigrants
- Certain Afghan Nationals Granted Parole Between July 31, 2021, and Sept. 30, 2023
- Certain Ukrainian Nationals Granted Parole Between Feb. 24, 2022, and Sept. 30, 2024
- Victims of Severe Trafficking

LPRs who meet one of the following conditions are also exempt from the five (5) year waiting period:

- aged 18 or older with 40 qualifying work quarters
- Blind or disabled individuals
- Children
- Age 65 or older and lawfully resided in the US on August 22, 1996
- Military connection

Legal Authority

Citizenship and alien status (Federal): SNAP: 7 USC § 2015(f); 8 USC § 1612(a)(1); *Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) Provisions of the One Big Beautiful Bill – Alien SNAP Eligibility – Question and Answer #1 REVISED*, dated December 9, 2025, *available at:* https://www.fns.usda.gov/snap/obbb-alien-eligibility-qas1

8.6.2.2 Forty Qualifying Work Quarters Requirement

Normally, an LPR must have a specific entry status~~—such as refugee or asylee—~~or meet other conditions to be eligible earlier than five years from the date they resided in the US as a qualified noncitizen. Sponsored immigrants must also have a portion of their sponsor's income and assets deemed to them if certain conditions are not met.

If an LPR can be credited with 40 qualifying quarters (10 years) of work in the US:

- They can receive SNAP even before they have met the five-year period as a qualified noncitizen
- Sponsored immigrants are exempt from having their sponsor's income and assets deemed to them when determining eligibility for benefits.

8.6.2.2.1 Qualifying Quarters or Quarters of Coverage

"Qualifying quarter" or "quarter of coverage" is a term from the SSA that is used to determine whether an individual has worked enough to qualify for Social Security, also referred to as "Social Security credit."

An individual can earn up to four qualifying quarters per year based on their earnings. SSA sets the minimum earnings for a qualifying quarter of work in each year. See ***Table 25.4, Minimum Earnings for SSA Qualifying Quarters for Work by Year***.

Legal Authority

Alien eligibility (Federal): SNAP: 7 CFR § 273.2(f)(1)(ii)(B)

Household members meeting citizenship or alien status requirements (Federal): SNAP: 7 CFR § 273.4(a)(6)(ii)(A)

~~8.6.3 Victims of a Severe Form of Trafficking and Battered Noncitizens~~

~~Individuals identified as victims of specific violent acts such as battery, extreme cruelty or human trafficking qualify for SNAP benefits. These vulnerable noncitizens receive special exemptions from the standard restrictions on noncitizens' SNAP eligibility.~~

~~8.6.3.1 Victims of a Severe Form of Trafficking~~

~~The following noncitizens who have been subjected to a severe form of trafficking may be eligible to participate in SNAP:~~

- ~~A noncitizen who has been subjected to a severe form of trafficking in persons and who is certified by DHHS, to the same extent as a noncitizen who is admitted to the US as a refugee under Section 207 of the INA~~
- ~~A noncitizen who has been subjected to a severe form of trafficking in persons and who is under age 18, to the same extent as a noncitizen who is admitted to the US as a refugee under Section 207 of the INA~~
- ~~The spouse, child, parent or unmarried minor sibling of a noncitizen who is a victim of a severe form of trafficking in persons under age 21 and who has received a derivative T visa, to the same extent as a noncitizen admitted to the US as a refugee under Section 207 of the INA~~
- ~~The spouse or child of a noncitizen who is a victim of a severe form of trafficking in persons aged 21 or older and who has received a derivative T visa, to the same extent as a noncitizen who is admitted to the US as a refugee~~

~~Under federal law, a "severe form of trafficking" has the following categories and meanings:~~

- ~~**Sex trafficking:** When someone recruits, harbors, transports, provides, solicits, patronizes or obtains a person for the purpose of a commercial sex act, where the commercial sex act is induced by force, fraud or coercion, or the person being induced to perform such act is under age 18~~
- ~~**Labor trafficking:** When someone recruits, harbors, transports, provides or obtains a person for labor or services through the use of force, fraud or coercion for the purpose of involuntary servitude, peonage, debt bondage or slavery~~

~~8.6.3.1.1 Determining if an Immigrant Is a Victim of a Severe Form of Trafficking~~

~~Noncitizens who have been subjected to a severe form of trafficking in persons may be eligible for SNAP benefits and services under the Trafficking Victims Protection Act of 2000. The US Department of Homeland Security notifies the DHHS Administration for Children and Families when the agency receives a report of this nature. The Administration for Children and Families then issues a Certification Letter granting the person continued presence or T visa or noting that a bona fide T visa application has not been denied.~~

~~Persons who have applied for a T visa may also receive a Certification Letter from DHHS Office of Refugee Resettlement.~~

~~Child victims of trafficking (under age 18) do not need to be certified to receive benefits and services. The Office of Refugee Resettlement will instead issue a letter stating that a child is a victim of a severe form of trafficking and is eligible for benefits and services.~~

~~8.6.3.2 Battered Noncitizens~~

~~Noncitizens who have been subjected to battery or extreme cruelty in the US by a family member with whom they reside may be eligible to participate in SNAP.~~

~~8.6.3.2.1 Qualified Status for Battered Noncitizens~~

~~A noncitizen who is battered is an eligible noncitizen when they have proof of the battering and meet the following conditions:~~

- ~~The noncitizen must have one of the following:~~
  - ~~Form I-130 (Petition for Alien Relative) filed by their spouse or parent~~
  - ~~Form I-130 petition filed as a widow(er) of a US citizen~~
  - ~~Approved self-petition under the Violence Against Women Act or a pending self-petition under the Act with a notice of prima facie determination (including those filed by a parent)~~
  - ~~Application for cancellation of removal or suspension of deportation filed as a victim of domestic violence~~
- ~~The noncitizen, the noncitizen's child or the noncitizen child's parent has been abused in the US under any of the following circumstances:~~
  - ~~The noncitizen has been battered or subjected to extreme cruelty in the US by a spouse or parent of the noncitizen or by a member of the spouse's or parent's family residing in the same household if the spouse or parent consents to or acquiesces in the battery and cruelty~~
  - ~~The noncitizen's child has been battered or subjected to extreme cruelty in the US by a spouse or parent of the noncitizen or by a member of the spouse's or parent's family residing in the same household if the spouse or parent consents to or acquiesces in the battery or cruelty, and the noncitizen did not actively participate in the battery or cruelty~~
  - ~~The parent of a noncitizen child has been battered or subjected to extreme cruelty in the US by the parent's spouse or by a member of the spouse's family residing in the same household as the parent if the spouse consents to or acquiesces in such battery or cruelty~~
- ~~There is a substantial connection between the battery or extreme cruelty and the need for SNAP benefits.~~
- ~~The battered noncitizen, child or parent no longer resides in the same household as the abuser.~~
- ~~The noncitizen meets one of the following conditions:~~
  - ~~Has resided as a qualified noncitizen in the US for five years~~
  - ~~Was born on or before August 22, 1931, and was lawfully residing in the US on August 22, 1996~~
  - ~~Is a child under age 18~~

- ~~Is disabled, as defined by 7 USC 2012(j)~~
- ~~Is a veteran or active duty personnel~~
- ~~Is lawfully residing in the US in accordance with section 141 of the Compacts of Free Association between the government of the United States and the governments of the Federated States of Micronesia, the Republic of the Marshall Islands and the Republic of Palau~~
- ~~Meets the exceptions for certain Hmong and Highland Laotians~~
- ~~Meets the exception for certain Native Americans~~

~~*8.6.3.3 U Visa*~~

~~Individuals with U visas, including minor children under age 18, are ineligible for SNAP because they have temporary status and are not considered qualified noncitizens. However, if the individual adjusts to qualified noncitizen status, such as LPR or battered noncitizen status, the individual could potentially be eligible to receive SNAP.~~

8.6.3 Verification of Noncitizenship Status

ESA must verify eligible immigration status of all noncitizen household members applying for SNAP. For acceptable verification of noncitizenship status, see ***Section 5.4.2, Noncitizenship***.

SAVE is a system operated by the US Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) to electronically verify immigration status. ESA uses SAVE to verify the initial documentation of immigration status received from the household (see ***Section 5.4.2.1, SAVE***, for additional information on this process). If a noncitizen does not want ESA to contact USCIS to verify their status, ESA must give the household the option to withdraw the application or participate without the noncitizen member.

SNAP regulations require State application forms to provide a statement allowing applicants to attest, under penalties of perjury, to the citizenship status of the members applying for benefits. This attestation of US citizenship is generally sufficient for SNAP purposes unless questionable.

If a household member is unable or unwilling to provide documentation of immigration status for themselves or for any household member, ESA must take the following actions:

- Show that person and/or the household member as an ineligible noncitizen.
- Stop efforts to obtain such documentation.

Legal Authority

Reporting illegal aliens (Federal): SNAP: 7 CFR § 273.4(b)(2)

Verification (Federal): SNAP: 7 CFR § 273.2(f)(1)(ii), § 273.2(f)(2)(i)-(ii), § 273.2(f)(10)

8.6.4 Sponsored Noncitizens

A sponsored noncitizen is anyone for whom an individual (the sponsor) has signed an I-864 Affidavit of Support, on behalf of the noncitizen. This form is signed as a condition of the noncitizen's entry into the US.

One condition regarding sponsors is that ESA must deem a portion of the sponsor's income and assets to certain noncitizens when determining eligibility and benefit level for the household.

Legal Authority
Sponsor deeming (Federal): SNAP: 7 USC § 2014(i), 7 CFR § 273.4(c)

8.6.4.1 Who Is Subject to Deeming

Two groups of noncitizens have sponsors who have signed a legally binding I-864 Affidavit of Support, where ESA must deem income and assets of the sponsor to the noncitizen's household:

- Noncitizens, including immediate relatives, family preference immigrants and some orphans, must submit an I-864 when the immigrant files a visa application or applies for an adjustment to LPR status on or after December 19, 1997.
- An employment-based noncitizen who is coming to work for a relative or a company in which they own at least five percent must file an I-864.

Requests to verify whether a noncitizen has a sponsor who signed an I-864, Affidavit of Support, are completed through the SAVE process (see ***Section 5.4.2.1, SAVE***, for additional information).

8.6.4.2 Exceptions to Deeming

The following noncitizens are not subject to deeming:

- Children under age 18 regardless of when they entered the US
- Battered spouses, parents or children
- Noncitizens without sponsors
- Noncitizens whose sponsor has not signed a legally binding Affidavit of Support
- Sponsor in same SNAP household
- Indigent noncitizens
- Ineligible members
- Sponsor that is an organization or a group

8.6.4.2.1 Indigent Noncitizens

An indigent noncitizen immigrant is an LPR whose sponsor signed an I-864, but the sponsored immigrant would be unable to obtain food and shelter without ESA benefits considering the immigrant's own income plus any cash, food, housing or other assistance provided by other individuals, including the sponsor.

An immigrant is considered indigent if they are unable to obtain food and shelter, and the sum of the immigrant household's income and any cash or in-kind assistance provided by the sponsor or others is at or below 130 percent of the federal poverty level based on the household size.

If an immigrant is declared indigent, ESA must count the amount of support provided by the sponsor to the household each month. Each indigence determination is effective for 12 months and may be renewed for additional 12-month periods.

- If the household's income is at or below 130 percent of the federal poverty level, it may qualify for an indigent exemption.
- Prior to determining an immigrant as indigent, ESA must explain the purpose of the determination to the immigrant and/or authorized representative and provide them the opportunity to refuse the determination.
- If the household refuses the determination, ESA will not complete the determination and will deem the sponsor's income and resources to the immigrant's household accordingly.

8.6.4.4 Sponsor Liability

Sponsors who signed legally binding I-864, Affidavits of Support, are liable for the value of the means-tested benefits received by the sponsored noncitizen if those benefits were received during the period of time the affidavit is in effect.

An affidavit of support remains in effect until one of the following events occurs:

- Sponsored noncitizen becomes a naturalized citizen.
- Sponsored noncitizen can be credited with 40 qualifying quarters of work.
- Sponsored noncitizen permanently leaves the US.
- Sponsored noncitizen obtains, in removal proceedings, a new grant of adjustment of status as relief from removal.
- Sponsor or sponsored noncitizen dies.

8.6.4.5 Deemed Income From a Sponsor

The portion of the monthly income of the sponsor(s) that will be deemed as unearned income to the sponsored noncitizen adult(s) will be calculated as follows:

- Add the sponsor's and spouse's countable earned income.
- Subtract 20 percent from the monthly gross earned income.
- Add countable unearned income.
- Subtract the 130 percent federal poverty level (see ***Table 25.3.a, SNAP Monthly Income Eligibility Standards***) for the sponsor's family size, including their spouse and any other

individual who is claimed or could be claimed by the sponsor(s) as a dependent for federal income tax purposes.

- Divide the result by the number of sponsored noncitizens.
- Multiply the result by the number of sponsored noncitizen adults applying for SNAP benefits.

The result of this calculation is the sponsors' deemed income amount.

8.6.4.6 Deemed Assets From a Sponsor

The assets of a sponsor(s) that will be deemed to the noncitizen are calculated as follows:

- Add the sponsor's countable assets together.
- Subtract $1,500 from the result.
- Divide by the number of sponsored noncitizens.
- Multiply the result by the number of sponsored noncitizen adults applying for SNAP benefits.

The result of this calculation is the sponsor's deemed asset amount.

8.6.4.7 Request for Reimbursement

ESA must request reimbursement from sponsors who have signed the I-864 for the value of any benefits received by the sponsored noncitizen during the period the affidavit is in effect. It is not required to pursue legal action, however, if the amount of the liability is not paid.

ESA must notify households that contain noncitizens who are subject to deeming that the noncitizen's sponsor may be liable for the amount of benefits the sponsored noncitizen receives while the affidavit of support is in effect.

ESA cannot request reimbursement from the sponsor for any period that the sponsor received SNAP. If the sponsor stops receiving SNAP, the sponsor is still not liable for the benefits received by the sponsored noncitizen during the period the sponsor also received SNAP.

8.6.5 Determining Whether an LPR Entered the US on or Before August 22, 1996

Some LPRs are eligible for benefits without waiting five years only if they entered the US before August 22, 1996.

To determine whether the LPR entered the US before August 22, 1996, ESA must review immigration documents and printouts obtained through SAVE (see ***Section 5.4.2.1, SAVE***). If these documents do not indicate whether the noncitizen entered before August 22, 1996, ESA must request the individual to provide additional documentation that can establish whether they were physically present in the country on or before August 22, 1996.

8.6.5.1 Methods of Determining Date of Entry

Several types of documentation can demonstrate that an individual entered the country on or before August 22, 1996:

- Immigration documents
- Date of entry in the SAVE system
- Additional documentation provided by the noncitizen
    - Cancelled checks or bank statements from a period before August 22, 1996
    - A rent receipt, lease, mortgage or other document showing that the individual maintained a residence in the US on or before August 22, 1996
    - A written statement from an employer, landlord or social service agency describing the relationship the customer had with the statement writer on or before August 22, 1996
    - Driver's license issued on or before August 22, 1996
    - Written documentation (including a letter from the principal, report card and so on) from a school showing that a member of the family attended the school on or before August 22, 1996
    - Other reasonable evidence that shows the immigrant lived in the US on or before August 22, 1996

8.6.5.2 Determining Continuous Presence

Some people, such as those on tourist visas, may have entered the country on or before August 22, 1996, but they were not continuously present in the US.

An LPR who did not obtain their qualified status on or before August 22, 1996, and traveled to and from the US but did not establish a continuous presence until after August 22, 1996, is not eligible for benefits on the basis of having entered the US on or before August 22, 1996.

To determine whether an individual was continuously present in the US on or before August 22, 1996, ESA will follow these steps:

1. Determine the latest date the person entered the country on or before August 22, 1996.
2. Determine whether the noncitizen had a single absence from the US of more than 30 days between the date of latest entry on or before August 22, 1996, and the date the individual became a qualified noncitizen. If there is any absence of more than 30 days, ESA does not consider the individual as having entered the US on or before August 22, 1996, when determining eligibility.
3. Determine whether the noncitizen's combined absences from the US total more than 90 days between the last date of entry before 1996 and the date they became a qualified noncitizen. If there were more than 90 days of absence in this period, they are usually not considered to have entered the US on or before August 22, 1996.

Note: If the noncitizen can show they resided in the US on or before August 22, 1996, and has a legitimate reason for the absences in steps 2 and 3, such as caring for an ill family member in the individual's country of origin, ESA must request a review of the case by the Office of the Administrator to determine whether they should be considered continuously present on or before August 22, 1996.

8.6.5.3 Length of Absence

If the immigrant has a passport that shows that they left and reentered the US after August 22, 1996, ESA can use the date stamps on the passport to determine whether the individual was continuously present in the US.

It may be difficult to verify periods of absence from the US if an immigrant does not have a passport. Accept the customer's written statement of the amount of time they were absent from the US between the latest date of entry on or before August 22, 1996, and the date they obtained qualified status.

Legal Authority

Citizenship and alien status (Federal): SNAP: 8 USC §§ 1611-1615, 7 USC § 2015(f), 7 CFR § 273.4

Guidance: Department of Justice Interim Guidance on Verification of Citizenship, Qualified Alien Status and Eligibility under Title IV of PRWORA (AG Order No. 2129-97); Guidelines for Making Determinations Using SSA's Quarters of Coverage History System, June 1998, Social Security Administration

8.7 Disability

Throughout this section, the term "disabled" refers to people who are unable to work due to a mental or physical disability or blindness.

The SNAP program considers a person disabled if they receive cash or medical benefits based on disability criteria used by the SSA or VA. A customer is disabled for purposes of the SNAP program eligibility if they receive any of the following benefits:

- SSI
- SSDI disability, blindness or disability retirement payments
- Federal- or state-administered supplemental benefits
- Total disability payments from the VA
- A VA designation of in need of regular aid and attendance or permanently housebound under Title 38 of the USC
- VA payment for permanently disabled surviving spouse or child of a veteran
- Railroad Retirement Act disability payment
- State-funded interim assistance pending the receipt of SSI; in the District, this program is called Interim Disability Assistance (IDA)
- Medicaid based on SSA disability criteria

For exemption from the SNAP General Work Requirements (see ***Chapter 9, SNAP Work Requirements***), the definition of disability is:

- An individual who is physically or mentally unfit when they have an illness, injury or incapacitation
  - This must be verified by providing the SNAP Work Requirements Medical Report Form, signed and dated by the client and an allowable professional or other proof of medical condition.

Legal Authority
Disability and blindness (Federal): SNAP: 7 USC § 2012(j), 7 CFR § 271.2

Chapter

9

Chapter 9. SNAP Work Requirements

SNAP has two sets of work requirements:

- **General Work Requirements (GWRs)**: Requires customers subject to the GWRs to register for work, accept a suitable job if offered, and not voluntarily quit a job or reduce work hours below 30 hours.
  - Applies to SNAP household members between the ages of **16 and 59** who do not meet an exemption
- **Able-Bodied Adults without Dependents Work Requirement (ABWR)**: Requires customers subject to the ABWR to work or participate in a qualifying work activity for a minimum of 20 hours per week, averaged monthly, or participate in SNAP E&T workfare for a minimum number of hours equal to the household's SNAP allotment divided by the District's minimum wage.
  - Applies to customers between the ages of **18 and 64** who are not exempt from the GWRs and do not meet an ABWR exemption.

As customers who are exempt from the GWRs are also exempt from the ABWR, it is important to properly screen SNAP customers for GWR exemptions prior to screening the customer for ABWR exemptions. If a customer qualifies for more than one exemption, ESA must apply the exemption that will last the longest.

For more comprehensive policy on the SNAP work requirements, see ESA's SNAP Work Requirements Handbook.

9.1 General Work Requirements (GWRs)

As a condition of eligibility, SNAP household members between the ages of 16 and 59 who do not qualify for an exemption must meet the GWRs. Failure to comply with the GWRs without good cause will result in disqualification from SNAP.

9.1.1 Work Registration Requirements

ESA registers SNAP household members between the ages of 16 and 59 for work at the time of application and every 12 months as a condition of eligibility, unless they are exempt. Work registrants must:

- Be registered for work by ESA at application and every 12 months after initial registration.
- Provide ESA with sufficient employment status or availability for work when requested.
- Accept a genuine offer of suitable employment.
- Report to an employer to whom ESA has made a referral as suitable employment.
- Not voluntarily reduce work hours to less than 30 hours a week without good cause.
- Not voluntarily quit, without good cause, a job that provided more than 30 hours of work a week or provided weekly earnings of at least the federal minimum wage multiplied by 30 hours.

ESA registers a person for work by recording work registration in the customer's case record. If a customer refuses to allow ESA to register them for work without good cause, they will be disqualified from SNAP.

A striker who applies for assistance and whose household is eligible for SNAP must be registered for work unless they were exempt from work registration on the day of application.

9.1.2 General Work Requirement Exemptions

SNAP customers who meet one of the criteria in Table 3 are exempted from the GWRs. Verification necessary for a particular exemption, if any, is noted for each criterion. Some of the verification of exemptions in **Error! Reference source not found.** are part of the normal verification procedures at application and recertification. This is noted, where appropriate, and SSRs should follow existing verification procedures.

ESA must screen each household member between the ages of 16 and 64 for GWR and ABAWD exemptions at initial application and recertification (see ***Section 9.3, Work Requirements Screening***).

Table 9.1.2.a. GWR Exemptions

Exemption Criteria	When to Apply	Verification
Younger than age 16 or age 60 or older[1]	Customer is: • younger than age 16 ***or*** • age 60 or older	**Age/Date of Birth:** Normal verification procedures at certification and recertification. Verify if questionable.
Age 16 or 17 and not head of household	Customer is: • age 16 or 17 **and** • not head of household	**Age/Date of Birth:** Normal verification procedures at certification and recertification for age or date of birth. Verify if questionable. **Household Composition:** Normal verification procedures at certification and recertification. Verify, if questionable, to determine the head of household.
Age 16 or 17 and attending school or enrolled in an employment and training program	Customer is: • age 16 or 17 **and** • attending school on at least a half-time basis ***or*** • is enrolled in an employment and training program on at least a half-time basis (employment and training program is not limited to SNAP E&T)	**Age/Date of Birth:** Normal verification procedures at certification and recertification. Verify if questionable. **Educational Verification:** Normal verification procedures at certification and recertification. Verify if questionable. **Employment, Training Programs**: • *SNAP Verification of Employment or Qualifying Work Activity Form* signed and dated by customer and program provider, **OR**

[1] Age is not technically considered an exemption for the GWR. Instead, the GWRs only apply to customers aged 16 through 59. See 7 USC § 2015(d)(1)(A) and (d)(2).

		• Other documentary evidence/written statement from program
Physically or mentally unfit for employment	Customer has: • an illness, • injury, or • incapacitation	Recipient of the following District-funded benefits:[2] • Program on Work, Employment, and Responsibility (POWER) • Interim Disability Assistance (IDA) or on the IDA waitlist *SNAP Work Requirements Medical Report* signed and dated by an allowable professional (***Section 9.1.2.1, SNAP Work Requirements Medical Form – Allowable Professionals***) and client, **OR** other proof of medical condition
[34] (second or third trimester)	Customer is: • pregnant in their second or third trimester	• *SNAP Work Requirements Medical Report* signed and dated by an allowable professional (***Section 9.1.2.1, SNAP Work Requirements Medical Form – Allowable Professionals***) and client, **OR** • Other proof of pregnancy
Complying with TANF Work Requirements	Customer is: • complying with the TANF work requirements	Verification of complying with TANF work requirements is part of the TANF case management procedures. This information shall be used to determine if the customer is exempt.
Caretaker of child under age 6	Customer is: • responsible for the care of a dependent child under age 6, even if the dependent child does not live in the same household	**Household Composition and Age/Date of Birth:** Normal verification procedures at certification and recertification for a child under 6 living in the SNAP household.

[2] Recipients of the District's POWER and IDA benefits have undergone a determination by a medical professional that a physical or mental barrier exists that prevents them from working and/or participating in TANF. For POWER, see DC Official Code § 4-205.72, § 4-205.7,4 and 29 DCMR § 5829. For IDA, see DC Official Code § 4–204.07.

[4] Under 7 CFR § 273.7(b)(1)(ii), states may define physical and mental fitness using criteria no more restrictive than those in the TANF program. Because the District's TANF program exempts pregnancy in the second or third trimester (29 DCMR § 5809.4(j)), the District includes the same exemption for SNAP GWR, with similar verification requirements.

	This includes: • a non-custodial parent who is responsible for the care of a dependent child under age 6 • a parent with joint custody of a dependent child under age 6 • any other household member who is responsible for the care of a dependent child under age 6	**For a child not living in the SNAP household**: • Completed *SNAP Work Requirements Screening Form* If questionable: • Request verification, such as a signed statement from another family member or collateral contact.
Caretaker of an incapacitated person	Customer is: • responsible for the care of an incapacitated person, even if the incapacitated person does not live in the same household	**For an incapacitated person who is a member of the SNAP household[5] and is receiving Social Security Disability benefits**: Normal verification procedures through data match with the Social Security Administration (SSA) or a document from SSA verifying receipt of benefits. **For no SSA disability benefits**: • *SNAP Work Requirements Medical Report* signed and dated by a physician or licensed or certified psychologist and the customer, **OR** • Other verification provided by a physician or licensed or certified psychologist **For an incapacitated person who is NOT a member of the SNAP household**: • Completed *SNAP Work Requirements Screening Form* If questionable: • Request verification, such as, but not limited to, a court-ordered appointment of guardianship, a signed statement from the incapacitated person or family member, or collateral contact.

[5] 7 CFR § 273.7(a)(3) requires exemption verification procedures that are not less restrictive than TANF. 29 DCMR § 5809.4(i) requires medical verification by a physician or licensed or certified psychologist of the incapacitated household member. Note, the same level of verification is not required if the incapacitated person is not living in the SNAP household.

Applicant for or receiving Unemployment Compensation	Customer is: • an Unemployment Compensation applicant or recipient and complying with application/recipient work requirements	• Unemployment Compensation Interface/Data Match • Completed *SNAP Work Requirements Screening Form* If questionable: • Contact DOES or request verification from customer

Participating regularly in a substance abuse treatment and rehabilitation program	Customer:
	• attests to participation in Alcoholics, Narcotics, or other substance abuse Anonymous Meetings, or
	• receives ongoing services from a substance use disorder (SUD) provider in the District as certified by a program official, or
	• receives Recovery Support Services (RSS) through the District's Department of Behavioral Health as certified by a program official, or
	• participates in a program for the treatment of substance abuse as certified by a program official, including, but not limited to:
	  ○ Rehabilitation programs or centers
	  ○ Recovery clinics, programs, or centers
	  ○ Long- or short-term residential treatment
	  ○ Therapeutic community (TC)
	  ○ Inpatient treatment
	  ○ Outpatient treatment programs
	  ○ Individualized or group drug counseling
		Alcoholics, narcotics, or other substance abuse anonymous meetings
		• Completed *SNAP Work Requirements Screening Form*
		All Other:
		• *SNAP Work Requirements Medical Report* signed and dated by an allowable professional (***Section 9.1.2.1, SNAP Work Requirements Medical Form – Allowable Professionals***) and customer, **OR**
		• Other verification provided by an allowable professional

Employed 30 hours per week	Customer is: • employed or self-employed and working at least 30 hours per week, averaged monthly • migrant or seasonal farm worker under contract/agreement to begin employment within 30 days and contract/agreement provides 30 hours of work per week, averaged monthly	**Earned Income:** Normal verification procedures provided the customer's income verification provides a means to identify the number of hours worked: • Number of hours worked is provided on verification • Hourly rate is provided on verification (divide the gross income by the hourly rate to obtain hours)

		If the customer's income verification does not provide a way to determine the number of hours worked, request documentary evidence of hours worked such as, but not limited to: • *SNAP Verification of Employment or Qualifying Work Activity Form* signed and dated by the customer and employer • Signed statement from employer with number of hours worked Collateral contact by the SSR with the employer is acceptable to verify hours worked. For self-employment income verification that does not provide a way to determine the number of hours worked, request a client statement documenting that the volume of work claimed justifies a determination that the self-employment is at least a 30 hours per/week job for the purpose of this exemption. **Migrant/Seasonal farm worker**: contract or agreement indicating weekly hours
Earning[6] a weekly wage equivalent to the federal minimum wage multiplied by 30 hours	Customer is: • receiving weekly earnings equal to or greater than the federal minimum wage multiplied by 30, averaged monthly • migrant or seasonal farm worker under contract/agreement to begin employment within 30 days and contract/agreement provides weekly earnings equal to or greater than the federal minimum wage multiplied by 30, averaged monthly	**Earned Income:** Normal verification procedures provided the customer's income verification identifies earnings equal to or greater than the federal minimum wage multiplied by 30 (averaged monthly), regardless of actual hours worked. **Migrant/Seasonal farm worker**: Contract or agreement indicating weekly earnings
Student at least half time	Customer is:	**Educational Verification:** Normal verification procedures at

[6] Earning means working for pay. The cash value of in-kind work cannot be counted as earnings per FNS' response to DC's *General Work Requirements Exemptions* question in the May 15, 2020, "ABAWD Questions for FNS – Set 2 – Jan 2020 FNS partial response."

	• enrolled at least half time in any recognized school, including high school, a training program, or an institution of higher education. To be eligible for SNAP, the client must meet the student status requirements (see ***Section 8.5, Students*** in ESA's SNAP Policy Manual).	certification and recertification. Verify if questionable.
Refugee Training Program Participant[7]	Customer is: • a participant in a federally recognized refugee training program at least half time. **Note**: Receipt of Refugee Cash Assistance (RCA) does **not** mean the customer is a participant in a refugee training program at least half time	• *SNAP Verification of Employment or Qualifying Work Activity Form* signed and date by the customer and employer, • Other documentary evidence/written statement from program, **OR** • Collateral contact with the program administrator to verify the customer's participation

Verification of exemption status is considered **optional** verification. This means a household cannot be denied SNAP solely because it does not provide verification of an exemption. However, if verification is required and not provided, ESA will determine the customer does not qualify for that exemption and will not apply it.

Certain GWR exemptions **must always be verified** because they are linked to other mandatory verification requirements. These include:

- Working 30 hours per week or earning a weekly wage equivalent to the federal minimum wage multiplied by 30 hours, which affects the household's earned income
- Receipt of unemployment compensation, which affects the household's unearned income (verification should first be attempted by data match)
- Student at least half-time, which may affect eligibility as the student must meet the student status requirements (see ***Section 5.10, Student Status and Exemption Verification***, and ***Section 8.5, Students***)

9.1.2.1 SNAP Work Requirements Medical Form – Allowable Professionals

[7] See U.S. Department of Health & Human Services Administration for Children and Families' Office of Refugee Resettlement joint policy letter with USDA-FNS ***#16-07***, July 15, 2016.

If the customer is requested to submit a SNAP Work Requirements Medical Form to verify an exemption, the following is a list that includes but is not limited to allowable professionals[8] who may sign the form.

- Physician or Assistant
- Designated Representative of the Physician's Office
- Nurse
- Nurse Practitioner
- Osteopath
- Psychologist
- Drug and Alcohol Abuse Counselor or Designee
- Mental Health Counselor
- Social Worker
- Homeless Outreach Case Manager
- Midwife
- Podiatrist
- Audiologist
- Physical Therapist
- Occupational Therapist
- Optometrist
- Vocational Rehabilitation Program Counselor or Designee

9.1.2.1 Physically or Mentally Unfit

ESA's definition of physically and mentally unfit is when a customer has an illness, injury or incapacitation. Households claiming this exemption must provide appropriate documentation that contains proof of the medical condition. It must be signed and dated by one of the following allowable professionals:

- Physician or assistant
- Designated representative of the physician's office
- Nurse
- Nurse practitioner

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[8] 7 CFR § 273.7(a)(3) requires exemption verification procedures that are not less restrictive than TANF. 29 DCMR § 5809.4(f) requires competent medical evidence (or other sound basis) to verify an exemption. As 29 DCMR § 5809.4(f) does not limit the professionals who may provide the competent medical evidence, this list outlines professionals who may provide such evidence for the purposes of SNAP work requirement exemptions.

- Osteopath
- Psychologist
- Drug and alcohol abuse counselor or designee
- Mental health counselor
- Social worker
- Homeless outreach case manager
- Midwife
- Podiatrist
- Audiologist
- Physical therapist
- Occupational therapist
- Optometrist
- Vocational rehabilitation program counselor or designee

9.1.3 SNAP Recipient Work Requirements

Individuals who are not exempt must be registered for work by ESA and meet the following SNAP work requirements:

- Be registered for work by ESA at application and every 12 months after initial registration.
- Provide ESA with sufficient employment status or availability for work when requested.
- Accept a genuine offer of suitable employment.
- Report to an employer to whom ESA has made a referral as suitable employment.
- Not voluntarily reduce work hours to less than 30 hours a week without good cause.
- Not voluntarily quit, without good cause, a job that provided more than 30 hours of work a week or provided weekly earnings of at least the federal minimum wage multiplied by 30 hours.

If an individual claims to be exempt from work requirements due to employment or **self-employment** of at least 30 hours per week, verification of the amount of income received from employment is sufficient to establish the exemption if the income appears consistent with employment for at least 30 hours a week at the federal minimum wage. ESA will also not request additional verification if regular earned income verification procedures show the number of hours worked or show both the gross pay and the hourly rate, which can be used to determine the number of hours. If earned income verification does not provide a way to determine the number of hours worked, ESA will request additional verification, such as a signed employer statement or SNAP Verification of Employment or Qualifying Work Activity Form.

If a self-employed individual does not meet this exemption, they must cooperate with ESA in establishing that the income received from the self-employment enterprise is at least sufficient to be considered suitable employment (see ***Section 9.1.3.5, Suitable Employment***). It must be determined whether the employed or self-employed individual is working at least 30 hours per week or earning at least 30 times the District's minimum wage per week.

When determining whether an individual meets the criteria for exemption from work requirements, ESA may request additional documentation when it is unavailable through regular verification procedures performed as part of the certification or recertification process. For example, if questionable, ESA may request verification of the following:

- School enrollment, participation in an employment and training program or participation in a refugee training program: In this instance, the household can provide proof by completing the SNAP Verification of Employment or Qualifying Work Activity Form or by providing other documentary evidence. Verification of compliance with TANF work requirements is provided through TANF case management procedures.
- When the SSR can visually see that a person is incapacitated, the SSR can determine the individual is exempt from work registration and not required to be referred to work registration. If this is not evident or the disability is not able to be verified though data match information, ESA will request proof with the use of the SNAP Work Requirement Medical Form.
- Employment hours or earnings, if not obtainable through normal verification procedures, including for migrant or seasonal farmworkers: ESA will verify a weekly wage equivalent to the federal minimum wage multiplied by 30 hours through another acceptable source.
- Application for Unemployment Compensation, if not available through the Unemployment Compensation interface, or if questionable: A more detailed table is available in the SNAP Work Requirements Handbook.

9.1.3.1 Providing Employment Information

If ESA requests information on employment status from a nonexempt household member, the customer must provide this information to meet the work requirements.

9.1.3.2 Accepting Suitable Employment

If a customer is offered employment that ESA considers suitable employment (see ***Section 9.1.3.5, Suitable Employment***) and the offer is for a wage equal to or greater than the District's minimum wage at the time of the employment offer, the customer must accept the offer in order to meet SNAP work requirements.

If a customer refuses an offer of suitable employment at a wage of the District's minimum wage or greater and does not have good cause, ESA will sanction them for failing to meet work requirements.

9.1.3.3 Voluntary Quit or Reduction of Work Hours

9.1.3.3.1 Voluntary Quit

ESA considers a customer to have voluntarily quit a job in the following situations:

- The customer quit a job where they were working at least 30 hours a week or receiving earnings of at least 30 hours multiplied by the current federal minimum wage.

- The customer does not have good cause for quitting.

ESA will send a Notice of Adverse Action within 10 days of determining a customer has voluntarily quit without good cause and disqualify them as described in the ***Section 9.1.3, SNAP Recipient Work Requirements***.

ESA does not disqualify a person for a voluntary quit in the following situations:

- The customer **was exempt from work registration** (unless the exemption was based on working 30 hours or more or earning a weekly wage equal to the federal minimum wage multiplied by 30 hours).
- The employment involved was less than 30 hours per week and did not provide weekly earnings that were at least equivalent to the federal minimum wage multiplied by 30 hours.
- The customer quit their job more than 60 days before they applied for SNAP.
- The customer resigned from a job at the demand of the employer.
- The customer terminated a self-employment enterprise.
- The customer had good cause for quitting.

If a customer quits a job, secures new employment at comparable wages or hours and is then laid off or loses the job through no fault of their own, ESA does not use the earlier quit to disqualify the customer.

If a customer is an employee of the federal, state or local government and participates in a strike against their employer and is dismissed from their job for participating in the strike, ESA considers this a voluntary quit without good cause.

9.1.3.3.2 Reduction of Work Hours

If a customer voluntarily reduces their work hours to less than 30 hours per week without good cause, they will be disqualified from SNAP for a disqualification period as described in ***Section 9.1.3, SNAP Recipient Work Requirements***. ESA will send a Notice of Adverse Action within 10 days of determining that a customer voluntarily reduced their work hours without good cause.

ESA does not disqualify a customer for reduction of work hours in the following situations:

- The customer was **exempt from work registration** when they reduced their work hours (unless the exemption was based on working 30 hours or more or earning a weekly wage equal to the federal minimum wage multiplied by 30 hours).
- The customer was employed less than 30 hours per week before the reduction of hours.
- The customer still earns wages that are more than the federal minimum wage multiplied by 30 hours even with the reduced hours.
- The customer reduced their work hours more than 60 days before they applied for SNAP.
- The customer had good cause for reducing their work hours.

Minor variations in the number of hours worked or in weekly compensation are inevitable and are not considered a voluntary reduction in work hours without good cause.

9.1.3.3.3 Voluntary Quit or Reduction of Work Hours at Application

For applicant households, when a nonexempt household member is unemployed and has voluntarily quit a job or reduced work hours **without good cause** within the 60 days before application, the individual is ineligible to participate in SNAP for the disqualification period as described in ***Section 9.1.3, SNAP Recipient Work Requirements***.

If an applicant household member subject to the work requirements voluntarily quits or reduces their work hours **without good cause** after the date of application but before certification, the applicant is ineligible for the duration of the disqualification period as described in ***Section 9.1.3, SNAP Recipient Work Requirements***.

If ESA receives information about the applicant's income that shows a reduction in income, such as pay stubs from the last 30 days with a reduction in work hours, ESA will determine whether the applicant voluntarily quit or reduced work hours.

If the applicant voluntarily quit or reduced work hours **without good cause,** ESA will disqualify the customer for a disqualification period as described in ***Section 9.1.3, SNAP Recipient Work Requirements***.

Example

Mr. Wright applies for SNAP on January 1 as a single household. Mr. Wright is not exempt from work registration or SNAP work requirements.

As part of the income verification process, Mr. Wright provides weekly pay stubs covering the 30 days prior to application. The first two pay stubs indicate Mr. Wright is working 30 hours a week at minimum wage. The last two pay stubs indicate Mr. Wright is only working 20 hours per week at minimum wage.

The last two pay stubs show a reduction in work hours to less than 30 hours a week. Mr. Wright may have voluntarily reduced his work hours without good cause within 60 days prior to the application.

First, the SSR determines if the current weekly wage is less than the federal minimum wage multiplied by 30 for the last two pay stubs. If so, the SSR reviews the circumstances to determine whether Mr. Wright had good cause for his reduction in work hours. During the interview, the SSR explores why Mr. Wright's hours were reduced. Mr. Wright indicates his employer cut hours because the holiday season had ended. The SSR contacts Mr. Wright's employer to verify the reason for the reduction in hours. In this situation, the reduction in hours was employer-caused because the holiday season had ended. Mr. Wright did not voluntarily reduce his hours and had good cause for the reduction in work hours in the 60 days prior to the application. The SSR does not apply a sanction to Mr. Wright's benefits.

If an applicant is part of a multiperson household, the disqualified applicant is considered an ineligible household member. The disqualification starts when ESA determines eligibility for the remaining household members.

9.1.3.3.4 Voluntary Quit or Reduction of Work Hours for Ongoing Households

If ESA determines that a customer has voluntarily quit a job or reduced work hours **without good cause** while receiving SNAP, the person will be ineligible to participate in SNAP for the disqualification period as described in ***Section 9.1.3, SNAP Recipient Work Requirements***, after ESA sends a Notice of Adverse Action for the disqualification.

If a nonexempt adult in the SNAP household fails to meet SNAP work requirements, ESA will determine whether they had good cause for not meeting these requirements. Good cause reasons include the following:

- Personal illness
- Illness of another household member that requires the customer to be there or provide care
- Lack of adequate childcare for children who are at least age 6 but under age 12
- Lack of available transportation
- A household emergency such as a death in the family
- The job meets the definition of unsuitable employment

ESA must verify circumstances that show good cause for not meeting work requirements.

9.1.3.4 Good Cause for Leaving Employment

Individuals have good cause for leaving employment if they meet one of the good cause reasons described in ***Section 9.1.3.3.4, Voluntary Quit or Reduction of Work Hours for Ongoing Households***, or any of the following criteria:

- Discrimination by an employer based on age, race, sex, color, disability, religious beliefs, national origin, political beliefs or any other traits protected under the DC Human Rights Act of 1977, as amended, and Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended
- Work demands or conditions that make continued employment unreasonable, such as working without being paid on schedule
- Acceptance of employment by the customer or enrollment by the customer in a recognized school, training program or institution of higher education on at least a half-time basis that requires the individual to leave employment
- Resignations by persons under age 60, which the employer recognizes as retirement
- Employment that becomes unsuitable (see ***Section 9.1.3.5, Suitable Employment***) after the customer accepted the employment

- Acceptance of a bona fide offer of employment of more than 30 hours a week that, for reasons beyond the customer's control, does not materialize or ends up providing less than 30 hours of work a week
- Acceptance of a bona fide offer of employment with weekly earnings of at least the federal minimum wage multiplied by 30 hours that, for reasons beyond the customer's control, does not materialize or ends up providing earnings of less than the federal minimum wage multiplied by 30 hours
- Leaving a job in connection with patterns of employment where workers frequently move from one employer to another, such as migrant farm labor or construction work
  - There may be some circumstances where households will apply for SNAP benefits between jobs, particularly in cases where work may not yet be available at the new job site.
  - Even though employment at the new site has not started, ESA considers a customer quitting the previous job as a part of the pattern of this type of employment as having good cause.

9.1.3.5 Suitable Employment

If a household member voluntarily quits a job or refuses a job that ESA considers unsuitable employment, they will not lose SNAP eligibility for doing so.

ESA considers employment unsuitable if it meets any of the following criteria:

- The wage offered is less than the District's minimum wage.
- Employment is offered on a piece-rate basis, and the average hourly wage the employee can reasonably expect to earn is less than the District's minimum wage.
- The household member is required to join, resign from or refrain from joining a legitimate labor organization to be hired or to continue working.
- The work offered is at a site subject to a strike or lockout at the time of the offer, unless one of the following has occurred:
  - A judge has enjoined the strike under section 208 of the Labor-Management Relations Act (Taft-Hartley).
  - A judge has issued an injunction under section 10 of the Railway Labor Act.
- The job has an unreasonable risk to health and safety.
- The member is physically or mentally unfit to perform the work, as documented by medical evidence or reliable information from other sources.
- The employment offered within the first 30 days of work registration is not in the household member's field of experience.
- The place of employment is an unreasonable distance from the person's home based on the expected wage and the time and cost of commuting:
  - Daily commute time must not exceed two hours per day, not including transportation of a child to and from the childcare facility.

  - Employment is not considered suitable if the distance to the place of employment prevents walking to the job site and both public and private transportation are unavailable to get to the job site.

- Working hours or the nature of employment interferes with the member's religious observance, convictions or beliefs.
- Employment, an offer of employment or activity discriminates based on one of the protected traits under the DC Human Rights Act.
- Accepting work may result in domestic violence.

Example

Mr. Taylor is a Sabbatarian and refuses to work on Saturday. His religious observance will not affect his eligibility, and he is not required to accept a job with Saturday hours.

9.1.3.6 SNAP Disqualification for Failure to Meet Work Requirements

If a nonexempt individual member of the household subject to SNAP General Work Requirements (GWR) fails to meet the work requirements without good cause, they are ineligible for SNAP until one of the following dates, whichever is later:

- ESA determines they have complied with work requirements.
- They have completed the appropriate disqualification period (see ***Table 9.1.3.6, Disqualification Periods per Violations***).

Table 9.1.3.6. Disqualification Periods per Violation

Violation	Disqualification Period
First	Two months
Second	Three months
Third and subsequent violations	Six months

For a disqualified individual to be compliant, they must meet the GWRs. In most cases, after the disqualification period has ended, the individual will reapply or be added back into the household, at which time ESA will register them for work. If the individual did not voluntarily quit or reduce their work hours within 60 days prior to reapplying or being added back into the household, they will be compliant with the GWRs by just being registered for work.

If the noncompliant individual is found to be exempt during their disqualification period, the disqualification sanction may be lifted.

9.1.3.6.1 Disqualification for One-Person Households

When a one-person SNAP household fails to comply with the GWRs, the SNAP case will close when the individual is disqualified. The individual must reapply for SNAP to begin receiving benefits again. They may become eligible:

- After the disqualification period has ended or the individual is complying with the GWRs, whichever is later
- When the individual is found exempt from the GWRs

If otherwise eligible, benefits will begin effective on the date of reapplication.

9.1.3.6.2 Disqualification for Multiperson Households

If the case is not closed because the noncompliant individual is part of a multiperson SNAP household, ESA will add the disqualified individual back into the SNAP household:

- When the disqualification period ends or the individual becomes compliant with the GWRs, whichever is later
- The month after the individual is found exempt from the GWRs

The disqualified individual is considered an ineligible household member. This means all otherwise countable income and assets of the disqualified individual are considered available to the remaining SNAP household and the remaining household receives its full deductions with the exception of the standard deduction, which is tied to household size. The size of the household is reduced when determining benefit level, standard deduction amount, income eligibility standards and asset eligibility standards.

The disqualification sanction is tied to the individual customer and makes the customer an ineligible household member. This means that if any customer who failed to comply with the GWRs joins another SNAP household, the customer will remain ineligible for the remainder of their disqualification period.

9.1.3.6.3 Disqualification Notification Requirements

A customer who fails to comply with the GWRs without good cause will be disqualified. Prior to disqualification, ESA must notify the customer.

9.1.3.6.3.1 Notification to Determine Good Cause

Upon determining an individual failed to comply with the GWR, ESA must determine if good cause exists. If the information to establish good cause requires contact with the customer, ESA must send a Request for Contact (if the information was received during the certification period) or a Request for Verification (at initial application or certification) requesting the individual contact ESA within 10 days to provide documentary evidence to establish good cause.

If the individual contacts ESA within 10 days and ESA determines good cause exists, ESA will record the good cause in the individual’s records.

If the individual contacts ESA within 10 days and ESA determines good cause does not exist or the individual fails to contact ESA within 10 days, ESA will send a Notice of Adverse Action.

9.1.3.6.3.2 Notification for Failing to Comply Without Good Cause

Upon determining that noncompliance with the GWRs has occurred without good cause, ESA will provide the household with a Notice of Adverse Action within 10 days. The Notice of Adverse Action will be specific to the individual and explain in easily understandable language:

- The proposed action
- The particular act of noncompliance committed that is the reason for the proposed action
- That the customer may reapply, if appropriate, at the end of the disqualification period and be determined eligible if in compliance with the GWRs
- The proposed disqualification period
- The specific action(s) that must be taken to avoid disqualification
- The telephone number of the SNAP office (toll-free number or a number where collect calls will be accepted for households outside the local calling area)
- The name of the person to contact for additional information, if possible
- The right to request a fair hearing
- The availability of continued benefits
- The liability of the household for any overissuances received while awaiting a fair hearing if the hearing official's decision is adverse to the household
- The availability of any individual or organization that provides free legal representation
- Citations to specific laws and regulations supporting the adverse action

The Notice of Adverse Action must be sent even if the case was closed for other reasons. If the case was closed for other reasons and the household reapplies within the disqualification period, the disqualification will be imposed.

The start date of the disqualification period will begin the first month following 15 days from the date the adverse action notice was sent unless a fair hearing is requested.

Legal Authority

SNAP General Work Requirements (Federal): 7 USC § 2015(d), 7 CFR § 273.7 and § 273.13

TANF work requirements set a floor for some SNAP work requirements (District): DC Official Code §§ 4-205.19c, 19e, 19f, 19g and § 4-205.42; 29 DCMR §§ 5809.4 and 5810

9.2 ABAWD Work Requirement and Time Limit

As a condition of eligibility, SNAP household members between the ages of 18 and 64 who do not qualify for an exemption are subject to the ABAWD work requirement (ABAWD work requirements) and time limits. These customers must meet the ABAWD work requirements to receive SNAP benefits for more than 3 months in a 36-month (3-year) period (time limits). A large majority of these customers must also meet the GWRs in ***Section 9.1, General Work Requirements (GWRs)***.

For more detailed policy, please refer to the latest version of ESA's SNAP Work Requirements Handbook.

9.2.1 ABAWD Work Requirements

All SNAP household members subject to the ABAWD work requirements who do not qualify for an exemption must meet **one** of the following work requirements each month to continue receiving SNAP benefits for more than 3 months in a 36-month period.

- **Working** at least 20 hours per week, averaged monthly, or 80 hours a month. Work can be for pay, for goods or services (for something other than money), unpaid, or as a volunteer (see *Section 3.2.1, Working 20 hours Per Week/80 Hours a Month* in ESA's SNAP Work Requirements Handbook for more information).
- Participating in a **qualifying work activity** at least 80 hours a month. A qualifying work activity could be SNAP Employment and Training (E&T) or another federal, state, or local work program (see *Section 3.2.2, Participating in a Qualifying Work Activity* in ESA's SNAP Work Requirements Handbook for more information).
- Participating in a **combination of work and qualifying work activity** for a total number of hours of at least 80 hours a month (see *Section 3.2.3, Participating in a Combination of Work and Qualifying Work Activities* in ESA's SNAP Work Requirements Handbook for more information).
- Participating in the District's SNAP E&T **workfare (SNAP Volunteer Program)** at a not-for-profit organization for a minimum number of hours each month where the minimum number of hours are equal to the household's monthly benefit divided by the District's minimum wage (see *Section 3.2.4, Participating in Workfare* – SNAP Volunteer Program in SNAP E&T in ESA's SNAP Work Requirements Handbook for more information).
  - **Note**: A customer **cannot** combine workfare hours with hours earned from working or participating in a qualifying work activity to meet the 20 hours per week, averaged monthly, or 80 hours a month, work requirement.

Customers who are not exempt and are subject to the ABAWD work requirements and meeting the ABAWD work requirements must provide verification at initial application and recertification. See ***Section 5.11, ABAWD Verification***.

9.2.2 ABAWD Exemptions

SNAP customers who are exempt from the GWRs (see ***Section 9.1.2, General Work Requirement Exemptions***) are not subject to the ABAWD work requirements. Additionally, SNAP customers that meet one of the criteria in Table 9.2.2.a. are exempted from the ABAWD work requirements. Some verifications for an exemption are part of the normal verification procedures at application and recertification, while other exemptions allow for self-attestation, unless questionable.

ESA must screen each household member between the ages of 16 and 64 for GWR and ABAWD exemptions at initial application and recertification (see ***Section 9.3, Work Requirements Screening***).

For exemptions that allow self-attestation, a completed *SNAP Work Requirements Screening Form* is acceptable if it contains the customer's signature. A written and signed declaration from the customer is also acceptable.

Table 9.2.2.a. ABWR Exemptions

Exemption Criteria	When to Apply	Verification
Younger than age 18 or age 65 or older	Customer is: • younger than age 18 ***or*** • age 65 or older	**Age/Date of Birth:** Normal verification procedures at certification and recertification. Verify if questionable.

Facing physical or mental barriers to employment: *temporary or permanent disability benefits from a governmental or private source*	Customer is receiving:
	• temporary or permanent disability benefits from a government or private source, which includes, but is not limited to:
	  ○ Worker's compensation
	  ○ Veteran disability benefits/compensation based on **any** rating
	  ○ Short-term disability insurance (e.g., Aflac, Colonial, etc.)
	  ○ Supplemental Social Security (SSI) Benefits
	  ○ Other Social Security Administration (SSA) disability-related benefits
	  ○ Participating in Vocational Rehabilitation Programs/Services through the District's Department of Disability Services or the US Department of Veteran Affairs
		Data match, if available, OR written verification (copy of award letter/benefits letter/copy of benefits check)
		
		District-Provided Disability Benefits: known to the state agency; request verification if questionable.
		
		Vocational Rehabilitation Program/Services: completed *SNAP Work Requirements Medical Report*

Facing physical or mental barriers to employment: *evidenced by an allowable professional*	Customer is: • Facing temporary or permanent physical, mental, or medical barriers to employment, including substance dependence disorders, based on the certification of an appropriate professional	*SNAP Work Requirements Medical Report* signed and dated by an allowable professional (***Section 9.1.2.1, SNAP Work Requirements Medical Form – Allowable Professionals***) and client, OR other documentary evidence from an allowable professional including evidence that individual is on a waitlist for a substance addiction or treatment program

Facing physical or mental barriers to employment: *obvious as determined by the State Agency*	Customer is: • Chronically homeless based on responses to questions on the SNAP *Work Requirements Screening Form* or receipt of Permanent Supportive Household or Targeted Affordable Housing • Fleeing domestic violence • On a waitlist for a substance addiction or treatment program	**Chronically Homeless**: Completed *SNAP Work Requirements Screening Form* or written and signed declaration from the customer If questionable: • Documentation of receipt of Permanent Supportive Household or Targeted Affordable Housing, or documentation from a homeless service provider **Fleeing Domestic Violence**: Self-attestation on the application or recertification form, a written and signed declaration from the customer **Waitlist**: Completed *SNAP Work Requirements Screening Form* or written and signed declaration from the customer
Residing with a SNAP household member younger than 14	Customer has: • Someone in their SNAP household whose age is 13 or younger, regardless of the relationship to the customer **Note**: the person aged 13 or younger must be part of the SNAP household and may be an ineligible household member (*e.g.*, an ineligible student, someone who has committed an IPV).[9]	**Age/Date of Birth:** Normal verification procedures at certification and recertification for age or date of birth. Verify, if questionable. **Household Composition:** Normal verification procedures at certification and recertification. Verify, if questionable, to determine the head of household.
Pregnant (any stage)	Customer is: • Pregnant (at any stage)	Completed *SNAP Work Requirements Screening Form* or written and signed declaration from the customer If questionable: • *SNAP Work Requirements Medical Report* signed and dated by an allowable professional (***Section 9.1.2.1,***

[9] See Question #8 in FNS' "Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program - Able-Bodied Adults without Dependents (ABAWD) Questions and Answers-June 2015" issued June 26, 2015.

		SNAP Work Requirements Medical Form – Allowable Professionals) and client • Other proof of pregnancy
Certain Indigenous Peoples	Customer is: • American Indian/Alaska Native • Urban Indian • California Indian See *Section 3.3.2, Certain Indigenous Peoples* in ESA's SNAP Work Requirements Handbook, for more information.	Completed *SNAP Work Requirements Screening Form* or written and signed declaration from the customer If questionable: • Request verification. See *Section 3.3.2, Certain Indigenous Peoples* in ESA's SNAP Work Requirements Handbook.

Verification of exemption status is considered **optional** verification. This means a household cannot be denied SNAP solely because it does not provide verification of an exemption. However, if verification is required and not provided, ESA will determine the customer does not qualify for that exemption and will not apply it.

The following ABAWD exemptions **must always be verified** because it is linked to other mandatory verification requirements:

- Receipt of disability benefits, which affects the household's unearned income

For more details on each exemption, please see *Section 3.3, ABAWD Exemptions* in ESA's SNAP Work Requirements Handbook.

9.2.3 Discretionary Exemptions

Each year, USDA FNS allocates discretionary exemptions that the District can use to exempt a customer subject to the ABAWD work requirements. Each exemption is equal to one full month of SNAP eligibility for one customer subject to the ABAWD work requirements. The District has discretion on how to apply these exemptions. The number of exemptions allocated each fiscal year is equal to 8 percent of the District's caseload subject to the ABWR time limit.

When the District is allocated discretionary exemptions for the upcoming fiscal year, ESA will provide guidance on how the exemptions should be applied.

For additional details, see *Section 3.4, Discretionary Exemptions* in ESA's SNAP Work Requirements Handbook.

9.2.4 Countable Months and Time Limits

A **countable month** is any full month in which a customer subject to the ABAWD work requirements receives SNAP benefits while not:

- Satisfying the work requirement during the month (see ***Section 9.2.1, ABAWD Work Requirements***) without good cause (see *Section 3.2.5, Good Cause* in ESA's SNAP Work Requirements Handbook);
- Receiving a prorated month of benefits;
- Exempt for any part of the month;
- Living in a waived area of the District (see ***Section 9.2.8, ABAWD Time Limit Waiver***); or
- Granted a discretionary exemption (see ***Section 9.2.3, Discretionary Exemptions***).

Each customer subject to the ABAWD work requirements is limited to three countable months of benefits during the District 36-month clock. The limit of three months within a 36-month period is known as the **time limit**. Customers may be eligible for three additional consecutive countable months within the District's 36-month clock in certain situations (see ***Section 9.3.7, Additional Three Consecutive Months***).

Countable months do not have to be used consecutively, except for the three additional countable months described in ***Section 9.3.7, Additional Three Consecutive Months***. A customer may temporarily find employment, stop participating in SNAP for some time, become temporarily exempt, or experience other circumstances that may cause them to use their three countable months non-consecutively.

The number of countable months is attached to the customer and not to the SNAP household. This means the balance of a customer's countable months is not adjusted if they join another household, stop participating in SNAP for a period, or move to another state.

Countable months are reset to zero for all customers once the District's 36-month clock resets.

Prior to applying a countable month for failing to meet the ABAWD work requirements, the SSR should determine if the customer had good cause for failing to meet the ABAWD work requirements (see *Section 3.2.5, Good Cause* in ESA's SNAP Work Requirements Handbook) or should have been exempt (see ***Section 9.2.2, ABAWD Exemptions***). As customers subject to the ABAWD work requirements are not required to report unless their work hours drop below 20 hours per week (among other simplified reporting changes), the SSR may have to retroactively determine if the customer had good cause or should have been exempt and make appropriate adjustments to the customer's countable months (see ***Section 9.2.9, Retroactive Changes***).

During the District's 36-month clock, if a customer subject to the ABAWD work requirements uses all three of their countable months and is not exempt or satisfying the ABAWD work requirements, the customer will become ineligible for SNAP (see ***Section 9.2.5, Losing Eligibility***).

Example
James is certified for SNAP on August 15 and is subject to the ABAWD work requirements. He does not meet an exemption and is not meeting one of the ABAWD work requirements. James's first countable month is September. August is not considered a countable month because James will not receive a full

month of SNAP benefits. If James does not meet the ABAWD work requirements or becomes exempt, he will become ineligible for SNAP, and his benefits will be terminated as of December 1. His countable months are September, October, and November.

ESA must track each customer's use of their three countable months to correctly determine SNAP eligibility. Tracking requires the SSR to accurately screen each customer for the GWRs and ABAWD work requirements exemptions, apply any exemptions, and accurately document if the customer is meeting the ABAWD work requirements in the customer's case.

At recertification, ESA must review each month in the prior certification period to determine if the customer was meeting the ABAWD work requirements, had good cause if not meeting the ABAWD work requirements, or qualified for an exemption and make retroactive changes if necessary (see ***Section 9.2.9, Retroactive Changes***).

See *Section 3.7, Countable Months and Time Limits* in ESA's SNAP Work Requirements Handbook for more details.

9.2.5 Losing Eligibility

A customer subject to the ABAWD work requirements will lose eligibility for SNAP for failing to meet the ABAWD work requirements if the customer:

- has exhausted their three countable months;
- is not exempt; or
- does not reside in an area waived from the ABAWD work requirements.

The customer shall remain ineligible for the remainder of the District's 36-month period unless they regain eligibility (see ***Section 9.2.6, Regaining Eligibility***), qualify for an exemption, or move to a waived area (see ***Section 9.2.7, ABAWD Time Limit Waiver***).

The customer is made ineligible and not the household if the customer is part of a multi-person SNAP household (see ***Section 14.1.2, SSN Disqualification and Ineligible ABAWDs***).

9.2.5.1 Notification for Failing to Meet the ABAWD work requirements

During the third countable month, the household must be provided with a timely and adequate Notice of Adverse Action (NOAA) notifying the customer they will be terminated for the following month for failing to meet the ABAWD work requirements. The Notice of Adverse Action shall be specific to the customer and explain in easily understandable language:

- Action to be taken: the customer is being made ineligible for failing to meet the work requirements
- Reason for the action: the customer has exhausted their three countable months
- Effective date of the action
- Specific laws and regulations that support the action: 7 USC § 2015(o)(2); 7 CFR § 273.24(b)

- Right to appeal or request a fair hearing
- Information on when continued benefits will be provided pending the outcome of a hearing requested by the household
- Information about the household's liability for any overissuances provided pending the fair

hearing if the fair hearing outcome is not favorable to the household

- The telephone number of the SNAP office
- Explanation of the eligibility and benefit level of the remaining eligible members
- An explanation of how the adverse action may be avoided, how ineligibility may be ended, or how benefits may be reinstated after a disqualification period is over
- Information about the availability of free legal representation, if available

9.2.6 Regaining Eligibility

A customer who was terminated from SNAP for failure to satisfy the ABAWD work requirements can regain eligibility during the District's 36-month clock. There is no limit on the number of times a customer may regain eligibility within the District's 36-month period. Customers subject to the ABAWD work requirements who have exhausted their three countable months may regain eligibility, if otherwise SNAP eligible, at any time if they meet any one of the following:

- Work or participate in a qualifying work activity for at least 80 hours during any consecutive 30-day period prior to reapplying (***Section 9.2.1, ABAWD Work Requirements***)
  - **Note**: Customers **cannot** use SNAP E&T activities/components, including the workfare E&T component, to regain eligibility, as only customers receiving SNAP can participate in SNAP E&T.
- Qualify for an ABAWD exemption (***Section 9.2.2, ABAWD Exemptions***), including any GWR exemptions (***Section 9.1.2, General Work Requirement Exemptions***)
- Move to a waived area (***Section 9.2.8, ABAWD Time Limit Waiver***)
- Reach the end of the District's 36-month period

Regaining eligibility does not replace other SNAP eligibility criteria. Customers who meet the requirements to regain eligibility must be otherwise eligible for SNAP.

For more details, see *Section 3.9, Regaining Eligibility* in ESA's SNAP Work Requirements Handbook.

9.2.7 Additional Three Consecutive Months

In certain circumstances, customers subject to the ABAWD work requirements may be granted an additional three consecutive months of eligibility after they have exhausted their three countable months. This only applies to customers who have regained eligibility (see ***Section 9.2.6, Regaining Eligibility***) and then fail to meet the ABAWD work requirements. This provision allows the customer to be given three additional months of benefits, which must be used consecutively.

Once the first of the three consecutive months is issued, the other two months must follow even if the customer satisfies the ABAWD work requirements during that time.

A customer can only be granted the three consecutive months of eligibility **once** during the District's 36-month period after regaining eligibility and subsequently not meeting the ABAWD work requirements.

The three consecutive months start in the month in which one of the following occurs **after** a customer has regained eligibility:

- The month of application if the customer applies on the 1st and the customer is not currently meeting the ABAWD work requirements and not exempt,
- The month after the month of application if the customer does not apply on the 1st and the customer is not currently meeting the ABAWD work requirements and not exempt,
- The month the customer is added back to a household and the customer is not currently meeting the ABAWD work requirements and not exempt,
- The month in which a customer reports they are not working 20 hours per week, averaged monthly, and is not exempt, or
- The month in which the District notifies the customer they are no longer satisfying the requirements for meeting the ABAWD work requirements through a qualifying work activity or workfare and are not exempt.

Example

Andre is certified in March 2027 and is subject to the ABAWD work requirements. He is not meeting the requirements and loses eligibility in June 2027.

In September 2027, Andre begins working 20 hours per week, which meets the ABAWD work requirements. He regains eligibility and is recertified in October 2027.

In November 2027, Andre reports that he lost his job. Because he is no longer meeting the ABAWD work requirements, Andre begins using his three consecutive countable months:

-November 2027

-December 2027

-January 2028

After January 2028, Andre is ineligible for SNAP unless he either meets the ABAWD work requirements again or qualifies for an exemption.

9.2.8 ABAWD Time Limit Waiver

USDA FNS may grant the District a waiver of the ABAWD work requirements and time limits for the entire District's SNAP population or for SNAP customers living in certain areas within the District. Waivers may be granted in areas with an unemployment rate of over 10 percent. A waiver of the ABAWD work requirements does not waive the GWRs. This means customers subject to the GWRs must continue to comply with the GWRs as described in ***9.1, General Work Requirements (GWRs)***.

If the District receives a waiver from USDA FNS, ESA will issue an official memorandum indicating the coverage of the waiver and procedures for implementing the waiver.

For additional details on the requirements for submitting a waiver, see *Section 3.11, ABAWD Time Limit Waiver* in ESA's SNAP Work Requirements Handbook.

9.2.8.1 ABAWD Requirements Under a Waiver

The following requirements, tracking, and reporting must always be followed, even if the District has an ABAWD waiver:

- ESA must continue to report work registrant, ABAWD, and E&T data on the FNS-583 report.
    - Individuals who do not meet one of the ABAWD exemptions (***Section 9.2.2, ABAWD Exemption***) are considered ABAWDs subject to the time limit even if the District has a waiver covering all or part of the District.
- The GWRs still apply to all SNAP customers who are not exempt (***Section 9.1, General Work Requirements (GWRs)***). This includes disqualifying customers who fail to comply with the GWRs without good cause.
- ESA must inform the ABAWD population residing in a waived area that they are not subject to the time limit for those months in which the waiver is in effect.
- ESA must continue to verify the following for potential ABAWDs:
    - Work hours
    - Countable months from other states
- ESA must continue to screen potential ABAWDs (see ***Section 9.3, Work Requirements Screening***) at initial application, recertification, and when a new household member is added to ensure ABAWDs are accurately identified or exempted when the waiver expires.

9.2.9 Retroactive Changes

During the District 36-month clock, the District is required to ensure each customer subject to the ABAWD work requirements is eligible to receive benefits. This requires ESA to accurately record a household member's GWR and ABWR exemptions, good cause, countable months, and whether the ABAWD work requirements are met for each month. In some cases, SSRs will need to make retroactive changes to the customer's case record to ensure accurate tracking.

If a customer subject to the ABAWD work requirements fails to report a required change or ESA was at fault for not acting on a change resulting in SNAP benefits the customer was not eligible for, the SSR must determine if an overpayment occurred and a claim should be established. See *Section 3.13, Overpayments* in ESA's SNAP Work Requirements Handbook and ***Chapter 23, Claims Against the Household***.

For details on when to apply retroactive changes to exemptions, good cause, and countable months, see *Section 3.12, Retroactive Changes* in ESA's SNAP Work Requirements Handbook.

9.2.10 Tracking Potential ABAWDs

In order to ensure customers are properly subjected to the ABAWD time limits, proper screening (see ***Section 9.3, Work Requirements Screening***) is required for potential ABAWDs.[10] A potential ABAWD is a SNAP applicant or customer who could become subject to the ABAWD time limits if not for a statewide or partial ABAWD time-limit waiver.

Legal Authority

ABAWD Work Requirements (Federal): 7 USC § 2015(o), 7 CFR § 273.24

Notice of Adverse Action (Federal): 7 CFR § 273.13

Notice of Adverse Action (District): DC Official Code § 4–205.55(a)(2)

9.3 Work Requirements Screening

SNAP customers between the ages of 16 and 64 must be screened to determine if they are subject to the GWRs and ABAWD work requirements at initial application, recertification, or when a new household member is added. The screening will determine if a customer meets a potential exemption from the GWRs or ABAWD work requirements.

At initial application and recertification, **each** SNAP household member between the ages of 16 and 64 must complete the SNAP Work Requirements Screening Form or receive a verbal screening with the assistance of ESA (see ***Section 9.3.1, Screening From Verbal Attestation***). The SNAP Work Requirements Screening Form must also be completed when an existing household adds a new household member between the ages of 16 and 64 during the certification period. A complete screening form must be uploaded to the case file.

Based on the results of the screening form, if a customer qualifies for more than one exemption, the SSR must apply the exemption that will last the longest.

The SSR must follow appropriate verification procedures for the exemption (see ***Section 9.1.2, Exemptions From Work Requirements***, and ***Section 9.2.2, ABAWD Exemptions***).

ESA cannot assign countable months until the customer has been screened.

9.3.1 Screening Form Verbal Attestation

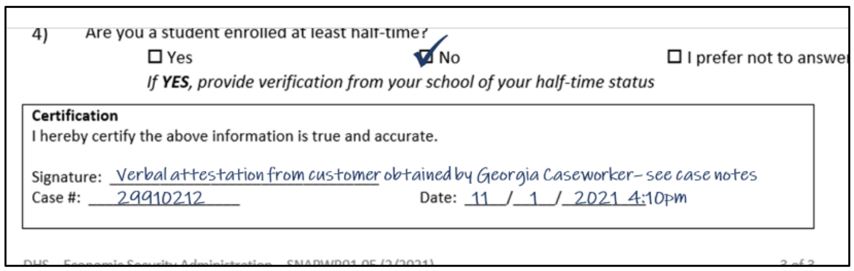
[10] See December 4, 2019, FNS memorandum titled “Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program – State Agency Readiness to Apply the ABAWD Time Limit and Serve ABAWDs” and the March 4, 2015, FNS memorandum titled “Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program – Expiration of Statewide ABAWD Time Limit Waivers”

In situations where the customer does not provide a screening form or provides an incomplete screening form, the SSR can complete the screening form with the customer during the interview or through a phone call and accept a verbal attestation in lieu of a signature from the customer.

To obtain a verbal attestation, the SSR must review each question, the response to each question, and ask the customer to ensure the information reviewed is true and accurate. If the customer agrees, the SSR must document the following in case notes:

- Full name of applicant or household member providing the verbal attestation
- Date and time the attestation was provided
- Indication that the attestation was provided for the SNAP Work Requirements Screening Form
- And a statement that you (SSR) reviewed the completed form and each response and that the customer verbally attested that the information captured by the SSR on the SNAP Work Requirements Screening Form is true and accurate

In addition, the SSR must complete the following in the Certification box on the screening form:


4) Are you a student enrolled at least half-time?
☐ Yes ☑ No ☐ I prefer not to answer
*If **YES**, provide verification from your school of your half-time status*

Certification
I hereby certify the above information is true and accurate.
Signature: Verbal attestation from customer obtained by Georgia Caseworker – see case notes
Case #: 29910212 Date: 11 / 1 / 2021 4:10pm

- **Signature**: "Verbal attestation from customer obtained by [SSR Name] – see case notes"
- **Case #**: Write the case number
- **Date**: Write the date and time the verbal attestation was obtained
- Ensure the first section of the form is completed with the customer's information.

The completed screening form **must be uploaded** to the case file.

9.3.2 Expedited Service and Screening

- Expedited service timeframes must be met regardless of screening. Benefits must be issued within 7 days if the household meets expedited criteria and identity is verified.
- ESA must make reasonable efforts to screen for exemptions during the expedited process, particularly if an interview is conducted.
- If exemption status is established and not questionable, apply the exemption immediately.
- If exemption status is questionable or requires verification (see ***Section 9.1.2, Exemptions From Work Requirements***, and ***Section 9.2.2, ABAWD Exemptions*** for exemption verification requirements), ESA must first attempt to verify using existing sources. If verification cannot be completed within 7 days, postpone verification and issue benefits.
- If the individual has already received 3 countable months and no information indicates they are exempt or have regained eligibility, they are ineligible for expedited service. If information does indicate an exemption or regained eligibility (see Section 3.9, Regaining Eligibility), expedited service applies following the rules above.

Legal Authority

Screening (Federal): 7 CFR § 273.24(k)

Exemption Verification (Federal): 7 CFR § 273.24(l)

Expedited Service: 7 CFR § 273.2(i)(4)

9.4 Work Requirements Verbal Notification

ESA is required to provide oral and written notification of the work rules for each member subject to the GWRs and ABAWD work requirements. For details on the written notification, see ***Section 16.10, Notice of Consolidated Work Requirements***.

At initial application, recertification, or when a new or previously exempt household member becomes subject to work requirements, the SSR must provide a comprehensive oral explanation of the applicable work requirements. The oral explanation must:

- Identify which household members are subject to the GWRs and/or the ABAWD work requirements.
- Explain the rights and responsibilities under each requirement.
  - GWR: ***Section 9.1.3, SNAP Recipient Work Requirements***
  - ABWR: ***Section 9.2.1, ABAWD Work Requirements***, reporting when work hours drop below 20 hours per week
- Describe available exemptions for the GWRs and ABAWD work requirements and explain how to request an exemption.
  - GWR: ***Section 9.1.2, Exemptions From Work Requirements***
  - ABWR: ***Section 9.2.2, ABAWD Exemptions***
- Explain what actions are required to maintain eligibility under each requirement.
  - GWR: ***Section 9.1.3, SNAP Recipient Work Requirementss***
  - ABWR: ***Section 9.2.1, ABAWD Work Requirements***
- State the consequences for failing to comply.
  - GWR: ***Section 9.1.3.6, SNAP Disqualification for Failure to Meet Work Requirements***
  - ABWR: Section 3.8, Losing Eligibility
- Describe the process for requesting good cause, including examples of good cause circumstances and how to contact the agency to make a request.
  - GWR: Section 9.1.3.4, Good Cause Criteria
  - ABWR: Section 3.2.5, Good Cause
- Provide pertinent dates by which household members must act to remain in compliance.

- Explain that the customer may voluntarily participate in the SNAP E&T program or other District employment and training programs, regardless of exemption status.
- If the customer expresses interest in the SNAP E&T program, this interest shall be documented in the customer file, regardless of whether they are exempt. Customers expressing interest in the SNAP E&T program should also be provided with a program brochure and encouraged to reach out to program staff for additional information.
- Offer any additional information that would assist the household in understanding and meeting their work requirements.

The oral notification must be delivered in clear and understandable language and must cover all household members.

Additionally, at recertification, for any household containing a member subject to the GWRs, with at least one adult, no elderly or disabled individuals, and no earned income, DHS must provide a list of available employment and training services electronically or in printed form to the household.

Legal Authority
Work Requirements Notification (Federal): 7 CFR § 273.7(c)(1)(ii)-(iii) and 7 CFR § 273.14(b)(5)

Chapter

10

Chapter 10. Resource Eligibility

10.1 Determining Countable Resources/Assets

Assets include cash, bank accounts, other liquid assets, nonliquid financial assets and any real or personal property that a member of an assistance household owns. ESA applies resource standards to all applicants and households unless the household is categorically eligible (see ***Chapter 4, Categorically Eligible Households***).

- ESA counts the value of all assets that are available and not explicitly excluded.
- Assets are available if a customer has both legal authority and actual ability to use the assets for self-support.
- When a customer owns an asset in whole or in part, ESA presumes the asset is wholly available unless the customer proves it is not available.
- A customer may prove unavailability by verifying a legal or other actual barrier to disposal of the asset that they cannot reasonably overcome.

ESA must count the assets of all people included in the household, including the assets of ineligible and disqualified mandatory household members. ESA must also count assets for a financially responsible person not included in the household, as described in ***Section 10.5, Deemed Assets***.

Table 25.2.a, Treatment of Assets Chart, describes asset types and whether they are countable or excluded by program.

In the context of this chapter, “resources” and “assets” refer to the same thing and are used interchangeably.

10.2 Maximum Allowable Resources/Assets

The maximum allowable resources, including both liquid and nonliquid assets, of all members of the household must not exceed the current asset limit for the type of household. See ***Table 25.3.g, Asset Limits***, for the current amounts.

10.3 Types of Resources/Assets

Assets are either liquid or nonliquid. For SNAP:

- Liquid assets have a cash value.
- Nonliquid assets usually have an equity value.

Fair market value is the wholesale value of an asset, without considering the amount the household owes on it.

Equity value is the fair market value minus encumbrances or any amount legally owed on the asset. An asset that is converted from one type to another (e.g. an item is sold for cash) continues to be considered an asset.

10.3.1 Liquid Assets

The following are types of liquid assets:

- Cash on hand, including uncashed checks, drafts and warrants
- Savings account
- Checking account
- Stocks, bonds, securities and mutual funds
- Lump sum payments such as insurance settlements or inheritances

10.3.2 Nonliquid Assets

The following are types of nonliquid assets, unless exempt as shown in ***Section 10.4, Exempt Assets***:

- Real property (land and building), mortgages, land contracts, life estates and life leases
- Licensed and unlicensed boats, aircraft, campers and trailers
- Tools and machinery for education, training or employment of the household

10.3.3 Lottery or Gambling Winnings

Lottery or gambling winnings are a lump sum in the month received.

When a household member wins substantial lottery or gambling winnings with a cash prize from a single game that is at or over the **current asset limit for elderly or disabled households**, regardless of whether the household contains an elderly or disabled member, or the household is categorically eligible, the entire household loses eligibility for SNAP. The household may reapply when its assets and income are below the eligibility limits for its household size and type. The household cannot be considered categorically eligible and have the income and asset tests waived at reapplication.

Example 1

Mr. Wright won $25,000 playing the DC-5 game at the corner market. While the lump sum payment is not budgeted against his household's SNAP benefits, the Wright household loses eligibility for SNAP. The household may reapply for benefits when it has liquid assets of $2,750 or less because the household does not include an elderly or disabled person.

Example 2

Ms. Lewis, aged 70, is a part of a lottery club at Swings coffee shop. The club had a winning ticket of a $50,000 Powerball prize for matching four numbers plus the Powerball. Ms. Lewis bought one share of the club's 17 tickets purchased that week.

Ms. Lewis' portion of the winnings before taxes is 1/17 of the $50,000 prize, or $2,941.17. Because Ms. Lewis' portion of the winnings from a single game was less than $4,250, she does not lose eligibility for SNAP because she is considered elderly for SNAP based on her age.

Example 3

Mr. and Mrs. Douglas and their son, Daniel, receive SNAP. Mr. Douglas wins $75,000 in the DC lottery. Mr. Douglas reports this information within 10 days of winning, and ESA closes SNAP benefits for the entire household.

Mr. Douglas later leaves the household. Mrs. Douglas then applies for SNAP benefits for herself and Daniel. Mrs. Douglas and Daniel may be approved for SNAP under expanded categorical eligibility without having to meet the asset test. The new household with Mrs. Douglas and Daniel was not the one disqualified from SNAP for substantial lottery winnings.

10.4 Exempt Assets

An asset may be completely or partially excluded depending upon the asset type or source. Assets may be excluded for a set period of time. See the specific program section for rules on whether an asset may be excluded, the amount of the exclusion and the time period an asset may be excluded.

See ***Table 25.2.a, Treatment of Assets Chart***, for a complete list of assets and how they are considered for SNAP.

10.4.1 Nonrecurring Lump Sums and Accrued Benefits

Lump sum payments and retroactive benefits are excluded as income and counted as a resource/asset in the month received.

Example 1

Ms. Williams and her two children receive TANF and SNAP. Between January and August, Ms. Williams received a TANF benefit of $200. ESA discovers that her TANF benefits were miscalculated for the eight-month period and that she should have received $275 each month. In September, she receives a payment of $600 to offset her underpayment for the eight-month period in addition to her $275 regular TANF benefits.

The household's SNAP benefits were calculated correctly between January and August based on the income Ms. Williams actually received (based on a TANF benefit of $200). The $600 underpayment is treated as an asset, not as income, in the month received. The household receives TANF and is categorically eligible for SNAP, so the additional assets do not affect eligibility or benefit level for SNAP.

Example 2

Ms. Johnson and her two children received TANF and SNAP from January through April. She found a job in April and stopped receiving TANF. She continues receiving SNAP. In June, Ms. Johnson is awarded a $300 TANF underpayment based on a prior ESA error. The $300 is considered an asset in June, but the family is also considered to be a TANF recipient in June and categorically eligible for SNAP with no impact to SNAP eligibility or benefit level due to the issuance of an underpayment.

10.5 Deemed Assets

All or part of the assets of responsible individuals are counted toward the asset limit. Assets are deemed available to a unit. ESA must count assets deemed available to a household even if the household does not actually have access to the assets.

If a disqualified or ineligible household member is a mandatory household member, ESA deems all of this person's assets to the household.

- Exclude up to $1,500 of the noncitizen's sponsor's total net assets.
- Deem the amount in excess of the $1,500 exclusion to the household that includes the sponsored immigrant.

ESA must deem assets of the sponsors of **sponsored** noncitizens for SNAP if no exemption applies. A countable asset controlled by the sponsor of a sponsored noncitizen included in the applicant's assistance household must be considered when determining program eligibility. ESA must add the net value of the sponsor's assets minus program-specific disregards to the applicant's own assets when determining asset eligibility.

See ***Section 11.4, Deeming Income***, for information on how to deem income of financially responsible people.

If a sponsored immigrant can provide verification to ESA that their sponsor is also supporting other noncitizens, ESA will divide the income and resources being counted based on the total number of sponsored noncitizens. Likewise, if a sponsored noncitizen or their citizen child is exempt from having their income and resources counted, ESA will use the same process to determine how much should not be counted.

Legal Authority

Countable assets (Federal): SNAP: 7 USC § 2014, 7 CFR § 273.2(j) and 7 CFR § 273.8

Asset groups (Federal): SNAP: 7 USC § 2014(g), (i), (j); 7 CFR § 273.8 and § 273.11(c)-(d)

Deeming assets (Federal): SNAP: 7 USC § 2014(i); 7 CFR § 273.11(c) and § 273.4(c)

Chapter

11

Chapter 11. Income

11.1 Definition of Income

Income is any type of payment that is a gain or benefit to the household.

ESA either counts a payment as income or excludes the payment based on federal or District laws and regulations. Income that ESA counts is either earned or unearned income.

- ESA considers **countable income** when determining if a household is income-eligible for program benefits. Some or all countable income may be disregarded in a step of the eligibility determination process.
- **Countable income** is the gross amount unless otherwise stated. This includes garnished income.
- If a source of income is excluded for a program, ESA does not count it in any step of the eligibility determination process.
- Income paid to an individual for the specific benefit of another person is considered the income of the person who benefits from the payment, not the payee.
- All income a household receives is counted and budgeted when ESA determines eligibility for program benefits unless specifically excluded.

Sometimes, income is treated differently based on the program in which it is being applied. ***Table 25.2.b, Treatment of Income Chart***, describes different types of income and how they are treated for each program.

Legal Authority

Countable and excludable income (Federal): SNAP: 7 USC § 2014(d)–(f), (i), (k)–(n); 7 CFR §§ 273.4(c), 273.9, 273.10(c), 273.11

11.2 Earned Income

Earned income is all money earned by a household member(s) through receipt of wages, salary, tips or commissions as an employee. Income earned directly from one's own business, trade or profession rather than specified as salary or wages from an employer is considered self-employment income. For treatment of self-employment income, see ***Section 11.2.1, Self-Employment Income***. Earned income is allowed certain deductions, as listed in ***Section 12.3, Earned Income Deduction***.

Examples of earned income include the following (see ***Section 11.2.1, Self-Employment Income***, for examples of self-employment income):

- All wages, salaries, tips and commissions for services performed as an employee
- Rental income if a household member actively manages the property at least an average of 20 hours a week
  - **Note**: Ownership of rental property is considered a self-employment enterprise.
- Training allowances received from non-Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act vocational and rehabilitation programs sponsored by federal, state or local governments that are not for participant reimbursements
- State-funded work study
  - **Note**: Federally funded work study is noncountable income; see ***Section 11.6, Excluded Income***.
- Garnishments from wages to pay a household expense (such as court-ordered child support)
- Sick pay, vacation pay and bonus pay if employed at the time of receipt
  - **Note**: Sick, vacation and bonus pay is considered unearned income if paid in more than one payment after employment termination. If received as a one-time lump sum payment after employment termination, it is considered a lump sum payment and excluded as income.

Refer to ***Table 25.2.b, Treatment of Income Chart***, for further types of earned income.

Legal Authority
Earned income (Federal): SNAP: 7 CFR § 273.9(b)(1)

11.2.1 Self-Employment Income

Self-employment income is from a self-employment enterprise, including the total gain from the sale of any capital goods or requirements related to this business. The cost of doing business is excluded from the gross self-employment income (see ***Section 11.2.1.2, Allowable Self-Employment Expenses***).

Examples include the following:

- Income of independent contractors, including many drivers who deliver food and goods ("gig workers")

- Income of child daycare and family home daycare providers
- Income from odd jobs (money from sporadic or periodic work without a business license or established employer-to-employee relationship)
- Payments from a roomer or boarder
  - **Note**: Foster care payments for individuals considered members of the SNAP household are considered unearned income.
- Income from ownership of rental property
  - **Note**: Income derived from a rental property is considered earned income if a member of the household is actively engaged in the management of the property at least 20 hours per week.

11.2.1.1 Self-Employment Status

A self-employed individual earns income through a trade or business, not wages from an employer:

- Self-employed people may be sole proprietors, partners or independent contractors.
- Independent contractors do not have taxes and Federal Insurance Contributions Act (FICA) payroll taxes deducted from payment for their work and receive IRS 1099 forms from entities they perform work for.

Business ownership can be checked through the DC Business License Center at ***Online Resources | DLCP (dc.gov)***. See ***Table 25.5.b, Self-Employment Business Structure***, for an overview of self-employment business structures.

11.2.1.2 Allowable Self-Employment Expenses

Generally, expenses allowed as a deduction under the IRS code are also allowable expenses to be excluded when determining self-employment income.

ESA will exclude the following verified expenses from the gross proceeds of self-employment income:

- Labor, taxes, insurance and other expenses for employees (not including the self-employed person)
- Payments on the principal of the purchase price of income-producing real estate and capital assets, equipment, machinery and other durable goods
- Interest—but not the principal—on loans for equipment, real estate or income-producing property
- Insurance premiums on equipment, real estate and other income-producing property
- Taxes paid on income-producing property
- Transportation or vehicle expenses for work only
- Stock and raw material
- Cost of goods sold, supplies and materials

- Advertising costs
- Accounting and legal fees
- Professional licensing fees and union dues
  - Proportional costs to maintain the person's home as a place of business, such as rent and utilities. If a business is operated in the home, only the portion of utilities, rent or mortgage used for the business may be deducted.

The following expenses *cannot* be excluded from self-employment income:

- Depreciation on equipment, real estate or other capital investments
- A net loss from a previous period
- Federal, state and local income taxes paid for the self-employed individual
- Personal entertainment or other personal business expenses
- Money set aside for retirement
- Any amount that exceeds the payment a household receives from a boarder for lodging and meals
- Transportation costs to and from work

11.2.1.3 Self-Employment: Farming

Self-employed farmers, unlike other self-employed individuals, can deduct losses from farming from other household income if their actual or anticipated proceeds are $1,000 or more for the year.

ESA deducts a farm loss from other income of the household as follows:

- Deduct the net farm loss from any other self-employment income of the household.
- If a net farming loss remains, deduct it from any other countable income of the household after allowing the earned income deduction.
- Prorate the loss over the year to determine a monthly amount to deduct from other income sources.
- The previous year's tax return is the usual basis to calculate the farming income.

11.2.1.4 Budgeting Self-Employment Income

Countable earnings from self-employment are the total income received minus allowable expenses of producing the income. If the allowable expenses exceed the total proceeds, the amount of the loss cannot offset any other income.

The most current tax return, including all schedules, often provides all information necessary to calculate self-employment income. The 2018 IRS tax reforms eliminated most expenditures that would not be allowable for public benefits.

- Use the IRS Schedule C for sole proprietors to calculate all expenses *except* depreciation.

- If depreciation is claimed, use the deprecation schedule to determine any actual expenses in the current tax year that were required to be depreciated on the Schedule C and add this amount to the other eligible expenses.

Generally, self-employment income is annualized, also known as averaged, over a 12-month period. Divide annual self-employment income by 12 to even out the fluctuations of income of self-employed individuals.

Exceptions to annual averaging of self-employment income are as follows:

- If the household has experienced a significant increase or decrease in business and averaging the self-employment income over the year would not accurately reflect the household's circumstances, calculate self-employment income based on what can be reasonably anticipated.
- Average self-employment income intended to meet the household's needs for only part of the year over the period of time the income is intended to cover.
- If a household's self-employment business has been in existence for less than a year, average the income from the self-employment enterprise over the period of time the business has been in operation and project a monthly amount for the coming year.

Example 1

Ms. Davis and her two children apply for SNAP. Ms. Davis is a self-employed caterer.

Last year, she earned $8,000 over the course of the year, though her earnings were uneven during the year. She earned more during the Christmas season and in the early summer due to catering several weddings. Ms. Davis expects her annual income to be similar to her earnings last year.

Average the household's self-employment earnings over a 12-month period. Use her average net monthly earnings of $667 per month as the household's monthly income to determine eligibility for SNAP.

Example 2

If Ms. Davis recently added a contract to provide catering services each week to new clients and the prior year's earnings would not reflect her current circumstances, do not use the prior year's income to determine her eligibility or benefits.

If she anticipates earning $2,400 over the next three months, use her new average expected earnings over the next three months ($800) to determine eligibility and benefits.

Example 3

Mr. Roberts is self-employed during June, July and August selling ice cream as a street vendor, but he intends to work at another job (not as a self-employed person) for the remainder of the year. Average the self-employment income from the ice cream business over the three months in which it is earned.

Example 4

Ms. Rodell operates a retail store. Total proceeds for the month are $3,200. Allowable expenses for the mortgage interest, property tax, insurance, utilities and goods purchased at wholesale total $3,800. Her countable self-employment income is $0. The $600 loss cannot be used to offset any other household income.

11.2.1.5 Boarder and Roomer Income

Room and board income includes all direct payments to the household for the boarder's room, meals and utilities. A boarder is an individual residing with others and paying reasonable compensation to the household for meals or meals and lodging. A roomer is a person who is not a household member but lives with the household for lodging and does not eat with or pay the household for food. A roomer lives in someone else's home and pays rent to the owner.

Payments received by the household from a boarder or roomer are considered self-employment income.

ESA must count gross boarder and roomer income minus expenses.

For an expense to be excluded, it must be clearly associated with the rental unit, such as expenses the household would not incur without having the boarder or roomer. Shelter expenses paid directly by a boarder or roomer to a third party are not considered income to the household. If expenses are greater than the gross boarder or roomer income, the gross boarder or roomer income should be reduced to $0.

Foster care payments are not considered boarder and roomer income. See ***Section 11.3, Unearned Income***, for treatment of foster care payments.

Example

Ms. Ginsburg charges her boarder $100 per month. The boarder also pays the household's electric bill of $75 per month, which he pays the electric company directly. The $100 the boarder pays Ms. Ginsburg is counted as self-employment income.

Legal Authority

Self-employment income (Federal): SNAP: 7 CFR § 273.9(b)(1)(ii), § 273.11(a)

11.3 Unearned Income

Unearned income is any income not defined as earned income. Unearned income includes the following:

- Public assistance payments (e.g. TANF, POWER, General Assistance for Children, Interim Disability Assistance [IDA])
- Annuities
- Retirements and pensions
- Veterans' benefits
- Disability benefits
- Workers'/unemployment compensation
- Survivors' benefits
- Educational grants and loans minus allowable exclusions (see ***Section 11.7, Educational Assistance***)
- Child support and alimony payments
- Foster care payments if the household has chosen to include the foster child/adult in the SNAP household
- Cash prizes, gifts or awards
- Rental income when a household member manages the property **less** than 20 hours a week; otherwise, it is considered earned income
- Cash contributions made by a nursing home patient to a spouse or children at home
- Cash donations based on need received from a nonprofit charitable organization of over $300 in a quarter; otherwise, donation is excluded from income
- Sick pay, vacation pay and bonus pay if paid in more than one payment after employment termination; if received as a one-time lump sum payment after employment termination, it is considered a lump sum payment and excluded as income
- All others, such as:
  - Dividends
  - Interest
  - Royalties
  - Withdrawals from trust funds
  - Payments on sales contracts

Refer to ***Table 25.2.b, Treatment of Income Chart***, for further types of unearned income.

Legal Authority

Unearned income (Federal). SNAP: 7 CFR § 273.9(b)(2)

11.4 Deeming Income

Income from financially responsible individuals must be counted when determining financial eligibility for SNAP. The process for counting the income of financially responsible individuals who are not included in the assistance unit is called deeming.

For SNAP, deeming income only applies if a SNAP-eligible noncitizen has a sponsor. ESA must deem the income and resources of the sponsor and the sponsor's spouse, if they have signed a legally binding affidavit of support, as the unearned income and resources of the sponsored noncitizen.

11.4.1 Expiration of Deeming Income

Deeming of income and assets ends when any of the following conditions are met:

- The noncitizen gains US citizenship.
- The noncitizen has worked or can receive credit for 40 qualifying work quarters.
- The noncitizen loses lawful permanent resident status and leaves the US.
- The noncitizen receives in removal proceedings a new grant of adjustment of status as relief from removal.
- The sponsor dies.

Legal Authority

Income deeming (Federal): SNAP: 7 CFR §§ 273.4(c), 273.9(b)(4), 273.11(c)(3)(v)

11.4.2 Noncitizen Sponsor's Income

The income of a noncitizen sponsor and sponsor's spouse who have signed legally binding affidavits of support (executed US Citizenship and Immigration Services [USCIS] Form I-864 or I-864A) must be counted (deemed) when determining the eligibility for federal means-tested benefits of households that contain SNAP-eligible noncitizens they sponsored.

The monthly income of the sponsor and sponsor's spouse must be the total monthly earned and unearned income of the sponsor and sponsor's spouse at the time the household containing the sponsored noncitizen member applies or is renewed for participation, reduced by:

- A 20 percent earned income amount for that portion of the income determined as earned income of the sponsor and the sponsor's spouse; and
- An amount equal to SNAP's monthly gross income eligibility limit for a household equal in size to the sponsor, the sponsor's spouse and any other person who is claimed or could be claimed by the sponsor or the sponsor's spouse as a dependent for federal income tax purposes

If the noncitizen has already reported gross income information on their sponsor in compliance with the sponsored noncitizen rules of another program administered by ESA, ESA will use that income amount for SNAP deeming purposes. However, ESA must limit allowable reductions to the total gross income of the sponsor and the sponsor's spouse prior to attributing an income amount to the noncitizen to amounts specified in the two bullets above.

ESA must consider as income to the noncitizen any money the sponsor or the sponsor's spouse pays the eligible sponsored noncitizen but only to the extent the money exceeds the amount deemed to the eligible sponsored noncitizen as determined above. Where applicable, ESA must deem as available to the eligible sponsored noncitizen the total amount of the resources of the sponsor and sponsor's spouse, reduced by $1,500.

If a sponsored noncitizen can demonstrate that their sponsor is the sponsor of other noncitizens, ESA must divide the income and resources, where applicable, deemed under the provisions of this section by the number of such sponsored noncitizens.

Deeming income **does not apply** to the following individuals:

- A noncitizen who is a member of their sponsor's SNAP household
- A noncitizen who is sponsored by an organization or group instead of an individual
- A noncitizen who is not required to have a sponsor under the Immigration and Nationality Act, such as a refugee, a parolee, an asylee or a Cuban or Haitian entrant
- An indigent noncitizen who ESA has determined is unable to obtain food and shelter, taking into account the noncitizen's own income plus any cash, food, housing or other assistance provided by other individuals, including the sponsor(s). Prior to determining whether a noncitizen is indigent, ESA must explain the purpose of the determination to the noncitizen and/or household representative and provide the noncitizen and/or household representative the opportunity to refuse the determination.
  - If the household refuses the determination, ESA will not complete the determination and will deem the sponsor's income and resources to the noncitizen's household per instructions in this section. ESA must inform the sponsored noncitizen of the consequences of refusing this determination.
- A battered noncitizen spouse, noncitizen parent of a battered child or child of a battered noncitizen, for 12 months after ESA determines the domestic violence is substantially connected to the need for benefits, and the battered individual does not live with the batterer; after 12 months, ESA must not deem the batterer's income and resources if the battery is recognized by a court or USCIS and has a substantial connection to the need for benefits, and the noncitizen does not live with the batterer
- A sponsored noncitizen child under age 18 of a sponsored noncitizen
- A citizen child under age 18 of a sponsored noncitizen

11.5 Income From Disqualified SNAP Household Members

The **entire** earned and unearned income of household members who are disqualified or excluded for the following reasons will continue to count as income to the remaining household members:

- Failure to comply with SNAP General Work Requirements
- IPV
- Fleeing felon disqualification
- Certain convicted felons

A **prorated** share of the earned and unearned income of household members who are disqualified or excluded for the following reasons will count as income to the remaining household members:

- Ineligible noncitizen status
- Failure to comply with SSN requirements
- Exceeding the time limit for ABAWDs

Legal Authority

Treatment of income for disqualified household members (Federal): SNAP: 7 CFR §§ 273.11(c), 273.9(b)(3)–(4)

11.6 Excluded Income

Certain types of income are to be excluded when making an eligibility determination. This section provides examples of some common types of excluded income. For a comprehensive list of other types of excluded income, including those excluded by federal statute, refer to ***Table 25.2.b, Treatment of Income Chart***.

- **In-kind income:** any gain or benefit not in the form of money payable directly to the household, including free rent, meals, clothing, public housing or produce from a garden
- **Vendor payment:** money payment made to a vendor on behalf of a household member by a person outside the household or an organization
- **Earnings of children in school:** earned income of household members who are 17 or younger; in elementary or secondary school, GED classes or accredited homeschooling; and live with a natural, adoptive or stepparent or under the parental control of a household member other than a parent
  - This income is excluded during temporary interruptions in school attendance due to semester or vacation breaks as long as the child's enrollment in school resumes following the break.
  - If a household contains a student whose income is excluded and the student turns 18 during the month of application, ESA will exclude the student's earnings in the month of

application and count the student's earnings in the following month. If the student turns 18 during the certification period, the student's income will be excluded until the month following the month in which the student turns 18.

Example

Darlene attends high school and assists her parents in a street vendor business, and the profits are shared. Prorate the net earnings and exclude one-third as attributable to Darlene. If Darlene turns 18 in the initial application month (April), count Darlene's portion of the income beginning in the month after the month of application (May).

- **Military combat–related pay:** payments received by military personnel while deployed to a combat zone received in addition to the service member's basic pay that was not received prior to the service member's deployment to or service in a combat zone; a designated combat zone must be federally designated

Legal Authority

Income exclusions (Federal): SNAP: 7 CFR § 273.9(c)

11.7 Educational Assistance

Educational assistance is financial support provided to learn new skills or pursue an additional degree(s) and/or certification(s).

To be excluded, educational assistance, including grants, scholarships, fellowships, federal work study, educational loans on which payment is deferred, veterans' educational benefits and the like must be:

- Received under Title IV of the Higher Education Act of 1965, as amended, or under Bureau of Indian Affairs student assistance programs
- Awarded to a household member enrolled at one of the following:
  - Recognized institution of postsecondary education (meaning any public or private educational institution that normally requires a high school diploma or equivalency certificate for enrollment or admits persons who are beyond the age of compulsory school attendance in the state in which the institution is located, provided that the institution is legally authorized or recognized by the state to provide an educational program beyond secondary education in the state or provides a program of training to prepare students for gainful employment, including correspondence schools at that level)
  - School for students with disabilities
  - Vocational education program
  - Vocational or technical school
  - Program that provides for obtaining a secondary school diploma or the equivalent

- Used for or identified (earmarked) by the institution, school, program or other grantor for the following allowable expenses:
  - Tuition
  - Mandatory school fees, including the rental or purchase of any equipment, materials and supplies related to the pursuit of the course of study involved
  - Books
  - Supplies
  - Transportation
  - Student's miscellaneous personal expenses, other than normal living expenses, incidental to attending a school, institution or program
  - Dependent care
    - **Note**: Any portion of education assistance for dependent care costs excluded as income **cannot** also be counted when determining a household's dependent care deduction (see ***Section 12.4, Dependent Care Deduction***).
  - Origination fees and insurance premiums on educational loans

Normal living expenses, which are room and board, are **not** excludable.

Exclusions of allowable educational expenses earmarked by the institution, program or other grantor must be incurred or anticipated for the period the educational income is intended to cover, regardless of when the educational income is received.

If a student uses other income sources to pay for allowable educational expenses in the months before they receive the educational income, the exclusions to cover the expenses will be allowed when the educational income is received.

When the amounts used for allowable expenses are more than the amounts earmarked by the institution, school, program or other grantor, an exclusion will be allowed for the amounts used over the earmarked amounts.

A student's total educational income exclusions granted under the provisions cannot exceed the student's total educational income.

Except for federal work study, which is always excluded, educational assistance that has a work requirement (e.g. state-funded work study, assistantship, fellowship) in excess of the amount excluded (as described in this section) is counted as earned income.

Legal Authority

Educational assistance (Federal): SNAP: 7 CFR §§ 273.9(c)(3), 273.9(b)(1)(vi)

Chapter

12

Chapter 12. Income Deductions

ESA allows certain deductions when determining a household's eligibility and benefits. Income deductions reduce the amount of income used to determine whether a household is eligible for benefits and the amount of benefits it receives. Earned income deductions provide an incentive for households to increase their earnings by reducing the amount of earnings used when determining eligibility and benefits.

A deduction from income can never reduce income below $0 (i.e. if a household is eligible for a $134 standard deduction in SNAP but the household only has $100 in income, the household's income is reduced to $0 by the standard deduction, but it is not reduced below this level).

To determine the household's net income, ESA must subtract applicable deductions and disregards from gross income.

12.1 Income Deductions: General

ESA applies several income deductions to reduce a household's gross income when determining a SNAP household's eligibility and benefits:

- Standard deduction
- Earned income deduction
- Excess medical deduction
- Dependent care deduction
- Child support deduction
- Excess shelter deduction or homeless shelter deduction

Households that are not **categorically eligible** and do not include an elderly or disabled household member must pass a gross income test to be eligible for SNAP. Deductions are not applied when determining if a household is **income-eligible under the gross income test.**

Households must verify deductible expenses to receive the **excess medical deduction**, **excess shelter deduction** and **child support deduction.** Households only need to verify dependent care expenses when questionable.

The standard deduction applies to all SNAP households, while all other deductions apply only to certain SNAP households.

12.2 Standard Deduction

A standard deduction is applied to all SNAP households. The amount of the standard deduction varies based on the household size. Total income is reduced by the amount of the standard deduction, which is updated each October. See ***Table 25.3.c, SNAP Standard Deduction***, for the current deduction amounts.

12.3 Earned Income Deduction

Households with earned income will receive the earned income deduction. ESA will deduct an amount equal to 20 percent of the household's gross countable earnings.

The earned income deduction cannot be applied against any **excluded** income.

Example

A household has $300 in gross countable earnings and receives a travel reimbursement of $50, which is excluded as income. The household receives an earned income deduction of $60 (20 percent of $300). The travel reimbursement is excluded as income, so it is not considered for the earned income deduction.

12.4 Dependent Care Deduction

Households that pay dependent care costs for the care of each dependent child (under age 18) or incapacitated person (of any age) living in the home are eligible for the dependent care deduction. See ***Table 25.1.a, Glossary of Terms***, for the definition of incapacitated.

For dependent care costs to be allowable, they must be necessary for a household member to do the following:

- Accept or continue employment.
- Comply with employment and training requirements.
- Attend training or pursue education to help the individual prepare for employment.

Dependent care costs include the following:

- Costs of child and adult care provided by an individual care provider or care facility, including copays for subsidized care
- Costs of care provided by a relative if the relative providing the care is not part of the same SNAP household as the child or dependent adult receiving the care

- Extended day programs and before- or afterschool programs
- Summer camps
- Care-associated activity or other fees necessary for the household to participate in the care
- Transportation costs to and from the care facility/program sites

Example 1

Ms. Allen takes her child to a childcare center not located on her route to school. When the stop at the childcare center is added, she drives an additional 10 miles in the morning and an additional 10 miles in the afternoon. She provides this transportation five days a week. Ms. Allen is eligible for a dependent care transportation deduction. The actual related transportation expense is the 20 miles per day associated with the travel to and from the childcare center.

Expenses are not allowed if paid in goods or services (payment-in-kind) or are reimbursed.

Example 2

Ms. Hicks is employed and permits a neighbor to use her garage in payment for babysitting her children. Ms. Hicks estimates the use of the garage to be valued at $150 per month. The expense is not allowed because the payment is in-kind and not a cash payment.

If a household has a dependent care expense that could qualify for both the medical deduction and the dependent care deduction, the household can choose to deduct the expense as either medical or dependent care expense but not both.

Dependent care costs must be verified before providing the deduction. See ***Section 5.3.2, Verification of Dependent Care Expenses***.

12.5 Child Support Deduction

Households that pay legally obligated child support payments to a nonhousehold member are eligible for the child support deduction.

Allowable payments include the following:

- Legally obligated payments made by a household member to a nonhousehold member
- Legally obligated payments made by a household member to a third party (e.g. landlord, utility company) as part of the support order
- Legally obligated payments made to a state child support agency, such as the DC OAG CSSD or similar agencies in other states
- Payments made toward child support arrears

The following payments are **not** allowable:

- Payments made by someone outside the household

- Payments not court-ordered (i.e. voluntary)
- Alimony, spousal support or property settlements

The deduction is based on the amount of legally obligated child support the household pays or expects to pay during the certification period. Do not allow more than the legally obligated amount unless the excess is toward a verified arrearage.

Child support payments must be verified before providing the deduction. See ***Section 5.3.3, Verification of Child Support Payments***.

12.6 Medical Deduction

Households with members who are 60 or older or who meet the SNAP criteria for being disabled (see ***Table 25.1.a, Glossary of Terms***, for SNAP's definition of disabled) can qualify for a medical deduction. This deduction is equal to the total of all allowable monthly out-of-pocket medical expenses incurred by these qualifying members combined, minus $35. Only one medical deduction is allowed per household.

Example

Loretta, aged 72, and Jasmine, aged 68, live together. Loretta and Jasmine both pay $174 in medical insurance premiums. Loretta pays $5 monthly for a prescription, and Jasmine pays $10 monthly for a prescription. To determine the deduction amount:

- Add all the monthly expenses: $174 + $174 + $5 + $10 = $363
- Subtract $35 from the total because only the monthly amount in excess of $35 can be deducted: $363 - $35 = $328

The household's monthly medical deduction is $328.

An individual who, at the time of application, did not meet the SNAP criteria for a disabled person but later was determined eligible for SSI is eligible for a retroactive medical deduction. ESA will restore benefits back to the date of the SNAP application or the date of initial SSI eligibility, whichever is later.

Medical expenses incurred by a household member who is younger than 60 and does not have a disability but receives disability benefits as a dependent of someone who is 60 or older or has a disability are not eligible for this deduction.

Only the medical expenses of the household members who are 60 or older or have a disability are used to determine the medical deduction.

The following medical expenses are allowable:

- Medical and dental care, including psychotherapy and rehabilitation services, provided by a licensed practitioner authorized by District law or a qualified health professional

- Hospitalization, outpatient treatments or nursing care, including payments made by the household for an individual who was a household member immediately prior to entering a hospital or nursing home; the care must be provided by a District-recognized facility
- Prescription drugs or over-the-counter medications, including insulin, prescribed or approved by a licensed practitioner or qualified health professional
- Rental or purchase of prescribed medical supplies, sick room equipment or other prescribed equipment
- Health and hospitalization insurance policy premiums
- Medicare premiums
- Co-payments, spend-down or other cost-sharing for Medicaid recipients
- Dentures, hearing aids and prostheses
- Purchase and maintenance of a specially trained service animal, such as a seeing-eye or hearing dog, including food for the animal and veterinarian expenses
- Eyeglasses prescribed by an optometrist or a physician skilled in eye disease
- Reasonable transportation and lodging to obtain medical treatment or services
- Maintenance of an attendant, such as a homemaker, home health aide, childcare service or housekeeper; this service must be provided by a nonhousehold member and be necessary due to age, infirmity or illness of the elderly or disabled household member
  - **Note**: If the household provides the majority of an attendant's meals, the household is eligible for a deduction equal to the benefit allotment for one person; this deduction must be updated each October when the maximum allotment amount changes to reflect the increased maximum benefit for a one-person household

The following expenses are not allowable expenses:

- Any portion of an allowable medical expense that is reimbursed
- The cost of medical marijuana **is never allowed** as an expense, even if prescribed by a physician
- Life and accident, mortgage or debt insurance policies and disability insurance
- Food items purchased for special diets, such as the supplemental drink Ensure

If a medical expense could qualify for both the medical deduction and the dependent care deduction, the household can choose to deduct the expense as either medical or dependent care expense but not both.

Example

Ms. Dodds' son, James, is 19 years old and has disabilities that require constant care. To enable Ms. Dodds to work, James attends an adult daycare center. Use the cost of the adult daycare as a dependent care expense instead of a medical deduction. This is because the entire amount can be deducted as a dependent care expense but would have to be reduced by $35 if used for the medical deduction.

Medical expense deductions would be based on current verified medical expenses and any anticipated changes that can reasonably be expected to occur during the certification period.

If the household reports a medical expense at certification but cannot verify the expense, ESA must not give the deduction until the expense and reimbursement are verified. See ***Section 5.3.1, Verification of Medical Expenses***, for additional information about verification and treatment of medical expenses.

12.6.1 Nonrecurring Medical Expenses

Nonrecurring medical expenses occur on a one-time basis (e.g. expenses related to surgery).

- For households assigned a certification period of 12 months or less, allowable nonrecurring medical expenses may be given, at the individual's option, as a one-time deduction in the month the change would become effective, or the expense can be averaged over the certification period.
- For households in which all adult members are elderly or disabled with no earned income, allowable nonrecurring medical expenses may be given, at the individual's option, as a one-time deduction in the month the change would become effective, averaged over a 12-month period or averaged over the entire certification period.

Households reporting allowable nonrecurring medical expenses during the certification period have the same options as above to have a one-time deduction or averaged over the certification period. Averaging would begin the month the change becomes effective.

Example

Zelda is 66, lives alone and is receiving a $90 medical deduction. On March 2 (the seventh month of her 36-month certification period), Zelda reports paying $1,680 for a hip replacement. Zelda can choose to treat this expense in one of the following ways beginning in the month of April (when the change becomes effective):

- One-time deduction: In April, the medical deduction would be $1,770 ($90 + $1,680). For May through the end of the certification period, the deduction would go back to $90.
- Average deduction: Average the expense over the remaining 28 months in the certification period to get $60 ($1,680 ÷ 28). Add this amount to Zelda's existing deduction to get a total of $150 ($90 + $60). Zelda's medical deduction will now be $150 for the remainder of the certification period.
- **Note:** The $35 excess is already factored in Zelda's existing $90 deduction.

12.6.2 Recurring Medical Expenses

Recurring medical expenses continue to occur over a specific period. The expense can be allowed in the month the expense is billed or otherwise becomes due. Past due medical expenses may be considered if reported at the appropriate certification/recertification as required.

ESA must average fluctuating recurring expenses to calculate an average **monthly** expense.

If a recurring expense is billed less often than monthly, the household may elect to have the expense averaged over the period of time the expense is meant to cover (converted to a monthly expense).

Example

James is disabled. He has a $60 prescription, charged every three months for a 90-day supply, and $110 monthly insurance premium. The prescription expense needs to be converted to a monthly amount. Divide $60 over the three months the prescription is meant to cover to get a monthly amount of $20. The $20 amount would then be added to the $110 monthly premium for a total monthly amount of $130. Subtract $35 to get the monthly medical deduction amount of $95.

12.7 Shelter Deductions

Households with allowable shelter expenses may receive a shelter deduction. SNAP has two types of shelter deductions:

- **Excess shelter deduction** applies to households with shelter costs (including an SUA) in excess of 50 percent of the household's net income after all other deductions.
- **Homeless shelter deduction** may be elected by households that incur shelter costs and in which all members are experiencing homelessness.

12.7.1 Excess Shelter Deduction

ESA allows an income deduction for monthly shelter costs that are more than 50 percent of the household's income **after** applying the earned income, standard, excess medical, dependent care and child support deductions.

The excess shelter deduction is composed of the following:

- Allowable monthly shelter expenses (e.g. rent, mortgage)
- Allowable monthly utility expenses, which in the District is in the form of an SUA; see ***Section 12.7.3, Utility Allowance***

Shelter expenses include the costs necessary to maintain a residence.

Allowable shelter expenses include the following:

- Rent
- Mortgage for real property or a mobile home (allow principal and interest for mortgage)
- Mandatory personal mortgage insurance
- Second or third mortgage
- Liens or judgments against the property
- Property taxes and state and local assessments

- Insurance on the structure but not separate charges on the contents, such as furniture, clothing and personal belongings (if the cost of insurance includes coverage on the structure and the contents, the entire charge may be deducted)
- Costs for repair of a home that was substantially damaged or destroyed as a result of a natural disaster (i.e. fire or flood) that have yet to be reimbursed
- Shelter costs associated with an unoccupied home, including homes in another state, temporarily unoccupied by the SNAP household due to employment or training away from home, illness or abandonment caused by a natural disaster or casualty loss; all shelter expenses listed in this section incurred on a temporarily unoccupied home can be counted as a shelter expense and used when calculating the household's excess shelter deduction, provided all of the following conditions are met:
  - The SNAP household intends to return to the home.
  - The current occupants of the home, if any, are not claiming shelter costs on that home for SNAP purposes.
  - The home is not being leased or rented to others during the SNAP household's absence.

Example

Mr. Powell was arrested and borrowed money for bail. As collateral for the loan, he used his home. Because failure to pay the loan, including interest, would result in the loss of the household's shelter, payments on the bail loan are allowable as shelter costs.

The following expenses are not allowable:

- Insurance on furniture or other personal belongings
- Rental insurance
- One-time deposits (i.e. security deposit)
- Repairs to dwelling resulting from a disaster that have been or will be reimbursed
- Amounts carried forward from past billing periods (i.e. past due amounts)
- Late fees or penalties

Households cannot receive credit for utility expenses for unoccupied homes when they also receive credit for utility costs for the residence they presently occupy.

Shelter expenses are allowed when billed. The expenses do not have to be paid to be allowed. For example, rent that is due each month must be included in the household's shelter costs, even if the household has not yet paid the expense.

The household can elect to average recurring nonmonthly expenses or one-time expenses instead of taking the deduction in the month the expenses are billed or become due as follows:

- **Recurring expenses not billed monthly** are averaged forward over the interval between scheduled billings or, if there is no scheduled interval, averaged forward over the period the expense is intended to cover.

- For example, if a household receives a single bill in February that covers three months of home insurance, the bill may be averaged over February, March and April.

- **One-time expenses** are averaged over the entire certification period in which they are billed.

Shelter expenses must be verified before a deduction can be provided. See ***Section 5.3.4, Verification of Shelter Expenses***.

The total amount of the excess shelter deduction depends on the household composition:

- A household that includes at least one member who is 60 or older or disabled may receive a deduction equal to the full amount of shelter expenses (plus the utility allowance) that exceed 50 percent of the household's net income.
- All other households that do not contain a member who is 60 or older or disabled cannot receive a shelter deduction in excess of the maximum shelter deduction. The maximum shelter deduction changes each October. See ***Table 25.3.d, SNAP Maximum Shelter Deduction and Homeless Shelter Deduction***, for current values.

Example 1

Loretta, aged 72, and Jasmine, aged 68, live together and pay $1,500 a month in mortgage payments and are eligible for the $345 HCSUA (fiscal year [FY] 2023). The household's net income after all other deductions is $800. The excess shelter deduction is calculated as follows:

- Total shelter expenses: $1,500 + $345 = $1,845
- 50 percent of net income = $400
- Shelter expenses in excess of 50 percent of net income: $1,845 - $400 = $1,445

Because the household contains a member who is 60 or older, there is no cap, and the household's monthly shelter deduction is $1,445.

Example 2

James and Carlotta, who are both younger than 60 and do not have disabilities, live together and pay $1,500 a month in mortgage payments and are eligible for the $345 HCSUA (FY 2023) because they pay for heating costs. The household's net income after all other deductions is $800. The excess shelter deduction is calculated as follows:

- Total shelter expenses: $1,500 + $345 = $1,845
- 50 percent of net income = $400
- Shelter expenses in excess of 50 percent of net income: $1,845 - $400 = $1,445

The household is eligible for a monthly excess shelter deduction of $624, the maximum shelter deduction (FY 2023) for households without a member who is 60 or older or has a disability.

12.7.2 Homeless Shelter Deduction

ESA allows a standard deduction amount for households that pay monthly shelter and/or utility expenses and in which all members are experiencing homelessness. The deduction is subtracted from the household's net income.

The standard homeless shelter deduction changes each October. See ***Table 25.3.d, SNAP Maximum Shelter Deduction and Homeless Shelter Deduction***, for current values.

To be eligible for the homeless shelter deduction, the household must meet all of the following criteria:

- Be composed of members who lack a fixed and regular nighttime residence
- Not receive free shelter throughout the month
- Pay for shelter expenses and/or utilities

Households eligible for the homeless shelter deduction may elect to claim actual shelter expenses instead of the standard homeless shelter deduction. These households' shelter deductions will be determined in accordance with ***Section 12.7.1, Excess Shelter Deduction***.

Households that receive the homeless shelter deduction **cannot** also receive the excess shelter deduction or a utility allowance. ESA will work with households experiencing homelessness to determine whether they would benefit from the homeless shelter deduction or the excess shelter deduction.

Shelter expenses may be verified. See ***Section 5.3.4.2, Homeless Shelter Deduction***.

12.7.3 Utility Allowance

When determining a household's excess shelter deduction (see ***Section 12.7.1, Excess Shelter Deduction***), ESA uses an SUA instead of actual utility costs paid by the household. These standard amounts may be more or less than a household's actual out-of-pocket expenses for utilities in a given month.

ESA uses the following SUAs:

- HCSUA for households that pay for heat or air conditioning costs (see ***Section 12.7.3.1, Heating and Cooling Standard Utility Allowance***) directly to a utility provider, to a landlord, or to someone with whom the household shares these expenses.
- HCSUA for households with a member who is 60 years or older or disabled and received an energy assistance payment of more than $20 under the Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Act of 1981 (42 U.S.C. § 8621, *et seq.*) or other similar energy assistance program in the past twelve (12) months. (see ***Section 12.7.3.1, Heating and Cooling Standard Utility Allowance***).
- Limited Utility Allowance (LUA) for households that do not incur heating or air conditioning costs but are paying any portion of **at least 2** allowable utility expenses directly to the utility provider, to a landlord, or to someone with whom the household shares these expenses (see ***Section 12.7.3.2, Limited Utility Allowance***).

- One Utility Allowance (OUA) for households that do not incur heating or air conditioning costs but are paying any portion of only **one** allowable utility expense directly to the utility provider, to a landlord, or to someone with whom the household shares these expenses (see ***Section 12.7.3.3, One Utility Allowance***)
- Telephone SUA to households when telephone (landline or cellular) is their only utility expense. This includes households that share telephone expenses (see ***Section 12.7.3.4, Telephone Allowance***).
- ~~only applies HCSUA (see **_Section 12.7.3.1, Heating and Cooling Standard Utility Allowance_**) to households that qualify for an SUA.~~

The SUA amounts are adjusted each October to account for changes in the District's utility costs. See ***Table 25.3.e, Standard Utility Allowance***, for current values.

Households that receive the homeless shelter deduction are **not** eligible to receive an SUA. ESA will work with households experiencing homelessness to determine whether they would benefit from the homeless shelter deduction or the SUA.

12.7.3.1 Heating and Cooling Standard Utility Allowance

HCSUA includes the costs for heating and cooking fuel, cooling and electricity, water and sewage, garbage/trash collection and telephone. Cooling costs do not include the cost of using fans.

Households that are responsible for a heating or cooling cost that is separate from their rent or mortgage are eligible for the HCSUA, including the following:

- ~~Households that receive energy assistance under the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) of at least $20.01 in the last 12 months~~
- ~~Households that receive an energy assistance payment of at least $20.01 under LIHEAP Heat and Eat in the last 12 months (see **_Section 12.7.3.1.1, Heat and Eat_**)~~
- ~~Households that receive direct or indirect energy assistance payments other than LIHEAP, such as the US Department of Housing and Urban Development utility reimbursements, which are expected to pay for some out-of-pocket heating or cooling expenses during the certification period~~
- Residents of private rental housing who are billed monthly for heating or cooling costs by their landlords based on individual use or a flat rate
- Residents in a public or private housing unit that has a central utility meter and charges residents only for excess heating and cooling costs

A household incurring heating or cooling costs on an intermittent basis but otherwise eligible for the HCSUA may continue to receive it between billing periods.

In addition, households with at least one member who is 60 years or older or disabled can receive the HCSUA upon receipt of energy assistance payments, including the following:

- Households that receive energy assistance under the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) of at least $20.01 in the last 12 months

- Households that receive an energy assistance payment of at least $20.01 under LIHEAP Heat and Eat in the last 12 months (see ***Section 12.7.3.1.1, Heat and Eat***)
- Households that receive direct or indirect energy assistance payments other than LIHEAP, such as the US Department of Housing and Urban Development utility reimbursements, which are of at least $20.01 in the last 12 months and expected to pay for some out-of-pocket heating or cooling expenses during the certification period

12.7.3.1.1 Heat and Eat

ESA and the District Department of Energy and Environment partner to provide certain SNAP households a $20.01 yearly energy assistance benefit through LIHEAP Heat and Eat. This annual benefit is provided to SNAP households with at least one member who is 60 years or older or disabled that do not already qualify for the HCSUA and for which the use of the HCSUA will result in increased SNAP benefit.

The system determines if the household is eligible for the Heat and Eat benefit based on the following factors:

- If the household does not include a member who is 60 years or older or disabled, the system will not provide a Heat and Eat benefit.
- If the household will receive the maximum allotment without applying the HCSUA, the system will not provide a Heat and Eat benefit. The household will receive the maximum SNAP allotment.
- If the Heat and Eat benefit would increase the household's monthly allotment, the system will trigger a Heat and Eat benefit and provide the HCSUA to the household.

The process to determine the Heat and Eat benefit occurs in the same manner for applications and recertifications.

Households that receive the Heat and Eat do not need to provide verification of utility expenses. However, ESA must verify that the household received a LIHEAP Heat and Eat payment within the last 12 months prior to providing the HCSUA.

Example 1

Ms. Grier, age 65, applies for SNAP benefits. She states that she does not pay heating or cooling costs, and there is no record in DCAS of a LIHEAP payment.

Based on her income and other expenses, Ms. Grier is eligible for the maximum SNAP allotment even without the HCSUA. The system identifies her as eligible for the maximum allotment without the HCSUA and does not provide a Heat and Eat benefit.

Example 2

Mr. Allen's current SNAP certification period ends June 30. Mr. Allen is disabled. He comes to recertify on June 13. During the interview, Mr. Allen provides verification of his monthly wages and shelter costs. He also verifies he does not pay for heating or cooling separate from his monthly rent. After entering Mr. Allen's income and expenses, the system determines he is not eligible for the maximum allotment and that applying the HCSUA would increase his monthly SNAP benefit allotment. Therefore, the system provides the Heat and Eat benefit and then adds the HCSUA to Mr. Allen's shelter costs to determine his monthly SNAP benefit allotment.

Example 3

Ms. Allawi applies for SNAP on August 10. She rents and pays separately for her heating and cooling costs. She is not 60 years or older or disabled.

Because she pays for her heating costs, she is eligible for the HCSUA. ~~without a Heat and Eat benefit.~~ ESA documents that the household claimed to pay heating expenses and is not eligible for Heat and Eat.

12.7.3.2 Limited Utility Allowance

The Limited Utility Allowance (LUA) includes the following non-heating/non-cooling costs (including flat fees for these costs):

- Electricity for purposes other than heating or air conditioning
- Gas or other fuels for purposes other than heating or air conditioning
- Water/sewage
- Telephone

Households that do not qualify for the HCSUA but are responsible for paying any portion **of at least two** of the above expenses directly to their utility provider, to a landlord, or to someone with whom the household shares these expenses are eligible to receive the LUA.

12.7.3.3 One Utility Allowance

The One Utility Allowance (OUA) is for households that are responsible for paying any portion of only **one** of the following expenses directly to their utility provider, to a landlord, or to someone with whom the household shares these expenses:

- Electricity for purposes other than for heating or air conditioning
- Gas or other fuels for purposes other than for heating or air conditioning
- Water/sewage

12.7.3.4 Telephone Allowance

The telephone allowance includes the following expenses:

- Landline
- Cellular/mobile phone

Households that do not qualify for the HCSUA, LUA, or OUA and are responsible for paying any portion of a telephone expense directly to their telephone/mobile phone provider, to a landlord, or to someone with whom the household shares these expenses are eligible to receive the telephone SUA.

12.7.3.5 Allowable Utility Costs

- Cooking fuel (e.g., natural gas, propane, kerosene)
- Cooling:
  - Central air conditioning
  - Room or window air conditioner
  - Excess cooling costs
    - Only for households in public housing that have central utility meters and charge households only for excess cooling costs
- Heating
  - Heating fuel (e.g., natural gas, propane, kerosene)
  - Electricity (to power air conditioning)
  - Purchased wood
  - Steam heat
  - Space heater (if primary source of heat)
  - Excess heating costs
    - Only for households in public housing that have central utility meters and charge households only for excess heating costs
- Electricity for non-heating/non-cooling (e.g., oven, stove, microwave, lights, etc.)
- Garbage/trash collection
  - **Note**: Garbage/trash collection is **not** included in the District's SUAs as most households are not responsible for directly paying for this service.

- Water/sewage
  - Including well and septic tank installation and maintenance
- Telephone (landline and cellular/mobile)
- Fees charged for installation of utilities

Heating costs associated with electricity or heating fuel must be for primary heating and do **not** include:

- Space heaters (unless they are the primary source of heat)
- Electric blankets
- Heat lamps
- Use of the cooking stove to heat

Cooling costs associated with electricity (or heating fuel in some circumstances) do **not** include:

- Fans

Legal Authority

Utility allowance (Federal): SNAP: 7 USC § 2014(e)(6)(C), 7 CFR § 273.9(d)(6)(ii)(C), 7 CFR § 273.9(d)(6)(iii)

Chapter

13

Chapter 13. Determining Household Eligibility and Benefit Level

13.1 Determining Household Eligibility

ESA must determine a household's eligibility for SNAP by completing the following tasks:

- Receive all required verification to verify household circumstances (see ***Chapter 5, Verification***).
  - **Note**: For households entitled to expedited processing, verification may be postponed except for identity (see ***Section 7.2.5, Expedited Verification***).
- Ensure the household meets all the nonfinancial eligibility requirements (see ***Chapter 8, Nonfinancial Eligibility***).
- For households subject to asset limits, ensure the household does not have more assets than the appropriate asset limit (see ***Section 13.2, Determining Assets***).
- For households subject to the gross and net income limits, ensure the household does not have income higher than these limits (see ***Section 13.5.2, Income Eligibility***).

For households determined eligible for SNAP, ESA will calculate monthly benefit amount. Households with three or more members whose calculated monthly benefit amount is zero are not eligible to participate. See ***Section 13.5, Calculation of Net Income and Benefit Levels***.

ESA must use prospective eligibility to determine eligibility and benefit levels.

13.1.1 Prospective Eligibility and Budgeting

Prospective eligibility is the determination of SNAP eligibility based on actual and anticipated income and other household circumstances.

Prospective budgeting is the determination of an eligible SNAP household's benefit amount based on actual and anticipated income and other household circumstances reasonably anticipated. See ***Section 13.3, Determining Income***, for more information.

ESA uses prospective eligibility and budgeting.

- This requires ESA to anticipate the household's circumstances for each month of participation based on existing circumstances that are expected to remain the same and changes in existing circumstances that are reasonably certain to occur.
- Prospective eligibility and budgeting are used at initial application, mid-certification, recertification or when a household experiences a change in circumstances that may affect its eligibility or benefits.

13.1.2 Month of Application

ESA uses a household's circumstances for the entire month of application to determine eligibility and benefit level for the initial month of certification.

13.1.3 Recertification

Eligibility for recertification will be determined based on circumstances anticipated for the certification period starting the month following the expiration of the current certification period. The level of benefits for recertification will be based on the same anticipated circumstances.

13.1.4 Anticipated Changes

Because of anticipated changes, a household may be eligible for the month of application but ineligible in the subsequent month. The household will be entitled to benefits for the month of application even if the processing of its application results in the benefits being issued in the subsequent month.

Similarly, a household may be ineligible for the month of application but eligible in the subsequent month due to anticipated changes in circumstances. Even though it is found ineligible or is denied benefits for the month of application, the household does not have to reapply in the subsequent month. The same application will be used for the denial for the month of application and the determination of eligibility for subsequent months.

As a result of anticipated changes, the household's allotment for the month of application may differ from its allotment in subsequent months.

Legal Authority

Determining household eligibility and benefit levels (Federal): SNAP: 7 USC § 2014, 7 CFR § 273.10

Month of application (Federal): SNAP: 7 CFR § 273.10(a)

Recertification (Federal): SNAP: 7 CFR § 273.10(a)(2)

Anticipated changes (Federal): SNAP: 7 CFR § 273.10(a)(3)

13.2 Determining Assets

ESA must determine a household's available assets if the household is subject to the asset limits. Households that are not categorically eligible for SNAP are subject to the asset limits. See ***Chapter 4, Categorically Eligible Households***, for additional information. Households subject to asset limits include the following:

- Households that include an individual disqualified for any of the following reasons:
  - An IPV (see ***Chapter 21, Disqualification for Intentional Program Violation***)
  - Being a fleeing felon or probation or parole violator (see ***Sections 8.5.1, Fleeing Felons*** and ***8.5.2, Probation and Parole Violators***)
  - Conviction of certain crimes and noncompliance with their sentence (see ***Section 8.5.5, Certain Convicted Felons***)
  - Failure to meet the work requirements when the individual is the head of the household (see ***Chapter 9, SNAP Work Requirements***)
- Households disqualified for substantial lottery or gambling winnings (see ***Section 14.10, Disqualification for Substantial Lottery and Gambling Winnings***)

To determine the total value of available assets for a household subject to the asset limits, see ***Chapter 10, Resource Eligibility***.

The total value of available assets of a household subject to the asset limits must be compared with the appropriate asset limit in effect at the time of eligibility determination (see ***Table 25.3.g, Asset Limits***). If the household's assets are greater than the appropriate limit, the household is ineligible for failing to have assets less than the appropriate asset limit.

Non-categorically eligible SNAP households fall into two asset limit categories (see ***Table 25.3.g, Asset Limits***, for the current limits):

- Households that include members who are 60 and older or have a disability
- All other households

See ***Chapter 14, Determining Action on Households With Special Circumstances***, for instructions on counting assets for certain nonhousehold members.

Legal Authority

Maximum allowable financial resources (Federal): SNAP: 7 USC § 2014(g), 7 CFR § 273.8(b)

13.3 Determining Income

A household's countable income is used to determine whether the household is income-eligible for program benefits (gross and net income test). Categorically eligible households are not subject to the gross or net income test. The household's income is also used to determine the level of benefits for which the household is eligible.

All SNAP cases are budgeted prospectively. ESA will use the following budgeting procedures to determine ongoing prospective income:

- To determine representative income, verify all income received in the past 30 days (four current consecutive weeks) prior to the file date. The file date is the date the ESA received the application (initial or reapplication), recertification or report form.
- Determine the number of times this income was received in those four weeks. Use income receipt date (not pay period ending date). To determine countable income, use four consecutive weeks of income received in the past 30 days unless one or more of those pay dates is determined to be not representative.
- Follow appropriate policy in this section.

Representative income is the income within the range of what would be considered typical or usual for that particular job. Income that is significantly higher or lower due to circumstances not typical or usual would not be considered representative. Such a break or difference in income might be due to illness, death, vacation, emergency, overtime or other reasons. ESA must also determine if a week in which no pay is received in the four-week period is representative, considering the nature of the job in making this determination. If the pay for one or more of the four consecutive weeks is not representative, ESA must disregard that week's income and document the reason it was not considered representative income.

13.3.1 Anticipated Income

Total countable income for eligibility is determined on the basis of the income anticipated to be received during the certification period.

A person may receive income less often than monthly or may receive a payment for a period of more than one month. ESA records the amount and frequency of income receipt—weekly, biweekly, semimonthly or monthly—and converts all income to monthly by multiplying the average payment amount by the average number of payment periods in a calendar month and rounding to the nearest cent:

- If payments are received weekly, multiply by 4.3.
- If payments are received biweekly (every other week), multiply by 2.15.
- If payments are received semimonthly (twice a month), multiply by 2.

If the payments received vary, ESA averages the payments and then converts this average figure to a monthly amount. Converting earnings or other income to an average monthly amount evens out household earnings to ensure the timing of paychecks and pay periods does not affect program eligibility.

Example 1

Ms. Elizondo and her two children apply for SNAP. Ms. Elizondo works and is paid biweekly. In the month of application, she has already received one paycheck for $350 and is expecting to receive a second paycheck for $400. Follow these steps to compute anticipated income:

1. Average the two paychecks to compute average biweekly earnings ($350 + $400 = 750 ÷ 2 = $375).
2. Convert the biweekly earnings to monthly earnings by multiplying the average biweekly earnings by 2.15 ($375 x 2.15 = $806.25).

Example 2

Mr. Thompson is under contract to drywall an office building. The renovation is scheduled to take six months. The contract states Mr. Thompson will be paid $6,000 when the work is completed. Divide the $6,000 contracted earnings by the contractual six-month period. Mr. Thompson is treated as if he earns $1,000 per month during the months covered by the contract. See ***Section 11.2.1, Self-Employment Income*****.**

- If self-employment or rental income is received less often than monthly, convert the self-employment or rental income to a monthly amount based on past or estimated future proceeds.
- Divide educational benefits by the number of months in the period the benefits are intended to cover (e.g. semester, term).
- If income is received on a regular basis and is representative of the amount the applicant or recipient can reasonably be expected to receive throughout the eligibility period, total countable income is projected based on the income actually received during the 30 days preceding the date of application or recertification.
- If total countable income received during the 30 days preceding the date of application is not representative of the income the applicant or recipient can reasonably be expected to receive, as in cases where the individual has been ill, is performing seasonal labor or anticipates an increase in income, make the necessary adjustment for an accurate projection of income.
- If income is received on an irregular basis, review the case circumstances with the applicant or recipient to determine the most appropriate means of projecting income. A lump sum payment of earned income must be prorated over the months it is expected to take to earn the payment. If the irregular income is from self-employment or seasonal employment, review the income earned during the three months prior to the month of application or recertification if that is the best estimate of what future earnings during the certification period are likely to be.

Example

Ms. Weiss earns $15.15 an hour and usually works 40 hours a week. She is paid every other Friday. Her last three gross pay amounts (from the month prior to the month of application) were $606, $570.70 and $712.05.

Ms. Weiss has submitted a signed statement from her employer to verify that her hours will be reduced to 35 hours per week effective the first day of the next month.

When determining Ms. Weiss's income for the month of application when she was still working 40 hours per week, use her expected gross pay for the month of application. If she expects to work 40 hours during the month of application and does not expect to work overtime, assume that she will earn $606 per paycheck. Determine her eligibility for the month of application based on her expected monthly income in that month.

When determining the household's eligibility for future months, use her anticipated earnings based on working 35 hours a week to determine the household's prospective income ($15.15 x 35 = $530.25).

13.3.2 Income Only in Month Received

Once anticipated income is converted to a monthly amount (see ***Section 13.3.1, Anticipated Income***), the monthly amount will be attributed to each month of the certification period in which the household anticipates to receive the income, unless the income is being averaged (see ***Section 13.3.3, Income Averaging***).

- Wages held at the request of the employee will be considered income to the household in the month the wages would otherwise have been paid by the employer.
- Wages held by the employer as a general practice, even if in violation of law, will not be counted as income to the household unless the household anticipates it will ask for and receive an advance or receive income from wages that were previously held by the employer as a general practice and that were, therefore, not previously counted as income by ESA.
- Advances on wages will count as income in the month received only if reasonably anticipated, as defined in ***Section 13.3.1, Anticipated Income***.
- Households receiving income on a recurring monthly or semimonthly basis will not have their monthly income varied merely because of changes in mailing cycles or pay dates or because weekends or holidays cause additional payments to be received in a month.
- Nonrecurring lump sum payments will be counted as a resource starting in the month received and will not be counted as income.

13.3.3 Income Averaging

- Although ESA uses income received during the past 30 days as an indicator of the income that is and will be available to the household during the certification period, if changes in income have occurred or can be anticipated, ESA will not use past income.

- If income fluctuates between months to the extent that a 30-day period alone cannot provide an accurate indication of anticipated income, ESA and the household may use a longer period of past time if it will provide a more accurate indication of anticipated fluctuations in future monthly income. To average income, ESA can use past monthly income amounts and/or the monthly income the household anticipates to receive over the certification period.
  - **Note:** Income averaging is different from converting weekly, biweekly or semimonthly income into a monthly amount, as described in ***Section 13.3.1, Anticipated Income***.

Example

Mr. Smith works at a fast-food restaurant between 25 and 35 hours a week, so his monthly income can fluctuate by about $500 from month to month. Mr. Smith made $1,500 in April (the month of application) but expects to receive less in future months. Mr. Smith provides verification of March income of $1,100. Average income for March and April is $1,300, which can be used as a more accurate estimate of anticipated income over the certification period.

- Average income can be recalculated in response to new information about or reported changes in income.
- Households that, by contract or self-employment, derive their annual income in a period of time shorter than one year will have that income averaged over a 12-month period, provided the income from the contract is not received on an hourly or piecework basis. These households may include school employees, sharecroppers, farmers and other self-employed households. However, these provisions do not apply to migrant or seasonal farmworkers.
- The procedures for determining self-employed income are described in ***Section 11.2.1, Self-Employment Income***. Self-employment income that is not the household's annual income and is not paid on an hourly or piecework basis will be prorated over the period the income is intended to cover.
- Earned (and unearned) educational income, after allowable exclusions, will be averaged over the period it is intended to cover. Income will be counted either in the month it is received or in the month the household anticipates receiving it or receiving the first installment payment, although it is still prorated over the period it is intended to cover.

Example

Mr. Smith applies for SNAP after being laid off. The past 30 days of his earnings are not reasonable to anticipate for future months because the employment has ended.

Legal Authority

Determining income eligibility (Federal): SNAP: 7 USC § 2014, 7 CFR §§ 273.9-10, 7 CFR § 273.2(j)(2)(v)

13.4 Determining Deductions

Allowable deductions include only certain dependent care, shelter, child support and medical costs, as described in ***Chapter 12, Income Deductions***.

- **Note:** Dependent care expenses will only be deductible if the service is provided by someone outside the SNAP household and the SNAP household makes a money payment for the service. For example, a dependent care deduction will not be allowed if another SNAP household member provides the care or compensation for the care is provided as an in-kind benefit, such as food.

13.4.1 Billed Expenses

Except as provided in ***Section 13.4.2, Averaging Expenses***, a deduction will be allowed only in the month the expense is billed or otherwise becomes due, regardless of when the household intends to pay the expense. For example, rent due each month will be included in the household's shelter costs even if the household has not yet paid the expense. Amounts carried forward from past billing periods are not deductible, even if included with the most recent billing and actually paid by the household. In any event, a particular expense may only be deducted once.

ESA will calculate a household's expenses based on the expenses the household expects to be billed for during the certification period. Anticipation of the expense will be based on the most recent month's bills unless the household is reasonably certain a change will occur.

13.4.2 Averaging Expenses

Households may elect to have fluctuating expenses averaged. Households may also elect to have expenses that are billed less often than monthly averaged forward over the interval between scheduled billings or, if there is no scheduled interval, averaged forward over the period the expense is intended to cover. For example, if a household receives a single bill in February that covers the next three months of childcare, the bill may be averaged over February, March and April. The household may elect to have one-time-only expenses averaged over the entire certification period in which they are billed.

13.4.3 Conversion of Deductions

Household's expenses billed weekly or biweekly will be converted to a monthly amount following procedures for income in ***Section 13.3.1, Anticipated Income***.

13.4.3.1 Anticipated Medical Expenses

For households eligible for the medical deduction (see ***Section 12.6, Medical Deduction***), the household's monthly medical deduction for the certification period will be based on the information reported and verified by the household and any anticipated changes in the household's medical expenses that can be reasonably expected to occur during the certification period based on available information about the recipient's medical condition, public or private insurance coverage and current verified medical expenses.

The household will not be required to file reports about its medical expenses during the certification period.

Legal Authority
Determining deductions (Federal): SNAP: 7 USC § 2014(e), 7 CFR § 273.10(d)

13.5 Calculation of Net Income and Benefit Levels

13.5.1 Net Monthly Income

To determine a household's net monthly income, ESA must calculate the following:

1. **Gross monthly income:** Add the gross monthly countable income earned by all household members and the total monthly countable unearned income of all household members to determine the household's total gross income. (This is the household's gross monthly income used to determine if non-categorically eligible households and households without adults aged 60 and older or individuals with disabilities have incomes below the gross income limits.)
2. **Earned income deduction:** Multiply the total gross monthly countable earned income by 20 percent and subtract this amount from the gross monthly income.
3. **Standard deduction:** Subtract the current standard deduction amount based on household size.
4. **Excess medical deduction:** If the household is entitled to a medical deduction, as provided in ***Section 12.6, Medical Deduction***, determine if total medical expenses exceed $35. If so, subtract allowable monthly medical expenses that exceed $35.
5. **Dependent care deduction:** Subtract allowable monthly dependent care expenses, if any, for each dependent.
6. **Child support deduction:** Subtract allowable monthly child support payments in accordance with ***Section 12.5, Child Support Deduction***.
7. **Homeless shelter deduction standard:** For households composed of members who experience homelessness and have qualifying shelter costs and opt to receive the homeless shelter deduction standard (see ***Section 12.7.2, Homeless Shelter Deduction***) *instead of* the excess shelter deduction, subtract the current homeless shelter deduction standard.

   Note: Households that are experiencing homelessness and have qualifying shelter expenses can either opt to receive the homeless shelter deduction standard or excess shelter deduction; they cannot take both.
8. **Excess shelter deduction:** Calculate total allowable monthly shelter expenses plus an SUA to determine total shelter costs.
   - Subtract from total shelter costs 50 percent of the household's monthly income after the earned income, standard, excess medical, dependent care and child support deductions (#2–#6) have been subtracted.
   - The remaining amount, if any, is the excess shelter cost. If there is no excess shelter cost, the household is not eligible for the excess shelter deduction.

– If there are excess shelter costs, subtract the excess shelter cost, up to the current maximum excess shelter amount, from the household's monthly income after all other applicable deductions (#2–#6). Households that contain a member aged 60 or older or a member with a disability are not subject to a capped shelter expense (see ***Section 12.7, Shelter Deductions***) and will have the total excess shelter costs subtracted from the household's monthly income after all other applicable deductions (#2–#6).

9. **Net monthly income:** The result of the above steps is the household's net monthly income for SNAP. If the amount is a negative number, the household's net monthly income is zero.

The above steps must be adjusted if the household contains certain nonhousehold members. See ***Section 14.1, Treatment of Income and Resources of Certain Nonhousehold Members***, for instructions on counting income and deductions for certain nonhousehold members.

Example
*Using FY 2023 Figures

Step	Household of Two, No Members Aged 60+ or With a Disability	Household of One, Member With a Disability	Household of Three, Homeless, No Members Aged 60+ or With a Disability
1. Gross monthly income			
a. Earned	$1,000	$0	$0
b. Unearned	+ $500	+ $1,358	+ $2,120
c. Gross monthly income	**= $1,500**	**= $1,358**	**= $2,120**
2. Earned income deduction	$200	$0	$0
3. Standard deduction	$193*	$193*	$193*
4. Excess medical deduction	$0	$253	$0
5. Dependent care deduction	$200	$0	$0
6. Child support deduction	$0	$0	$350
Total deductions	$593	$446	$543
Income after deductions	**$907**	**$912**	**$1,577**
7. Homeless shelter deduction standard	$0	$0	$167 (rounded)
Or			
8. Excess shelter deduction			
a. Shelter expenses	$1,000	$800	
b. Standard utility allowance	+ $345*	+ $345*	
c. Total shelter costs	= $1,345	= $1,145	
d. 50 percent of income after deductions	- $454	- $456	
e. Excess shelter costs	= $891	= $689	
f. Excess shelter deduction	$624*	$689	$0
9. **Net monthly income** (income after deductions minus #7 or #8.f)	**$283**	**$223**	**$1,410**

13.5.1.1 Destitute Migrant and Seasonal Farmworker Households

The gross and net monthly income for migrant and seasonal farmworkers who are destitute (see ***Table 25.1.a, Glossary of Terms***) is calculated differently from other households.

Only income received between the first of the month and the date of application is considered. Income the household anticipates receiving from a new source after the date of application is disregarded.

The above only applies to the first month of each certification period at initial certification and recertification.

13.5.1.2 Households With Elementary or Secondary School Students Under Age 18

If a household contains a member younger than 18 who is an elementary or secondary school student and has earned income, ESA must consider the following when calculating gross and net monthly income to determine income eligibility and benefit levels:

- The earned income of the student will be excluded if the student turns 18 during the month of application but will be counted in the following months.
- If the student turns 18 during the certification period, the student's income will be excluded until the month following the month in which the student turns 18.

See ***Section 11.6, Excluded Income***, for additional details.

Legal Authority

Net month income (Federal): SNAP: 7 USC § 2014, 7 CFR § 273.10(e)(1)

Destitute households (Federal): SNAP: 7 CFR §§ 273.10(e)(2)(i)(C), (e)(3)

Student income (Federal): SNAP: 7 CFR § 273.10(e)(2)(i)(E), 7 CFR § 273.9(c)(7)

13.5.2 Income Eligibility

Once gross and net monthly income is calculated in accordance with ***Section 13.5.1, Net Monthly Income***, the household's gross and net monthly income will be compared with the monthly gross and net income limits for the household size in effect at the time of eligibility determination (see ***Table 25.3.a, SNAP Monthly Income Eligibility Standards***) as follows:

- **Categorically eligible households:** No gross and net income limits apply because these households were conferred SNAP income eligibility through another program or service (see ***Chapter 4, Categorically Eligible Households***).
- **Households with an older member or a member with a disability:** Non-categorically eligible households with a member aged 60 or older (including a member who turns 60 in the month of application) or a member with a disability that are not destitute will only have their net monthly income, as calculated in ***Section 13.5.1, Net Monthly Income***, compared with the net income limit.

- **Destitute migrant and seasonal farmworker households:** Migrant and seasonal farmworkers who are considered destitute will have their gross and net income, as calculated in ***Section 13.5.1.1, Destitute Migrant and Seasonal Farmworker Households***, compared with the gross and net income limits.
- **All other households:** All other households will have their gross and net monthly income, as calculated in ***Section 13.5.1, Net Monthly Income***, compared with the gross and net income limits.

Legal Authority
Income eligibility (Federal): SNAP: 7 CFR § 273.10(e)(2)

13.5.3 Benefit Levels

SNAP households that meet income and nonfinancial eligibility must have their monthly SNAP benefit levels calculated as follows:

- **30 percent of net income:** Multiply net monthly income (as calculated in ***Section 13.5.1, Net Monthly Income***) by 30 percent, rounded up if the result ends in cents.
- **Maximum SNAP allotment:** Determine the maximum monthly SNAP allotment for the household's size in effect at the time of eligibility determination (see ***Table 25.3.a, SNAP Monthly Income Eligibility Standards***).
- **Monthly benefit level:** Subtract from the maximum SNAP allotment for the household's size 30 percent of net income to determine the household's monthly SNAP benefit amount.
  - Except for the initial month of benefits, one- or two-person households must not have a monthly benefit level less than the minimum monthly benefit amount (see ***Section 13.5.3.3, Minimum Monthly Benefit Amount***).

13.5.3.1 Determining Initial Month of Benefits

A household's benefit level for the initial month of certification will be based on the day of the month the household applies for benefits (see exceptions below). The household will receive prorated benefits from the date of application to the end of the month.

- Prorate over the exact length of the month during which the application was filed using the SNAP Allotment Proration Table provided by FNS annually.
- Round the prorated amount down to the nearest lower whole dollar.

Formula for Prorating Initial Month Benefits

$$\frac{\textit{(number of days in the month + 1 – application date) x full monthly benefit}}{\textit{number of days in the month}}$$

Example

Mr. Medley applied for SNAP benefits on November 12. He is eligible for a monthly SNAP benefit of $194. His initial month benefits are prorated from November 12:

$$\frac{(30 + 1 - 12) \times \$194}{30} = \$122.86 \text{ (rounded down to \$122)}$$

- If this proration calculation results in an allotment of less than $10, the household does not receive benefits for the initial month.
  - If the household is entitled to benefits in subsequent months (see ***Sections 13.5.3.3, Minimum Monthly Benefit Amount***, and ***13.5.3.4, Entitlement to No Benefits***), the household must not be denied and instead be certified beginning with the month of application.
- For SNAP, a one- or two-person household may receive less than the current minimum allotment due to proration of benefits in the first month.

Exceptions to the proration of benefits for the initial month an application is filed include the following:

- Applicant households consisting of residents of public institutions who apply jointly for SSI and SNAP prior to release from the public institution will have their eligibility determined for the month they are released from the institution. For these households, the benefit level for the initial month of certification must be based on the date of the month the household member is released from the institution. Benefits are received from the date of release from the institution to the end of the month.
- For migrant and seasonal farmworkers, an initial month is the first month the household is certified for SNAP after a period of more than one month of not being certified for SNAP. If a migrant seasonal farmworker household has a gap of a month or less, **do not prorate** benefits from the date of application.

For purposes of this section, the term "initial month" means the first month a household is certified to participate in SNAP following any period during which the household was not certified for participation. The exception is that the initial month for migrant and seasonal farmworker households must follow a period of more than one month in which this household was not certified to participate in SNAP.

13.5.3.2 Determining Benefits at Recertification

Households found eligible at recertification are entitled to a **full month of benefits** (not prorated) for the first month of their new certification period as follows:

- The household submits an application for recertification prior to the end of its certification period, the recertification process is completed before the end of the certification period (i.e. interview and verification), and the household is found eligible for the first month following the end of the certification period.

- The household submits an application for recertification prior to the end of its certification period, an interview is conducted (if required) prior to the end of the certification period, but eligibility cannot be determined by the end of the current certification period due to the time period allowed for submitting any missing verification. The household will receive an opportunity to participate, if eligible, within five working days after the household submits the missing verification. Benefits cannot be prorated.

If the recertification process is delayed beyond the end of the certification period due to a household-caused delay, the first month's benefits for households found eligible are **prorated** either from the date the household takes the required action or from the date of the application for recertification:

- If a household files a recertification application prior to the end of the certification period, regardless of whether the application was submitted by the 15th day of the last month, and the household completes the last outstanding action (i.e. submits final required verification) within 30 days after the end of the certification period, ESA must provide benefits retroactive to the date the household took the last outstanding action.
- If a household files a recertification application within 30 days after the end of the certification period and completes all required actions, benefits must be prorated from the date the recertification application was filed following policy in ***Section 13.5.3.1, Determining Initial Month of Benefits***.

If the recertification process is delayed beyond the end of the certification period due to delays caused by ESA, benefits are provided for the full month of the new certification period and **not prorated**.

- If a household files a recertification application before the end of the certification period but processing is delayed beyond the end of the certification period due to the fault of ESA, the household, if eligible, must receive a full month's benefits for the new certification period.
- If a household files a recertification application within 30 days after the end of the certification period and ESA is at fault for causing the application to be filed after the certification period (i.e. ESA failed to offer assistance to complete the application), the household, if eligible, must receive a full month's benefits for the new certification period.

Follow policy in ***Chapter 17, Recertifications***, to determine cause of delays.

Legal Authority

Recertification eligibility (Federal): SNAP: 7 USC § 2020(e)(4), 7 CFR § 273.10(a)(2), 7 CFR § 273.14(b)(4) and (d)-(e), FNS's SNAP Recertification Toolkit (June 2018)

13.5.3.3 Minimum Monthly Benefit Amount

Except during the initial month (see ***Section 13.5.3.1, Determining Initial Month of Benefits***), the monthly benefit level calculated in accordance with ***Section 13.5.3, Benefit Levels***, for one- and two-person households must not be less than the minimum monthly benefit allotment in effect; see ***Table 25.3.b, SNAP Minimum Allotments***.

Except during the initial month (see ***Section 13.5.3.1, Determining Initial Month of Benefits***), households of three or more persons must receive the monthly allotment as calculated in ***Section 13.5.3, Benefit Levels***.

13.5.3.4 Entitlement to No Benefits

Except during the initial month (see ***Section 13.5.3.1, Determining Initial Month of Benefits***), households of three or more persons whose monthly benefit amount is equal to zero or less (as calculated in ***Section 13.5.3, Benefit Levels***) will be denied on the grounds that the household's net income exceeds the level at which benefits are issued.

13.5.3.5 Prohibition on Benefit Increase Due to Sanction From Another Assistance Program

SNAP allotments cannot be increased when a household's income has been reduced as a result of a sanction in another assistance program. If a household's income is lower due to a penalty, such as a TANF sanction, ESA must compute the household's SNAP benefits as if no sanctions were imposed. See ***Section 14.8, Treatment of Cash Assistance Sanctions for SNAP***.

Legal Authority

Benefit levels (Federal): SNAP: 7 CFR § 273.10(e)(2)(ii)-(iv)

Proration for initial month (Federal): SNAP: 7 CFR § 273.10(a)(1)

Prerelease applicant households (Federal): SNAP: 7 CFR § 273.11(i), 7 CFR § 273.10(a)(1)(ii)

Proration at recertification (Federal): SNAP: 7 CFR § 273.10(a)(2), 7 CFR § 273.14(b)(4) and (e)

Prohibition on benefit increase (Federal): SNAP: 7 CFR § 273.11(j)

13.5.4 Thrifty Food Plan and Maximum SNAP Allotments

Maximum SNAP allotments will be based on the Thrifty Food Plan. Maximum allotments are set based on household size. An eligible SNAP household's benefit amount is equal to the maximum allotment for the household size reduced by 30 percent of the household's net income. Households cannot receive a monthly benefit amount greater than the maximum allotment for the household size.

The Thrifty Food Plan amounts and maximum allotments are adjusted every October 1. Please refer to ***Section 25.3, SNAP Benefit Tables***, for the current maximum allotments.

Legal Authority

Thrifty Food Plan and maximum allotments (Federal): SNAP: 7 CFR § 273.10(e)(4)

13.6 Certification Periods

SNAP households are assigned the following certification periods based on circumstances:

- A six-month certification period is assigned to:
  - Households experiencing homelessness or those that lack a fixed and regular nighttime residence.
  - Households with at least one member who is not exempt and subject to the ABAWD work requirements (see ***Section 9.2, ABAWD Work Requirement and Time Limit***).
- A 12-month certification period is assigned to households that do not meet the criteria for a six- or 36-month certification period. Households assigned a 12-month certification period are required to complete a mid-certification at six months. See ***Section 15.4, Mid-Certification Requirements***.
- A 36-month certification period is assigned to Elderly Simplified Application Project (ESAP) households—households in which all adults are aged 60 or older and/or have a disability and have no earned income. **Note:** Children can be present in these households. ESAP households are not required to complete a mid-certification. See ***Section 20.1, Elderly Simplified Application Project (ESAP)***, for further information regarding ESAP eligibility, requirements and processing of these types of household cases.

13.6.1 Shortening Certification Periods

ESA may not shorten a household's certification period unless one of the following criteria is met:

- ESA receives information that the household has become ineligible.
- The household has not complied with requests to clarify unclear information or data matches.
- ESA must shorten the household's certification period to comply with the requirements of ***Section 15.1, Simplified Reporting***.

ESA must use the Notice of Adverse Action to shorten a certification period, not the Notice of Expiration.

- **Note**: Loss of public assistance or a change in employment status is insufficient by itself to meet the criteria necessary for shortening the certification period.

13.6.2 Extending Certification Periods

ESA may extend a household's current certification period once it is established, as long as the total months of the certification period do not exceed 36 months for households eligible for ESAP or 12 months for other households.

If ESA extends a household's certification period, it must advise the household of the new certification ending date with a notice containing the same information as the Notice of Eligibility.

Legal Authority

Certification periods (Federal): SNAP: 7 CFR § 273.10(f)(1)-(5)

13.7 Transitional Benefit Assistance

Transitional Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (TSNAP) is a short-term allowance of SNAP benefits for customers whose TANF cash assistance terminates because of an increase in income.

These TANF families must also be receiving SNAP benefits to get TSNAP. TSNAP was created to ease the transition from public assistance to self-sufficiency and provides a set amount of benefits for five months.

13.7.1 Eligibility for TSNAP

SNAP households are eligible for TSNAP in the following situations:

- The SNAP household has at least one member who is also a member of a TANF or POWER assistance household, and benefits are being terminated due to an increase in income.
- The household has received SNAP in the last month it received TANF or POWER, and all other members of the SNAP assistance household meet any of the following criteria:
  - Are members of the same TANF or POWER assistance unit
  - Are recipients of SSI benefits
  - Are persons who are mandatory members of the TANF or POWER and SNAP assistance units but are ineligible to participate in SNAP due to immigration status

13.7.2 Who Is Not Eligible for TSNAP

SNAP households cannot receive TSNAP in the following situations:

- If **any** member of the SNAP assistance household is a member of a different TANF or POWER assistance unit
- If a member of the SNAP household meets noncitizen status requirements for SNAP but is not a member of the TANF or POWER assistance household and does not receive SSI
- If the household is leaving TANF or POWER because the TANF or POWER grant is being terminated due to a TANF or POWER disqualification
- If all household members are ineligible to receive SNAP because they meet any of the following criteria:
  - Disqualified for IPV
  - Ineligible for failure to comply with SNAP General Work Requirements
  - Ineligible students
  - Ineligible noncitizens

- Disqualified for failing to provide information needed for ESA to determine eligibility or complete any review of SNAP eligibility
- Disqualified for knowingly transferring assets to be eligible for SNAP
- Disqualified for receiving multiple SNAP benefits
- Disqualified for being a fleeing felon
- ABAWDs who fail to meet current ABAWD work requirements

13.7.3 How Long a Household Can Receive TSNAP

A household eligible for TSNAP can receive these benefits for up to five months, beginning with the first month after the TANF or POWER case closes due to an increase in income. The five months are considered the transitional period and can extend or shorten the household's existing SNAP certification period.

Example 1

Mr. Smith began receiving SNAP and TANF in February. His 12-month certification period will end in January of the following year. Mr. Smith's TANF case closed effective June 30 due to an increase in income. His TSNAP certification period is from July through November. This shortened the original SNAP certification period by two months. Mr. Smith will receive a recertification notice two months before his TSNAP certification period ends, by the end of September.

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
	Case opens				Case closes	TSNAP begins		9/30 SNAP recert notice mailed		TSNAP ends	

Example 2

Mr. Johnson receives SNAP and TANF. His certification period is from January to December. His TANF closes effective October 31 due to an increase in income. His TSNAP transitional period will be for five months, November through March. Mr. Johnson's SNAP certification period is extended by three months. Mr. Johnson will receive a recertification notice two months before his TSNAP certification period ends, by January 31.

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Case opens									Case closes	TSNAP begins	
1/31 SNAP recert notice mailed		TSNAP ends									

13.7.4 Calculation of TSNAP Benefits

ESA determines eligibility for TSNAP prospectively. TSNAP benefits are calculated automatically using the following:

- The household size, income and expenses that were used in determining SNAP eligibility for the last month TANF or POWER was active but disregarding the TANF or POWER benefits and the increase in income that led to the termination of TANF or POWER benefits
- Normal SNAP rules in determining the level of TSNAP benefits for the household

Example

Ms. McField receives SNAP and TANF. Her certification period is from January to December. On August 19, ESA discovers and verifies that, beginning in February, Ms. McField had income that exceeded income for TANF effective March 1.

ESA closes Ms. McField's TANF case effective October 31. There may be an overpayment claim for March through October, but TSNAP begins effective November, the first month after Ms. McField's TANF benefit is actually terminated. Her TSNAP transitional period will be for five months, November through March. Ms. McField's SNAP certification period is extended by three months. She will receive a recertification notice two months before her TSNAP certification period ends, by January 31.

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Case opens		Income begins but is not reported					ESA discovers income and takes action		Case closes	TSNAP begins	
1/31 SNAP recert notice mailed		TSNAP ends									

13.7.5 Illustration of TSNAP Benefits Calculation

Example

Mr. Reyes receives SNAP and TANF. His TANF case closes effective May 31 due to a $3,000 increase in income. His TANF is terminated in June due to this increase in income.

Mr. Reyes's TSNAP certification period is July through November. To calculate his TSNAP income, ESA disregards his TANF grant and increased income. Because of this, Mr. Reyes may receive more SNAP benefits if he is not already receiving the maximum monthly benefit.

	May Income	June Income	July Income TSNAP Begins
Income	$878.00	$878.00	$878.00
Additional income		$3,000	(disregarded)
TANF benefit	$106.00	$0.00	$0.00

13.7.6 Changes During the TSNAP Certification Period

- TSNAP benefits are not recalculated if SNAP parameters change during the TSNAP certification period (such as the annual changes effective October 1).
- TSNAP households do not have to report changes in household, income, residence or expenses during the TSNAP period.
- If a TSNAP household reports a change, ESA will determine the impact the change would have on the level of benefits and make the change effective the month after the last month of the TSNAP certification period or invite the household to reapply and be certified to receive benefits using regular SNAP rules. (In using regular SNAP rules, this would include counting the increase in income that led to the TANF or POWER termination if the household still receives this income.)
- If the household is eligible for fewer SNAP benefits than it would receive under TSNAP, ESA will encourage the household to withdraw its application for recertification and recertify for SNAP at the end of its TSNAP period.
- If the household insists on the change being applied, ESA terminates TSNAP following timely and adequate notice. The first month of the new certification period starts on the first day of the first month following the date of the application for recertification. If the household agrees to withdraw the application for recertification, ESA does not make changes to the TSNAP case.
- If the change would result in a level of SNAP benefits that is greater than the level of TSNAP benefits, ESA will issue a supplemental benefit if it has already issued TSNAP benefits for the first month of the new certification period. The first month of the new certification period is the first day of the first month after receiving the application for recertification.
- If a TSNAP household member leaves the household and applies for SNAP separately or joins another household that receives SNAP, ESA will redetermine benefits for the remainder of the TSNAP household for the remainder of the TSNAP certification period after removing the income and expenses of the person who left the household.
- If a TSNAP household becomes eligible for TANF or POWER again, ESA will terminate TSNAP and determine benefits for a new SNAP certification period using recertification rules.

Example 1

Ms. Harris receives TSNAP benefits of $509 monthly. Her five-month TSNAP period ends on August 30. In June, Ms. Harris applies for recertification of her SNAP benefits.

During the interview, ESA determines that Ms. Harris's SNAP benefits would decrease to $200 monthly based on her current income and expenses. ESA will encourage her to withdraw her application and keep the higher TSNAP benefits through August.

Example 2

Mr. McKinnon receives TSNAP benefits of $300 monthly. His five-month TSNAP period ends on March 31. On February 1, Mr. McKinnon applies for recertification of his SNAP benefits.

During the interview, ESA determines that Mr. McKinnon's SNAP benefits would increase by $55 monthly based on his current income and expenses.

ESA will process the recertification effective February 1 and issue a supplement of $55 for the February benefits.

13.7.7 Termination of TSNAP

If a household receives TSNAP and then starts to receive TANF or POWER again, ESA will terminate TSNAP and determine eligibility for SNAP benefits using recertification rules.

If that household is later terminated from TANF or POWER due to an increase in income, the household can receive TSNAP for another five-month period as long as it meets all TSNAP eligibility criteria.

Legal Authority

Transitional SNAP/TSNAP (Federal): 7 USC § 2020(s), Title 7 CFR Part 273 Subpart H–Transitional Benefit Alternative

Transitional SNAP/TSNAP (District): DC Official Code § 4-261.21

Chapter

14

Chapter 14. Determining Action on Households With Special Circumstances

14.1 Treatment of Income and Resources of Certain Nonhousehold Members

During the period of time that a household member cannot participate for the reasons addressed in this section, the eligibility and benefit level of any remaining household members will be determined in accordance with the procedures outlined in this section.

Whenever an individual is determined ineligible within the household's certification period, ESA will determine the eligibility or ineligibility of the remaining household members based, as much as possible, on the information in the case file.

- **IPV disqualifications:** If a household's benefits are reduced or terminated within the certification period because one of its members was excluded due to disqualification for an IPV (for treatment of the financial factors of members disqualified due to an IPV, see ***Section 14.1.1, IPV, Fleeing Felon and Work Requirement Sanctions***), ESA will notify the remaining members of their eligibility and benefit level at the same time the excluded member is notified of their disqualification.
  - The household is **not** entitled to a Notice of Adverse Action but may request a fair hearing to contest the reduction or termination of benefits unless the household has already had a fair hearing on the amount of the claim as a result of consolidation of the ADH with the fair hearing.
  - However, a participating household is entitled to a Notice of Adverse Action prior to any action to reduce, suspend or terminate its benefits if ESA determines that it contains an individual who was disqualified in another State and is still within the period of disqualification.
- **Non-IPVs:** If a household's benefits are reduced or terminated within the certification period for reasons other than an IPV disqualification, ESA will issue a Notice of Adverse Action in

accordance with ***Section 16.6, Notice of Adverse Action***. This notice informs the household of the ineligibility, the reason for the ineligibility, the eligibility and benefit level of the remaining members and the action the household must take to end the ineligibility. See the following sections in this chapter for treatment of financial factors of members disqualified/ineligible due to reasons other than an IPV.

Legal Authority

Treatment of income and resources of certain nonhousehold members (Federal): 7 USC § 2014(e)(6)(C)(ii)(III), 7 USC § 2015, 7 CFR § 273.11(c)

14.1.1 IPV, Fleeing Felon and Work Requirement Sanctions

The eligibility and benefit level of any remaining SNAP household members of a household containing individuals determined ineligible because of disqualification for an IPV, their fleeing felon status (per ***Section 8.5.1, Fleeing Felons)***, noncompliance with a work requirement (per ***Chapter 9, SNAP Work Requirements***) or certain convicted felons (per ***Section 8.5.5, Certain Convicted Felons***) will be determined as follows:

- **Income and resources:** The income and resources of the ineligible household member(s) will continue to count in their entirety.
- **Deductible expenses:** The allowable earned income, medical, dependent care, child support and excess shelter deductions for ineligible household member(s) will continue to apply to the remaining household members.
- **Eligibility and benefit level:** The ineligible member(s) will **not** be included when determining the household's size for the purposes of:
  - Assigning a benefit level to the household
  - Determining the standard deduction
  - Comparing the household's monthly income with the income eligibility standards
  - Comparing the household's resources with the resource eligibility limits

ESA will ensure that no household's SNAP benefit allotment is increased as a result of the exclusion of one or more household members.

14.1.2 SSN Disqualifications and Ineligible ABAWDs

The eligibility and benefit level of any remaining members of a household containing individuals determined to be ineligible for refusal to obtain or provide an SSN (see ***Section 8.2, SSNs***) or for not meeting the ABAWD work requirements (see ***Section 9.2, ABAWD Work Requirement and Time Limit***) will be determined as follows:

- **Resources:** The resources of the ineligible member(s) will continue to count in their entirety to the remaining household members.
- **Income:** A pro rata share of the income of the ineligible member(s) will be counted as income to the remaining members.

- This pro rata share is calculated by first subtracting the allowable exclusions from the income of ineligible member(s) and dividing the income evenly among the household members, including the ineligible members.
- All but the ineligible members' share is counted as income for the remaining household members.

- **Deductible expenses:**
  - The 20 percent earned income deduction will apply to the prorated income earned by such ineligible members, which is attributed to their households.
  - The portion of the household's allowable child support payment, shelter and dependent care expenses that are either paid by or billed to the ineligible member will be divided evenly among the household's members, including the ineligible member(s). All but the ineligible members' share is counted as a deductible child support payment, shelter or dependent care expense for the remaining household members.
  - **Exception:** If the household is entitled to an SUA, the entire allowance is allowed when calculating the excess shelter expense deduction. All other expenses, such as rent, etc. will be prorated.
- **Eligibility and benefit level:** The ineligible member(s) will not be included when determining the household's size for the purposes of:
  - Assigning a benefit level to the household
  - Determining the standard deduction
  - Comparing the household's monthly income with the income eligibility standards
  - Comparing the household's resources with the resource eligibility limits

14.1.3 Ineligible Noncitizens

ESA must determine the eligibility and benefit level of any remaining household members of a household containing an ineligible noncitizen in the same way as a household with a member disqualified for failing to provide an SSN (or good cause for not providing one) or a member who is an ineligible ABAWD, as outlined in ***Section 14.1.2, SSN Disqualifications and Ineligible ABAWDs***.

ESA must not include the resources and income of the sponsor and the sponsor's spouse in determining the resources and income of an ineligible sponsored noncitizen.

14.2 Treatment of Income and Resources of Other Nonhousehold Members

For all other nonhousehold members defined in ***Chapter 2, Household Composition***, who are not specifically mentioned in ***Section 14.1, Treatment of Income and Resources of Certain Nonhousehold Members***, the income, resources and expenses of such individuals will be treated as follows:

- **Income and resources:** Income and resources will not be considered available to the remaining household members with whom the nonhousehold member(s) resides. **Exceptions:**
  - Cash payments from the nonhousehold member to the household will be considered income under the normal income standards set in ***Section 11.1, Definition of Income***.
  - Vendor payments, as defined in ***Section 11.6, Excluded Income***, will be excluded as income.
  - When the earned income of one or more household members and the earned income of a nonhousehold member are combined into one wage, the income of the household members will be determined as follows:
    - If the household's share can be identified, ESA will count that portion due to the household as earned income.
    - If the household's share cannot be identified, ESA will prorate the earned income among all those whom it was intended to cover and count that prorated portion to the household.
- **Deductible expenses:** If the household shares deductible expenses with the nonhousehold member(s), only the amount actually paid or contributed by the household will be deducted as a household expense. If the payments or contributions cannot be differentiated, the expenses will be prorated evenly among persons actually paying or contributing to the expense and only the household's pro rata share can be deducted.
- **Eligibility and benefit level:** The nonhousehold member(s) will **not** be included when determining the size of the household for the purposes of:
  - Assigning a benefit level to the household
  - Comparing the household's monthly income with the income eligibility standards
  - Comparing the household's resources with the resource eligibility limits

14.3 Residents of Drug Addiction and Alcohol Treatment Facilities

Residents of a drug addiction and alcohol treatment facility (DAA) must be certified, if otherwise eligible, through an authorized representative for the DAA treatment facility. See ***Section 2.6, Residents of Drug Addiction and Alcohol Treatment Facilities***, for additional details. The DAA must meet certain eligibility requirements before ESA can certify a resident of the facility.

14.3.1 DAA Eligibility for SNAP

Before certifying any residents for SNAP benefits, ESA must verify that the DAA meets one of the following criteria:

- Authorized by the FNS program as a retailer if the DAA wishes to redeem benefits through a wholesaler
- Certified by the Department of Licensing and Inspection, including a determination by that office that the DAA is a nonprofit organization
- Funded or eligible for funding (even if it does not actually receive such funding) under Part B of Title XIX of the Public Health Service Act (42 USC §§ 300x, *et seq*.)

ESA sends residents a Notice of Adverse Action explaining the impact of the DAA's disqualification on their eligibility for SNAP and when it will become effective.

Regular participants in a drug addiction or alcohol treatment and rehabilitation program are exempt from work registration.

14.3.2 Processing Provisions for DAAs

While residents of DAAs are not allowed to apply on their own behalf, applications on behalf of DAA residents must be processed and certified by using the same provisions that apply to all other households, including the same rights to a Notice of Adverse Action and fair hearings.

14.3.3 DAA's Responsibility

DAAs must take the following actions:

- Provide ESA with a monthly or semimonthly certified list of residents currently participating in SNAP.
  - **Note:** ESA must conduct periodic random onsite visits to the DAA to ensure accuracy of the list and confirm ESA records are consistent and up to date.
- Provide ESA with a statement signed by a responsible DAA official attesting to the validity of the above list.
- Notify ESA of changes in the household's income or other changes in the household's circumstances in accordance with ***Chapter 15, Reporting Requirements***.

- Notify ESA when resident participants leave the DAA (see ***Section 14.3.5, SNAP Benefits on Leaving the DAA***).
- Provide the participants with their EBT card to use for any benefits remaining in the EBT account when a resident recipient leaves the DAA. If the participants have left the DAA prior to this being accomplished, the DAA must return the EBT card to ESA.

The DAA is responsible for any misrepresentation or IPV that it knowingly commits in the certification of DAA residents. As an authorized representative, the DAA must be knowledgeable about household circumstances and should carefully review these circumstances with residents prior to applying on their behalf. The DAA is liable for all losses or misuse of EBT cards or benefits held on behalf of resident households and all overissuances that occur while the households are residents of the DAA.

14.3.4 DAA's Misuse of Benefits

DAAs that are authorized by FNS as a retailer may be penalized or disqualified if it is determined administratively or judicially that SNAP benefits were misappropriated or used for purchases that did not contribute to a certified household's meals.

14.3.5 SNAP Benefits on Leaving the DAA

When a SNAP customer leaves the DAA, the DAA will provide them with any unused EBT cards that were received for them. The customer leaving the DAA will also receive their full allotment if already issued and if no benefits have been spent on behalf of that individual. These procedures apply at any time during the month.

- If the benefits for the month have been issued, any portion has been spent on behalf of the individual, and the individual leaves the DAA prior to the 16th day of the month, the DAA will provide them with one-half of their monthly benefit allotment.
- If the participant leaves on or after the 16th day of the month and the benefits have already been issued and used, the individual does not receive any benefits.

Once the participant leaves the DAA, the DAA is no longer allowed to act as that individual's authorized representative.

The DAA provides the individual with a Change Report Form. The participant must use the form to report their new address and other circumstances to ESA after leaving the DAA. The DAA must advise the individual to return the form to ESA within 10 days.

The DAA must notify ESA of the changes in the participant's circumstances. The DAA must also inform ESA when the customer leaves the DAA.

ESA will establish a claim against the DAA for overpayments for SNAP benefits held on behalf of resident clients if any overpayments are discovered during an investigation or hearing procedures for redemption violations.

Legal Authority
Residents of drug addiction and alcohol treatment facilities (Federal): 7 CFR § 273.11(e)

14.4 Residents of Group Home Living Arrangement (GLA)

A GLA is a public or private nonprofit residential setting that serves no more than 16 residents and is certified by the appropriate state agency. Prior to certifying any residents, ESA must verify that the GLA is either:

- Authorized by FNS
- Certified by the appropriate District agency, including the agency's determination that the center is a nonprofit organization

To be eligible for SNAP, residents of GLAs must be blind or disabled and may apply using any of the following options:

- Through an authorized representative employed and designated by the GLA
- Through an authorized representative of their choice
- On their own behalf

The GLA must determine if any resident can apply on their own behalf. The determination is based on the resident's physical and mental ability to handle their own affairs.

14.4.1 Processing Provisions for GLAs

For residents who apply through an authorized representative of their choice or who apply on their own behalf, household size is handled in accordance with ***Chapter 2, Household Composition***. These residents are certified using the same provisions that apply to all other households. The household is responsible for reporting changes in their income and household circumstances to ESA in accordance with ***Chapter 15 Reporting Requirements***.

For residents who apply using the GLA's authorized representative, their eligibility must be determined as a one-person household. The GLA is responsible for notifying ESA of changes in the household's income or other changes in the household's circumstances in accordance with ***Chapter 15, Reporting Requirements***.

14.4.2 GLA's Responsibility

The GLA must take the following actions:

- Provide ESA with a monthly certified list of residents currently participating in SNAP. (ESA must conduct periodic random onsite visits to the GLA to ensure accuracy of the list and confirm ESA records are consistent and up to date.)

- If the GLA is acting as the authorized representative, notify ESA of changes in the household's income and other changes in the household's circumstances or when a resident recipient leaves the GLA in accordance with ***Chapter 15, Reporting Requirements***.
- Provide the household with its EBT card to use for any benefits remaining in the EBT account when a resident recipient leaves the GLA. If the household has left the GLA prior to this being accomplished, the EBT card must be returned to ESA.

Once the resident leaves the GLA, the GLA may no longer act as their authorized representative. The GLA will inform the household to report their new address and any changes in circumstances to ESA within 10 days after leaving the GLA. GLA is responsible for any misrepresentation or IPV that it knowingly commits in the certification of GLA residents. As an authorized representative, the GLA must be knowledgeable about household circumstances and should carefully review these circumstances with residents prior to applying on their behalf. As an authorized representative, the GLA is liable for all losses or misuse of EBT cards or benefits held on behalf of resident households and for all overissuances that occur while the households are residents of the GLA.

14.4.3 GLA's Misuse of Benefits

GLAs authorized by FNS as a retailer may be penalized or disqualified if it is determined administratively or judicially that SNAP benefits were misappropriated or used for purchases that did not contribute to a certified household's meals.

ESA will notify the DHS OPRMI when it has reason to believe that the GLA is misusing benefits. OPRMI will coordinate with USDA FNS on the referral. ESA will take no action prior to FNS action against the GLA. If any overissuances are discovered during an investigation or hearing procedure for redemption violations, a claim will be established. If FNS disqualifies the GLA as an authorized retailer, ESA will suspend the center's authorized representative status for the same time period; however, residents applying on their own behalf will still be able to participate if otherwise eligible.

14.4.4 SNAP Benefits on Leaving the GLA

For residents who applied using the GLA authorized representative, the following procedures apply:

- If the household leaves the GLA prior to using any of the household's allotment, the GLA must provide the allotment to the household.
- If the household leaves the GLA prior to the 16th day of the month and the benefits have been issued and any portion was used on behalf of the household, the GLA will provide the household with one-half of its monthly benefits.
- If the household leaves on or after the 16th of the month and the benefits have already been issued and used, the household will not receive any benefits. If the household leaves on or after the 16th of the month and the benefits have not been issued or used, the GLA will provide the household with a prorated amount of benefits based on the day the household leaves the GLA and the allotment amount.
- The GLA must return any EBT cards or benefits not provided to departing residents to ESA at the end of each month. The returned benefits include those not provided to departing residents

because they left on or after the 16th day of the month or they left prior to the 16th and the GLA was unable to provide them with benefits.

For residents certified on their own behalf, SNAP benefits may either be returned to the GLA to be used to purchase meals served either communally or individually to eligible residents or retained and used to purchase and prepare food for their own consumption. The GLA may purchase and prepare food to be consumed by eligible residents on a group basis if residents normally obtain their meals at a central location as part of the GLA's service or if meals are prepared at a central location for delivery to the individual residents. However, if personalized meals are prepared and paid for with SNAP benefits, the GLA must ensure that the resident's SNAP benefits are used for meals intended for that resident.

If a group of residents have been certified as one household and have returned the benefits to the GLA to use, the departing residents will be given a pro rata share of one-half of the allotment if leaving prior to the 16th day of the month.

Legal Authority

Residents of a group living arrangement (Federal): 7 USC § 2012(k) and (m)(5), 7 USC § 2019, 7 CFR § 273.11(f)

14.5 Survivors of Domestic Violence Living in Temporary Shelters

A shelter for battered persons is a public or private nonprofit residential facility that serves battered persons and their children (see exceptions in ***Section 2.7, Ineligible Household Members***). If such a facility serves other individuals, a portion of the facility must be set aside on a long-term basis to serve only battered persons and their children.

Shelter residents who are included in households already certified for SNAP may apply for and, if otherwise eligible, participate as a separate household if the certified household listing them as members also contains the person who abused them.

Residents may receive an allotment as a separate household only once a month. ESA must take prompt action to ensure that the former household's eligibility or allotment reflects the change in the household's composition.

Shelter residents who apply as a separate household will be certified solely on the basis of their income and resources and the expenses for which they are responsible. They must be certified without regard to the income, resources and expenses of their former household. Payments made by shelter residents to the shelter for a room must be considered shelter expenses to determine the excess shelter deduction.

Jointly held resources are considered inaccessible if the resources are jointly owned by a shelter resident and members of their former household and if the shelter resident's access to the value of the resources is dependent on the agreement of a joint owner who still resides in the former household.

Legal Authority

Shelter for battered persons (Federal): 7 USC § 2012(m)(5), 7 CFR § 271.2 "Shelter for battered women and children," 7 CFR § 273.1(b)(7)(vi)(D), 7 CFR § 273.3(a), 7 CFR § 273.11(g)

14.6 SNAP Households Experiencing Homelessness

An individual experiencing homelessness is defined as:

- An individual who lacks a fixed and regular nighttime residence; or
- An individual who has a primary nighttime residence that is one of the following:
  - A supervised publicly or privately operated shelter designed to provide temporary living accommodations (such as a welfare hotel or congregate shelter)
  - A halfway house or similar institution that provides a temporary residence for individuals intended to be institutionalized
  - A temporary accommodation for not more than 90 days in the residence of another individual
  - A public or private place not designed for, or ordinarily used as, a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings (such as a hallway, a bus station, a lobby or similar places)

ESA cannot require an otherwise eligible person who is experiencing homelessness to reside in a permanent dwelling or have a fixed mailing address as a condition of eligibility.

Residency verification of households experiencing homelessness can be self-attested if verification from the household or a collateral contact (such as with a shelter) cannot be obtained.

Homeless SNAP households will be permitted to use their SNAP benefits to purchase prepared meals from homeless meal providers authorized by FNS.

Legal Authority

Individuals experiencing homelessness (Federal): 7 USC § 2012(m)(5), 7 CFR § 271.2 "Homeless individual" and "Eligible foods," 7 CFR § 273.1(b)(7)(vi)(E), 7 CFR § 273.2(f)(1)(vi), 7 CFR § 273.3(a), 7 CFR § 273.11(h)

14.7 Prerelease Applicants for SNAP

A household that consists of a resident or residents of a public institution(s) who apply for SSI under SSA's Prerelease Program for the Institutionalized will be allowed to apply for SNAP benefits jointly with their application for SSI prior to their release from the institution.

- **Application filing date:** The filing date of the application that ESA must record is the date of release of the applicant from the institution.
- **Processing deadline:** ESA must process the application and provide the applicant an opportunity to participate, if eligible, within 30 days, or seven days if entitled to expedited processing, from the date of release of the applicant from the institution.
- **Initial month's benefits**: If eligible, benefit levels for the initial month of certification will be based on the date of the month the household is released from the institution, and the household will receive benefits from the date of the household's release from the institution to the end of the month.

Legal Authority

Prerelease applicants (Federal): 42 USC § 1383(n), 7 CFR § 273.2(c)(1)(vi), 7 CFR § 273.10(a), 7 CFR § 273.11(i)

14.8 Treatment of Cash Assistance Sanctions for SNAP

If the benefits of a household that is receiving cash assistance are reduced because of the failure of a SNAP household member to perform an action required under the assistance program or because of fraud, ESA will not increase the household's SNAP allotment as the result of the decrease in income.

A decrease in cash assistance will usually result in an increased SNAP allotment for the household; however, due to federal regulations, the household **must not** receive an increase in SNAP benefits.

This provision does not apply to initial cash assistance applications or when a new member is determined ineligible. The individual or household against whom the penalty is imposed must have been receiving cash assistance benefits that are reduced, suspended or terminated due to a failure to comply with a cash assistance requirement, or the individual or household has applied for continued benefits and there is no break in participation. This provision only applies to individuals who are receiving SNAP benefits at the time of their failure to comply with the requirements of the cash assistance program.

In addition, this provision **does not apply** to situations such as:

- Reaching a time limit for time-limited benefits
- Failing to complete the TANF annual redetermination process
- Failing to perform an action that the individual is unable to perform as opposed to refusing to perform
- Failing to comply with a purely procedural requirement; a procedural requirement is a step that

an individual must take to continue receiving benefits in the program, such as providing verification of circumstances (i.e. such as the TANF six percent work sanction or the 25 percent child support sanction)

Legal Authority

Reduction of public assistance benefits (Federal): 7 USC § 2017(d), 7 CFR § 273.11(j)

14.9 Deceased Individuals

ESA must ensure that benefits are not issued to any individual who is deceased. To provide this assurance, ESA has entered into a computer matching agreement with the SSA to obtain information from SSA about individuals who are deceased. The Deceased Matching System (DMS) via SVES will provide ESA staff access to information on deceased individuals furnished by SSA.

A request for information on deceased individuals for all applicants and recipients must be made at the following times:

- Application prior to approval
- Interview for recertification
- Before adding a new household member
- As necessary to determine eligibility

The certification process must not be delayed beyond the processing standards if the SVES data is not available. If ESA receives the information after certification, ESA must take immediate action to make any changes if appropriate. ESA should use the information the household provided if it is more current and/or accurate than available SVES information.

Information on deceased individuals obtained from SVES is not considered verified upon receipt. When ESA receives Death Match information from SVES, ESA will follow up by notifying the household that a match was received. ESA must obtain independent verification through contact with family members of the deceased, a newspaper obituary or other appropriate means (see ***Section 15.6, Unclear Information***).

ESA must recover any remaining benefits from the EBT card upon verification that all household members are deceased.

Legal Authority

Denial of SNAP benefits for deceased individuals (Federal): 7 USC § 2020(r), 7 USC § 2016(h)(12), 7 CFR § 272.14, 7 CFR § 273.12(c)(3)(iii)

14.10 Disqualification for Substantial Lottery and Gambling Winnings

Any household certified to receive SNAP benefits will lose eligibility immediately upon receipt of substantial lottery or gambling winnings by any individual in the household.

Substantial lottery or gambling winnings are defined as a cash prize equal to or greater than the maximum allowable financial resource limit for elderly or disabled households (***Table 25.3.g, Asset Limits***, adjusted every October) won in a single game before taxes or other withholdings. For the purposes of this provision, the resource limit applies to all households, including households without elderly or disabled members, with substantial lottery and gambling winnings. If multiple individuals shared in the purchase of a ticket, hand or similar bet, only the portion of the winnings allocated to the member of the SNAP household would be counted in the eligibility determination.

In accordance with ***Chapter 15, Reporting Requirements***, SNAP households are required to report the receipt of substantial winnings to ESA no later than 10 days from the end of the calendar month in which the prize was won. If the prize was won with less than 10 days remaining in the month, the household must report that winning within 10 days from the date of the winning.

ESA will take action to disqualify any household identified as including a member with substantial winnings, allowing for the issuance of a timely notice.

14.10.1 Regaining Eligibility

- Households with substantial lottery or gambling winnings will remain ineligible until they meet the allowable resource limit (***Table 25.3.g, Asset Limits***) and income eligibility requirements (***Section 13.5, Calculation of Net Income and Benefit Levels***). The disqualified household is not categorically eligible at reapplication. This requirement only applies to the first time a household is certified following the loss of eligibility for substantial lottery and gambling winnings.
- If the composition of the household changes, that household would no longer exist, and any remaining members would be considered as a new household if they choose to apply. An individual who chooses to reapply, alone or as a member of an existing household, would be considered a distinct household from the household that had substantial lottery or gambling winnings. The new household would not have to meet the regaining eligibility requirement.

Legal Authority

Substantial lottery or gambling winnings (Federal): 7 USC § 2015(s), 7 CFR § 273.11(r), 7 CFR § 272.17, 7 CFR § 273.12(a)(5)(iii)(G)(3)

14.11 Elderly Simplified Application Project (ESAP)

ESAP applies to households where all members are 60 or older and/or have disabilities and have no earned income. Children can be present in the household. See ***Section 20.1, ESAP***, for further information regarding ESAP eligibility, requirements and processing of these types of household cases.

Chapter

15

Chapter 15. Reporting Requirements

Each program has different rules on what changes households must report and when they must report them. In general, ESA must act on every change it discovers, whether the customer reports the change or ESA learns of the change in other ways. If a customer reports a change for one program, ESA may need to redetermine eligibility for all programs in which the customer and their household participate.

For income changes, the month of the change is the month during which the customer first receives new or changed income.

Legal Authority

Reporting (Federal): SNAP: 7 CFR § 273.12, 7 CFR § 273.2(e)

Computer matching (Federal): All: 5 USC § 552a(p); SNAP: 7 CFR §S 273.2(f)(9), 272.8, 272.12–.14, 272.16

15.1 Simplified Reporting

ESA assigns all SNAP households to the simplified reporting system. Simplified reporting simplifies the rules under which most SNAP participants inform ESA about changes in their income and circumstances during a certification period.

Under simplified reporting, SNAP households are only required to report certain changes (see ***Section 15.2, What Households Are Required to Report***) outside of application, mid-certification and recertification.

A mid-certification (referred to as the periodic report under simplified reporting in federal regulations) is required for most simplified reporting households certified for longer than six months to enable the household to report additional changes during the certification period. Simplified reporting households certified for 12 months or less in which all adult members are 60 or older or have disabilities cannot be required to submit a mid-certification (see ***Section 15.4, Mid-Certification Requirements***).

15.1.1 Simplified Reporting Notification Requirements

At the initial certification, recertification and when a household is transferred to simplified reporting, ESA must provide the household with the following:

- A written and oral explanation of how simplified reporting work
  - This explanation should cover the requirements in ***Section 15.2, What Households Are Required to Report***, and ***Section 15.3, When Households Are Required to Report***, and explain how households can report changes to ESA.
- For households required to submit a mid-certification, the written and oral explanation must also include:
  - What needs to be reported and verified at mid-certification
  - When the mid-certification is due
  - How to obtain assistance in completing the mid-certification
  - The consequences of failing to file a mid-certification
- Special assistance in completing and filing the mid-certification to households whose adult members are all either individuals with mental or physical disabilities or are non-English speaking or otherwise lacking in reading and writing skills such that they cannot complete and file the required mid-certification
- A telephone number (toll-free number or a number where collect calls will be accepted outside the local calling area) the household may call to ask questions or obtain help in completing the mid-certification

Legal Authority

Simplified reporting (Federal): SNAP: 7 USC § 2015(c)(1)-(2), 7 CFR § 273.12(a)(5)

15.2 What Households Are Required to Report

Outside the initial application, mid-certification and recertification, simplified reporting households must report the following changes to ESA:

- When the household's monthly gross income exceeds the maximum gross monthly income standard at 130 percent of the federal poverty limit for its household size (see ***Table 25.3.a, SNAP Monthly Income Eligibility Standards***)
  - **Note**: The household must use the maximum gross monthly income standard for its household size that existed at the time of its most recent certification or recertification
- Any reduction in work hours that brings a household member subject to the ABAWD work requirement and time limit below 20 hours a week, or 80 hours averaged monthly. This includes one of the following or a combination of the following:
  - Employment at a job where the customer receives money for their work

  - Self-employment
  - In-kind or working in exchange for goods or services
  - Unpaid work
- When a household member wins substantial lottery or gambling winnings with a cash prize from a single game that is at or over the current asset limit for elderly or disabled households, regardless of whether the household contains an elderly or disabled member. See ***Table 25.3.g, Asset Limits***, for current amounts, which are adjusted every October.

ESA cannot require the household to report additional changes. Households can voluntarily report other changes.

Households can report changes in writing, via the Change Report Form, over the telephone or in person. ESA must act on changes in the same manner, regardless of how the household reports a change to ESA. See ***Section 15.5, Action on Reported Changes***.

- ESA must document the date a change is reported, which is the date ESA receives the change or is advised of the change over the telephone or in person.

See ***Section 15.4, Mid-Certification Requirements***, for details on what simplified reporting households are required to report at mid-certification.

15.2.1 Failure to Report a Required Change

If ESA discovers that a SNAP household on simplified reporting failed to report a change it was required to report and received benefits to which it was not entitled, ESA must take the following actions:

- Verify the change when appropriate.
- Reduce or terminate benefits based on the verified change.
- Issue a Notice of Adverse Action in accordance with ***Section 16.6, Notice of Adverse Action***.
- Establish a claim against the household in accordance with ***Chapter 23, Claims Against the Household***.
- Refer to ***Chapter 21, Disqualification for Intentional Program Violation***, if the household's failure to report was intentional.

Reminder: SNAP households assigned to simplified reporting are only required to report changes defined in ***Section 15.2, What Households Are Required to Report***.

Legal Authority
Simplified reporting requirements (Federal): SNAP: 7 CFR § 273.12(a)(5)(iii)(G) and (d)

15.3 When Households Are Required to Report

When a change listed in ***Section 15.2, What Households Are Required to Report***, occurs, the simplified reporting households must report the change within the following timelines:

- If the change occurs between the application interview and the date of the Notice of Eligibility, simplified reporting households must report the change within 10 days of the Notice of Eligibility.
- If the change occurs after certification, simplified reporting households must report the change as follows:
  - Within 10 days of the end of the calendar month in which the change occurred
  - Within 10 days of the date of the receipt of the payment if the payment was received with less than 10 days remaining in the month

See ***Section 15.4, Mid-Certification Requirements***, for details on what simplified reporting households are required to report at mid-certification and when the mid-certification is due.

Example 1

Ollie Holmes was certified for 12 months of SNAP benefits based on no income on June 7. Ollie is subject to simplified reporting. On August 3, Ollie gets a new job and receives his first paycheck on August 19, which puts him over 130 percent of federal poverty guidelines for his household size.

Ollie must report this change to ESA by August 21, which is 10 days before the end of August.

Example 2

Sam Clemens receives SNAP and is subject to simplified reporting. Sam received an increase in his wages that exceeds the 130 percent standard on the paycheck he received on September 26.

Sam did not receive the increased wages with at least 10 days remaining in the month. This means he must report the change within 10 days of the date he received his check. Therefore, Sam must report the income change before October 7, which is within 10 days (September 27 to October 7) from receipt of the check.

Legal Authority

Simplified reporting requirements (Federal): SNAP: 7 CFR § 273.12(a)(2)-(3)

15.4 Mid-Certification Requirements

The mid-certification is a required certification point for most simplified reporting SNAP households. SNAP households subject to the mid-certification requirement must complete the mid-certification report form and provide verification of changes as specified on the mid-certification form.

The following households **cannot** be required to submit a mid-certification report form:

- Households certified for 12 months or less in which all adult members are 60 or older or have a disability with no earned income
  - **Note**: These households are generally certified as ESAP households and are not subject to mid-certification requirements. See ***Section 20.1, ESAP***.
- Households certified for six months or less

All other SNAP households must complete a mid-certification.

15.4.1 Mid-Certification Report Form

The mid-certification report form must request the household to report only the following changes:

- A change in the amount of unearned income if it is more than the current threshold for reporting changes in household income
  - Households are not required to report changes in the household's cash assistance programs administered by ESA because ESA has this information.
  - The threshold for reporting changes in household income may be adjusted each October. See ***Table 25.3.f, Threshold for Required Reporting of Changes in Household Income for Mid-Certification Report***, for the current threshold.
- A change in the source of income, including starting or stopping a job or changing jobs, if the change in employment resulted in a change of income
- A change in the amount of earned income of more than the current threshold for reporting changes in household income
  - The threshold for reporting changes in household income may be adjusted each October. See ***Table 25.3.f, Threshold for Required Reporting of Changes in Household Income for Mid-Certification Report***, for the current threshold.
- All changes in household composition, such as the addition or loss of a household member
- Changes in residence and the resulting change in shelter costs
- Acquisition of a licensed vehicle that is not fully excludable
- Changes in a household member's legal obligation to pay child support to a nonhousehold member
- Any reduction in work hours that brings a household member subject to the ABAWD work requirement and time limit below 20 hours a week, averaged monthly

- When a household member wins substantial lottery or gambling winnings with a cash prize from a single game that is at or over the current asset limit for elderly or disabled households, regardless of whether the household contains an elderly or disabled member (see ***Table 25.3.g, Asset Limits***, for current amounts adjusted every October)

If the household has a change in liquid assets, such as cash, stocks, bonds or bank accounts, that reach or exceed the asset limits (see ***Table 25.3.g, Asset Limits***, for the current asset limits)

The mid-certification form must:

- Be written in clear, simple language.
- Meet bilingual requirements.
- Specify the date by which ESA must receive the mid-certification form.
- Specify the consequences of submitting a late or incomplete mid-certification form, including whether ESA will delay benefits if the form is not received by the specified date.
- Specify the verification the household must submit with the form.
- Inform the household where to call for help in completing the form.
- Include a statement to be signed by the member of the household or their authorized representative indicating their understanding that the information provided on the form may result in reduction or termination of benefits.
- Include a brief description of SNAP fraud penalties.
- If the form requests an SSN, the form (or attachment to the form) must include a statement that indicates an SSN is required to receive SNAP benefits, the legal authority to request SSNs (i.e. The Food and Nutrition Act of 2008, as amended, 7 USC § 2025(e) and Social Security Numbers, 7 CFR § 273.6), that nonhousehold members need not provide an SSN or information about their citizenship or immigration status, how the SSN will be used by ESA and the effect of not providing an SSN.

ESA can use a combined mid-certification form for SNAP and TANF or Medicaid. If a combined form is used that includes SNAP, the form must clearly indicate that SNAP-only households do not need to provide information required by another program. The form must also advise that nonhousehold members do not need to provide their SSNs or information about citizenship or immigration status.

Note: ESA has chosen the option to process changes affecting SNAP household deductions that are reported during the certification period, including at mid-certification, pursuant to 7 CFR § 273.12(c)(4). If ESA changes this option for certain deductions, the mid-certification form must include a statement explaining that some deductions will not change until the household's next recertification and identify the deductions ESA will not change.

15.4.2 Mid-Certification Processing

ESA must select a due date for SNAP households to return their mid-certification report form and verification to allow for sufficient time to process reports so that households will receive adequate notice of action on the report in the first month of the new reporting period. ESA must provide the household a reasonable period after the end of the last month covered by the report in which to return the report.

- ESA mails the mid-certification report form at the end of the fourth month of the certification period and requests the household to return the completed form with verification by the first day of the sixth month of the certification period.

Once the household returns the form, ESA must process the form and follow verification requirements in ***Section 5.15, Verification Required at Mid-Certification***.

For households that return the report and required verification by the specified due date, and the changes result in a reduction or termination of benefits, ESA must:

- Send an adequate notice of action so that the household receives the notice no later than its normal issuance date in the seventh month.

For households that fail to return the report by the specified due date:

- ESA must provide the household with a reminder notice advising the household that it has 10 days from the date ESA mails the notice to file a complete report.
- If an eligible household files a complete mid-certification report during this 10-day period, ESA must provide the household with an opportunity to participate no later than 10 days after its normal issuance date.
- If the household does not respond to the reminder notice, the household's participation will be terminated, and ESA must send an adequate Notice of Termination.
- If an eligible household that has been terminated for failure to complete the report submits a complete report after the 10-day period but before the end of the issuance month ~~by the end of the seventh month~~, ESA will reinstate the household and provide a full month of benefits without a new application.
  - **Note**: ESA has elected to exercise the state option at 7 CFR § 273.12(a)(5)(iii)(F) to reinstate eligible households that have been terminated for failure to file a complete periodic report if the household files a complete periodic report after the extended filing date but before the end of the issuance month.
- If the household does not submit a completed report and does not provide all required information and verification by the end of the seventh month, the household must complete a new application.

Example 1

Ms. Zeek's SNAP certification period is from January 1, 2020, to December 31, 2020. Ms. Zeek's mid-certification report was due by the end of June.

She was sent a 10-day reminder notice, but Ms. Zeek did not submit the mid-certification report and proof of her circumstances until July 11 (month seven). Because July 11 is after the 10-day reminder period expired, but within the issuance month, Ms. Zeek does not have to submit a new application.

ESA will reinstate the SNAP case, and Ms. Zeek's certification period will continue through the end of December 2020.

Example 2

Mr. Carter's SNAP certification period is from January 1, 2020, to December 31, 2020. Mr. Carter's mid-certification report was due by the end of June.

Mr. Carter did not submit his mid-certification report and proof of his circumstances by the end of July (month seven). Mr. Carter visited a Service Center on August 5, 2020. Because he did not complete the mid-certification report by July 30 (the end of the issuance month), ESA cannot reinstate his benefits. He must complete a new application.

Note: If the end of the month falls on a weekend or holiday, the action will take place the next working business day.

Legal Authority

Simplified reporting periodic report (mid-certification) requirements (Federal): SNAP: 7 USC § 2015(c)(1)-(4), 7 CFR § 273.12(a)(5)(iii)-(iv) and (b)(2)

15.5. Action on Reported Changes

ESA must promptly act on changes reported by the household outside the initial application, mid-certification and recertification.

- For changes discovered through a source other than the household (i.e. a data match), see ***Section 15.8, Data Matches***.
- For changes reported at mid-certification, see ***Section 15.4, Mid-Certification Requirements***.

For changes reported by the household during the certification period:

- Document the change in the case file, including the date the change is reported.
  - The date the change is reported is the date ESA receives the change or is advised of the change over the telephone or in person.
- Provide/mail a new Change Report Form to the household if the change was reported on a Change Report Form.
- If verification is needed to process the change, request verification from the household and provide 10 days for the household to return verification.
  - Follow verification requirements in ***Section 5.14.1, Changes Reported by the Household***.
- Determine how to act on the change. If multiple changes are reported, determine the end result of acting on all changes to determine what actions to take.
  - Act in accordance with ***Section 15.5.1, Increase in Benefits***, if the change results in an increase in benefits.

- Act in accordance with ***Section 15.5.2, Decrease in Benefits***, if the change results in a decrease in benefits.

- Restore lost benefits to the household if ESA fails to increase benefits within the timeframes described in ***Section 15.5.1, Increase in Benefits***.

15.5.1 Increase in Benefits

Changes resulting in an increase in benefits must be verified in accordance with ***Section 5.14.1, Changes Reported by the Household***.

If the household is eligible for an increase in benefits because of a decrease in monthly income of $50 or more or the addition of household members:

- If no additional information is needed or if the household provides any needed information within 10 days from the date the change is reported, make the change effective for the month following the report month.
- If additional information is needed and the household provides the information more than 10 days after the date the change is reported, make the change effective for the month following the month verification was provided.
- If the change is reported and verified too late in the month to increase the regular monthly allotment for the following month, issue a supplemental payment by the 10th of that month.
- Issue an underpayment in situations where ESA does not increase the allotment on time.

Example 1

On January 26, Adele reports and provides verification of a decrease of $150 in earned income. ESA processes the change for February but may have to issue a supplement for February by February 10th if change was reported too late in the month to adjust February's normal allotment issuance.

Example 2

On June 25, Mr. Wallace reports to ESA that his hours have decreased at work and his monthly earnings have decreased by $100. ESA contacts the employer and receives verification of the reduced wages on July 10. ESA will process the decrease in income for August benefits.

For other changes that will result in increases and are reported or verified too late in the month to make the change effective with the following month's regular issuance, ESA does not need to issue a supplemental benefit by the 10th of the month:

- If no additional information is needed or if the household provides any needed information within 10 days after the change is reported, make the change effective for the first regular monthly allotment issued 10 or more days after the household reported the change.
- If the customer provides the needed information more than 10 days after reporting the change, make the change effective for the first regular monthly allotment issued 10 or more days after

the date ESA received the verification rather than basing it on the date the household reported the change.

- Issue an underpayment in situations where ESA does not increase the allotment on time.

Example

On March 19, Ms. Patterson reports that she has moved and is now paying higher rent, which will increase her SNAP allotment. Although a change in address does not have to be verified until the next recertification, ESA notifies Ms. Patterson in writing that she needs to provide proof of the change in rent within 10 days. She provides verification on March 23. Because she provides verification within 10 days of the date she reported the change, the increase is effective April 1.

If verification is required to take action on the change and the household does not provide verification:

- For changes related to the shelter, medical expenses, child support or dependent care deduction:
  - If the household was receiving the deduction, end-date the existing deduction and redetermine the household's benefit without the deduction.
  - If the household was not receiving the deduction, do not provide the deduction.
- For other changes, do not make the change.
- If verification is eventually received, increase the household's allotment for the first monthly allotment issued 10 days from receiving the verification unless it relates to a decrease in monthly income of $50 or more or the addition of household members, in which case the increase must occur no later than the 10th of the following month.
- Do not terminate the household's eligibility for failing to provide verification unless the household refuses to cooperate (see ***Section 7.1.3, Cooperation With Application Process***).
  - If the household refuses to cooperate, issue a timely Notice of Adverse Action (see ***Section 16.6, Notice of Adverse Action***).

15.5.1.1 Adding a Newborn

The effective date for adding a newborn to an existing SNAP household is the month after the month the household reported the birth.

If the household reports the change too late to affect the normal issuance cycle for the following month, issue supplemental SNAP benefits for the household to receive the increased benefits the 10th day of the month following the month the household reported the birth. ESA considers a Request to Add Newborns to DC Medicaid, public assistance and SNAP Rolls form completed at the hospital to be reported on the date the customer signed the form.

If the newborn does not have an SSN and the family has not already applied for an SSN, ESA will instruct them how to do so but must not delay adding the newborn to the SNAP household.

The household must provide an SSN or proof that it has applied for an SSN for the newborn within six months from the date of birth or at the next recertification, whichever is later. ESA will process supplements for any **underpayment** due if the customer reports the change timely.

Example

A mother completes and signs the hospital-generated request to add her newborn child to her case on March 13.

ESA receives the form from the hospital on April 5. ESA will adjust SNAP benefits to add the newborn for the full month of April.

Example

A mother completes and signs the hospital-generated request to add her newborn child to her case on June 15. ESA receives the form on August 10.

ESA initiates a supplement for the underpaid benefits in July and August because the household reported the birth in June.

15.5.2 Decrease in Benefits

Changes resulting in a decrease in benefits must be verified in accordance with ***Section 5.14.1, Changes Reported by the Household***.

If the household's benefit level decreases or the household becomes ineligible because of a change during the certification period:

- ESA must issue a Notice of Adverse Action, as outlined in ***Section 16.6, Notice of Adverse Action***.
- Ineligibility or decrease in benefits is effective the month following the expiration of the Notice of Adverse Action unless a fair hearing and continuation of benefits are requested or an exception to providing advanced notice applies.
- ESA must review the action to determine if the household has an overpayment.
  - If the household reported the change timely and ESA took appropriate action timely, there is no overpayment.
  - If the household reported the change untimely or ESA was delayed in taking action and the household received benefits to which they were not entitled, ESA will establish a claim against the household in accordance with ***Chapter 23, Claims Against the Household***.

Legal Authority

Simplified reporting acting on changes (Federal): SNAP: 7 CFR § 273.12(a)(5)(vi) and §(c)

15.6 Unclear Information

Unclear information is information that is not verified or information that is verified but ESA needs additional information to act on the change. During the certification period, ESA may receive unclear information about changes in the household's circumstances. Because of unclear information, ESA may be unable to determine the effect of the change on the household's benefit amount or continued eligibility. ESA may receive this unclear information from a third party, the household or certain data matches and must pursue clarification and verification (if applicable) of the household circumstances if:

- The information is less than 60 days old relative to the current month of participation and, if accurate, would have been required to be reported by the household under simplified reporting (see ***Section 15.2, What Households Are Required to Report***).
- The information appears to present significantly conflicting information from that used by ESA at the time of certification.

The following procedure must be followed to clarify and verify the household's circumstances:

- ESA must determine appropriate verification procedures in accordance with ***Section 5.14, Verification of Changes During Certification***.
- If verification can be requested, ESA must issue a written Request for Contact (RFC) that clearly advises the household of the verification it must provide or the actions it must take to clarify its circumstances and the consequences if the household fails to respond. The household must be given at least 10 days to respond to this request. See ***Section 16.5, Request for Contact***.
- If the household does not respond to the RFC or does respond but refuses to provide sufficient information to clarify its circumstances, ESA must send the household a Notice of Adverse Action, which closes the SNAP case. See ***Section 16.6, Notice of Adverse Action***.
  - **Note**: The Notice of Adverse Action cannot be used to advise the household of the verification needed or actions it must take to clarify its circumstances. This is the purpose of the RFC. The Notice of Adverse Action should be used to notify the household of the case closure that results from the failure to provide verification or take needed action.
- If the household responds to the RFC and provides sufficient information, ESA must adjust the household's benefit amount by acting on the new circumstances according to simplified reporting rules in ***Sections 15.5.1, Increase in Benefits***, or ***15.5.2, Decrease in Benefits***.

15.6.1 Prisoner and Deceased Person Matches

Information from the following data matches is handled differently than all other unclear information:

- Prisoner Verification System (PVS) Data Match
  - Matches received from an SSA interface of individuals reported as being confined in a jail, prison or other correctional facilities
- Deceased Matching System (DMS) Data Match
  - Matches received from the SSA's Death Master File through the State Verification and Exchange System (SVES).

Matches received from the PVS and DMS during the certification periods must be processed as follows:

- ESA must issue a Notice of Data Match Results, as described in ***Section 16.4, Notice of Data Match Results***, which clearly explains what information is needed from the household and the consequences for failing to respond. The household must be provided with at least 10 days to respond.
- If the household fails to respond to the Notice of Data Match Results or does respond but refuses to provide sufficient information to clarify its circumstances, ESA must issue a Notice of Adverse Action, as described in ***Section 16.6, Notice of Adverse Action***, if the action of removing the individual matched and subsequent adjustment to eligibility and benefit levels results in an adverse action (i.e. benefit reduction or termination).
- ESA must remove the subject individual and the individual's income from the household and adjust benefits accordingly.

ESA must follow procedures in ***Section 15.8, Data Matches***, for all other data matches that result in unclear information during the certification period.

Legal Authority

Unclear information (Federal): SNAP: 7 CFR § 273.12(c)(3)

15.7 Mass Changes

The District or federal government may take actions that affect all or a significant portion of the households receiving SNAP benefits. Special rules are applied when a change produces the following results:

- Simultaneously affects the entire caseload
- Affects a significant portion of the caseload
- Involves conducting individual desk reviews in place of a mass change

Mass change to the caseload is defined as changes that affect the eligibility requirements, amount of benefits, deductions, standards, etc., that result in an increase or decrease of SNAP benefits for the entire caseload or a significant portion of the caseload.

Mass changes include the following:

- Income and asset eligibility standards
- Certain deductions
- Maximum SNAP allotments (the Thrifty Food Plan)
- Utility standards (annual and seasonal adjustments)

- Periodic Cost-of-Living Adjustments (COLAs) to Old-Age, Survivors and Disability Insurance (OASDI), SSI, veterans' benefits and other federal benefits
- Periodic adjustments in payment levels in TANF and General Assistance programs such as Interim Disability Assistance (IDA) and General Assistance for Children (GC)
- Legislative or regulatory changes to the SNAP eligibility or benefit criteria

15.7.1 Federal SNAP Mass Changes

The federal government regularly makes adjustments to:

- SNAP allotments:
  - Maximum allotment by household size
  - Minimum allotment for households with one to two members
- SNAP deductions:
  - Standard deduction
  - Shelter deduction maximum for households without a member aged 60 or older or with a disability and the standard homeless shelter deduction
- Gross and net income limits and asset limits
- Threshold for required reporting of changes at mid-certification

These annual adjustments apply to all SNAP households and take effect prospectively at a specific time designated by FNS. These adjustments are typically effective October 1 of each year. See ***Section 25.3, SNAP Benefit Tables***, for current amounts.

15.7.1.1 Notice Requirements for Federal Government–Initiated SNAP Mass Changes

When the federal government initiates changes outlined in ***Section 15.7.1, Federal SNAP Mass Changes***, ESA is required to publicize these mass changes through the news media; posters in certification offices, issuance locations or other sites frequented by certified households; or general notices mailed to households.

ESA elects to issue a Notice of Mass Change to SNAP households prior to the annual federal adjustments taking effect to publicize these mass changes (see ***Section 16.11, Notice of Mass Change***).

When the federal government initiates mass changes such as periodic COLAs in OASDI, SSI, veterans' benefits and other federal benefits, ESA issues an individual Notice of Adverse Action to the specific households that will be adversely affected by the mass change.

15.7.2 District Government–Initiated SNAP Mass Changes

As required by federal regulations, ESA makes annual adjustments to SNAP SUA for all certified households.

This annual adjustment takes effect prospectively. This adjustment is typically effective for the month of October, along with changes outlined in ***Section 15.7.1, Federal SNAP Mass Changes***, but could be at a different time as specified by ESA.

15.7.2.1 Notice Requirement for District Government–Initiated SNAP Mass Changes

When the District government initiates annual adjustments to the utility standards, ESA must issue a general public notification, which may be publicized by news media and posters in ESA Service Centers, issuance locations or other sites frequented by certified households. Because ESA generally implements these changes at the same time as federal SNAP mass changes (***Section 15.7.1, Federal SNAP Mass Changes***), households are notified of utility allowance changes as part of the Notice of Mass Change (see ***Section 16.11, Notice of Mass Change***).

When the District government initiates a mass change to TANF, IDA and GC benefits, ESA must issue a general notice to all households on the SNAP caseload receiving the TANF, IDA or GC benefits that will be affected by the mass change.

Example

The District enacts legislation to increase TANF full payment levels. Because the income of all TANF recipients will increase and SNAP counts TANF benefits as unearned income when calculating SNAP eligibility and allotment levels, most TANF recipients who also get SNAP will receive reduced SNAP benefits. ESA sends TANF customers a general notice telling them about the increase in TANF benefits. In the notice, ESA also tells customers that because their income is increasing, they should expect that their SNAP benefits will decrease.

15.7.3 Other District-Initiated Changes

In instances when ESA adopts a new SNAP policy that adversely affects some SNAP households, ESA must send affected households a general notice to inform them of the changes.

If ESA chooses to complete an individual desk review of cases that are subject to a mass change, ESA sends affected households a general notice describing the change. If a general notice is not sent, ESA must send an individual Notice of Adverse Action instead.

Example

The District adopts a policy to use a mandatory utility allowance for all households. Under this policy, SNAP customers can no longer claim actual utility costs.

The District plans to make a mass change that will convert the current utility expenses to the new utility standards. Because of this change, some SNAP households will receive more in SNAP, and others will receive less.

ESA sends a general notice to all SNAP households notifying them of the expected change in their benefits.

15.7.4 Right to a Fair Hearing and Continued Benefits

Households may request a fair hearing when they disagree with a mass change. The household is eligible for continued SNAP benefits if the household meets the following three criteria:

- The household requests a fair hearing.
- The household does not specifically waive its right to a continuation of benefits.
- The household's fair hearing is based upon improper calculation of SNAP eligibility or benefits or the misapplication or misinterpretation of federal law or regulations.

Example

Mary Minor requests a fair hearing and continuation of benefits when her SNAP benefits are reduced because of a federally mandated reduction in the maximum SNAP allotments. Ms. Minor is not eligible to continue getting SNAP benefits at her previous level because the reduction is not due to an incorrect calculation of her benefits or misapplication of federal rules.

Legal Authority

Mass changes (Federal): SNAP: 7 CFR § 273.12(e)

15.8 Data Matches

ESA may receive information about a SNAP household's circumstances from data matches during the certification period. ESA must act on these data matches in accordance with this section.

15.8.1 Data Matches Considered Verified Upon Receipt

If the data match is considered verified upon receipt (see ***Section 5.12.3, Data Matches***) and the information provided is not questionable, incomplete, outdated or inconsistent:

- ESA must consider the information verified and act on it in accordance with ***Section 15.5.1, Increase in Benefits***, or ***Section 15.5.2, Decrease in Benefits***.

Example

On April 5, ESA receives a data match from DOES indicating that George is receiving unemployment compensation. ESA issues a Notice of Adverse Action on April 6 (which is within 10 days of receiving the data match) and decreases George's SNAP benefit for May (the month following the month the 15-day adverse action period expires).

15.8.2 Unclear Data Matches Results

If the data match is 1) considered verified upon receipt (see ***Section 5.12.3, Data Matches***) but the information provided is questionable, incomplete, outdated or inconsistent or 2) not considered verified upon receipt (other than certain federally required data matches), the data match results are considered unclear.

ESA can only act on these changes if the information meets one of the following conditions:

- The information is less than 60 days old relative to the current month and the change would have been required for the household to report under simplified reporting in accordance with ***Section 15.2, What Households Are Required to Report***.
- The information presents significantly conflicting information from that used at the time of the household's last certification action (e.g. initial certification, mid-certification, recertification).

If the information meets one of the above conditions, follow ***Section 15.6, Unclear Information***.

If the information does not meet one of the above conditions, the data match must be noted in the case file. ESA must pursue clarification or verification of this information during the household's next certification action (i.e. mid-certification or recertification).

Example 1

A National Directory of New Hires (NDNH) data match is received for Otis in November, the third month of the certification period. NDNH matches are not considered verified upon receipt. Although the information from the match is less than 60 days old, Otis is not required to report a new job under simplified reporting (NDNH matches provide information on newly hired employees and not income information). ESA notes the match in the case file and clarifies the information with Otis at mid-certification.

Example 2

Sharlene applied and was approved for SNAP in January with no earned income. On April 17, ESA receives a data match from DOES quarterly wage data indicating Sharlene was employed and receiving income in the month of January. Even though the information is older than 60 days, it significantly conflicts with the information used at the time of application. ESA issues a Request for Contact, providing 10 days for response. If Sharlene fails to respond, ESA issues a Notice of Adverse Action to close the case.

15.8.3 Certain Federally Required Data Matches

If the data match is from one of the following federally required data matches (which are not considered verified upon receipt), ESA must follow appropriate policy in ***Section 15.6, Unclear Information***:

- PVS
- DMS

For all other federally required data matches (e.g. NDNH), ESA must follow appropriate policy in ***Section 15.8.1, Data Matches Considered Verified Upon Receipt***, and ***Section 15.8.2, Unclear Data Matches Results***.

Legal Authority
Acting on data matches (Federal): SNAP: 7 CFR § 273.12(c)(3)

15.9 Changes Found by Other Means by the District

ESA may need to act on changes discovered from case reviews and investigations conducted by the District and the federal government.

15.9.1 Case Reviews

Federal regulations require ESA to conduct reviews of SNAP certification actions, referred to as case reviews, as part of the District's system to monitor and improve the administration of SNAP. Case reviews may result in findings of noncompliance or case processing errors. Reviewers are required to promptly report the findings and errors for correction. The primary types of case review activities are:

- Quality Control reviews performed by the DHS OPRMI
- Management Evaluation Reviews conducted by the Division of Policy, Training and Quality Assurance (DPT&QA) and FNS
- Case reviews conducted by DPT&QA and other District offices to monitor performance

Case findings and errors that change the household's eligibility and benefit levels should be processed in accordance with ***Section 15.5, Action on Reported Changes***, within 10 days of the case errors being reported. Errors resulting in underpayments are subject to the time limits in ***Section 15.10.1, Errors Discovered by ESA***.

Case findings and errors that do not change the household's eligibility and benefits levels should be corrected as promptly as possible. These include findings and errors related to lack of documentation, missing notices or applications or incorrect household member demographics.

Legal Authority

Performance Reporting System (Federal): SNAP: 7 CFR §§ 275.1, *et seq.*

Reporting Quality Control case review findings (Federal): SNAP: 7 CFR § 275.12(d)(3) and (f), 7 CFR § 275.13(d), 7 CFR § 275.16(c)

Case review findings (Federal): SNAP: 7 CFR 275.9(d)(2), 7 CFR § 275.16

15.9.2 Investigations

ESA must take action on changes resulting from investigations by District or federal investigators. ESA should follow guidance from the investigators and DPT&QA.

ESA staff who receive reports of suspected fraud must submit an Unusual Incident report to OPRMI for further investigation before ESA can act on the report.

15.10 Restoration of Lost Benefits

ESA will restore a household's benefits that were lost whenever the loss was caused by ESA's error or by an administrative disqualification for an IPV that was subsequently reversed. Benefits will be restored for not more than 12 months prior to whichever event occurred first:

- The date ESA receives a request for restoration from a household
- The date ESA is notified or otherwise discovers that a loss to a household has occurred

ESA will restore a household's benefits that were found by any judicial action to have been wrongfully withheld. If the judicial action is the first action the recipient has taken to obtain restoration of lost benefits, benefits will be restored for a period of not more than 12 months from the date the court action was initiated. When the judicial action is a review of the ESA action, the benefits will be restored for a period of not more than 12 months from the first of the following dates:

- The date ESA receives a request for restoration
- If no request for restoration is received, the date the fair hearing action was initiated; but
- Never more than one year from when ESA is notified of, or discovers, the loss

Legal Authority

Restoration of lost benefits (Federal): 7 CFR § 273.17

15.10.1 Errors Discovered by ESA

If ESA determines that a loss of benefits has occurred and the household is entitled to restoration of those benefits, ESA will automatically take action to restore any benefits that were lost. No action by the household is necessary.

However, benefits will not be restored if the benefits were lost more than 12 months prior to the month the loss was discovered by ESA in the normal course of business or more than 12 months prior to the month ESA was notified in writing or orally of a possible loss to a specific household. ESA will notify the household of its entitlement, the amount of benefits to be restored, any offsetting that was done, the method of restoration and the right to appeal through the fair hearing process if the household disagrees with any aspect of the proposed lost benefit restoration.

15.10.2 Disputed Benefits

If ESA determines that a household is entitled to restoration of lost benefits, but the household does not agree with the amount to be restored as calculated by ESA or any other action taken by ESA to restore lost benefits, the household may request a fair hearing within 90 days of the date the household is notified of its entitlement to restoration of lost benefits. If a fair hearing is requested prior to or during the time lost benefits are being restored, the household will receive the lost benefits as determined by ESA pending the results of the fair hearing. If the fair hearing decision is favorable to the household, ESA will restore the lost benefits in accordance with that decision.

If a household believes it is entitled to restoration of lost benefits, but ESA, after reviewing the case file, does not agree, the household has 90 days from the date of ESA's determination to request a fair hearing. ESA will restore lost benefits to the household only if the fair hearing decision is favorable to the household. Benefits lost more than 12 months prior to the date ESA was initially informed of the household's possible entitlement to lost benefits will not be restored.

15.10.3 Computing the Amount to Be Restored

After correcting the loss for future months and excluding those months for which benefits may have been lost prior to the 12-month time limits described in ***Section 15.10.1, Errors Discovered by the ESA***, and ***Section 15.10.2, Disputed Benefits***, ESA will calculate the amount to be restored as follows:

- If the household was eligible but received an incorrect allotment, the loss of benefits will be calculated only for those months the household participated.
- If the loss was caused by an incorrect delay, denial or termination of benefits, the months affected by the loss will be calculated as follows:
  - If an eligible household's application was erroneously denied, the month the loss initially occurred will be the month of application; for an eligible household filing a timely reapplication, the month following the expiration of its certification period.
  - If an eligible household's application was delayed, the months for which benefits may be lost will be calculated.

- If a household's benefits were erroneously terminated, the month the loss initially occurred will be the first month benefits were not received as a result of the erroneous action.

After computing the date the loss initially occurred, the loss will be calculated for each month subsequent to that date until either the first month the error is corrected or the first month the household is found ineligible.

For each month affected by the loss, ESA will determine if the household was actually eligible. If the household's case file has no information to document that the household was actually eligible, ESA will advise the household of what information must be provided to determine eligibility for these months. For each month the household cannot provide the necessary information to demonstrate its eligibility, the household will be considered ineligible.

For the months the household was eligible, ESA will calculate the allotment the household should have received. If the household received a smaller allotment than it was eligible to receive, the difference between the actual and correct allotments equals the amount to be restored.

If a claim against a household is unpaid or held in suspense, the amount to be restored will be offset against the amount due on the claim before the balance, if any, is restored to the household. At the point in time when the household is certified and receives an initial allotment, the initial allotment will not be reduced to offset claims, even if the initial allotment is paid retroactively.

15.10.3.1 SNAP Underpayments

ESA must not correct underpayments that are caused by a recipient error, such as a delay in reporting a change that results in increased benefits. No overpayments or underpayments are established because of changes (e.g. person becomes elderly or disabled and becomes eligible for a higher shelter deduction) that were not required to be reported by the household during the certification period.

Example 1

Ms. Allison contacts ESA on April 25, 2019, and requests correction of SNAP benefits for a three-month time interval from February to April of 2019 because the increased shelter costs she reported in January were not entered in DCAS. Since she made the discovery within 12 months of underpayment, she can receive a supplementary payment for the entire period.

Example 2

Mr. Roberts began receiving SSI benefits in January. He did not exceed 130 percent of federal poverty guidelines, so he was not required to report the SSI benefits or that the time loss benefits he received from his employer ended when the SSI started. ESA learned of the change at Mr. Roberts' SNAP recertification in April.

Mr. Roberts' disability allows him a higher shelter deduction and a deduction for his out-of-pocket medical costs, which will increase his SNAP benefits by $45 a month. Do not process an underpayment. Mr. Roberts did not report a change that he was not required to report.

15.10.4 Lost Benefits to Individuals Disqualified for IPV

Individuals disqualified for IPV are entitled to restoration of any benefits lost during the months that they were disqualified, not to exceed 12 months prior to the date of ESA notification, only if the decision that resulted in disqualification is subsequently reversed. For each month the individual was disqualified, not to exceed 12 months prior to the date of ESA notification, the amount to be restored, if any, will be determined by comparing the allotment the household received with the allotment the household would have received had the disqualified member been allowed to participate. If the household received a smaller allotment than it should have received, the difference equals the amount to be restored. Participation in an ADH in which the household contests the ESA assertion of IPV will be considered a notification that the household is requesting restored benefits.

15.10.5 Methods of Restoration

Regardless of a household's current eligibility, ESA will restore lost benefits to a household by issuing an allotment equal to the amount of benefits that were lost. The amount restored will be issued in addition to the allotment currently eligible households are entitled to receive.

ESA will honor reasonable requests by households to restore lost benefits in monthly installments if, for example, the household fears that the amount to be restored is more than it can use in a reasonable period of time.

15.10.6 Changes in Household Composition

Whenever lost benefits are due to a household and the household's composition has changed, ESA will restore the lost benefits to the household containing a majority of the individuals who were household members at the time the loss occurred. If ESA cannot locate or determine the household that contains a majority of household members, ESA will restore the lost benefits to the household containing the head of the household at the time the loss occurred.

Chapter

16

Chapter 16. Notices

ESA sends customers notices to inform them of the status of their benefits, request needed information and require certain action from households. ESA must provide notices as follows:

- In clear and simple language that most readers can easily understand
- In the household's primary language when required by law and in other formats for individuals with disabilities, as needed
- Clearly informing the household of the status of their benefits, information needed from the household and any actions the household must take.

Legal Authority

Language requirements for all notices (Federal): SNAP: 7 CFR § 272.4(b)

16.1 Notice of Eligibility

If a SNAP initial application or recertification is approved, ESA will send the household a Notice of Eligibility.

The notice must contain the following:

- Benefit amount for ongoing benefits
- If the initial allotment contains benefits for both the month of application and the current month's benefits, an explanation that the initial allotment includes more than one month's benefits and a clarification of the monthly allotment amount for the remainder of the certification period
- Variations in the benefit level based on changes anticipated at the time of certification
- Beginning and ending date of the certification period
- Fair hearing rights information
- Telephone number for the SNAP office or call center

- Information regarding availability of free legal representation (if an individual or organization is available)

Legal Authority

Notice of Eligibility (Federal): SNAP: 7 CFR § 273.10(g)(1)(i)(A)

16.1.1 Notice of Eligibility With Postponed Verification

In cases where a household's SNAP application is approved on an expedited basis without verification, the Notice of Eligibility must also include the following:

- Explanation that the household must provide the verification that was postponed
- Due date of required verification
- Consequences of failing to provide postponed verification

Legal Authority

Notice of Eligibility with postponed verification (Federal): SNAP: 7 CFR § 273.10(g)(1)(i)(A)-(B)

16.2 Notice of Required Verification

ESA will provide the household a notice to explain what the household must verify as part of the application or recertification process.

The notice must contain the following:

- Verification requirements the household must meet (e.g. provide proof of identity, income)
- Examples of the types of documents the household can use to meet the verification requirement (e.g. identity can be verified with a driver's license, state ID card, birth certificate, passport, school records or ID, current Alien Registration Card, voter registration card)
- Period of time the documents should cover
- Due date to provide the verification, providing at least 10 days
- Explanation of ESA's responsibility to assist the household with obtaining verification, provided that the household is cooperating

Legal Authority

Notice of Required Verification (Federal): SNAP: 7 CFR § 273.2(c)(5), 7 CFR § 273.14(b)(4)

16.3 Notice of Expiration

ESA is required to send a Notice of Expiration prior to the end of a SNAP household's certification period. The notice is sent between the following days unless the household is only certified for one month or is certified in the second month of a two-month-long certification period:

- The first day of the next-to-last month in certification
- The first day of the last month of the certification period

The notice must include the following:

- The date the certification period expires
- The date the household must submit an application for recertification to receive uninterrupted benefits (unless the household is certified for only one month or in the second month of a two-month long certification period; this date must be the 15th day of the last month of the household's current certification period)
- The consequences of failure to apply for recertification in a timely manner
- The right to receive an application form upon request and to have it accepted with at least the name, address and signature
- Information on how to turn in a recertification application if the customer or their authorized representative cannot come into the Service Center (e.g. mailing address, web address to submit online, fax number)
- The ESA Service Center addresses where the customer can file a recertification application in person
- An explanation that any household that includes only SSI recipients or applicants may apply for SNAP at an SSA office
- An explanation that the household is responsible for rescheduling a missed interview and providing required information and verification
- An explanation that failure to complete an interview may result in delay or denial of benefits
- The household's right to request a fair hearing if the recertification is denied or if the household disagrees with the amount of its benefits

Legal Authority

Notice of Expiration (Federal): SNAP: 7 CFR § 273.14(b)(1) and (c)(1)

16.4 Notice of Data Match Results

If ESA receives a match with a SNAP household member through Prisoner Verification System (PVS) or Deceased Matching System (DMS), the household must be sent a Notice of Data Match Results.

The PVS and DMS Notice of Data Match Results must include the following:

- An explanation of the match
- An explanation of what information is needed or what actions to take to clarify the household's circumstances
- Due date to provide the information, providing at least 10 days
- An explanation that failing to respond to the notice or responding but refusing to provide sufficient information to clarify its circumstances will result in the removal of the matched member from the household, including the member's income, and benefits will be adjusted accordingly

If ESA receives a match with a SNAP household member through another data match covered under the procedural and privacy protections required for computer data matches at 5 USC § 552a(p) (such as data matches from the National Directory of New Hires), ESA must issue the household a Notice of Data Match Results.

The notice must include the following:

- Statement of the findings
- Information on how the household can contest the findings
- Timeframe for contesting the findings, providing at least 10 days
- Consequences for failing to reply to the notice, if applicable

Legal Authority

Notice of Data Match Results (Federal): All: 5 USC § 552a(p); SNAP: 7 CFR §§ 272.12–14, 7 CFR § 272.16, 7 CFR § 273.12(c)(3)(iii)

16.5 Request for Contact

ESA may receive information about a SNAP household's circumstances outside a required certification action (i.e. between initial application/recertification and mid-certification) that comes from a third party, is unverified or does not provide enough information to determine the impact on the household's benefits.

ESA can only act on unclear information in accordance with ***Section 15.6, Unclear Information***. If the information can be acted upon during the certification period and requires information from the household, ESA must issue a Request for Contact (RFC).

The RFC must include the following:

- The information about the verification the household must provide or the action it must take
- Due date to provide verification or take the required action, providing at least 10 days
- Information on how the household can provide verification or take action (e.g. mail, online, in person, fax, call center)
- Explanation that if the household fails to respond to the RFC or responds but refuses to provide sufficient information, ESA will take action to terminate the household's participation in SNAP.

Example

On November 2, ESA receives information from a third party that on September 15th a member of the household won $6,000 from the local lottery. ESA must issue an RFC because the household is required to report lottery or gambling winnings equal to or greater than the financial resource limit for elderly or disabled households (which was $4,250 as of September 15 in this example) no later than 10 days from the end of the calendar month in which the change occurred. If, however, this information was older than 60 days relative to the current month of participation, ESA would not send an RFC to the household. Instead, ESA must document the information in the household's case file so it can be acted on at the household's mid-certification or recertification, whichever occurs first.

Legal Authority

Request for Contact (Federal): SNAP: 7 CFR § 273.12(c)(3)(i)

16.6 Notice of Adverse Action

Before taking any adverse action that discontinues, withholds, suspends, reduces or terminates assistance to a recipient; makes assistance subject to additional conditions; or changes the manner or form of the payment, ESA must send the recipient a Notice of Adverse Action.

An adequate Notice of Adverse Action must include the following:

- Action to be taken
- Reason for the action
- Effective date of the action
- Specific laws and regulations that support the action
- Right to appeal or request a fair hearing
- Information on when continued benefits will be provided pending the outcome of a hearing requested by the household

For SNAP, an adequate Notice of Adverse Action must be written in easily understandable language and also include the following information:

- The telephone number of the SNAP office
- Explanation of the eligibility and benefit level of the ~~remaining~~ eligible members
- For terminations, an explanation of how the adverse action may be avoided, how ineligibility may be ended or how benefits may be reinstated after a disqualification period is over
- Information about the household's liability for any overissuances provided pending the fair hearing if the fair hearing outcome is not favorable to the household
- Information about the availability of free legal representation, if available

DCAS generates a standard notice that may require additional text to be added to meet adequate notice standards.

Legal Authority

Notice of Adverse Action (District): All: DC Official Code § 4–205.55(a)(2)

Notice of Adverse Action (Federal): SNAP: 7 CFR §§ 273.13(a)(2), 273.11(c)(4)(ii), 273.7(b)(2)(i) and (f)(1)(ii)

16.6.1 Timely Notice of Adverse Action

Except as noted under ***Section 16.6.2, Exceptions to Timely Notice Requirement***, adverse action notifications must be adequate (see ***Section 16.6, Notice of Adverse Action***) and timely. A notice meets the timeliness standard if it is postmarked 15 days before the effective date of action.

If the household's benefit level decreases or the household becomes ineligible as a result of a change the household reported, ESA must issue the appropriate Notice of Adverse Action within 10 days of the date the change was reported.

If there are 15 days between the date the notice is postmarked and the end of the month, the change must be made effective in the month following the month in which the notice was issued. If there are less than 15 days between the date the notice was mailed and the end of the month, the change must be made effective in the second month following the month the notice was sent.

Example

On September 20, Ms. Colton refused a bona fide job offer. Because Ms. Colton offered no good reason for refusing the job, ESA sent Ms. Colton a Notice of Adverse Action dated September 25. Because there were less than 15 days left in September from the date of the adverse action notification, full benefits continued to be paid to Ms. Colton in October, and she will serve her disqualification period beginning in November.

Legal Authority
Timely Notice of Adverse Action (District): All: DC Official Code § 4–205.55(a)(1)
Timely Notice of Adverse Action (Federal): SNAP: 7 CFR § 273.13(a)(1)

16.6.2 Exceptions to Timely Notice Requirement

The following are the only circumstances under which timely notice does not have to be provided:

- ESA initiates a mass change, as described in ***Section 15.7, Mass Changes***.
  - **Exception:** A Notice of Adverse Action must be sent if an annual and/or seasonal adjustment to SSA, SSI and other federal benefits results in the termination or decrease of a household's benefits.
- ESA determines, based on reliable information, that all members of a household have died.
- ESA determines, based on reliable information, that the household has moved outside the District.
- The household has been receiving an increased allotment to restore lost benefits, the restoration is complete, and the household was previously notified in writing of when the increased allotment would terminate.
- The household's allotment varies from month to month within the certification period to take into account changes that were anticipated at the time of certification, and the household was so notified at the time of certification.
- The household jointly applied for cash assistance and SNAP benefits and has been receiving SNAP benefits pending the approval of the cash assistance and was notified at the time of certification that SNAP would be reduced upon approval of the cash assistance.
- A household member is disqualified for IPV, or the benefits of the remaining household members are reduced or terminated to reflect the disqualification of that household member.
- ESA has assigned a longer certification period to a household certified on an expedited basis and for whom verification was postponed, provided the household has received written notice that the receipt of benefits beyond the month of application is contingent on the household providing the verification that was initially postponed and ESA may act on the verified information without further notice.
- A household is converted from repayment to benefit reduction as a result of failure to make agreed-upon repayment on a SNAP claim.
- ESA terminates the eligibility of a resident of a drug addiction and alcohol treatment facility or a group living arrangement if the facility loses either its certification from the appropriate agency or agencies of the State or has its status as an authorized representative suspended due to FNS disqualifying it as a retailer. However, residents of group living arrangements applying on their own behalf are still eligible to participate.
- The household voluntarily requests, in writing or in the presence of a caseworker, that its participation be terminated. If the household does not provide a written request, ESA will send

the household a letter confirming the voluntary withdrawal. Written confirmation does not entail the same rights as a Notice of Adverse Action, except that the household may request a fair hearing.

- ESA determines, based on reliable information, that the household will not be residing in the District and, therefore, will not be entitled to obtain its next allotment. ESA will inform the household of its termination no later than its next scheduled issuance date. Although ESA may inform the household before its next issuance date, ESA will not delay terminating the household's participation in order to provide advance notice.
- ESA initiates recoupment of a claim against a household that has previously received a Notice of Adverse Action with respect to such claim.

Legal Authority

Exceptions to timely Notice of Adverse Action (District): All: DC Official Code § 4–205.55(b)

Exceptions to timely Notice of Adverse Action (Federal): SNAP: 7 CFR § 273.13(b)

16.7 Notice of Denial

SNAP households found to be ineligible will be sent a Notice of Denial as soon as possible but not later than 30 days following the date the application was filed.

The notice must contain the following:

- Explanation of basis for denial
- Right to request a fair hearing
- Telephone number of SNAP office: either local office or statewide number
- Name of SSR to contact, if available
- Name and contact information for organization that provides free legal services, if available
- For categorically eligible households, request for the household to notify the SNAP office if it is approved for public assistance, general assistance or SSI benefits
- When a delay occurred because the household failed to take action to complete the application process, the notice must advise the household of actions it must take to reopen its application, that the case will be reopened without a new application if action is taken within 60 days of the date of the application and that failure to do so means the household must file a new application to participate

Legal Authority

Notice of Denial (Federal): SNAP: 7 CFR § 273.10(g)(1)(ii), 7 CFR § 273.2(h)(2)(i)(A)

16.8 Notice of Interview Requirement

For SNAP households that do not complete an interview on the day their application is submitted, ESA must notify the household of the interview requirement and its options for completing the interview.

The notice must contain the following:

- The option to contact the call center or visit a Service Center during normal business hours to complete the interview
- The date by which the interview must be completed
- The consequences of not completing the interview

16.9 Notice of Missed Interview

For SNAP households that fail to complete an interview, ESA must notify the household that it missed the interview.

The notice must contain the following:

- Inform the applicant that the household missed the interview
- Inform the applicant that they are responsible for contacting ESA to complete the missed interview

Legal Authority

Notice of Missed Interview (Federal): SNAP: 7 CFR § 273.2(e)(3), (h)(1)(i)(D)

16.10 Notice of Consolidated Work Requirements

During initial certification, recertification and whenever a previously exempt household member or new household member becomes subject to work requirements (see ***Chapter 9, SNAP Work Requirements***), ESA must provide the household with a consolidated written notice of applicable work requirement(s). An oral explanation must also be provided.

For the purposes of this notice, the SNAP work requirements are:

- General Work Requirements
  - These are applicable to all nonexempt household members (see ***Section 9.2, Exemptions From Work Requirements***).
- ABAWD work requirement
  - The ABAWD work requirement and associated time limit are only applicable if the District does not have a waiver of the time limit from FNS.

- Mandatory E&T
  - Because the District does not operate a mandatory E&T program, these work requirements are not applicable.

The notice must contain the following:

- An explanation of each applicable work requirement
- An explanation of which individuals are subject to which work requirement
- Exemptions from each applicable work requirement
- An explanation of the process to request an exemption (including contact information to request an exemption)
- An explanation of the rights and responsibilities of household members subject to the work requirements, including the right to appeal a decision made by ESA and request a fair hearing
- An explanation of what is required to maintain eligibility under each applicable work requirement
- Pertinent dates by which an individual must take any actions to remain in compliance with each applicable work requirement
- The consequences of failure to comply with each applicable work requirement
- An explanation of the process for requesting good cause (including examples of good cause circumstances and contact information to initiate a good cause request)
- Other information ESA believes would assist the household members with compliance

Legal Authority
Work registration notice (Federal): SNAP: 7 CFR § 273.7(a), (c)(1)(ii)-(iii)

16.11 Notice of Mass Change

When ESA makes a mass change in SNAP eligibility or benefits, as applicable, and before the changes outlined in ***Section 15.7.1, Federal SNAP Mass Changes***, become effective (ESA's option), ESA must issue a Notice of Mass Change.

The Notice of Mass Change must include the following:

- The general nature of the change
- Examples of the change's effect on the household's allotments
- The month in which the change will take effect
- The household's right to a fair hearing
- The household's right to continued benefits and under what circumstances benefits will be continued pending a fair hearing

- General information on whom to contact for additional information
- The liability the household will incur for any overissued benefits if the fair hearing decision is adverse

Legal Authority

Notice of Mass Change (Federal): SNAP: 7 CFR § 273.12(e)(4)

Chapter

17

Chapter 17. Recertifications

ESA must periodically redetermine eligibility for program benefits. Each program has specific information that must be requested and verified for recertification of ongoing benefits.

Legal Authority

Recertification (Federal): SNAP: 7 USC § 2020(e)(4), 7 CFR §§ 273.2(f)(8) and 273.14

17.1 Renewal Process

SNAP benefits are time limited. No household may participate beyond the expiration of their certification period without a determination of eligibility for a new certification period. Prior to the end of a household's certification period, ESA must:

- Issue a Notice of Expiration to notify households that their SNAP participation is ending and that they must complete the recertification process (see ***Section 16.3, Notice of Expiration***).
- Provide an application households can use to complete the recertification process.
- Issue an interview appointment notice informing households of their options to complete an interview, including the option to contact the call center during normal business hours, the date by which they must complete the interview and the consequence of not doing so.
  - ESA must attempt to interview the client if they submit the recertification application in person or call the household to conduct an interview if the household submits the recertification application online, by mail or by dropping it off. **Note:** ESAP households do not generally need to complete an interview at recertification. See ***Section 20.1.6, Recertification Process***, for additional information.
- Advise the household of available employment and training services, as appropriate.
- Provide a Notice of Required Verification (see ***Section 16.2, Notice of Required Verification***) for any information required to be verified by the household and ensure the household's changes in circumstances are verified (see ***Section 5.16, Verification Required at Renewal/Recertification***).
- Approve, deny or terminate the household's participation based on the household's eligibility or failure to complete the recertification process.

Prior to the end of a household's certification period, the household must:

- Complete and return the recertification application.
- Attend the scheduled interview or contact ESA to reschedule the interview and attend the rescheduled interview.
- Provide documentation to complete any required verification.

SNAP households are automatically terminated at the end of the current certification period if the recertification process is not completed.

17.1.1 Notice of Expiration

Unless a household is certified for only one month or in the second month of a two-month long certification period, ESA automatically mails a Notice of Expiration 60 days prior to the end of the certification period to inform the customer that their case needs to be recertified to determine ongoing eligibility. See ***Section 16.3, Notice of Expiration***, for what the notice must be include.

ESA also provides households a letter about completing their interview, including a date by which to complete their recertification interview.

SNAP cases not recertified prior to the end of the current certification period are automatically terminated.

17.1.2 Recertification Application

When processing a recertification, ESA must evaluate all information on the form, in the case record and in the systems available to ESA and verify information as necessary.

Information missing or unclear on the form, in the case file or through available data matches that may affect the household's eligibility or benefit levels must be clarified during the recertification interview, by requesting verification or conducting a collateral contact, as applicable.

If the customer provides sufficient information or ESA can verify missing information through collateral contact, ESA will redetermine eligibility. The effective date for any changes in eligibility is the start date of the new certification period. See ***Section 17.4, Processing Recertification Applications***.

17.2 Recertification Interview

Households must complete a recertification interview as part of the recertification process at least once every 12 months. Households with non-exempt ABAWDs must complete an interview every other recertification (once every 12 months). Households transitioning off the Elderly Simplified Application Project (ESAP) are required to complete an interview as part of their recertification process.

  - **Note:** See ***Section 20.1.6, Recertification Process***, for more information on this requirement for ESAP households.

Recertification interviews are conducted to accomplish the following:

- Clarify information received by ESA interfaces, such as wages, unemployment compensation and Social Security benefits.
- Inform recipients that information they provide regarding eligibility and benefits will be matched regularly against information from DOES, IRS, SSA and other states.
- Inform recipients of the opportunity to register to vote.
- Explore and resolve unclear and incomplete information.
- Explain simplified reporting requirements to recipients.
- Explain the applicable work requirements for each household member subject to the general work requirements and/or ABAWD work requirements. See ***Section 9.4, Work Requirements Verbal Notification***.
- Ensure all household members between the ages of 16 and 64 are screened for exemptions from the general work requirements and ABAWD work requirement using the SNAP Work Requirements Screening Form. See ***Section 9.3, Work Requirements Screening***.

Customers may choose to have a telephone interview instead of a face-to-face interview without needing to show that an in-person interview would create a hardship. ESA must inform customers of the opportunity for a face-to-face interview and provide one upon request.

During the recertification process, ESA must conduct a face-to-face or telephone interview with the applicant or authorized representative. This process includes the following actions:

- Complete or review the applicant's statement fields on the appropriate screens in the system or hard copy application fields as indicated by the type of interview.
- Screen for expedited service using the Expedited Screening Form. Households that are timely recertifying are generally not eligible for expedited service.
- Review the applicant's responses and resolve any unclear or incomplete information.
- Ensure the application and appropriate forms are signed and dated.
- Advise the applicant of their rights and responsibilities, simplified reporting requirements, timeframes for application processing, the right to a fair hearing and the QC process.
- Provide the applicant with any necessary forms or verification requests.
- Advise the applicant with written explanation and oral notification of available employment and training services.

Customers who speak a language other than English must be provided with bilingual staff or an interpreter to complete the interview in the customer's language, including sign language.

The individual interviewed may be any responsible member of the household, such as the head of household or spouse, or an authorized representative. The household may bring or have present any person it chooses at the interview.

ESA must conduct the interview in an official and confidential manner to ensure the privacy of the household is protected.

17.2.1 Recertification Interview

Sixty days prior to the end of the household's certification period, the household will receive a Notice of Expiration, which indicates that an interview is required. Once the household submits a recertification application, the system will generate a Notice of Required Interview informing the household of its options to complete the interview process (see ***Section 16.8, Notice of Interview Requirement***).

17.2.2 Missed Interview

Households that submit a recertification application will receive a Notice of Missed Interview five days after submitting their recertification application.

If the household subsequently contacts ESA to complete the interview, ESA must advise the household of its options to complete the interview in person or by telephone.

17.3 Verification Requirements at Recertification

The customer must have at least 10 days to return needed information or verification to complete a recertification. A Notice of Required Verification must be issued to the customer to request any required verification and include the date that verification must be submitted (see ***Section 16.2, Notice of Required Verification***).

Customers are not required to produce documentation again for eligibility factors that do not change and have already been verified or can be verified using available data matches. See ***Section 5.16, Verification Required at Renewal/Recertification***, for more information.

During any recertification, ESA must screen the household for possible inclusion of household members previously excluded due to citizenship requirements that may have changed.

17.4 Processing Recertification Applications

ESA will not delay a recertification when verification requirements can be met by material already available to ESA. It will use information already included in the case record (e.g. copy of birth certificate or Social Security card) or verifiable through systems available to ESA.

All customers must be notified in writing of eligibility decisions that affect continuing eligibility.

Households that have timely met all application requirements must be notified in writing of their eligibility decision by the end of their current certification period.

SNAP recertifications determine eligibility for a new certification period. Households are notified of recertification decisions with an approval or denial notice. Timely advance notice is not required.

- If the household is determined to be eligible for a new certification period, ESA will mail a Notice of Reporting Requirements to the household.

- If a household files an application prior to the end of the certification period but the recertification cannot be completed within 30 days due to Department error, ESA will continue to process the application and provide benefits from the first day of the month if the household is determined to be eligible.
- If a household files an application before the end of the certification period but fails to complete a required action, ESA will deny benefits. If the household then completes the required action within 30 days after the end of the certification period, ESA will still treat the application as a recertification and prorate benefits from the date the client completes the required actions.

17.4.1 Automatic Denial of SNAP Recertification

ESA automatically denies recertifications if customers do not complete the full recertification process. The date of termination depends on the situation:

- If a customer does not come in for their recertification at all during the certification period, ESA will send the customer a Notice of Denial at the end of the last working day of the certification period. The customer may reapply within the next 30 days and be treated as a recertification, but benefits will be prorated from the date they come in to reapply. See Example 1 below.
- If a customer contacts ESA for their recertification before the last 10 days of the last month of the certification period, their recertification will be automatically denied if it remains incomplete at the end of the first working day of the month after benefits expire.
- If a customer contacts ESA during the last 10 days of the month and provides all needed information within 10 days, the recertification is timely, and the effective date for the new certification period will be the 1st of the month. Benefits must be made available within five working days of the date the household provided all verification. See Example 3 below.

Example 1

April Ashton's SNAP eligibility expires on June 30. She is sent a recertification notice on April 28 (the last working day of April) giving her a recertification interview due date of June 8. She does not meet the due date and does not contact ESA to reschedule. Unless she completes an interview and provides necessary verification before the end of June, her benefits will automatically expire on June 30. ESA will send a termination notice to her the night of June 30.

Example 2

John Jacobs' SNAP eligibility expires on December 31. He completes his recertification interview on the December 10 due date but does not provide all needed verification. His caseworker registers his recertification, and the system issues a Notice of Missing Verification to Mr. Jacobs. Mr. Jacobs' SNAP recertification will be automatically denied if his recertification is not completed by the first working day in January. A recertification denial notice will be issued January 1.

Example 3

Jane Reynolds' SNAP eligibility expires on January 31. She completed her recertification interview after the due date on January 28 but does not have all her required verifications. Her caseworker registers her recertification, and the system issues a Notice of Required Verification at the time of application and also sends her a Notice of Missing Verification. If her recertification is not completed by February 7, Ms. Reynolds will be sent a recertification denial notice.

To ensure the correct processing of recertifications, ESA must take the following steps:

- Register recertifications in the system when they are received.
- Issue a Notice of Required Verification at application and then a Notice of Missing Verification to customers.
- Complete eligibility determinations within timeframes required by federal and District law and regulations.

17.4.2 Timely Recertifications

A timely application for recertification is an application received by the 15th day of the last month of the current certification period. If the 15th falls on a holiday or weekend, the application for recertification is due on the last working day prior to the holiday or weekend.

A household that timely submits its application for recertification, completes the interview and provides all requested verification required before the end of the household's certification period must be notified of its approval or denial by the end of the household's current certification. Households that are approved for a new certification period must receive their SNAP benefits on their EBT card by their normal issuance cycle in the month following the end of their current certification period.

The application cannot be denied for failure to provide information before the certification period expires. If the end of the month falls on a holiday or weekend, requested information must be received by close of business on the last working day of the month.

17.4.3 Delay in Processing Recertification

If a household's recertification process cannot be completed by the end of the its certification period, ESA must determine if the delay is caused by ESA or the household and follow corresponding procedures.

A recertification delay is the fault of ESA if one or more of the following conditions are true:

- A Notice of Expiration was not sent by the last day of the month prior to the last month of the household's certification period.
- A Notice of Expiration did not meet the requirements for what must be included in the notice, including if the notice was issued in the wrong language (see ***Section 16.3, Notice of Expiration***, for notice requirements).
- The household did not receive notification to complete an interview.

- ESA provided an initial interview due date that did not leave the customer at least 10 days in the household's remaining certification period to provide verification.
- A Notice of Missed Interview was not issued to the household if the household missed its initial interview due date.
- ESA did not reschedule the interview if requested by the household.
- A Notice of Required Verification was not sent to the household if outstanding verification were required.
- The Notice of Required Verification did meet the requirements for what must be included in the notice, including if the notice did not provide at least 10 days to provide verification or was issued in the wrong language (see ***Section 16.2, Notice of Required Verification***, for notice requirements).
- ESA did not offer to assist the household in obtaining required verification.
- If the recertification application was incomplete, ESA failed to offer assistance in completing the application.
- ESA failed to process the recertification application or verification by the end of the certification period, even though the household submitted these items in accordance with the Notice of Expiration or Notice of Required Verification.

In addition to the above, other issues under ESA's control that directly affect a household's ability to complete the recertification process or ESA's ability to process the recertification action are considered the fault of ESA.

The delay is considered the fault of the household if the household failed to complete the recertification process even though ESA has taken all its required actions and offered to assist the household. ESA must first determine if the fault was due to ESA before a delay can be considered the fault of the household.

Example

Jamal's certification period for SNAP ends on May 31. ESA sends the Notice of Expiration, Notice of Interview Requirement and an application for recertification on April 1. Jamal submits the application on April 28 but misses the interview due date. Jamal contacts ESA on May 16 and completes the interview. During the interview, ESA tells Jamal to send proof of income, but ESA fails to send a Notice of Required Verification. Jamal does not submit proof of income by May 31. ESA is at fault for the delay because ESA failed to send a Notice of Required Verification.

17.4.3.1 Household Submits Application for Recertification by End of Certification Period: ESA Delay

If the household submits a recertification application before the end of the household's certification period (regardless of whether the application was submitted timely), but the recertification process cannot be completed within 30 days after the date of application because ESA is at fault, ESA must take the following steps:

- ESA must continue to process the application and work with the household to complete any outstanding actions (i.e. interview and required verification).
- The household's participation must be terminated by the last day of the household's certification period if ESA is unable to make a determination by the end of the certification period.
  - **Note:** Even though ESA is at fault for the delay, federal rules at 7 CFR §273.14(a) prohibit SNAP households from participating beyond the end of their certification period without a determination of eligibility for a new certification period.
- If determined eligible, ESA must provide a full month's SNAP benefit for the first month of the new certification period.
  - If verification is required and less than 10 days are left in the certification period, the Notice of Required Verification must still be issued and provide the household 10 days to provide verification (even though the 10 days will extend beyond the end of the certification period). If the household provides the required verification, has no other outstanding requirements and is eligible, ESA must issue benefits on the household's EBT within five working days from the date the household submits the requested verification.

Example

Marta's certification period for SNAP ends on June 30. Marta speaks Spanish. ESA sends the Notice of Expiration, Notice of Interview Requirement and an application for recertification on May 1 in Spanish. Marta submits the application on June 1 and completes the interview on June 14. On June 18, ESA sends a Notice of Required Verification in English. Marta calls ESA on June 29 asking for an update on the recertification and is notified that she has outstanding verification. Marta's participation is terminated on June 30. Marta submits the verification on July 2. Because ESA is at fault for failing to send the Notice of Required Verification in Spanish, Marta is entitled to a full month of benefits for the first month of the new certification period.

17.4.3.2 Household Submits Application for Recertification by End of Certification Period: Household Delay

If the household submits a recertification application before the end of the household's certification period (regardless of whether the application was submitted timely) and the household is at fault for failing to take a required action (e.g. complete the interview, submit required verification), ESA must take the following steps:

- If the household takes the required action(s) before the end of the certification period:
  - If eligible, provide a full month's SNAP benefit for the first month of the new certification period.
  - If not eligible, deny the application.
- If the household takes the required action(s) within 30 days after the end of the certification period:
  - ESA must deny the recertification application at the end of the certification period.

- ESA must continue to treat the application as a recertification.
- If eligible, ESA must provide benefits retroactive to the date the household takes the last required action. However, benefits will **not be prorated,** and a full month of benefits will be provided for the new certification period if the following conditions apply:
  - If verification is required and less than 10 days are left in the certification period, the Notice of Required Verification must be issued and provide the household 10 days to provide verification (even though the 10 days will extend beyond the end of the certification period). If the household provides the required verification, has no other outstanding requirements and is eligible, ESA must issue a full month of benefits on the household's EBT within five working days from the date the household submits the requested verification.
- If not eligible, ESA must deny the application.

Example

Jonah's certification period for SNAP ends on February 28. ESA sends the Notice of Expiration, Notice of Required Interview and an application for recertification on January 1. Jonah misses the interview due date, and ESA sends a Notice of Missed Interview. Jonah never contacts ESA to reschedule the interview. Jonah submits the application on February 27. Jonah's application is denied on February 28 for failing to complete the interview. Jonah contacts ESA on March 2 and completes the interview. Jonah provides all required verifications on March 14. Jonah is at fault for the delay for failing to reschedule the interview. Jonah's first month of benefits are prorated from March 14.

17.4.3.3 Household Submits Application for Recertification Within 30 Days After the End of the Certification Period: ESA Delay

If the household submits a recertification application within 30 days after the end of the household's certification period (the household's participation must also have been terminated at the end of the certification) and ESA is at fault for causing the application to be filed late, ESA must take the following steps:

- Continue to process the application as a recertification and work with the household to complete any outstanding actions (i.e. interview and required verification).
- Screen the application for expedited service; if found eligible for expedited service, the recertification must be processed in accordance with expedited service provisions (see ***Section 7.2, Expedited Processing***).
- If determined eligible, provide prorated SNAP benefits back to the date of the new application for the first month of the new certification period.

17.4.3.4 Household Submits Application for Recertification Within 30 Days After the End of the Certification Period: Household Delay

If a household submits its application for recertification within 30 days after the end of the certification period (the household's participation must also have been terminated at the end of the certification) and the household is at fault for the delay, ESA must take the following steps:

- Continue to process the application as a recertification and work with the household to complete any outstanding actions (i.e. interview and required verification).
- Screen the application for expedited service; if found eligible for expedited service, the recertification must be processed in accordance with expedited service provisions (see ***Section 7.2, Expedited Processing***).
- If determined eligible, provide prorated benefits from the date the recertification application was submitted.

Example 1

Mr. Roberts' certification period for SNAP expired on March 31. He submitted his application for recertification on April 7. He completed his interview and provided proof of his income on April 11 and was determined to be eligible for benefits. Because he submitted his application for recertification within 30 days of the date his SNAP benefits were terminated, ESA treats the application as a recertification and provides prorated benefits from April 7 (date of application).

Example 2

Ms. Sander's certification period for SNAP expired on March 31. She submitted her application for recertification on May 4. She completed her interview and provided proof of her income on May 8 and was determined to be eligible for benefits. Because she submitted her application for recertification beyond 30 days after the end of the certification period, the application must be processed as an initial application.

17.4.3.5 Household Submits Application for Recertification 31 Days or Later After the End of the Certification Period

ESA must process the application as an initial application.

Chapter

18

Chapter 18. SNAP E&T Program

Through the SNAP E&T program, SNAP participants receive a range of valuable resources, including career pathways, economic assistance, case management, participant reimbursements and supportive services. Although participation in the SNAP E&T program is currently voluntary, it is open to all SNAP customers, including those who may be exempt from work registration requirements.

ESA customizes the types of services for all participants in the SNAP E&T program by conducting personalized assessments, offering regular case management and providing many different program components.

The SNAP E&T program collaborates with various workforce development partners to ensure that its services are tailored to meet the specific workforce demands of the District. Areas identified as high demand in the District include:

- Business administration and information technology
- Construction
- Healthcare
- Hospitality
- Infrastructure
- Law enforcement and security

For additional information, please see the current SNAP E&T State Plan.

The District's SNAP E&T program also includes the SNAP Volunteer Program, a workfare component that helps customers meet the ABAWD Work Requirements. (See *3.2.4 – Participating in Workfare- SNAP Volunteer Program in SNAP E&T of the SNAP Work Requirements Handbook*)

18.1 Screening for Referral to SNAP E&T

During the interview at initial application and recertification, ESA will discuss and record the work registration status (see ***Section 9.1, Work Registration Requirements***) of each household member and advise the household of work registration requirements and penalties.

During the initial application and recertification, ESA also provides all individuals with a written explanation and oral notification of the applicable work requirements, as well as basic information on the SNAP E&T program, including participant reimbursements.

To record an individual's interest, SSRs can check a box in the DCAS system that denotes interest in the voluntary SNAP E&T program. The SSR assigned to the SNAP E&T program then contacts individuals to conduct additional eligibility and suitability reviews to ensure that individuals interested in the program are either unemployed or seeking to improve employment, are at least 16 and out of school and are interested in and willing to participate in gaining employment and training skills. If they meet these requirements, individuals are referred to SNAP E&T Vocational Development staff or a third-party partner if appropriate.

18.2 SNAP Work Activities

Individuals may participate in the SNAP E&T program and receive services to help them find successful employment. Work activities or components in the SNAP E&T program may include the following:

- Non-education or non-work components
  - Job search training
  - Job retention
  - Self-employed training
- Educational programs
  - Basic/foundational skills instruction (includes high school equivalency programs)
  - Career/technical education programs or other vocational training
  - Integrated education and training/bridge programs
  - Work readiness training
- Work experience
  - Internships
  - On-the-job training
  - Transitional jobs

18.3 SNAP E&T Participation Reimbursement

ESA may authorize reimbursement to SNAP E&T participants for expenses deemed reasonable, necessary and directly related to participation in SNAP E&T. Those expenses may include the following:

- Childcare
- Transportation
- Business attire and uniforms
- Licensing and bonding fees for work experience programs

- Work tools and supplies
- Books and testing fees for training or licensure

Legal Authority

Voluntary participation and reimbursements (Federal): SNAP: 7 CFR § 273.7(d)(4) and (e)(5)(i)

Chapter

19

Chapter 19. Administrative/Fair Hearings

19.1 Administrative/Fair Hearing Definition

A customer or authorized representative who disagrees with an action ESA takes that affects benefits, program participation or program requirements may request an administrative hearing. “Administrative hearings” are commonly referred to as “fair hearings,” and both terms are used throughout this chapter.

A customer or authorized representative may file a hearing request with anyone at ESA. They may also file a request with the Office of Administrative Hearings (OAH), the District agency that makes rulings on disputes about eligibility for Department programs.

19.2 Right to a Fair Hearing

At the time of initial and recertification application for benefits and on any Notice of Adverse Action, each customer will be informed in writing that they have a right to request a fair hearing. ESA Notices of Adverse Action must include the following information:

- Method by which a hearing may be requested
- An explanation that the customer has the right to be represented by legal counsel, relative, friend or a person who is not an employee of the District
- An explanation that the customer may bring witnesses on their behalf
- An explanation that ESA will pay reasonable expenses related to the hearing, such as transportation costs for the customer and their witnesses
- A list of public and private sources that provide legal services at low or no cost
- Circumstances under which benefits will be continued if a fair hearing is requested
- An explanation that the customer will be liable for any overissuances received while awaiting a fair hearing if the hearing official’s decision is adverse to the household

19.3 Requesting a Fair Hearing

Any public assistance customer who disagrees with ESA action or inaction that affects their participation in a particular program or level of benefits may request a hearing. Customers have 90 days from the postmark on the Notice of Adverse Action to request a hearing. A hearing request is a clear expression, oral or written, by the customer or their representative that they want to take either of the following actions:

- Appeal a decision by ESA.
- State their case to a higher authority.

ESA must treat a request made by the customer's representative as a request from the customer, as long as the customer provides written authorization of representation within 10 days of the request. Customers or their representatives may file a request for a hearing with any ESA employee or file the request directly at OAH.

ESA may not limit or restrict a household's right to request a hearing on an ESA decision. A customer may make a request verbally or in writing. If it is unclear from the household's request what action it wishes to appeal, ESA may request the household to clarify its grievance. ESA must assist the customer in completing their hearing request when asked. ESA must accept a request for a fair hearing and electronically transmit the request to the Office of Administrative Review and Appeals (OARA) on the date it is received.

Customers have the right to request a hearing if they have been aggrieved by any action or inaction of ESA that affects the receipt, termination, amount, kind or conditions of assistance.

OAH is not required to grant a hearing if the sole issue is a federal or District law requiring an automatic change that adversely affects some or all beneficiaries.

OAH may deny or dismiss a request for a fair hearing if:

- The customer withdraws the request in writing.
- The customer fails to appear at a scheduled hearing without good cause.

19.4 Continuation of Benefits

Generally, ESA must delay adverse action while awaiting a hearing decision unless the household waives its right to continued benefits, provided the following criteria are met:

- The recipient asks for a hearing before the effective date of the adverse action or within 10 days of the postmark date on the Notice of Adverse Action, whichever is later, or the household establishes that it had good cause for not doing so.
- The certification period has not expired.

See ***Section 19.4.1, Continuation of Benefits due to Mass Changes***, for specific SNAP mass change hearing rights.

ESA may reduce or terminate benefits while a fair hearing is pending in any of the following situations:

- A mass change affected the household's eligibility or benefit level.
- The household reports a change, or ESA discovers a change that affects the household's eligibility or level of benefits that is not related to the original hearing request, and the household does not request a hearing on this action after ESA sends a timely and adequate Notice of Adverse Action based on the change.
- OAH makes a preliminary determination, in writing and at the hearing, that the sole issue is one of federal law or regulation and that the household's claim that ESA improperly computed the benefits or misinterpreted or misapplied such law or regulation is invalid.
- The SNAP certification period expires.

If OAH upholds ESA's action in the hearing decision, any benefits the household receives for which it was not eligible are an overpayment.

Example: No Continued Benefits After SNAP Certification Ends

Ms. Clark and her two children receive SNAP. Her certification period ends on June 30, and she is sent a Notice of Adverse Action on June 10 indicating that her SNAP benefits will be terminated effective June 30 because she is over income for the program. Ms. Clark requests a fair hearing on June 20. Although Ms. Clark made a timely hearing request, she is not eligible for continued SNAP benefits because her certification period ends on June 30.

19.4.1 Continuation of Benefits Due to Mass Changes

Households may request a fair hearing when they disagree with a mass change (see ***Section 15.7, Mass Changes***, for more information). The household is eligible for continued SNAP benefits if the household meets the following three criteria:

- The household requests a fair hearing.
- The household does not specifically waive its right to a continuation of benefits.
- The household's fair hearing is based upon improper calculation of SNAP eligibility or benefits or the misapplication or misinterpretation of federal law or regulations.

Example

Mary Minor requests a fair hearing and continuation benefits when her SNAP benefits are reduced because of a federally mandated reduction in the maximum SNAP allotments. Ms. Minor is not eligible to continue getting SNAP benefits at her previous level because the reduction is not due to an incorrect calculation of her benefits or misapplication of federal rules.

19.5 Responsibilities Regarding Fair Hearings

When a customer requests a fair hearing, OARA schedules an administrative review conference (ARC) to try to resolve the disagreement informally. If the conference resolves the issue, the customer or authorized representative may sign a written request to withdraw their fair hearing request. Customers are not required to attend the ARC. If a customer or their authorized representative does not attend the conference or decides not to withdraw the request, the fair hearing will proceed as scheduled. OARA acts as follows:

- Reviews disputed ESA decisions
- Keeps records of all requests for fair hearings sent to OARA
- Discusses relevant laws and regulations with the customer (and their legal representative, if applicable) to clarify policy and legal issues once the customer requests a hearing
- Conducts ARCs for all programs ESA administers

19.5.1 Agency Responsibilities

OARA sets the date for the ARC, if possible, within 20 days of receipt of the hearing request. ESA mails an ARC notice to the customer, their representative and OAH. The written notice informs the customer of the following:

- The time and place of the administrative review
- The purpose of the review
- That the review will not be held if they do not attend
- That failure to attend will not affect the scheduled fair hearing
- Their right to review the case record
- The right to be represented by an individual they choose, including legal counsel, as well as the availability of low- or no-cost legal services from public and private sources

Prior to the administrative conference, OARA may act as follows:

- Discuss case issues with the center manager or others familiar with the case to determine whether ESA's action or inaction was correct.
- Review the case record to ensure that it is properly documented and accurately reflects ESA's decisions.
- Ask the supervisor to prepare an explanation for the action taken related to the disputed facts or issues.

During the administrative conference, OARA will act as follows:

- Inform the customer of their right to review the case record.

- Advise the customer that if they disagree with the result of the review, the requested fair hearing will be held as scheduled.
- Inform the customer that if they agree with the result of the review, they may withdraw the request for a hearing by signing a written statement of withdrawal.
- Discuss relevant laws and regulations with the customer and their representative to clarify policy and legal issues.

After the ARC, OARA prepares written findings, conclusions and recommendations, known as the Conference Summary and Determination, and mails them to the customer, their representative, the center manager and OAH.

If the customer fails to appear at the scheduled conference, the appeals officer will send a Conference Summary and Determination letter informing the customer that the case will go to a fair hearing for a decision.

Example

Ms. Hernandez applied for SNAP for herself and her two children on June 4. ESA found them ineligible based on immigration status and sent a denial notice. After receiving the denial notice, Ms. Hernandez requested a fair hearing.

At the ARC Ms. Hernandez attended, OARA found that she and her children were eligible based on their immigration status.

On August 3, OARA sent the center manager its decision. The center must reopen Ms. Hernandez's application and redetermine the household's SNAP eligibility according to OARA's instructions.

19.5.1.1 SNAP Administrative Reviews for Expedited Service

OARA will prioritize a request for review or a fair hearing for SNAP expedited service. If a customer requests SNAP expedited service and is denied, OARA schedules an ARC within two business days unless the household requests that it be scheduled later or states that it does not want to have a conference.

19.6 Scheduling of Fair Hearing

OAH must hold a hearing within 45 days from the date the customer requested the hearing. OAH will send written notice of the date and time of the hearing to the customer, their representative and ESA at least five days before the hearing. This allows all parties enough time to prepare for the hearing. Customers may request or agree to less advance notice to expedite the scheduling of the hearing.

The following describes the actions taken once a request for fair hearing is made:

- A customer files a request for a fair hearing with ESA, OAH or OARA. A customer may request a hearing in writing, in person or by telephone.
- ESA suspends the planned adverse action and reinstates benefits if the customer is eligible for continued benefits while waiting for the fair hearing decision.

- ESA forwards any requests received to OARA the day they are received.
- OAH assigns the case to an administrative law judge (ALJ).
- OAH schedules the hearing for a date within 45 days of the request and gives the household at least five days' notice before the hearing date.
- OARA schedules an ARC with ESA and the customer within 20 days of the hearing request. Next, the following actions occur:
  - OAH reviews the case file and determines if ESA needs to make any corrections.
  - If corrections are required, ESA makes them within three days.
  - OARA holds the ARC and writes a Conference Summary and Determination Notice.
  - The ALJ conducts the hearing.
  - The ALJ writes a recommendation and sends it to OAH for a final decision **within 60 days of the hearing request unless the hearing proceedings were postponed**.

19.7 Fair Hearing Procedures

19.7.1 Conducting a Fair Hearing

An ALJ assigned by OAH conducts all hearings in line with federal and District rules and regulations. ESA is not represented by an attorney at any hearing when the customer is not represented by an attorney.

19.7.2 Rights of the Customer During the Fair Hearing

The customer or their representative must be given adequate opportunity to act as follows:

- Examine all documents and records ESA will use at the hearing at a reasonable time before the date of the hearing and during the hearing. This includes the application/recertification form and documents of verification used to determine ineligibility or benefit level, as long as this does not release confidential information. ESA may not use confidential materials withheld from the customer in the hearing.
- Present their case or have it presented by a legal counsel or other representative.
- Bring witnesses.
- Make arguments without undue interference.
- Question or disprove any testimony or evidence, including a chance to confront and cross-examine adverse witnesses.
- Submit evidence to prove all relevant facts and circumstances in the case.

Legal Authority

Fair hearings (Federal): SNAP: 7 USC § 2020(e)(10), 7 CFR § 273.15

Fair hearings (District): DC Official Code §§ 4-210.01-.19, 1 DCMR 2970–2978

Chapter

20

Chapter 20. Federal Demonstration Projects

20.1 Elderly Simplified Application Project (ESAP)

20.1.1 Definition of ESAP

The District's ESAP is designed to simplify SNAP certification requirements for households whose members are older adults or have disabilities and have no earned income. These households have traditionally proven to be the District's most stable population, on fixed income, with few reportable changes in household composition or deductions.

Older adults and individuals with disabilities can face barriers when applying for and remaining enrolled in SNAP. Individuals with limited mobility, visual impairments or cognitive disabilities may face challenges accessing and understanding application materials, obtaining documentation to satisfy verification requirements or traveling to Service Centers.

ESAP helps reduce barriers to SNAP for older adults and individuals with disabilities. ESAP households have streamlined application and verification procedures, are assigned 36-month certification periods and have a simplified recertification process.

ESAP cases are handled by SSRs who process all SNAP applications, continuing eligibility and maintenance functions. All staff will be trained to screen any SNAP application for ESAP eligibility.

20.1.2 Requirements for ESAP

To be certified as an ESAP household, the household must meet the following requirements:

- All adult household members are either of the following:
  - Age 60 or older
  - Disabled, per the SNAP definition of disabled in 7 CFR § 271.2
- Children under 18 who do not have earned income can be present in the household and included in the ESAP case.

- The household has no earned income.
- The household meets all other financial and nonfinancial eligibility criteria.

20.1.2.1 Initial Application Process

To determine initial eligibility for ESAP:

- An ESAP application or combined application for benefits must be submitted.
- ESA must follow simplified ESAP verification procedures.
- An interview must be completed.
- Consistent with procedures for non-ESAP households, ESA must process the application within seven days if the household meets expedited service criteria. All other ESAP households must be processed within 30 days. ESAP households that meet expedited service criteria can have verification postponed and assigned one- or two-month certification periods. Once postponed verification requirements are satisfied, the ESAP certification period will be assigned.

20.1.3 Certification Period

ESAP households are certified for 36 months.

20.1.4 Benefits

ESAP benefits will be calculated the same as for any regular SNAP household.

20.1.5 Reporting Requirements

All ESAP households will be on simplified reporting; however, the ESAP participants will not be required to submit mid-certifications. Households are required to report when the household's monthly gross income exceeds 130 percent of the federal poverty guidelines and when a household member wins substantial lottery or gambling winnings, as defined in ***Chapter 10, Resource Eligibility***.

ESA will mail a notice to ESAP households every 12 months to remind them of the simplified reporting requirements and how to report changes.

20.1.6 Recertification Process

To determine ongoing eligibility for ESAP households, a recertification application must be submitted, and ESA must follow simplified ESAP verification procedures.

An interview is required in the following situations:

- The case is closing, terminating or being denied.
  - **Note:** ESA may not close, terminate or deny an ESAP case without first attempting to schedule a recertification interview.
- Information supplied by the household or authorized representative is questionable, incomplete or contradictory.

- The household requests an interview.

20.1.7 Simplified ESAP Verification Procedures

ESAP eligibility for initial application and recertification will be determined based on information on the application, information obtained during the interview and any information from state and federal computer matches. To determine eligibility, the household will not have to verify any additional information, unless questionable. If information regarding noncitizen status is needed, the household must provide this verification. Any information that is not verified through state and federal computer matches (State Data Exchange, BENDEX, IEVS, etc.), such as shelter, medical or child support expenses, may also be considered questionable and require additional verification by the household.

Chapter

21

Chapter 21. Disqualification for Intentional Program Violation

An individual may be permanently or temporarily ineligible for SNAP if they have been found by a federal, state or District court to have committed an IPV. For SNAP IPVs, an ADH can also result in permanent or temporary disqualification. IPVs are intentional actions for the purpose of receiving more SNAP benefits than the individual or family is eligible for.

The entire SNAP household cannot be categorically eligible if a member has been disqualified for an IPV (see ***Section 4.4.1, Households Prohibited From Being Categorically Eligible***).

21.1 Administrative Responsibility

ESA will be responsible for referring any case of alleged or suspected IPV to the DHS OPRMI for investigation. OPRMI ensures that appropriate cases are acted upon either through ADH or referral to the DC OAG for prosecution in a court of appropriate jurisdiction in accordance with the procedures outlined in this section. OPRMI should initiate administrative disqualification procedures or referral for prosecution in cases in which it has sufficient documentary evidence to substantiate that an individual has intentionally made one or more acts of IPV, as defined in ***Section 21.2, Definition of IPV***. OPRMI will pursue ADHs (see ***Section 21.3, Methods of Determining an IPV***) for cases in which it believes the facts of the individual case do not warrant civil or criminal prosecution through the appropriate court system, cases previously referred for prosecution that were declined by the appropriate legal authority and previously referred cases where no action was taken within a reasonable period of time and the referral was formally withdrawn by OPRMI.

OPRMI will not initiate an ADH against an accused individual whose case is currently being referred for prosecution or subsequent to any action taken against the accused individual by the prosecutor or court of appropriate jurisdiction if the factual issues of the case arise out of the same, or related, circumstances.

OPRMI may initiate administrative disqualification procedures or refer a case for prosecution regardless of the current eligibility of the individual.

If OPRMI does not initiate administrative disqualification procedures or refer for prosecution a case involving an overissuance caused by a suspected act of IPV, ESA will take action to collect the overissuance by establishing an inadvertent household error recipient claim against the household. The collection of the overpayment and the disqualification for IPV are separate issues. ESA will implement administrative disqualifications for IPVs as determined by hearing authorities through ADHs or by courts of appropriate jurisdiction.

However, OPRMI will allow accused individuals to waive their rights to ADHs or sign disqualification consent agreements for cases of deferred adjudication. ESA will implement administrative disqualifications for IPV on the waived right to an ADH or on the signed disqualification consent agreement in cases of deferred adjudication.

21.2 Definition of IPV

Intentional actions that may result in an IPV include the following:

- A false or misleading statement
- A misrepresentation, concealment or withholding of facts
- Any act that constitutes a violation of federal SNAP laws, SNAP regulations or any District statute for the purpose of using, presenting, transferring, acquiring, receiving, possessing or trafficking of SNAP benefits or EBT cards

An IPV disqualification is in addition to, and cannot be substituted for, any other sanction or penalties that may be imposed by law for the same offenses.

ESA must inform the household in writing of the disqualification penalties for IPVs each time the household applies for SNAP benefits. The penalties must be in clear, prominent and boldface lettering on the application form.

The District Office of Administrative Hearings conducts ADHs for individuals accused of IPVs.

Please see ***Section 14.1.1, IPV, Fleeing Felon and Work Requirement Sanctions***, for more information.

21.3 Methods of Determining an IPV

Individuals can be found to have committed an IPV through any of the following:

- An ADH
- By a federal, state or local court
- A signed a waiver of right to an ADH
- A signed disqualification consent agreement in cases referred for prosecution

21.4 IPV Disqualification Time Periods

An individual found to have committed an IPV is ineligible for the following time periods:

- Twelve months for the first offense
- Twenty-four months for the second offense
- Permanently for the third offense
- Twenty-four months for the first finding by a federal, state or District court of trading a controlled substance for benefits
- Permanently for the second finding by a federal, state or District court of trading a controlled substance for benefits
- Permanently for the first occasion of a finding by a federal, state or District court for trading firearms, ammunition or explosives for benefits
- Permanently for having trafficked benefits for an aggregate value of $500 or more

IPV disqualifications follow individuals from one jurisdiction to another.

Assistance will be denied for a period of 10 years to any person convicted in a federal, state or District court after August 22, 1996, of making a fraudulent statement or misrepresentation with respect to residence to receive TANF, SNAP, SSI or Medicaid simultaneously in two or more states.

- The 10-year period will begin on the date of the conviction in federal, state or District court of having made such a statement or misrepresentation.
- This policy does not apply to individuals who have been granted a pardon from the President of the US with respect to the above conduct.
- The individual must be denied or terminated from federally funded assistance programs at the earliest possible date.

21.5 Electronic Disqualified Recipient System (eDRS)

For information on eDRS, see ***Sections 6.6, Electronic Disqualified Recipient System (eDRS)***, and ***5.12.3.1.7, Independent Verification Requirements for eDRS***.

Legal Authority

Disqualification for intentional program violations (Federal): 7 CFR § 273.16

Chapter

22

Chapter 22. Electronic Benefits Transfer

22.1 Method of Issuance

SNAP households receive benefits through an EBT card, similar to an ATM or debit card, to make purchases at participating grocery stores and markets.

When a SNAP recipient uses an EBT card at the food store, the SNAP benefits are deducted from their SNAP account and transferred to the food vendor electronically.

The DC EBT card is known as the Capital Access Card. Eligible beneficiaries may access TANF, POWER, Interim Disability Assistance (IDA) and refugee cash assistance benefits electronically at participating stores and ATMs (cash machines for cash benefits only) that display the QUEST logo.

EBT cards are mailed the business day following the date of approval for benefits. Individuals may pick up their EBT card at one of the following EBT card distribution centers:

- 645 H Street NE
- 1649 Marion Barry Avenue SE (formerly Good Hope Road SE)

22.2 Who May Use the EBT Card

Generally, the EBT card is issued in the head of household’s name. However, anyone in the SNAP household or their authorized representative may use the card to access benefits. The head of household may authorize a nonhousehold member as one of the following options to act on the household’s behalf:

- **Representative:** This person/organization can apply for benefits, provide interview assistance, receive notices, report changes and make inquiries. The SNAP household will be held liable for any overissuance that results from the representative providing incorrect information. Representatives may include a private nonprofit organization or an institution managing a drug addiction or alcohol treatment facility.

- **Nominee:** This person will receive an EBT card with their name on it and will be able to access the SNAP household's cash and food benefits on its behalf (food and cash only).
- **Courier:** This person can pick up the SNAP EBT card from the EBT office (food and cash only).

22.3 Replacements for Household Misfortunes

Replacement SNAP is available at any time and does not require a major disaster declaration such as Disaster SNAP (D-SNAP). To receive replacement benefits, a customer must already be receiving a SNAP allotment at the time food purchased with SNAP benefits was lost due to a misfortunate event. A household's misfortunate events include loss of food due to a non-major disaster such as a severe storm, flooding, power outage or fire.

The following are general requirements for receiving replacement SNAP benefits:

- The household must have received an allotment for the month during which the food loss occurred.
- The household has purchased food with its SNAP benefits, and this food was destroyed due to a household misfortune, including:
  - Severe storm
  - Fire
  - Flood
  - Power outage lasting at least four hours
  - Refrigerator or freezer equipment failure
  - Other household misfortunes (contact the Policy Unit for other situations)
- The household has reported the loss to ESA orally or in writing within 10 days of the loss of the food.
- A member of the household has submitted a signed DHS Form 1696, Replacement of SNAP Benefits, attesting to the household loss, and ESA received the form within 10 days of the report of the loss.
- ESA must verify the loss, usually through collateral contact, documents from companies and agencies such as the Red Cross or Pepco or home visit.
  - **Note:** The amount of the loss does not need to be verified.
- ESA has 10 days after the household reports a loss or two business days after receiving the DHS Form 1696, whichever is later, to provide replacement issuances.
- The amount of replacement benefits is limited to the household's monthly SNAP benefit amount unless the issuance includes restored benefits that must be replaced up to their full value.
- There is no limit on the number of times a household may receive replacement SNAP due to a household misfortune.
- A household may not receive replacement SNAP and a D-SNAP benefit for the same time period.

Note that a customer may report a loss of food purchased with SNAP benefits orally or in writing within 10 days of the household misfortune. If this initial report was not completed using the DHS Form 1696, Replacement of SNAP Benefits, the customer has 10 days from the date of their initial report to submit a completed DHS Form 1696.

The completed DHS Form 1696 and any verification documents must be scanned into DIMS using the "Add Attachment" option to save in DCAS.

22.4 Replacing a Lost EBT Card

A household may request a replacement EBT card by calling (888) 304-9167 or by visiting one of the ESA card distribution centers listed in ***Section 22.1, Method of Issuance.*** ESA may collect a fee for issuing a replacement card.

22.5 Monthly Issuance Schedule

The day a SNAP household's benefits are available on the EBT card is based on the first letter of the applicant's last name (see schedule in Table 22.5.a).

Table 22.5.a. Schedule of Availability of SNAP Benefits on EBT Card

First Letter of Last Name	Date
A or B	1st of month
C	2nd of month
D, E or F	3rd of month
G or H	4th of month
I, J or K	5th of month
L or M	6th of month
N, O, P or Q	7th of month
R or S	8th of month
T, U or V	9th of month
W, X, Y or Z	10th of month

22.6 Replacement of Stolen Benefits

SNAP customers whose benefits are stolen may request replacement benefits under certain conditions.

Customer Eligibility and Limitations

- A household may receive reimbursement for stolen SNAP benefits up to a maximum of two (2) claims per fiscal year.

- The maximum reimbursement for each claim is limited to the value of the household's most recent two months of SNAP allotments.
- The household must report the theft of benefits **within 60 calendar days** of the first allegedly fraudulent transaction.

Reporting and Documentation

- A police report is not required.
- The household must complete and submit a Request for Replacement of Stolen SNAP Benefits form (DHS-1697). This form is processed by OPRMI. Customers can submit the form as follows:
  - **Online (preferred):** ***https://dhs.dc.gov/node/1680151*** and click "Replacement of Stolen SNAP or Cash Benefits Form."
    - **Note**: customers should **not** submit a "Fraud Allegations Form"
  - Via mail or in person
    - The DHS-1697 can be downloaded from ***https://dhs.dc.gov/node/1680151***
    - Mail or drop off to:
DHS/OPRMI
64 New York Avenue NE
Washington, DC 2002
    - Via phone by calling (202) 671-4460 and pressing "1" for a live representative between the hours of 8:15 am and 4:45 pm
- The household must also provide a signed attestation or a verbal agreement to the DHS affirming that the reported theft occurred.

Card Replacement

- Customers whose benefits were stolen must obtain a replacement EBT card from Fidelity National Information Services (FIS) before replacement benefits can be issued. Customers can request a replacement EBT card as follows:
  - In person by visiting the EBT Card Distribution Center
  - By mail after contacting FIS at 888-304-9167 to request a replacement card

Chapter

23

Chapter 23: Claims Against the Household

This section provides information on SNAP overpayment policy and underpayment policy.

- A household has an overpayment when it receives more benefits than it is eligible to receive.
- A household has an underpayment when it receives less benefits than it is eligible to receive.

23.1 Definition of a Recipient Claim

The overpayment or underpayment is the difference between the benefit amount the client actually received before any recoupment and the benefit amount the client should have received before recoupment.

ESA must use the policies in effect in the payment month when calculating benefit errors.

23.1.1 Applying Income Disregards and Deductions

The SNAP 20 percent earned income disregard is not allowed if the household did not report the income change timely.

When a household is completely ineligible in one or more months and is eligible in one or more later months, ESA assumes that the household reapplied on the first day it eligible. ESA will calculate the amount that the household should have received based on the first day it was eligible and prorate if necessary.

23.1.2 Best Estimate of Income

If a customer does not cooperate by providing information to determine the amount of the incorrect payment, ESA will use the best estimate or best information available from sources such as IEVS or The Work Number.

If information is available in an earlier quarter, ESA will use the information for the following months. If ESA has quarterly wage information (from DOES or the recipient's previous employer) and the recipient is unwilling or unable to provide monthly earnings amounts, ESA will average the quarterly wages over the quarter and use the resulting monthly average to determine the correct payment amounts. ESA must attempt to get monthly wage information directly from the recipient's employer before using an estimate on best available information.

When calculating overpayments or underpayments for SNAP households that also receive TANF, ESA will use the amount of TANF cash assistance actually received in the payment month, even if the cash assistance was later determined to be an overpayment.

23.1.3 Reporting Overpayments

All ESA staff who identify an overpayment must complete the Claim Referral Form and provide sufficient documentation/justification for the identified overpayment. The completed form and documentation/justification must be sent to the ESA Overpayment Unit (OPU) within two business days from the date an overpayment is suspected.

OPU will review the Claim Referral Form, along with the documentation/justification, and validate whether a claim should be established. If a claim is established, OPU will mail a demand letter and, for SNAP claims, the repayment agreement letter.

23.1.4 When ESA Does Not Establish an Overpayment

An overpayment claim is established, but no collection action will take place when the claim amount is $125 or less and the household is not currently participating, unless the overpayment was discovered through a QC review.

If a recipient promptly reports a change, but ESA does not act on a reported change within the 10-day standard, the household would have a Department error overpayment for the excess benefits the household received because ESA did not act within the 10-day standard.

For simplified reporting households, if the household reports an income change between certifications, there is no overpayment if the income is below the household's reporting threshold or if the household reports the change timely. ESA must provide an adequate and timely notice before reducing benefits.

If an administrative review, fair hearing or court ruling decides that an overpayment claim is unjustified, ESA will terminate the claim and return any benefits already recovered through recoupment or any other mechanism to the household.

Example: No Overpayment

Ms. Wright receives TANF. In June, she finds a job and gets her first paycheck. She calls her caseworker June 17, two days after being paid. She is paid twice a month and earns $150 per paycheck.

Her caseworker issues a notice on June 19 informing Ms. Wright that her TANF benefits will decrease by $47 per month and that her SNAP benefits will be reduced by $58 based on her new earnings. These changes are effective August 1 because of the 15-day notice period.

Ms. Wright reported her income change timely, and ESA acted on the information timely, so there is no TANF or SNAP overpayment.

Example: Department Error Overpayment

Ms. Lewis is employed, receives TANF and SNAP and is subject to simplified reporting. Ms. Lewis receives a pay raise in June, and her total income for July exceeds her reporting threshold. Ms. Lewis calls her caseworker August 3 to report her increased income. The caseworker fails to issue a termination notice for TANF and SNAP until August 25. Benefits are reduced beginning October because of the 15-day notice period.

No overpayment is charged for either program for June, July and August because these benefits would not have been reduced even if ESA had acted in a timely manner. TANF and SNAP ESA error overpayments are charged for the excess benefits received in September because of ESA's failure to act promptly on the reported change.

23.1.5 Time Limitations on Calculating and Collecting Overpayments

- ESA calculates overpayments for a period of 12 months from the date the overpayment is discovered unless ESA suspects the overpayment is a result of fraud or an IPV.
- When ESA identifies or suspects an overpayment is a result of fraud or an IPV, the overpayment is calculated for the entire period over which excess benefits were received, up to a limit of six years from the date the overpayment was discovered.
- Although ESA calculates an overpayment beyond 12 months from the date of discovery of suspected fraud, ESA does not collect for the period beyond 12 months unless fraud or IPV has been determined.

Example 1

Ms. Freeman and her two children receive SNAP. In March 2020, ESA discovers that the household was overpaid SNAP because Ms. Freeman's oldest son is 20 and had countable earnings since he was 18. Ms. Freeman says she did not know that her son's wages were countable because she was told that his earnings were excluded when he was 17. Although the income dates back two years, calculate the household's overpayment for only the 12-month period from April 2019 to March 2020 because the overpayment appears to be an inadvertent household error.

Example 2

Ms. White and her three children receive TANF. In March 2020, it is discovered that James O'Brien, the father of Ms. White's youngest child, has lived with them for the past two years. A review of Ms. White's records shows that she failed to list James O'Brien as a household member on the recertification forms she completed during the two-year period. Because case documentation shows that Ms. White misrepresented her household's composition, calculate an overpayment for the entire two-year period.

23.1.6 Determining an Overpayment's Start Date

When determining the amount of the overpayment, ESA will determine whether the first month's benefits would have been adjusted had the change been reported timely and ESA had acted on that information timely.

Households subject to simplified reporting must report a change within 10 days from the end of the month in which the change occurred or within 10 days of the change, whichever is later.

ESA has 10 days to take action on the reported change and must follow the Notice of Adverse Action policy in ***Section 16.6, Notice of Adverse Action***.

Note: These timeframes apply only to changes required to be reported under the household's assigned reporting system. The requirements vary according to the reporting system requirements.

Example 1

Mr. Porter receives SNAP. He starts work in March and receives his first paycheck on March 27. Mr. Porter waits until his recertification appointment on July 19 to report his employment, and his wages are used to determine his benefits for the new certification period that begins August 1. Mr. Porter was expected to report his earnings by April 10. Had he done so, ESA had until April 20 to process his income change and issue a 15-day notice of a change in benefits for June. There is no overissuance for March, April and May. ESA will establish a SNAP overpayment for June and July.

Example 2

Ms. Schwarte receives TANF and SNAP. Ms. Schwarte is approved for Maryland unemployment benefits and receives her first check on May 15. She reports her new income at her TANF review on July 19. Because her caseworker cannot give a 15-day timely notice for August, she adjusts Ms. Schwarte's TANF and SNAP benefits for September. Ms. Schwarte had until June 10 to report her unemployment benefits. Her caseworker had 10 days—until June 20—to process the change and send a 15-day notice of change for August.

There are no overpayments or overissuances for May through July. ESA will establish a TANF and SNAP overpayment for August.

23.2 Classification of Recipient Claims

SNAP overpayments occur when an individual or household receives more benefits than it was eligible to receive. There are three types of overpayments:

- Department error
- Inadvertent household error
- Fraud/IPV

23.2.1 Department Errors

Department error overpayments result from ESA's incorrect action or inaction.

Examples of Department errors follow:

- Failing to take prompt action on a change the household reported
- Miscalculating the household's income or deductions, resulting in an overpayment
- Failing to reduce SNAP benefits when cash benefits increase
- Issuing SNAP benefits after a household's certification period has expired
- Incorrectly classifying a household as categorically eligible for SNAP when the household is not categorically eligible

23.2.2 Inadvertent Household Errors

Inadvertent household errors are caused by misunderstanding or unintentional errors by the household, including the following:

- Failure to report a change between recertifications that appears to be a result of oversight or misunderstanding
- Failure to report a change promptly
- Failure to report the absence of a child who has unexpectedly not returned home within 90 days

23.2.3 Suspected Fraud or IPV

Suspected fraud or IPV occurs when an individual or household provides false or incomplete information to receive benefits for which it is not eligible.

ESA refers cases for suspected fraud or IPV investigation when there is a documented incident of false or misleading statements or misrepresentation, concealment or withholding of facts.

ESA processes cases suspected of fraud or IPV as an inadvertent customer error overpayment until a determination of fraud or IPV is made.

The following are examples of suspected IPV:

- Providing false or incomplete information at application, recertification or when reporting a change
- Failure to report an income change at application or recertification
- Failure to report a change in household size at recertification
- Providing false verification at application, recertification or when reporting a change

For ESA to consider an overpayment a result of fraud, one of the following actions must occur:

- A court must convict the household of fraud or theft of public benefits.
- A court or an ADH must find that the household committed an IPV.
- The customer signed a waiver to an ADH or a disqualification consent agreement for cases of deferred adjudication.

Example 1

Ms. Tilly applies for SNAP for her family in May. She states she just started a job and is working 20 hours a week and provides a phone number to call and verify her employment. She is approved for benefits based on the verbal confirmation with someone who states they are her supervisor.

At her next recertification, Ms. Tilly states her income has not changed. However, when ESA verifies her employment through The Work Number, it shows income equal to full-time pay in the two months before. This is in direct conflict with the information Ms. Tilly provided when she applied. Process the overpayment as an inadvertent error and refer the case for an IPV determination.

Example 2

Ms. Andrews receives TANF and SNAP for herself and her two children. She applied as a single parent and has maintained she does not know who the father is. She reports her rent has increased. ESA calls her landlord to verify the amount of rent. The landlord verifies the rent and states Mr. and Mrs. Andrews and their children have been long-term tenants. Send a notice requesting information to determine eligibility with Mr. Andrews in the home and refer the case for a fraud investigation.

Example 3

Mr. Sparks receives SNAP. At his recertification, he includes a copy of his current Maryland driver's license in his packet. ESA contacts Maryland and discovers Mr. Sparks is also receiving benefits there. Deny the recertification. Process an inadvertent household error overpayment for the months of SNAP benefits Mr. Sparks received in the District while he also received benefits in Maryland. Refer the case for an IPV determination.

23.3 Liability of Recipient Claims

The following individuals are responsible for paying a claim:

- Each person who was an adult member of the household when the overpayment or trafficking occurred: The primary informant may not be held "automatically" responsible for trafficking the household's benefits if there is no direct evidence identifying them as the guilty party. However, the primary informant may be held responsible when sufficient circumstantial evidence shows their complicity in the violative act. Complicity in this case means that even though the primary informant may not have actually conducted the transaction, upon questioning, there is convincing evidence that they were aware of it, may have benefited and took no actions to correct it. Complicity may be shown by establishing a clear pattern of misuse over time with the primary informant not providing a reasonable explanation and never reporting a loss/theft of the EBT card or benefits.
- A sponsor of a noncitizen household if the sponsor is at fault.
- A person connected to the household, such as an authorized representative, who causes an overpayment: This includes when a drug addiction and alcohol treatment facility or other group living arrangement acts as the authorized representative.
- A person connected to the SNAP household, such as an authorized representative, who actually traffics: This includes when a drug addiction and alcohol treatment facility or other group living arrangement acts as the authorized representative.

23.4 Offset of Recipient Claims

An offset occurs any time a household is entitled to receive a restoration of lost benefits and there is an outstanding recipient claim. The amount of restoration the household is entitled to receive must be applied toward repayment of the claim. The household may receive the balance of the benefits after the claim has been paid in full. An automated offset will not occur for the current month because this is considered a supplemental benefit.

23.4.1 Compromise

A SNAP claim may be reduced in full or in part if the claimant is unable to repay the full claim within a three-year period.

23.4.1.1 Requesting a Compromise

A SNAP claimant may request a compromise at any time after a claim is established, but only one compromise will be granted per claim. Once OPU grants a compromise, future requests for a compromise will be denied. The request must be directed to the ESA office or personnel listed in the customer's demand letter.

23.4.1.2 What Claims May Be Compromised

A SNAP claim may be reduced through compromise if the claim cannot be repaid within three years.

23.4.1.4 Amount of the Claim Reduced by Compromise

If the claimant meets the requirements listed in ***Section 23.4.1.2, What Claims May Be Compromised***, the claim may be reduced to the amount the claimant may be expected to repay within three years.

23.4.1.5 Restoring Compromised Benefits to a SNAP Claim

The SNAP claimant must comply with the repayment agreement. If the claimant fails to make a required repayment, ESA will void the compromise, and the claimant must repay the full amount of the overissuance.

If the Office of Administrative Hearings or DC Superior Court later determines that a claim is the result of fraud or an IPV, ESA must restore any portion of a claim that was compromised to the full amount of the overissuance.

23.4.1.6 Restrictions on the Number of Compromises

Only one compromise may be made on any individual SNAP claim. The amount of benefits that were compromised may not be recalculated even if the claimant's income, expenses or household size changes.

23.4.1.7 Notification That a Compromise May Be Requested

SNAP claimants will be sent notification when a SNAP claim is established, telling them that they may ask to have the overissuance reduced through compromise.

23.4.1.8 Restrictions on Consolidating Multiple Claims When Determining if a Compromise May Be Made

Separate SNAP claims cannot be consolidated to determine whether all or a portion of the claimant's combined debt may be compromised. A separate claim is defined as an overissuance for one month or two or more consecutive months that is the result of the same action or inaction of the claimant or ESA.

Example

Mr. Pondexter failed to report his wages from UPS timely. He was charged a SNAP overissuance for May 2018 through October 2018. Mr. Pondexter's job terminated, and he failed to report when he began receiving unemployment benefits. He was charged an overissuance for December 2018 through April 2019. Mr. Pondexter's overissuance cannot be combined because the months of the overissuance are not consecutive and the overissuances are based on two separate incidences of Mr. Pondexter's failing to report changes of his income.

23.5 Collection of Recipient Claims

Methods of recovery vary depending on whether the overpaid person is currently receiving benefits.

The primary method of recovering overpayments from households that currently receive benefits is recoupment of a portion of the household's ongoing monthly benefits to repay the amount owed.

When the household charged with an overpayment no longer receives benefits in the program where the household had an overpayment, the Payment and Collections Division (PCD) in the DC Office of the Chief Financial Officer is responsible for negotiating repayment terms.

Recovery methods for overpayments from persons who are no longer receiving benefits include the following:

- Voluntary repayment
- Civil recovery
- Criminal restitution
- Offset of an overpayment with an underpayment

In addition to the recovery options above, ESA may be able to use the Treasury Offset Program to recover overpayments by former and current SNAP recipients.

23.5.1 Initiating Recovery

ESA must establish the claim by sending the demand letter or written notification within the calendar quarter after the date ESA discovered the overpayment.

Next steps in the SNAP claims process follow:

- Begin recovery of the overpayment.
- Begin recoupment from a recipient's benefit.
- Send a letter requesting repayment and attempt to arrange a repayment agreement from a former recipient.

Failure to take any of the above actions within the timeframe does not affect the customer's responsibility to repay or ESA's responsibility to recover the overpayment.

23.5.2 SNAP Recoupment

When a household that has been charged with an overpayment continues to receive assistance, ESA withholds a portion of the household's monthly benefit to recoup the overpaid benefits unless the household makes other payment arrangements. ESA will not recoup more than the actual overpayment of assistance.

The amount ESA recovers each month from a participating SNAP household with a SNAP overpayment depends on the type of overpayment:

- For non-IPV error overpayments, recoup 10 percent of the household's monthly SNAP allotment or $10 a month, whichever is greater.
- For IPV overpayments, recoup 20 percent of the household's monthly SNAP allotment or $20 a month, whichever is greater.

For households with one or two members for which the minimum benefit rule generally applies, the application of this rule applies before the reduction in benefits due to recoupment. A household with one or two members can receive a benefit of less than $10 if the reason the benefit is below this amount is the recoupment of an overpayment.

Example 1

Mr. Ford is charged a non-IPV overpayment. His monthly SNAP benefits are $60. Although 10 percent of his allotment is $6, a $10 recoupment will be deducted from his benefits. If Mr. Ford were receiving $120 in SNAP, $12 (10 percent) would be recouped.

Example 2

Ms. Franklin is charged a fraud overpayment, which is an IPV. Her monthly SNAP benefits are $250. Ms. Franklin's allotment will be reduced by $50 (20 percent of her monthly benefits).

23.5.3 SNAP Overpayments Not Collected

PCD may write off a claim for a nonparticipating household if the claim meets any of the following criteria:

- All adult household members are deceased, and PCD is not planning to pursue collection from the estate.
- The claim, and any other overpayment claims against the household, is $25 or less, and the claim has been delinquent for 90 days or more.
- The claim has been delinquent for three years, and PCD is not planning to continue to pursue the claim through the Treasury Offset Program.
- The household cannot be located.

23.6 Collection Action on Bankruptcy Cases

When a person owing a claim files for bankruptcy, the PCD may petition the bankruptcy court on behalf of FNS. If ESA receives written notification that an individual has filed for bankruptcy, all collection actions must stop, including automated benefit recoupment. ESA staff that become aware of a bankruptcy petition must promptly notify the PCD, which will manage communications and coordinate any necessary actions with the Bankruptcy Court.

23.7 Delinquent Recipient Claims

A recipient claim must be considered delinquent if it meets one of the following conditions:

- The claim has not been paid by the due date on the initial demand letter, and a satisfactory repayment agreement has not been made. In addition, a scheduled payment has not been made by the agreed-upon due date or when there has been no collection for the past 30 days. The claim will remain delinquent until payment is received in full, a satisfactory repayment agreement is negotiated or allotment reduction is invoked.
- A repayment agreement has been made, and a scheduled payment has not been made by the due date. The date of the delinquency of a claim in this category is the due date of the missed payment. The claim will remain delinquent until payment is received in full, allotment reduction is invoked or ESA determines to resume or renegotiate the repayment agreement.

A claim will not be considered delinquent if another claim for the same household is currently being paid either through a repayment agreement or allotment reduction and ESA expects to begin collection on the claim once the prior claim is settled.

A claim is not subject to the requirement for delinquent debts if ESA is unable to determine delinquency status because collection is coordinated through the court system.

Recipient claims that are 90 days delinquent may be referred to PCD. The DCAS system automatically transfers these claims to add to the monthly delinquency determination. Once a delinquent claim has been transferred to PCD, the primary responsibility for collection action belongs to PCD.

PCD will initiate collection on delinquent SNAP recipient claims by the federal Treasury Offset Program for claims at least 120 days delinquent.

Legal Authority

Underpayments (Federal): SNAP: 7 USC § 2020(b) and (e)(11), 7 CFR § 273.17

Overpayments (Federal): SNAP: 7 USC § 2022, 7 CFR § 273.18

Chapter

24

Chapter 24. Quality Control

24.1 Scope and Purpose

As a condition of receiving federal funds to administer SNAP, the District must have a QC process to ensure that customers receive timely and accurate SNAP benefits. The QC process takes the following actions:

- Reviews a statistically valid sample of cases in the District
- Compiles, analyzes and reports review findings to identify benefits overpaid, underpaid and denied inappropriately
- Aids in creating corrective action plans to improve timeliness and accuracy of benefits

24.2 Sample of Cases

QC selects a random sample of households for review each month. The sample is selected based on two categories:

- Households participating in SNAP (called active cases): Reviews will be conducted on active cases to determine if households are eligible and receiving the correct allotment of SNAP benefits. The determination of whether the household received the correct allotment will be made by comparing the eligibility data gathered during the review against the amount authorized by ESA.
- Households for which participation was denied, suspended or terminated (called negative cases): Reviews of negative cases will be conducted to determine whether ESA's decision to deny, suspend or terminate the household, as of the review date, was correct.

24.3 Case Review Process

QC case reviews are completed according to the requirements of the FNS 310 handbook. Reviews typically include the following:

- An electronic file and case record review
- A field investigation, including an in-person interview with the benefit recipient

- Verification of all eligibility factors
- A determination of the correctness of payment and benefit eligibility

24.4 QC Findings

When ESA identifies an error, a correction must be made. It must be determined whether an underpayment or overpayment occurred. An underpayment refers to a situation where a household received less benefits than it was entitled to, while an overpayment refers to a situation where the household received more benefits than it was entitled to.

These findings help determine ESA's SNAP payment error rate (PER) for active cases and case and procedural error rate (CAPER) for negative cases.

A report of the findings is provided to ESA and FNS.

24.5 SNAP Households' Responsibility in QC Process

All SNAP households must cooperate during a QC review. If a household member refuses to cooperate, the entire household is ineligible for SNAP from the point QC determines the household has not cooperated until the earlier date of the following:

- For **District** reviews:
  - The household cooperates with the QC process
  - One hundred twenty-five days from the end of the annual QC review period
- For **Federal** reviews:
  - The household cooperates with the QC process
  - Nine months after the end of the annual review period

The QC annual review period runs from October 1 of one calendar year to September 30 of the following calendar year.

Example 1

A noncooperation disqualification was placed on the household effective June 1, 2022, for refusing to cooperate with the QC. The household reapplies for SNAP on December 3, 2022. Because this is within the QC annual review period, the household must cooperate with QC to be determined eligible and receive benefits.

Example 2

A noncooperation disqualification was placed on the household effective June 1, 2022, for refusing to cooperate with the QC. The household reapplies for SNAP on February 15, 2023. Because the household is reapplying beyond 125 days after the end of the QC annual review period (September 30, 2022), the household is not required to cooperate with QC.

If a household is found ineligible because it did not cooperate with QC, ESA staff must take no further action until QC informs them the household has cooperated. If the household reapplies, its application will be subject to all eligibility requirements, except for households eligible for expedited services.

Legal Authority

Quality Control cooperation (Federal): SNAP: 7 USC § 2015, 7 CFR § 273.2 (d)(2), 7 CFR § 275.10-14

Chapter

25

Chapter 25. Appendix 1

25.1 Terms, Abbreviations and Acronyms

Table 25.1.a. Glossary of Terms

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M
N	O	P	Q	R	S	T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z

A	
Able-bodied adult without dependents (ABAWD)	Customers between the ages of 18 and 64 who do not qualify for an exemption from the ABAWD work requirement. ABAWDs can only receive SNAP benefits for three months in a 36-month period unless they are meeting the ABAWD work requirement.
Adoption subsidy	A payment to the adopting parent of an adopted child who would remain in foster care without the subsidy incentive. There are two types of adoption subsidies: ▪ Support subsidy: a payment for ongoing care and support of the child ▪ Medical subsidy: a payment for medical expenses due to a physical, mental or emotional condition of the child
Adverse action	An action taken that has a negative effect on a household's benefits, such as a termination, denial suspension, or reduction in benefits
Affidavit	A written declaration made under oath
Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC)	The former federal entitlement program authorized under Title IV-A of the Social Security Act to provide financial assistance and support services to needy families with dependent children. The program was repealed under the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996 and was replaced with TANF.
AmeriCorps	There are three AmeriCorps programs: ▪ AmeriCorps State and National provides grants to community-based organizations that host part-time and full-time AmeriCorps volunteers. ▪ AmeriCorps National Civilian Community Corps is a full-time residential service program that focuses on environmental issues and disaster relief. ▪ AmeriCorps VISTA provides nonprofit organizations and public agencies with full-time AmeriCorps volunteers who focus on relieving poverty.
Amerasian	A child fathered by a US citizen in certain Southeast Asian countries during the years of conflict in that region. These immigrants have been granted legal permanent resident status

A	
Applicant	An individual who has applied for assistance either directly or through their authorized representative
Application	A written request for assistance on the form prescribed by ESA for this purpose
Asset limit	The maximum amount of countable assets a customer may own or have available and remain eligible for assistance
Assets	Cash or other liquid assets, nonliquid financial assets and any real or personal property that a member of an assistance household owns
Assignment	The transfer of a legal claim, such as assignment of child support or medical support
Assistance unit	People whose needs, income and assets are considered when making a determination of eligibility for, and the amount of, public assistance
Authorization date	The date the SSR or supervisor completes the authorization action
Authorized representative	Generally, an adult nonmember of a SNAP household may act on behalf of the household in applying for, obtaining or using program benefits. A private nonprofit organization or institution managing a drug addiction and alcohol treatment facility may also serve in this capacity. An authorized representative can also be an individual who applies for other ESA benefits on behalf of others.

B	
Beneficiary	The person named to receive benefits or payments
Beneficiary Data Exchange (BENDEX)	A computerized system that makes available to ESA information from the SSA regarding the Old-Age, Survivors and Disability Insurance benefits and Medicare coverage

C	
Capital gains	The profit from the sale or transfer of capital assets used in a self-employment enterprise. The term “capital assets” refers to real estate property, equipment, machinery and other items or goods expected to last at least 12 months.
Caretaker	An individual who is responsible for the day-to-day care of the child; this includes physical care, supervision and making decisions about the child
Caretaker relative	A nonparent individual responsible for the care and support of a dependent child and who is related to the child within a specified degree of relationship
Case error	An overpayment, underpayment, payment to ineligible individuals or the invalid denial or termination of benefits
Cash surrender value (CSV)	The amount an insurance company will pay upon the cancellation of a life insurance policy

C	
Categorically eligible/Cat-El	The household meets one of the following criteria: ■ All members receive, or are authorized for, TANF cash assistance or SSI benefits. ■ The household is authorized to receive a TANF-funded brochure on domestic violence services, and its monthly income is at or below 200 percent of federal poverty guidelines. Categorically eligible households are not required to meet the gross and net income test and do not have to meet the resource limits.
Child support	Child support is the voluntary or court-ordered payment of money by the absent parent for the living expense of their children (medical, dental, childcare and educational expenses can also be included). Child support may be paid directly to the child's caretaker, paid through the court to the caretaker or paid to CSSD. CSSD sends the family: ■ All support collected if the family never received TANF. ■ Support received in excess of the amount that CSSD may legally retain if the family received AFDC/TANF in the past. Up to the first $150 in total child support is collected by CSSD for a family that receives TANF. This is called a "pass-through" payment.
Citizenship	The status of being a citizen of the US as native born, by naturalization or by parentage
Collateral contact	A written or verbal confirmation of a household's circumstances by an individual outside the household. A collateral contact may be obtained by telephone
Combat areas/combat zones	A combat area/combat zone (CZ) is an area designated under Executive Order or Public Law as a combat zone for purposes of military pay and benefits. Current and recent combat zones are published in pay tables of the Defense Finance and Accounting Service. The current list of combat zones can be found here: ***Defense Finance and Accounting Service > MilitaryMembers > payentitlements > Pay Tables > CZ1 (dfas.mil)***
Combined or integrated application	The application used to apply for multiple benefit programs, including Medical Assistance, TANF, General Assistance for Children, Program on Work, Employment and Responsibility (POWER), Interim Disability Assistance (IDA) and SNAP. Individuals applying only for Medicaid can often use a different application.
Continued absence from the home	The absence of a parent or caretaker from a home for the following: ■ Desertion or abandonment ■ Divorce or legal separation ■ Imprisonment ■ Voluntary separation involving a detachment of marital and family relationship Continued absence does not include absence of a parent for the following: ■ Employment elsewhere when they are also meeting the financial needs of the family ■ Separate living arrangements for the purpose of establishing eligibility for assistance
Cost-of-Living Adjustment (COLA)	An adjustment to benefit levels to compensate for inflation

C	
Countable assets	Assets belonging to members of the assistance household (and certain disqualified household or family members) that are included when determining asset eligibility
Countable income	Earned and unearned income received by members of the assistance household (and certain disqualified household or family members) and counted when determining income eligibility and benefit levels

D	
Date of entry	The date an individual entered the US with the intent to remain permanently in the country
Deduction	A portion of income that is not counted when determining income eligibility or benefit levels under various programs
Deem	To consider the assets and income of certain financially responsible people not in the assistance unit as available to members of an assistance unit, regardless of whether the assets and income are actually contributed to the members of the assistance unit
Deemed income	Income of people not in the household that is treated as if it were income the household received
Department	The District of Columbia Department of Human Services
Department error	An individual receiving an overpayment, underpayment or wrong denial as a result of any action or failure to act by a District government employee
Dependent child	A person under age 22 who is living in the home of a parent or under the parental control of an adult
Destitute	Migrant or seasonal farmworker households with little or no income at the time of application. A household is considered destitute when: ■ The household's only income for the month of application was received before the date of application and was from a terminated source. ■ The household's only income for the month of application is from a new source. ■ The household receives income both from a terminated source before the date of application and from a new source after the date of application.

D	
Disabled	An individual is considered disabled if they meet any of the following criteria: ■ SSI or presumptive SSI under Title XVI of the Social Security Act or disability/blindness payments under Titles I, II, X, XIV or XVI of the Social Security Act ■ State Supplementation ■ Disability retirement benefits from a federal, state or local government agency because of a disability considered permanent under Section 221(i) of the Social Security Act. This includes Federal Employees Compensation Act (FECA) payments an individual elects to receive in place of Civil Service Retirement benefits. This does not include FECA payments received pending a determination of eligibility for Civil Service disability. ■ Annuity payments under one of the following: – Section 2(a)(1)(iv) of the Railroad Retirement Act of 1974 **and** is determined to qualify for Medicare by the Railroad Retirement Board – Section 2(a)(i)(v) of the Railroad Retirement Act of 1974 **and** is disabled based upon the criteria used under Title XVI of the Social Security Act ■ A veteran with a service-connected or not service-connected disability rated by the VA or paid as total (100 percent) by the VA under Title 38 of the USC ■ A veteran considered by the VA to be in need of regular aid and attendance or permanently housebound under Title 38 of the USC ■ A surviving spouse of a veteran considered by the VA to be in need of regular aid and attendance or permanently housebound or a surviving child of a veteran and considered by the VA to be permanently incapable of self-support under Title 38 ■ A surviving spouse or child of a veteran considered by the VA to be entitled to compensation for a service-connected death or pension benefits for a nonservice-connected death under Title 38 who has a disability considered permanent under Section 221(i) of the Social Security Act ■ Disability-related medical assistance under Title XIX of the Social Security Act, including a determination by the Medical Review Team that the person is disabled
Disability, permanent and total	A medically determined physical or mental impairment that causes an individual to be unable to engage in any substantial gainful activity and that can be expected to result in death or has lasted or can be expected to last for a continuous period of not less than 12 months
Disaster Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (D-SNAP)	A temporary food assistance program for households affected by a major disaster in which the president has declared a “major disaster” and the Federal Emergency Management Administration has approved assistance to individuals living in the disaster area. Operations of a D-SNAP program are different than SNAP and can vary based on the nature of the disaster. If the District is approved to operate a D-SNAP program, ESA leadership will provide staff guidance on the program.
Disqualified person	A household member ineligible for assistance because they failed to meet an eligibility requirement (such as immigration status requirements) or program requirement (such as SNAP work requirements)
Diversion Payment Program (DPP)	A program that provides a lump sum payment to a TANF applicant to divert them from receiving an ongoing TANF grant. It is used to resolve an immediate short-term financial need that will enable the applicant to secure or continue in current employment

D	
Documentation	A written statement or record that substantiates or validates an assertion made by a person, agency or entity
Domestic violence	The condition of being subject to physical acts that result in or threaten to result in physical harm, forced engagement in nonconsensual sexual activity, threats of physical or sexual abuse, emotional abuse or neglect or deprivation of medical care
Domestic Volunteer Service payments	Payments are made to volunteers in programs under Title I, Title II and Title III of the Domestic Volunteer Service Act of 1973 (PL 93-113). Title I programs include the following: ■ AmeriCorps VISTA ■ University Year for Action ■ Urban Crime Prevention Program Title II programs include the following: ■ Foster Grandparents ■ Senior Companion ■ Retired Senior Volunteer Program ■ Older American Volunteer Program Title III programs include the following: ■ Service Corps of Retired Executives ■ Active Corps of Executives

E	
Early withdrawal penalty	A monetary penalty for deductions, before a specified date, from a Keogh plan, individual retirement account (IRA), certificate of deposit, etc.
Earned income	Cash or in-kind income earned by an individual through the receipt of wages, salary, commission or profit from activities in which they are engaged as a self-employed individual or as an employee
Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC)	A refundable federal and District tax credit available to working low-income individuals and families
Educational skill training	A program designed to provide the participant with the basic educational skills considered necessary for employment
Effective date	The date for impending denial, termination or other changes in eligibility or benefit amount after giving proper notice
Electronic benefits transfer (EBT)	Uses automated data processing technology to allow beneficiaries to use their benefits electronically
Elderly	An individual who is 60 or older
Encumbrance	Any claim against an asset, such as a loan or mortgage, held by a financial institution or other third party
Essential person	An individual who resides with a dependent child, disabled individual or elderly adult and is recognized by the customer as essential to the well-being of the dependent person

E	
Excluded income	Income not counted as available to the household when determining eligibility
Exempt	A customer who is not required to meet a program requirement
Expanded categorical eligibility	A household that qualifies for SNAP on the basis of receiving a prescribed TANF-funded service. The household must have income at or below 200 percent of the federal poverty level but does not have to be tested against asset and net income limits to determine eligibility
Expedited SNAP processing	Federal mandate that certain SNAP applicants with limited income and assets have their applications processed within seven days from the date of application

F	
Face value, life insurance policy	The basic death benefit of a life insurance policy, excluding the dividend additions or additional amounts payable because of an accidental death or other special condition
Fair hearing	A formal administrative proceeding conducted by an administrative law judge with the Office of Administrative Hearings
Fair market value	The monetary value for which an item can be expected to sell on the open market
Financially responsible relative	A relative of the customer who is legally responsible for the financial support of one or more members of the assistance unit
Fraud	The deliberate act of misrepresenting circumstances for the purpose of obtaining Medical Assistance benefits, TANF, General Assistance for Children and SNAP benefits. A finding of fraud is punishable by fine or imprisonment. It can also result in disqualification from participating in benefits programs.

G	
General Assistance for Children Program (GC)	Provides direct financial support to children living in households that do not include a parent or caretaker relative
Good cause	Valid reasons for noncompliance with program requirements. Individuals who have good cause for failing to meet a program requirement are not subject to penalties or sanctions for failing to meet those requirements.
Grievance	Applicant or recipient dissatisfaction with an action taken by the Department
Gross income	Total countable earned and unearned income before any deductions are taken to reduce the amount of income considered in certain eligibility determinations
Gross income test	An eligibility test based on gross income

H	
Head of SNAP household	An individual who is an adult parent of children (of any age) living in the household, an adult who has parental control over children (under age 18) living in the household or anyone appointed by ESA and agreed upon and designated by all adult household members
Hearing request	Clear expression by the claimant, their legal counsel or authorized representative that indicates that they disagree with a case action taken by the Department and wish to have a hearing to determine whether the Department was in error

I	
Incapacity, physical or mental	A physical or mental disability, illness or impairment of such a debilitating nature as to reduce substantially or eliminate an individual's ability to work or provide support
Income	Any type of payment that is a gain or benefit to the household
Income disregard	An amount that is excluded from gross income when determining net income
In-kind income	Food, clothing, shelter or any item other than cash provided to one or more members of the assistance unit by someone who is not a member of the assistance unit
Institutional status	In SNAP, an individual is considered a resident of an institution when it provides them with the majority of their meals (over 50 percent of three daily meals) as part of the institution's normal services.
IV-D agency	The entity responsible for establishing paternity and child support orders and enforcing those orders. In the District of Columbia, the Child Support Services Division is the IV-D agency. "IV-D" refers to a particular section of the Social Security Act.

J

K

L	
Lawfully present	An immigrant who has authorization to be in the US from the US Citizenship and Immigration Services
Lawfully residing	An immigrant who has authorization to be in the US from the US Citizenship and Immigration Services and who is not in the country on a temporary basis (such as a student or tourist)
Liquid assets	Assets in the form of cash or other financial instruments that are convertible to cash
Long-term care facilities	Licensed skilled nursing facilities, skilled nursing units, intermediate care facilities, intermediate care facilities for individuals with intellectual disabilities and psychiatric institutions

L	
Lump sums or accrued benefits	A lump sum is a nonrecurring, one-time payment that excludes money that applicants receive through the Diversion Payment Program (DPP). Lump sums include: ▪ Winnings ▪ Inheritances ▪ Insurance settlements ▪ Retroactive payments of SSI, SSDI and VA benefits ▪ An accrued benefit is a one-time payment intended to cover a retroactive or future period of time but not the current payment period
Lump sum payment or settlement	A monetary payment that is received at one time and will not be repeated regularly

M	
Mandatory work registrant	A SNAP customer who is required to register for work as a condition of program eligibility
Marriage	A legally recognized union between two individuals by ceremony or common law
Mass change	A change brought about by a shift in federal or state policy that affects many or all assistance units
Medicaid program	A federally funded program authorized under Title XIX of the Social Security Act to provide medical assistance to low-income individual
Medical Review Team (MRT)	Staff who are designated or contracted to determine incapacity or disability for customers of Medical Assistance, TANF or SNAP
Medicare	A federally funded and federally administered health insurance program authorized by Title XVIII of the Social Security Act. This program provides health insurance to individuals 65 and older and individuals who are disabled and receiving Title II Social Security benefits.
Medicare buy-in	Assistance for some low-income Medicare beneficiaries, including people receiving or eligible to receive Medicare based on their receipt of Title II benefits (Social Security), to help pay for some or all of their Medicare premiums, co-payments and deductibles
Minor	An individual who has not attained age 18 or has not attained age 19 and is a full-time student in a secondary school (or in the equivalent level of vocational or technical training)
Minor parent	A minor who is the parent of a child

N	
Net income limit	The maximum level of total countable income less all applicable income deductions and disregards an assistance household may have and still qualify to participate in a benefit program
Noncompliance	The situation in which a customer fails to cooperate or comply with program requirements

O	
On-the-job training	A work activity in which a benefit recipient is hired by a private or public employer and is providing training by the employer
Overpayment	A benefit received by an assistance household in excess of the amount for which the household was eligible

P	
Parent	The child's natural or adoptive parent
Payee	The person to whom a benefit is paid
Payment month	The fiscal or calendar month for which assistance is paid
Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act (PRWORA)	The law signed on August 22, 1996, that eliminated the federal entitlement program Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC) and created a new program called Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF). The law also changed immigrant eligibility rules for most means-tested benefits, altered many SNAP rules and restructured the eligibility of children for the SSI program.
Program on Work, Employment and Responsibility (POWER)	The District program that allows certain categories of TANF-eligible customers to be placed in a special District-funded cash assistance program
Pregnant or parenting teen	An individual who is younger than 18 and has a child or children or is in the third trimester of the first pregnancy
Primary informant	The household member who files the application for benefits is the person to whom ESA generally directs correspondence and notices
Processing time standard	The period of time ESA is allowed to process an application for assistance

Q

R	
Recertification	The scheduled redetermination of SNAP eligibility. If eligibility for SNAP is not recertified prior to the end of the certification period, benefits are terminated.
Recipient	An individual who receives benefits
Refugee	An individual determined by the US Citizenship and Immigration Services to be unable to return to their country of origin because of fear of persecution
Refugee Cash Assistance	A program that provides cash assistance to certain immigrants ineligible for TANF and SSI
Representative payee	An individual or organization selected by the Social Security Administration to receive benefits on behalf of Old-Age, Survivors and Disability Insurance or SSI recipient and obligated to use those benefits for their personal care and well-being

R	
Resources	A general term used to refer to an individual's assets
Roomer	An individual to whom the household furnishes lodging, but not meals, for compensation

S	
Sanctions	Actions taken against customers who fail to comply with program requirements and do not have a good cause reason for failing to comply
Shelters for battered individuals	Formerly shelters for battered women and children. Temporary residents of shelters for battered individuals may be a separate household and participate in more than one SNAP household in a given month if they were a member of a household containing the person who had abused them. This provision applies to abused household members regardless of sex.
SNAP Employment and Training (SNAP E&T)	A voluntary employment and training program for SNAP participants
Social service representative (SSR)	A caseworker responsible for determinations of eligibility for Medical Assistance, TANF, General Assistance for Children and SNAP
Special Immigrant Visa (SIV)	Visa granted to eligible Iraqi and Afghan translators and interpreters who worked directly with the US Armed Forces or under Chief of Mission authority at US Embassy Baghdad or US Embassy Kabul
Sponsor	An individual or organization who has signed an affidavit of support or other statement of agreement to support a noncitizen as a condition of the noncitizen's entry into the US
Spouse	A legally recognized husband or wife through civil or common law marriage
Standard utility allowance	A type of SNAP income deduction available to units that incur expenses for heating or cooling. The allowance covers heating, cooling, electricity, water, sewage, garbage and phone expenses.
Stepparent	An individual who is not the child's natural or adoptive parent but who is the spouse of the child's natural or adoptive parent by ceremony or common law marriage
Standards of promptness	Time standards within which ESA must take a required case action
State Data Exchange (SDX)	A computerized system that makes information from the SSA regarding the eligibility, living arrangements and sources of income of a recipient of SSI available to ESA
State supplements	Cash payments made by a state and the District to certain recipients of SSI
Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)	A program that provides monthly benefits to low-income households usable only to purchase food needed to maintain adequate nutrition
Supplemental Security Income (SSI) program	A federal program authorized under Title XVI of the Social Security Act and administered by the SSA to provide financial assistance to low-income, aged, blind and disabled individuals

S	
Striker	An individual who has agreed, in cooperation with others, to stop work. Special eligibility conditions are imposed on strikers in the SNAP program
Student	An individual who is attending a school, college, university or course of vocational or technical training designed to fit them for gainful employment; includes a participant in the Job Corps Program under the Workforce Investment Act of 1998, the replacement legislation for the Job Training Partnership Act
Suitable employment	See ***Section 9.3.5, Suitable Employment***
Systematic Alien Verification for Entitlements (SAVE)	A computerized system that makes information from the US Citizenship and Immigration Services regarding a noncitizen's eligibility for public benefits available to ESA

T	
Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)	TANF replaced Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC) as described in the Personal Responsibility and Work Reconciliation Act of 1996 (PL 104-193). The TANF block grant received from the federal government funds a variety of District programs, including the main cash assistance program for families with children, referred to as TANF.
Termination	A discontinuation of program participation and benefits
Timely notice	An adverse action notice that is mailed at least 15 days before the effective date of the case action when no exception applies
Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA)	Federally provided benefits for people whose employment was adversely affected by the importation of goods
Transitional Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (TSNAP)	A short-term allowance of SNAP benefits for customers when their TANF cash assistance terminates because of an increase in income. TANF households must also be receiving SNAP benefits to get TSNAP.
Trust fund	A trust is a right of property created by one or more people for the benefit of themselves or another person. The grantor is the person who creates the trust, and the beneficiary is the person for whose benefit the trust is created. The trustee is the person to whom the grantor transfers the trust. The trustee has legal title to the trust and is responsible for managing the trust for the benefit of the beneficiary. When a trust established by a household member is determined to be irrevocable, it is excluded. Irrevocable trusts and any funds in a trust or transferred to a trust are excluded from assets if they are inaccessible to the household.

U	
Underpayment	Amount by which benefits received are less than the amount for which the assistance household was eligible
Unearned income	Monetary or in-kind compensation that is not received as the direct result of an individual's own labor or services

V	
Verification	Proof that statements made by the customer are true
Vehicle	Any motorized vehicle reasonably associated with the function of transporting people or goods. Common vehicles are passenger cars, trucks, motorcycles, motorbikes, jeeps, recreational vehicles, vans and sport utility vehicles. A boat may be considered a vehicle if it is the household's primary means of transportation.
Voluntary quit	An individual who deliberately reduces income without good cause; this is a sanctionable action under both TANF and SNAP

W	
Work participation allowance or stipend	An amount of money under both TANF and SNAP designed to reimburse participants for employment or work-related training activities

Table 25.1.b. Abbreviations and Acronyms

Note: Common acronyms are explained when they are first introduced in text. Less common acronyms are explained on first mention in each chapter.

Abbreviation/Acronym	Term
ABAWD	Able-bodied adult without dependents
ABD	Aged, blind and disabled (Medicaid)
ABE	Adult Basic Education
ABWR	Able-bodied adult without dependents work requirement
ADH	Administrative disqualification hearing
AEFLA	Adult Education and Family Literacy Act
ALJ	Administrative law judge
ARC	Administrative review conference
AFDC	Aid to Families with Dependent Children
ATM	Automated teller machine
BEERS	Beneficiary Earnings Exchange Records
BENDEX	Beneficiary Data Exchange
BEOG	Basic Education Opportunity Grants
CAMP	College Assistance Migrant Program
CAPER	Case and procedural error rate
CFR	Code of Federal Regulations
COLA	Cost-of-Living Adjustment
CSSD	Child Support Services Division
CSV	Cash surrender value
DAA	Drug addiction and alcohol treatment facility
DC	District of Columbia
DCAS	District of Columbia Access System
DCMR	DC Municipal Regulations
DIMS	Document Imaging Management System
DHHS	US Department of Health and Human Services
DHS	Department of Human Services
DIMS	Document Imaging Management System
DMS	Deceased Matching System
DOES	Department of Employment Services

Abbreviation/Acronym	Term
DPP	Diversion Payment Program
DPT&QA	Division of Policy, Training and Quality Assurance
D-SNAP	Disaster Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program
EBT	Electronic benefits transfer
eDRS	Electronic Disqualified Recipient System
EITC	Earned Income Tax Credit
ESA	Economic Security Administration
ESAP	Elderly Simplified Application Project
FECA	Federal Employees Compensation Act
FICA	Federal Insurance Contributions Act
FNA	Food and Nutrition Administration
FTI	Federal tax information
FY	Fiscal year
GC	General Assistance for Children
GED	General Educational Development
GLA	Group living arrangement
GWR	General Work Requirements
HCSUA	Heating and cooling standard utility allowance
HIPAA	Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act
HUD	US Department of Housing and Urban Development
ID	Identification or identity
IDA	Interim Disability Assistance (Program)
IEVS	Income and Eligibility Verification System
INA	Immigration and Nationality Act
INS	Immigration and Naturalization Service; now US Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS)
IPV	Intentional program violation
IRA	Individual retirement account
IRS	Internal Revenue Service
LIHEAP	Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program
LPR	Lawful permanent resident
LUA	Limited utility allowance
LWE	Limited Work Experience

Abbreviation/Acronym	Term
MAGI	Modified adjusted gross income
MRT	Medical Review Team
N/A	Not applicable
NDNH	National Directory of New Hires
OAG	Office of the Attorney General
OAH	Office of Administrative Hearings
OARA	Office of Administrative Review and Appeals
OASDI	Old-Age, Survivors and Disability Insurance
OPRMI	Office of Program Review, Monitoring, and Investigation
OPU	Overpayment Unit
OUA	One utility allowance
PA	Public assistance
PCD	Payment and Collections Division
PER	Payment error rate
PII	Personally identifiable information
PIN	Personal identification number
PL	Public Law
POWER	Program on Work, Employment and Responsibility
PRWORA	Personal Responsibility and Work Reconciliation Act of 1996
PUPS	Prisoner Update Processing System
PVS	Prisoner Verification System
QC	Quality Control
QCHS	Quarters of Coverage History System
QMB	Qualified Medicare beneficiary
QQ	Qualifying quarters
RC	Refugee Cash Assistance
RFC	Request for Contact
RSDI	Retirement, Survivors and Disability Insurance
SAVE	Systematic Alien Verification for Entitlements
SDX	State Data Exchange
SEOG	Supplemental Education Opportunity Grants
SIV	Special Immigrant Visa
SNAP	Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program

Abbreviation/Acronym	Term
SNAP E&T	SNAP Employment and Training Program
SOLQ/SOLQ-I	State On-Line Query/State On-Line Query-Internet
SSA	Social Security Administration
SSDI	Social Security Disability Insurance
SSI	Supplemental Security Income
SSN	Social Security number
SSR	Social service representative
SUA	Standard utility allowance
SVES	State Verification & Exchange System
TAA	Trade Adjustment Assistance
TANF	Temporary Assistance for Needy Families
TSNAP	Transitional Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program
UIB	Unemployment insurance benefits
US	United States
USC	United States Code
USCIS	US Citizenship and Immigration Services; formerly Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS)
USDA	US Department of Agriculture
VA	US Department of Veterans Affairs
WIC	Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children
WIOA	Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act

25.2 Assets, Income and Verification Charts

Table 25.2.a. Treatment of Assets Chart

Note: Assets are not considered for SNAP households that are categorically eligible. See ***Chapter 4, Categorically Eligible Households***, for additional information.

Asset Type	TANF, GC, RCA	SNAP	ABD Medicaid and IDA
Achieving a Better Life Experience (ABLE) account Section 529A of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986	Excluded		
Agent Orange Settlement Fund Payments MDL No 381 (EDNY)	Excluded		
Assets of an SSI or TANF recipient	Exclude the assets of an SSI recipient, including assets from sources other than SSI benefits, when determining the eligibility of other household members.	Excluded	Exclude the assets of an SSI recipient, including assets from sources other than SSI benefits, when determining the eligibility of other household members.
Boat (recreational)	Count a boat used for recreational purposes as a nonliquid asset.		

Asset Type	TANF, GC, RCA	SNAP	ABD Medicaid and IDA
Burial funds	Exclude the following burial funds: ▪ Funds in a prepaid burial account, burial plan or burial trust ▪ All other funds clearly designated for burial expenses, including funeral agreements, burial contracts, burial trusts or other burial arrangements ▪ Financial accounts (checking, savings or other types of accounts) and the cash surrender value of life insurance if set aside for burial expenses To be excluded, burial funds cannot be commingled with any assets except excluded burial space assets. If a savings account is designated for burial funds, all later deposits must also be designated for burial funds. If excluded burial funds are used for purposes other than the burial of the person for whom the funds were set aside, the amount not used becomes unearned income.	Exclude the value of one burial plot and the value of one funeral agreement per household member.	Exclude burial funds up to $1,500 for an individual or $3,000 for a couple.
Burial space	Exclude the value of a burial space for each person in the household (and each ineligible noncitizen or disqualified individual whose resources are being counted for SNAP), provided that the burial space items are identified separately from the value of nonburial space items.		
Business assets	Exclude all accounts receivable, promissory notes and loan-related assets.	Count if household member has both legal authority and actual ability to use the assets for self-support.	Exclude all accounts receivable, promissory notes and loan-related assets.

Asset Type	TANF, GC, RCA	SNAP	ABD Medicaid and IDA
Cash on hand or in a bank account	Unless excluded based on the where it came from, count cash on hand as a liquid asset.		
Cash counted as income in the month	Cash that is countable as income in the month received is not counted as an asset in that month.		
Cash excluded as income	Count cash excluded as income in the month received as an asset. This includes accrued benefits, including retroactive benefit payments of TANF, GC, IDA, SSI and others.		
Crowd funding proceeds raised through websites such as GoFundMe, Fundly, Customink, Razoo, Indiegogo and FundRazr	Excluded in the month received. Any remaining is counted as an asset in the following month.	Counted as a liquid asset once the funds are available to the household.	Excluded in the month received. Any remaining is counted as an asset in the following month.
District judgments or settlement agreements made on behalf of customers of District government	N/A		Excluded; examples: ▪ Evans vs. Williams ▪ Dixon vs. Williams ▪ Brady vs. Williams ▪ Salazar vs. Williams
Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC)	Excluded	▪ Federal EITC is excluded for month of receipt and following month for the individual and their spouse. ▪ Federal, State or local EITC received by any household member is excluded for only 12 months if they participated in SNAP at the time it was received and the household participates in SNAP continuously for that 12-month period.	Excluded
Essential for self-support of a blind or disabled individual	N/A		ABD (excluding SSI recipients) and QMB: Exclude assets specified in a Department-approved self-support plan as essential for self-support.

Asset Type	TANF, GC, RCA	SNAP	ABD Medicaid and IDA
Higher Education Savings Plans (529)	Excluded		
Home	See *primary residence*		
Home during temporary absence	Exclude the home that the person who formerly lived in if they are “'temporarily absent” from that home.	Exclude a home the person formerly lived in if they intend to return and the absence is due to any of the following: ▪ Vocational rehabilitation training ▪ Inability to live at home due to a verified health condition ▪ Status as migrant farmworker with the intent to return to the home ▪ Employment, training for future employment ▪ Illness ▪ Casualty (such as fire) or natural disaster	Exclude a home the person formerly lived in if the absence is due to care in a hospital or long-term care facility and the person intends to return to the home. Exclude a home an individual formerly lived in if they are temporarily absent.
Home sales	Exclude income generated from the sale of a home as an asset if the household purchases or intends to purchase a new home within the next 12 months. If the person buys another home within the 12-month period, count any remaining cash from the earlier sale as an asset. If the household does not intend to purchase a new home within 12 months or fails to purchase a new home within 12 months, count the remaining cash from the sale as an asset.	Nonrecurring lump sum; count as an asset in the month the household receives the funds.	See TANF

<table>
<tr><th>Asset Type</th><th>TANF, GC, RCA</th><th>SNAP</th><th>ABD Medicaid and IDA</th></tr>
<tr><td>Household and personal goods</td><td colspan="3">Excluded. Examples of household and personal goods include the following:
Appliances
Carpets
Clothing
Dishes and utensils
Exercise equipment
Furniture and furnishings
Household tools and equipment
Musical Instruments
Televisions and audio equipment
Watches and jewelry</td></tr>
<tr><td>Inaccessible and unavailable assets</td><td colspan="3">Exclude inaccessible assets. Inaccessible assets are assets the household cannot use for ongoing support and cannot sell.
Examples of inaccessible assets include the following:
Irrevocable trust funds
Security deposits on rental property or utilities
Property in probate
Real property that the household is making a good faith effort to sell at a reasonable price and that has not been sold
Real property that, if sold, would be unlikely to produce a return of one-half or more of the asset limit ($1,500.00 for SNAP) for the household</td></tr>
<tr><td>Income-producing assets</td><td colspan="3">Exclude the portion of a noncash asset (such as a separate parcel of land or a vehicle) needed for producing income for a household member, as long as the asset produces a return consistent with its value. This exclusion applies even if the household can convert the asset to cash or a parcel of property is, in effect, subdivided contrary to an ordinance or law.
Exclude assets of self-employed farmers, including land, equipment and supplies, essential to self-employment of a household member engaged in farming for the period they are farming and for one year after terminating farming as self-employment.</td></tr>
<tr><td rowspan="2">Income-producing real property</td><td colspan="3">Property that annually produces income consistent with its fair market value, even if it only produces income on a seasonal basis, is not counted as an asset (though the income produced from the asset would be treated as income). The minimum annual rate of return is six percent of either assessed or fair market value, whichever is less.</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">N/A</td><td>Some SSI-related Medicaid recipients may also qualify for the "PASS" program, under which some assets are not countable.
Contact the ESA Policy Unit, if an ABD Medicaid recipient reports such assets.</td></tr>
<tr><td>Income tax refunds</td><td colspan="3">Excluded from being counted as an asset for 12 months after the refund is received.</td></tr>
<tr><td>Indian land</td><td colspan="3">Exclude Indian lands jointly held with a tribe and land than can only be sold with the approval of the Department of Interior, Bureau of Indian Affairs.</td></tr>
</table>

Asset Type	TANF, GC, RCA	SNAP	ABD Medicaid and IDA
Jointly owned assets: unavailable	Exclude unavailable jointly owned assets. A jointly owned asset is unavailable if: ▪ An owner cannot legally sell their share without the other owner's consent and verifies that the joint owner does not agree to the sale. ▪ A resident of a shelter for battered people jointly owns an asset with a former member of their household and access to the asset is dependent on the cooperation of the joint owner.		
Jointly owned assets: available	Prorate the value of the asset based on the number of owners.	Count assets owned jointly by separate households in their entirety to each household. If the household can demonstrate that it has access to only a portion of the asset, count the value of that portion toward the household's asset level.	QMB & ABD (excluding SSI recipients): Count the entire amount of an asset to which the household has access.
Land contract	Exclude the value of the property for both the contract holder (seller) and the purchaser.		
Life insurance	Excluded		▪ If face value of all policies combined is $1,500 or less: exclude. ▪ If the face valued of all policies combined is more than $1,500: count the cash surrender value as an asset.
Life insurance–funded funerals	Excluded		
Loan-related assets	Exclude noncash assets of a household member used to secure a loan for business purposes if both of the following conditions are met: ▪ The borrower is a household member, ineligible noncitizen or disqualified person whose assets are counted as part of the household's assets. ▪ A security or lien agreement prevents the household from selling the asset or converting it to cash. If the above conditions are not met, count the asset's cash or equity value.		

Asset Type	TANF, GC, RCA	SNAP	ABD Medicaid and IDA
Nonrecurring lump sums, including: ▪ Inheritance ▪ Lawsuit settlements ▪ Lottery winnings ▪ Insurance settlements ▪ Refunds of security deposits for housing or utilities	Counted as assets in the month they are received.		
Nonsaleable assets	Excluded. An asset is considered non- saleable when it has no current market value, as shown by one of the following: ▪ Statements from two knowledgeable sources (such as realtors, bankers, stock brokers) in a geographic area that say the asset is not saleable due to a specific condition. ▪ An actual sale attempt at or below fair market value in the geographic area that results in no reasonable offer to purchase an asset for which a fair market value is determined. This is applicable primarily to real property, mortgages, land contracts, life estates and life leases. The asset becomes saleable when a reasonable offer is received.		
Pending sale of property	Count as an asset any income generated from sale of real estate property other than the household's primary residence. Exclude property the household is making a good faith effort to sell. This means all of the following conditions are met: ▪ An actual attempt has been made to sell it at a price no higher than fair market value, confirmed by a listing with a real estate company or advertising the property in a major newspaper. ▪ No reasonable purchase offer has been made. ▪ For active cases, the property is continuously up for sale. If the above conditions are not met, count the household equity in the property as an asset.		
Primary residence	Except for long-term care, exclude the primary residence owned and occupied by the household. Primary residence is the place where the household usually lives. It includes the home, adjoining land and any other buildings on the land. Adjoining land may be separated by roads, rivers and so on, but it may not be owned by someone else. Count all other residences.		
Probate property	Exclude all property held in probate.		
Property or lot	Exclude a lot (including a partially built home) in the District if the person intends for it to become their home and does not own another home.		
Radiation Exposure Compensation Act Payments, PL 101-325	Excluded		

Asset Type	TANF, GC, RCA	SNAP	ABD Medicaid and IDA
Rental payments withheld	Exclude rental payments withheld for a rent strike and given to a third party, such as the Landlord Tenant Court or Neighborhood Legal Service.		
	Exclude rental payments that are withheld due to a rent strike but remain in the possession of the household.	Excluded	Exclude rental payments that are withheld due to a rent strike but remain in the possession of the household.
Retirement plans, individual retirement accounts (IRAs), 401(k)s	Exclude the cash value of all retirement plans for all household members, including the following: ■ IRAs ■ Keogh accounts ■ 401(k), 403(b) and 457 accounts ■ All other pension and retirement funds as long as the funds remain in the retirement plan		If the customer has the option to withdraw a lump sum and they are not eligible for periodic payments: Count as an asset, less any early withdrawal penalty. If the customer is eligible for periodic payments: Exclude as an asset.
Retroactive lump sum benefits, including: Unemployment compensation TANF SSI OASDI (Social Security) Railroad retirement VA benefits	Excluded	Counted as resources in the month received	Excluded, except unemployment compensation, railroad retirement and VA benefits. For these payments, exclude the first $12,000 for 12 months from month of receipt and count any excess as an asset to the household.
Trailers and campers	Count nonmotorized or towable conveyances, such as trailers or campers as nonliquid assets.		

<table>
<tr><th>Asset Type</th><th>TANF, GC, RCA</th><th>SNAP</th><th>ABD Medicaid and IDA</th></tr>
<tr><td>Trusts</td><td colspan="3">A trust is a right of property created by one or more people for the benefit of themselves or another person. The grantor is the person(s) who creates the trust, and the beneficiary is the person(s) for whose benefit the trust is created.
There are two types of trusts:
■ Revocable trust
– Excluded assets placed in a revocable trust, including a home, are excluded. The value of any nonexcluded assets in the revocable trust is countable for the grantor.
– Medicaid rules require that the trust principal is counted as resource if the funds can be used to purchase food or shelter unless the individual does not have the legal authority to revoke/terminate the trust or direct the use of the assets for their own support and maintenance. Any payments made for the benefit of the individual are considered income to the individual.
■ Irrevocable trust
– When a trust established by a household member is determined to be irrevocable, it is excluded.
– Under Medicaid, funds in an irrevocable trust are not counted if the trust is irrevocable by its terms and under state laws and the trust beneficiary cannot control or direct the use of trust for their support and maintenance or the trust meets one of the exceptions. If there are any circumstances under which payment could be made to or for the benefit of the individual, the relevant principal amount from the irrevocable trust is counted as a resource. Payments made from the trust for the benefit of the individual are counted as income.
Funds in a trust or transferred to a trust are considered unavailable for other public assistance programs if all of the following conditions apply:
■ The trust arrangement is not likely to end during the benefit period.
■ No household member has the power to revoke the trust or change the name of the beneficiary during the benefit period.
■ The trustee administering the funds is either of the following:
– A court or an institution, corporation or organization not under the direction or ownership of any household member
– An individual appointed by the court who is restricted by the court to use the funds solely for the benefit of the beneficiary
■ Investments made on behalf of the trust do not directly involve or benefit any business or corporation under the control or direction of an asset household member.
■ The funds in the irrevocable trust are either of the following:
– Established from the asset group’s own funds, and the trustee uses the funds solely to make investments on behalf of the trust or pay the educational or medical expenses of the beneficiary.</td></tr>
</table>

Asset Type	TANF, GC, RCA	SNAP	ABD Medicaid and IDA
	– Established from funds of an individual who is not a member of the household. ■ If a determination can be made that assets in a trust are totally available, the trust is a countable asset. If a determination of availability cannot be made by examining the trust documents or talking with the trustee, proceed as follows: – If the trust is administered by Probate Court, the household must petition the court to make the trust available. The court decides availability. – If Probate Court does not administer the trust, refer the trust to the Office of the General Counsel to advise on availability.		
Underwood vs. Harris (HUD reimbursements)	Exclude retroactive tax and utility cost subsidy payments issued by the Department of Housing and Urban Development as a result of Underwood vs. Harris in the month received and the following month.		
Veterans Benefits and Health Care Improvement Act Payments PL 106-419	Excluded		
Vehicles	Excluded	Excluded	Exclude the vehicle with the highest value. Count the value of remaining vehicles as an asset.

ABD = Aged, Blind and Disabled (Medicaid); GC = General Assistance for Children; HUD = US Department of Housing and Urban Development; IDA = Interim Disability Assistance; OASDI = Old-Age, Survivors and Disability Insurance; QMB = Qualified Medicare Beneficiary; RCA = Refugee Cash Assistance; SSI = Supplemental Security Income; TANF = Temporary Assistance for Needy Families; VA = Veterans Administration

Table 25.2.b. Treatment of Income Chart

INCOME TYPE	TANF, GC AND RCA	SNAP	NON-MAGI MEDICAL AND IDA	MAGI—MEDICAID
Achieving a Better Life Experience (ABLE) account earnings Section 529A of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986	Excluded			
Adoption subsidy		▪ Support subsidy: Unearned ▪ Medical subsidy: Excluded when used for medical expenses	Excluded	Nontaxable/excluded
Agent Orange payments	▪ Payments from Agent Orange Settlement Fund or other similar government payments: Excluded ▪ VA benefits for service-connected disabilities due to Agent Orange exposure: Unearned		Excluded	Nontaxable/excluded
AmeriCorps VISTA	Excluded	▪ If the VISTA volunteer received SNAP benefits when they joined the VISTA program: Excluded ▪ If the person was a VISTA volunteer when they applied for benefits: Earned	Excluded	Nontaxable/excluded
Capital gains	▪ Unearned: Count the profit from the sale of capital assets in the month received after subtracting any commissions. This amount may be more than what is taxed for federal income tax purposes. ▪ Earned: For SNAP when it relates to self-employment.		Unearned	Taxable/unearned
Census Bureau wages	Excluded	Earnings from temporary work for current census: ▪ Excluded if FNS grants a waiver to the District for that census year	Excluded	Taxable/earned

INCOME TYPE	TANF, GC AND RCA	SNAP	NON-MAGI MEDICAL AND IDA	MAGI—MEDICAID
		- Earnings as a permanent employee of the Census Bureau: Earned		
Child nutrition benefits paid under Child Nutrition Act of 1965 or National School Lunch Act of 1946	Excluded	For a childcare provider in the SNAP household, count in gross self-employment income calculation the cost of meals for the children in their care as a self-employment expense.	Excluded	Taxable/earned
Children's earnings	Disregard all monthly gross earned income of each child who is a full-time student or a part-time student, provided they are not employed full time.	Exclude the earned income of a household member under age 18 who meets both criteria: - Is an elementary or secondary school student or attends GED classes - Lives with a natural, adoptive or stepparent or is under the parental control of a household member other than a parent	Earnings from an unmarried child who lives with the person who provides care or supervision: Excluded	- If child or tax dependent is not required to file a tax return: Nontaxable/ excluded - If child or tax dependent is not included in the same household as the parent or tax filer claiming them: Taxable/earned
Child support	**For TANF applicants:** - Count voluntary child support, any CSSD "excess" payments received by the household and any CSSD pass-through payments as unearned income to determine potential eligibility.	Exclude all child support payments that the household must transfer to CSSD under an official agreement between CSSD and the household, including TANF recipients. Count as unearned income: - Child support payments the household receives when it does not have an agreement with CSSD. - All child support CSSD pays to the household	Current child support is unearned income to the child. Count 2/3 of child support payments as unearned income. Child support arrears paid to the parent after the child turns 18 is unearned income to the parent.	Nontaxable/excluded

INCOME TYPE	TANF, GC AND RCA	SNAP	NON-MAGI MEDICAL AND IDA	MAGI—MEDICAID
	■ Count child support in excess of $150 as countable income for TANF for two months to allow CSSD time to retain support. For TANF recipients: ■ Disregard the first $150 pass-through payment and count the remainder as unearned income for the first two months, after timely and adequate notice. ■ Discontinue counting support after two months, assuming that CSSD will begin retaining the support, or earlier if ESA learns that CSSD is retaining the payments. ■ Continue to count child support received after the second month only if the adult fails to cooperate with CSSD and receives a child support sanction as a result.	including the $150 pass-through payment to TANF households.		

INCOME TYPE	TANF, GC AND RCA	SNAP	NON-MAGI MEDICAL AND IDA	MAGI—MEDICAID
	For GC: ▪ Count child support as unearned income to the household, including payments through CSSD.			
Crime Victims Compensation Funds under PL 103-322	Excluded whether run by a state or federal program	Excluded whether run by a state or federal program	Excluded	Nontaxable/excluded
Crowd funding income raised through websites such as GoFundMe, Fundly, Customink, Razoo, Indiegogo and FundRazr	Unearned	Excluded as income	Earned	▪ Funds raised to help an individual pay for personal or medical expenses, and the contributors intend the funds to be a gift or donation and do not expect anything in return: Exclude these contributions as income. ▪ Funds raised by an individual to support a website or other business with no advertisers, and the contributors intend to support the operations of the business and expect something in return: Count contributions as income. ▪ Funds raised to support research and development of a product or service for a percentage of revenue from the product on completion, and contributors are investors providing capital: Exclude these contributions as income.

INCOME TYPE	TANF, GC AND RCA	SNAP	NON-MAGI MEDICAL AND IDA	MAGI—MEDICAID
Disability benefits: short or long term through employer or insurance	■ Benefits paid to workers absent from work due to illness or injury, usually through the worker's or employer's insurance: Unearned after subtracting any monthly or monthly averaged premium the customer must pay to continue receiving the benefits ■ Regular sick leave paid while sick or injured: Earned	Earned if: ■ Person is still considered an employee and plans to continue to work, and ■ Employer contributes part of the premium or benefit. Unearned if: ■ Person has separated from work. ■ Person is not considered an employee. ■ The employer does not contribute to the premium or benefit.	Unearned	Taxable/unearned
Domestic service volunteer payments	Excluded	■ Title I payments: – Excluded if the person received SNAP, TANF, GC, POWER or PA when they joined the volunteer program – Earned income if they joined the program before receiving SNAP, TANF, GC, POWER or PA ■ Title II payments: Excluded ■ Title III payments: Earned income	Excluded	Meals and lodging allowances are taxable/unearned.

INCOME TYPE	TANF, GC AND RCA	SNAP	NON-MAGI MEDICAL AND IDA	MAGI—MEDICAID
Donations	Exclude nonrecurring cash gifts of $600 or less quarterly.	Exclude cash donations, based on need, from one or more private nonprofit charitable organizations totaling $300 or less per federal fiscal year quarter.	Exclude nonrecurring cash gifts of $600 or less quarterly. Count excess as unearned income.	■ Receiver: Taxable/unearned if the receiver has a valid arrangement with the gift giver to pay the taxes on the donation. ■ Gift giver: Gifts made that are $14,000 or less each year are nontaxable/ excluded.
Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC)	Excluded, including those issued in monthly installments	Excluded if it is a federal EITC or if it is a District EITC paid in a lump sum payment	Excluded	Nontaxable/excluded
Educational benefits	■ Educational benefits from the Department of Education's Bureau of Indian Affairs: Excluded ■ Educational benefits under the Perkins Vocational and Applied Technology Education Act of 1998: Excluded ■ Perkins loans under Title IV of the Higher Education Act: Excluded	Exclude the following educational benefits as long as funds are used or earmarked for allowable educational expenses: ■ Any loan or grant made or insured by the Department of Education ■ Benefits through the Department of Education's Bureau of Indian Affairs ■ Benefits through the Perkins Vocational and Applied Technology Education Act of 1998 ■ Title IV benefits, including: – Basic Education Opportunity Grants (BEOG or Pell Grants) – Bureau of Indian Affairs Grants	Exclude educational benefits from the Department of Education, including: ■ Title IV ■ Perkins Vocational and Applied Technology Education Act ■ Work study wages ■ Bureau of Indian Affairs	Educational assistance is provided in many forms, including scholarships, fellowships and need-based education grants. Student loans are not included in educational assistance. See Loans. For Medicaid budgeting, treatment will vary depending on the source and use of the assistance. Educational benefits from the following sources are exempt as income: ■ Bureau of Indian Affairs ■ Title IV Assistance (work study, Pell Grant) ■ AmeriCorps State and National, AmeriCorps NCCC ■ VA educational benefits ■ Exclude other nonexempt educational assistance when used for allowable educational expenses, including: – Tuition – Books – Lab fees

INCOME TYPE	TANF, GC AND RCA	SNAP	NON-MAGI MEDICAL AND IDA	MAGI—MEDICAID
		– College Assistance Migrant Program (CAMP) – Federal Work Study Funds – High School Equivalency Program – National Early Intervention Scholarship and Partnership – Perkins Loans (formerly NDSL) – PLUS Loans for parents – Presidential Access Scholarships (Super Pell Grants) – Robert C. Byrd Honors Scholarship Program – Robert E. McNair Post-Baccalaureate Achievement – Stafford Loan (formerly Guaranteed Student Loan) – State Student Incentives Grants – Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grant (SEOG) – Supplemental Loan for Students (formerly ALAS)		– Student fees – Supplies and equipment **Note:** The cost of travel, research, clerical help, equipment not required for enrollment or class attendance and normal living expenses (including room and board) are not allowable educational expenses. Count any taxable nonexempt educational assistance remaining after subtracting allowable educational expenses as income to the household.

INCOME TYPE	TANF, GC AND RCA	SNAP	NON-MAGI MEDICAL AND IDA	MAGI—MEDICAID
		– Upward Bound (TRIO Grants)		
Energy assistance	Exclude benefits through LIHEAP.	• Exclude benefits through LIHEAP. • If the energy assistance payment was made under State laws as money payable directly to a household without an elderly or disabled member: Count as unearned income	Exclude benefits through LIHEAP.	Nontaxable/excluded
Foster care payments	If the household chooses to exclude the foster child from the household: Excluded ▪ A child cannot receive foster care payments and TANF benefits at the same time.	▪ If the household chooses to include a foster child in the SNAP household: Unearned ▪ If the household chooses to exclude the foster child from the household: Excluded	Excluded	Nontaxable/excluded
Grandparents caregivers subsidy	Excluded	Unearned	Excluded	Nontaxable/excluded
Guardianship subsidy	Excluded ▪ Children whose legal guardian receives a guardianship subsidy for their care are not eligible for TANF or GC.	▪ Unearned if the child for whom the caretaker receives the subsidy is included in the household ▪ Excluded if the child whom the subsidy is for is not in the SNAP household	Unearned	Taxable/unearned

INCOME TYPE	TANF, GC AND RCA	SNAP	NON-MAGI MEDICAL AND IDA	MAGI—MEDICAID
Housing assistance	Exclude housing assistance provided by the federal or District government or nonprofit organizations.	Exclude housing assistance paid directly to a landlord under: ■ Title II of the Uniform Relocation and Real Property Acquisition Act of 1970 ■ Experimental Housing Allowance Program made under Annual Contribution Contracts entered into prior to January 1, 1975, under Section 23 of the US Housing Act of 1937, as amended ■ US Housing Act of 1937 ■ Relocation payments made to displaced persons under Section 216 of PL 91-6469, the Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act of 1970 ■ National Housing Act of 1949 ■ Section 101 of the Housing and Urban Development Act of 1965	Exclude housing assistance provided by the federal or District government or nonprofit organizations.	Nontaxable/excluded
Income tax refunds	Excluded	Excluded	Excluded	Excluded

INCOME TYPE	TANF, GC AND RCA	SNAP	NON-MAGI MEDICAL AND IDA	MAGI—MEDICAID
Inconsequential infrequent and irregular income	Exclude a household member's first $50 of inconsequential income per month. If the entire household shares a payment, prorate the income among the members.	Exclude infrequent and irregular income that cannot be reasonably anticipated if it is $30 per quarter or less.	Exclude the first $30 per calendar quarter of infrequent or irregular earned income. Exclude the first $60 per calendar quarter of infrequent or irregular unearned income.	Nontaxable/excluded
In-kind benefits	Excluded	■ Exclude goods or services in a form other than cash that are provided to a member of the household. ■ Do not exclude money legally obligated to the household that is diverted to pay expenses of the household.	Exclude noncash benefits in the form of a voucher, commodity or service (SNAP, WIC, Section 8 voucher).	Nontaxable/excluded
Japanese and Aleut benefits	Exclude payments made under PL 100-383 to US citizens of Japanese ancestry, resident Japanese noncitizens and Aleuts.	Exclude payments made under PL 100-383 to US citizens of Japanese ancestry, resident Japanese noncitizens and Aleuts.	Exclude payments made under PL 100-383 to US citizens of Japanese ancestry, resident Japanese noncitizens and Aleuts.	Nontaxable/excluded
Jury duty income	Excluded	■ Reimbursement of costs, including mileage and parking: Excluded ■ Compensation for service over a period of time: Earned	Excluded	Taxable/unearned
Lease of natural assets	Income from leasing rights to natural assets such as timber, gravel, oil and natural gas: Unearned			Taxable/unearned

INCOME TYPE	TANF, GC AND RCA	SNAP	NON-MAGI MEDICAL AND IDA	MAGI—MEDICAID
Loans	Exclude: ▪ Loans from private individuals or banking institutions, including US Repatriation Assistance, if the household declares an intent to repay it. Otherwise, count payments as unearned income. ▪ Payments to the household on reverse mortgages. These are loans against the equity of a house and are excluded. In a questionable circumstance or when private loans are recurring, ESA may require a signed statement by the lender regarding the repayment obligation.		Excluded	Nontaxable/excluded
Lump sums and accrued benefits	Excluded as income the month received. Lump sums include: ▪ Winnings ▪ Inheritances ▪ Insurance settlements ▪ Retroactive payments of SSI, SSDI and VA benefits An accrued benefit is a one-time payment intended to cover a retroactive or a future period of time but not the current payment period.	▪ Nonrecurring lump sums: Excluded as income (these are an asset in the month received) ▪ Any portion intended to cover needs in the current month: Unearned ▪ Lottery/gambling winnings: A household that receives a lottery or gambling winnings equal to or greater than the asset limit for elderly or disabled households loses eligibility for SNAP. This includes households that are categorically eligible for SNAP and do not have an asset limit.	Excluded as income the month received. Lump sums include: ▪ Winnings ▪ Inheritances ▪ Insurance settlements ▪ Retroactive payments of SSI, SSDI and VA benefits An accrued benefit is a one-time payment intended to cover a retroactive or future period of time but not the current payment period.	Taxable /earned or unearned Lump sum payments that are not qualified lottery winnings or qualified lump sum income are counted as income in the month they are received. This includes back pay, retroactive benefits, state tax refunds and insurance settlements. For lottery and gambling winnings: ▪ Winnings less than $80,000.00: Count as income in the month received ▪ Winnings of $80,000.00 but less than $90,000.00: Count as income over two months with an equal amount counted in each month ▪ For every additional $10,000, add one month to the period over which total winnings are divided in equal installments and count as income.

<table>
<tr><th>INCOME TYPE</th><th>TANF, GC AND RCA</th><th>SNAP</th><th>NON-MAGI MEDICAL AND IDA</th><th>MAGI—MEDICAID</th></tr>
<tr><td rowspan="2">Military pay, allowances, allotments</td><td>Regular wages: Earned</td><td>Regular pay (wages) received by active duty members of the Armed Forces: Earned</td><td>Regular wages: Earned</td><td>Taxable/earned</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">Basic Allowance for Housing or Basic Allowance for Subsistence paid to household: Earned
Allotments for the support of dependents of military personnel: Unearned income for the receiving household</td><td>Housing, subsistence and dependent allowances: Unearned</td><td>Taxable/unearned</td></tr>
<tr><td>Military pay: additional pay for service in a combat zone</td><td colspan="2">Exclude income a member of the US Armed Forces receives in addition to the service member’s basic pay when the income was:
Received as a result of the service member’s deployment to or service in an area designated as a combat zone as under an Executive Order or Public Law
Not received by the service member before their deployment to or service in a federally designated combat zone</td><td>Excluded</td><td>Taxable/earned</td></tr>
<tr><td>Money received by a third party</td><td colspan="2">Money received by a third party for a household member:
Excluded if not received by the household member
Counted if received by the household member</td><td>Exclude money received by a third party for a household member unless the money is made available to the member.</td><td>Nontaxable/taxable: How the income is treated varies depending on the source of the funds and if the funds are available to the member.</td></tr>
<tr><td>Money received for others</td><td colspan="2">Exclude money received by the household on behalf of others who are not in the household if the household does not use the funds for its own needs.</td><td>Exclude money received by a member on behalf of a nonhousehold member if it is not for the needs of the household.</td><td>Nontaxable/taxable: How the income is treated varies depending on the source of the funds and if the member keeps the funds.</td></tr>
</table>

<table>
<tr><th>INCOME TYPE</th><th>TANF, GC AND RCA</th><th>SNAP</th><th>NON-MAGI MEDICAL AND IDA</th><th>MAGI—MEDICAID</th></tr>
<tr><td>Native American/Alaska Native payments</td><td colspan="2">Payments to Native Americans are excluded when the payments are specifically excluded under federal law:
PL 92-203: Tax exempt portions of payments under the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act
PL 93-134: Funds distributed to members of Indian tribes and the purchases made with such funds
PL 93-531: Relocation assistance payments to members of the Hopi and Navajo Tribes
PL 94-114: Receipts distributed to members of certain Indian tribes
PL 96-420: Payments to the Passamaquoddy Tribe and the Penobscot Nation
PL 95-433: Payments received by the confederated tribes and Bands of Yakima Indian Nation Apache Tribe of the Mescalero Reservation
PL 95-531: Relocation payments to the Navajo and Hopi Tribes
PL 94-540: Judgment funds to the Grand River Band of Ottawa Indians</td><td>Excluded</td><td>Nontaxable/excluded</td></tr>
<tr><td>Nutrition payments</td><td>Excluded</td><td>Exclude benefits issued through the following programs:
WIC
Title VII Nutrition Program for the Elderly of the Older Americans Act of 1965
Child Nutrition Act of 1965
National School Lunch Act of 1946
Section 32 of PL 74-320, as amended 7 USC 612c
Section 416 of the Agriculture Act of 1949</td><td>Excluded</td><td>Nontaxable/excluded</td></tr>
<tr><td>Prenatal and well-baby care</td><td>Excluded</td><td>Excluded</td><td>Excluded</td><td>Nontaxable/excluded</td></tr>
</table>

INCOME TYPE	TANF, GC AND RCA	SNAP	NON-MAGI MEDICAL AND IDA	MAGI—MEDICAID
Radiation exposure payments	Excluded	Excluded	Excluded	Nontaxable/excluded
Railroad Retirement Board benefits	Unearned	Gross retirement benefit before any deductions: Unearned income	Unearned	Taxable/unearned
Rehabilitation Services Administration payments	Excluded	▪ Any portion of the payment that is a reimbursement: Excluded ▪ All other payments: Unearned	Excluded	Taxable/unearned
Reimbursements	Exclude reimbursements for actual expenses that are paid or documented separately from other payments such as wages. Examples of excluded reimbursements include: ▪ Payments to volunteers for expenses incurred in their work ▪ Payments and allowances from an agency or organization to participate in a training program, such as travel, per diem, uniforms and transportation ▪ Compensation awards for a set use such as workers' compensation that must be used for training expenses or disaster-related loans or grants ▪ Transportation reimbursement for jury duty ▪ Stipends for participants in SNAP E&T or a TANF work program ▪ Work-related reimbursements Count any portion of a reimbursement that covers normal living expenses as earned income.		Excluded	Nontaxable/excluded

INCOME TYPE	TANF, GC AND RCA	SNAP	NON-MAGI MEDICAL AND IDA	MAGI—MEDICAID
Rental income	Count gross rental income less expenses as earned or unearned income as described below: - If the individual manages the property by collecting rental payments and by providing services to maintain the property: Count as earned income. - If a rental company or other party manages the property and the individual has no specific responsibility for managing the property: Count as unearned income.	Count gross rental income less expenses as earned or unearned income as described below: - If the household actively manages the rental units for at least 20 hours a week, count as earned self-employment income. - If the household spends less than 20 hours a week managing the units, count as unearned self-employment income. Active management of a rental household includes tasks such as advertising, showing the property to prospective renters, bookkeeping, inspections, cleaning, making repairs, redecorating and yard maintenance.	Unearned: Count gross lease income less expenses. Lease expenses may include interest on mortgage, property taxes, maintenance and repair costs, insurance on structure, advertising and utilities when paid by the landlord. Lease expenses do not include the amount of a mortgage applied toward the principal balance of the loan.	Taxable/unearned: Count gross lease income less expenses. Lease expenses may include interest on mortgage, property taxes, maintenance and repair costs, insurance on structure, advertising and utilities when paid by the landlord. Lease expenses do not include the amount of a mortgage applied toward the principal balance of the loan.

<table>
<thead>
<tr><th>INCOME TYPE</th><th>TANF, GC AND RCA</th><th>SNAP</th><th>NON-MAGI MEDICAL AND IDA</th><th>MAGI—MEDICAID</th></tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Room and board</td>
<td>Count gross boarder income minus expenses as earned income. (Boarder income is treated as other self-employment income.)

To allow an expense, it must be clearly associated with the rental unit, such as expenses the household would not incur without having the boarder.</td>
<td>For payments made by a boarder directly to the household:
Count gross boarder income minus expenses as earned income. (Boarder income is treated as other self-employment income.)
To allow an expense, it must be clearly associated with the rental unit, such as expenses the household would not incur without having the boarder.
Exclude any payments the boarder pays to a third party, such as a direct payment to the utility company.</td>
<td>Unearned:
Customers must own or be buying the property to have “roomer or boarder income.”
Count gross room and board income less a prorated share of housing costs, including interest on mortgage, property tax, insurance on structure, maintenance and repair costs, advertising and utilities, paid by the landlord.
Prorate expenses based on the number of bedrooms for rent compared with the number of bedrooms in the house.</td>
<td>Taxable/unearned</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roomer income</td>
<td colspan="3">Count the gross rent payments minus expenses as:
Unearned income if the household does not provide any services
Earned income if the household provides services
To allow an expense, it must be clearly associated with the rental unit, such as expenses the household would not incur without having the roomer.</td>
<td>Taxable/unearned</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

INCOME TYPE	TANF, GC AND RCA	SNAP	NON-MAGI MEDICAL AND IDA	MAGI—MEDICAID
Roommates and shared living arrangements	Exclude cash payments given to the assistance household by a nonhousehold member for their share of the shelter costs. The household that pays the landlord does not have the funds it collects for shared costs counted as income.	When separate households live in the same residence and neither household owns the home, this is a roommate or shared living arrangement. ▪ Exclude cash payments provided by one household to the other household for its share of housing costs that will be paid to the landlord or utility companies. ▪ Only allow the portion paid by the household for its share of housing costs for the excess shelter expense deduction.	Excluded	Nontaxable/excluded
Retirement income and pensions	▪ Exclude any portion that is diverted to an ex-spouse as a requirement under a divorce decree or settlement. ▪ Count all other retirement payments as unearned income.			Taxable/unearned
Self-employment income	▪ Count the total proceeds of self-employment minus allowable expenses of producing the income as earned income to the household. ▪ If the allowable expenses are more than the total proceeds, the amount of the loss does not reduce the other income of the household.		Earned: ▪ Count gross business income less all business operating costs of self-employment as earned income.	Taxable/earned: ▪ Count gross business income less all business operating costs of self-employment as earned income.
Senior community service employment	Excluded under Title V of the Older Americans Act of 1965	Excluded under Title V of the Older Americans Act of 1965	Excluded under Title V of the Older Americans Act of 1965	Nontaxable/excluded

INCOME TYPE	TANF, GC AND RCA	SNAP	NON-MAGI MEDICAL AND IDA	MAGI—MEDICAID
Social Security Benefits Old-Age, Survivors, and Disability Insurance (OASDI, SSDI)	Unearned	Unearned: ▪ If SSA deducts Medicare premiums from these benefits, allow this expense for the excess medical expense deduction.	Unearned	Taxable (conditional): ▪ Exclude the RSDI income of a MAGI tax dependent or child's RSDI if their other countable income plus 50 percent of their OASDI is $25,000 or less. ▪ It the calculation above is more than $25,000, use IRS worksheets to determine if the income is taxable/counted.
Spousal support or alimony	Unearned	Unearned, including spousal support that is otherwise payable to the household but is diverted to another party or creditor to pay for a household expense	Unearned	Taxable/unearned
Strike benefits	Unearned	▪ Count the striker's pre-strike income as earned income if the striker's income the day before the strike was higher than the striker's income while on strike. ▪ Count strike income as earned income only if the strike income is more income than they received while working.	Unearned	Taxable/unearned
Supplemental Security Income (SSI)	Unearned	Unearned: ▪ Exclude any money that is deposited to a PASS account or that is withheld to repay a prior overpayment.	Excluded, including SSI presumptive payments	Nontaxable/excluded

INCOME TYPE	TANF, GC AND RCA	SNAP	NON-MAGI MEDICAL AND IDA	MAGI—MEDICAID
TANF and Tribal TANF Benefits	N/A	- Monthly TANF benefits: Unearned - Amount TANF grant is reduced due to a sanction for not complying with TANF rules: Unearned income even though this portion is not received by the household - Initial TANF benefit intended to cover a previous month: Excluded as income; asset in month received	Excluded, including underpayments and incentive payments for prenatal and well-baby care for current and former TANF recipients	Nontaxable/excluded
TANF being withheld for an overpayment	N/A	- If the TANF overpayment was due to fraud or an intentional program violation: Unearned - If the TANF overpayment was for any other reason: Excluded	Excluded	Nontaxable/excluded
TANF sanction amount	N/A	SNAP may not increase based on the reduced TANF benefits from a work requirements sanction. Count the sanction amount as unearned income, as if the household received the benefit.	N/A	N/A
Training expense allowance and stipends	Excluded	Allowance to a trainee to reimburse them for expenses they incur from their participation in a countable work activity (typically covers transportation costs, dependent care costs, uniforms and minor supplies): Excluded	Excluded	Nontaxable/excluded

INCOME TYPE	TANF, GC AND RCA	SNAP	NON-MAGI MEDICAL AND IDA	MAGI—MEDICAID
Trust funds	Money provided to household members from the trust fund: unearned	Income available to the household that is not counted as an asset, including dividends: Unearned	Money provided to household members from the trust fund: Unearned	Money provided to household members from the trust fund: Unearned
Unemployment Compensation benefits	Unearned	Unearned	Unearned	Taxable/unearned
Utility allowances	Utility allowances through housing programs: Excluded			Nontaxable/excluded
Veterans' benefits: service-connected disability	Unearned	Unearned	VA compensation for service-connected disability, DIC or VA survivor benefits: Unearned	Nontaxable/excluded
Veterans' benefits: VA pension	Unearned	Unearned	▪ Amount for unusual medical expenses: Excluded ▪ Any remaining benefits: Unearned	▪ Taxable/unearned ▪ Amount for unusual medical expenses: Nontaxable/excluded
Veterans' benefits: Aid and attendance	Excluded	Unearned	Excluded	Nontaxable/excluded
Wages/tips	Earned	Earned	Earned	Taxable/earned
Workers' compensation benefits	Unearned	Unearned	Unearned	Nontaxable/excluded

INCOME TYPE	TANF, GC AND RCA	SNAP	NON-MAGI MEDICAL AND IDA	MAGI—MEDICAID
Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) payments	▪ Wages received from an adult's on-the-job training or work experience: Earned ▪ Wages received by a person under age 19 and under the parental control of an adult in the household: Excluded Training allowance: ▪ Amount intended to cover participation-related costs: Excluded ▪ Any remaining portion of an allowance: Unearned	Wages received from an adult's on-the-job training or work experience: Earned Training allowance: ▪ Amount intended to cover participation-related costs: Excluded ▪ Any remaining portion of an allowance: Unearned	Earned income: ▪ Title I programs for Adults, Dislocated Workers and Youth ▪ Title III programs run by an Employment Service Office (Wagner Peyser or other one-stop-center) ▪ Title IV program such as Vocational Rehabilitation ▪ Other occupational or on-the-job training or workforce development programs such as Limited Work Experience (LWE) or Job Corps Unearned income: ▪ Incentive payments from a WIOA-funded program as a reward for completing specific activity (even if based on hourly participation) ▪ Title II payments from Adult Education and Family Literacy Act (AEFLA), Adult Basic Education (ABE) or Literacy and English Language Acquisition	Taxable/earned or unearned

INCOME TYPE	TANF, GC AND RCA	SNAP	NON-MAGI MEDICAL AND IDA	MAGI—MEDICAID
Work study income	Excluded	Excluded if being used for allowable educational expenses	Earned	Taxable/earned
Work and training incentive allowance	Earned	Any portion of the allowance that is not a reimbursement or not intended to defray participation expenses: Earned	Earned	Taxable/earned

ABD = Aged, Blind and Disabled (Medicaid); CSSD = Child Support Services Division; DIC = Dependency and Indemnity Compensation; E&T = Employment and Training; GC = General Assistance for Children; IDA = Interim Disability Assistance; IRS = Internal Revenue Service; LIHEAP = Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program; MAGI = modified adjusted gross income; N/A = not applicable; OASDI = Old-Age, Survivors and Disability Insurance; PA = public assistance; PASS = Plan to Achieve Self Support; PL = Public Law; POWER = Program on Work, Employment and Responsibility; RCA = Refugee Cash Assistance; RSDI = Retirement, Survivors and Disability Insurance; SSA = Social Security Administration; SSDI = Social Security Disability Insurance; SSI = Supplemental Security Income; TANF = Temporary Assistance for Needy Families; USC = United States Code; VA = Veterans Administration; WIC = Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children

Table 25.2.c. Verification Chart

Element	Proof Required?			Examples of Acceptable Proof
	TANF and GC	SNAP	ABD Medicaid and IDA	
Age	Only if questionable for work exemption	Only if questionable for work exemption or medical expense deduction	Only if questionable	For SNAP, see ***Section 5.7, Identity Verification***
Applied for unemployment compensation (see Income for receipt of unemployment compensation)	No	For exemption from GWRs	No	▪ Completed SNAP Work Requirements Screening Form **If questionable:** ▪ Contact DOES or request verification from customer
Assets	Only if questionable	Only if the household is not categorically eligible and the asset would affect eligibility	Yes At application, redetermination and when a change in assets is reported	▪ Bank statements ▪ Insurance documents ▪ Vehicle registration ▪ Stock certificates ▪ Courthouse records ▪ Property tax statement
Bank accounts: checking and savings	Only if questionable	Only if the household is not categorically eligible and the asset would affect eligibility	Yes At application, redetermination and when a change in assets is reported	▪ Monthly statement (reviewing the household's checkbook is not sufficient verification) ▪ Current credit union statement (if necessary, telephone contact with the institution to verify the current balance) ▪ Passbook with entry posted within the last 30 days ▪ Current (30 days) quarterly credit union statement ▪ Christmas Club coupon book ▪ Written statement from financial institution (if necessary, telephone contact with the institution to verify the current balance)
Burial plots	No	No	Yes, if questionable	▪ Right of burial certificate ▪ Written statement from cemetery

Element	Proof Required?			Examples of Acceptable Proof
	TANF and GC	SNAP	ABD Medicaid and IDA	
Caretaker of an incapacitated person	No	For exemption from GWRs	No	**For an incapacitated person who is a member of the SNAP household and is receiving Social Security Disability benefits:** ▪ Normal verification procedures through data match with the Social Security Administration (SSA) or a document from SSA verifying receipt of benefits. **For no SSA disability benefits:** ▪ SNAP Work Requirements Medical Report signed and dated by a physician or licensed or certified psychologist and the customer, OR ▪ Other verification provided by a physician or licensed or certified psychologist **For an incapacitated person who is NOT a member of the SNAP household:** ▪ Completed SNAP Work Requirements Screening Form ***If questionable***: ▪ Request verification, such as, but not limited to, a court-ordered appointment of guardianship, a signed statement from the incapacitated person or family member, or collateral contact.
Caretaker of a child under age 6 not living in the household	No	For exemption from GWRs	No	▪ Completed SNAP Work Requirements Screening Form **If questionable:** ▪ Request verification, such as a signed statement from another family member or collateral contact.

Element	Proof Required?			Examples of Acceptable Proof
	TANF and GC	SNAP	ABD Medicaid and IDA	
Certain Indigenous Peoples	No	For exemption from ABAWD requirements	No	■ Completed SNAP Work Requirements Screening Form or written and signed declaration from the customer **If questionable:** ■ Request verification. See Section 3.3.2, Certain Indigenous Peoples in ESA's SNAP Work Requirements Handbook for allowable verification.
Child support obligation paid by the household	No	Yes	No	■ Court or administrative papers ■ Information or documents from CSSD ■ Written statement from custodial parent or person receiving support ■ Receipts or documents confirming payments made
Chronic homelessness	No	For exemption from ABAWD requirements	No	■ SNAP Work Requirements Screening Form ■ Written and signed declaration from customer **If questionable:** ■ Documentation of receipt of Permanent Supportive Household or Targeted Affordable Housing, or documentation from a homeless service provider
Citizenship	Only if questionable	Only if questionable	Yes Except for persons receiving SSI, SSDI, Medicare	■ US passport ■ Enhanced driver's license ■ Certificate of Naturalization ■ Certificate of Citizenship ■ Tribal membership card with picture ■ Official state- or county-issued birth certificate ■ Certification of birth by the US Department of State ■ Official military record showing a place of birth in the US

Element	Proof Required?			Examples of Acceptable Proof
	TANF and GC	SNAP	ABD Medicaid and IDA	
Countable months from another state	No	At application and when a new household member is added if: ▪ Applicant/new member is aged 18 to 64, and ▪ Indicates recently receiving SNAP in another state	No	▪ Collateral contact with other state agency documented in case file ▪ Written statement from the state ▪ Printouts of the customer's record from the other state's eligibility system showing countable months ▪ Copies of customer's notice(s) from the other state indicating a countable month was used
Dependent care expenses (including transportation costs)	Only if questionable	Yes, to receive income deduction	No	▪ Bills or statement from the provider that states cost, nature and period of time covered ▪ Receipts or cancelled checks showing payment ▪ Document or collateral contact with the CCSD
Disability	Yes	Yes	Yes	**All programs** ▪ Award letter from SSA ▪ Collateral contact with SSA ▪ Decision from ESA's Medical Review Team **For SNAP** ▪ Any verification listed above ▪ Collateral contact or award letter from VA ▪ Proof the individual receives SSI or SSDI ▪ Proof the individual receives IDA

<table>
<tr><th rowspan="2">Element</th><th colspan="3">Proof Required?</th><th rowspan="2">Examples of Acceptable Proof</th></tr>
<tr><th>TANF and GC</th><th>SNAP</th><th>ABD Medicaid and IDA</th></tr>
<tr><td>Drug or alcohol treatment</td><td>To show good cause for absence of over 90 days</td><td>For exemption from GWRs or ABAWD requirements</td><td>No</td><td>For TANF and GC
▪ Document from treatment facility
▪ Collateral contact from facility
▪ Signed doctor’s statement
For SNAP
For Alcoholics, narcotics, or other substance abuse anonymous meetings:
▪ SNAP Work Requirements Screening Form
All other:
▪ SNAP Work Requirements Medical Report
▪ Document from treatment facility
▪ Collateral contact from facility
▪ Signed doctor’s statement</td></tr>
<tr><td>Enrollment in an employment and training program</td><td>No; providers verify</td><td>For exemption from GWRs requirements</td><td>No</td><td>▪ SNAP Verification of Employment or Qualifying Work Activity Form signed and dated by customer and program provider
▪ Other documentary evidence/written statement from program</td></tr>
<tr><td>Household composition</td><td>Only if questionable</td><td>Only if questionable (including purchase and prepare arrangements)</td><td>No</td><td>▪ Statement from landlord
▪ Rental agreement
▪ Collateral contact</td></tr>
<tr><td>Fleeing Domestic Violence</td><td>No</td><td>For exemption from ABAWD requirement</td><td>No</td><td>▪ Self-attestation on the application or recertification form, a written and signed declaration from the customer</td></tr>
<tr><td>Funeral contract</td><td>No</td><td>No</td><td>Yes</td><td>▪ Copy of contract
▪ Contact with the funeral home</td></tr>
</table>

Element	Proof Required?			Examples of Acceptable Proof
	TANF and GC	SNAP	ABD Medicaid and IDA	
Identity	Yes Required for the head of household	Initial application: Yes (including expedited SNAP); required for both the head of household and authorized representative Recertification: only if the household has a new head of household or authorized representative and their identity has not been previously verified	Yes Required for the head of household	▪ Driver's license ▪ State ID card ▪ Birth certificate ▪ Passport ▪ School records or ID ▪ Current Alien Registration Card ▪ Voter registration card ▪ Collateral contact outside the client's household

Element	Proof Required?			Examples of Acceptable Proof
	TANF and GC	SNAP	ABD Medicaid and IDA	
Inability to work/unfitness for work (physically or mentally unfit for employment)	For exemption from work requirements	For exemption from GWRs or ABAWD requirements	No	**For TANF and GC:** ▪ Doctor's statement ▪ Medical records ▪ Decision from disability program specialist ▪ Any verification listed under *Disability* **For SNAP GWRs Exemption:** ▪ Receipt of POWER or IDA benefits, on IDA benefit waitlist ▪ SNAP Work Requirements Medical Report form ▪ Any other proof of medical condition ▪ Any verification listed under *Disability* **For SNAP ABAWD Exemption:** ▪ Proof of receipt of temporary or permanent disability benefits from a government or private source (see *Income* as this is considered unearned income) ▪ SNAP Work Requirements Medical Report form Any other proof of medical condition if not obvious to the State Agency **For SNAP ABAWD Exemption (Obvious as Determined by the State Agency):** ▪ A Completed *SNAP Work Requirements Screening Form or* ▪ information on application forms, information shared during interviews, worker observations, or information in the case record. Workers must document the information that led to the determination in the case record.

<table>
<thead>
<tr><th rowspan="2">Element</th><th colspan="3">Proof Required?</th><th rowspan="2">Examples of Acceptable Proof</th></tr>
<tr><th>TANF and GC</th><th>SNAP</th><th>ABD Medicaid and IDA</th></tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Income</td>
<td colspan="2">Initial application: Yes

Recertification or reported change in one of the following circumstances:
Source has changed
Amount has changed over $50
Information is incomplete, inaccurate, inconsistent or outdated</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Earned:
Pay stubs from last 30 days
Employer statement by telephone or in writing
Third-party verification sources, such as The Work Number
The Work Number must be checked for all adult household members at initial application and recertification. Verification of income discovered by The Work Number should only be requested from the household if the information is not representative of what is reported by the household or confirmed by the household verbally and documented in case notes.
Unearned:
ESA data matches, such as BENDEX or SOLQ
Award letters
Bank statement showing direct deposits (this may show the net amount); additional information may be needed to determine gross income
Collateral contact
See Section 5.2, Income Verification, for additional types of income verification sources.</td>
</tr>
<tr><td>In-kind income</td><td>No</td><td>No</td><td>No</td><td>N/A</td></tr>
<tr><td>“Living with” a relative</td><td>Yes, at application and when adding a child to the assistance unit</td><td>No</td><td>No</td><td>Written statement
Collateral contact</td></tr>
<tr><td>Insurance</td><td>No</td><td>No</td><td>Yes</td><td>Policy document
Written statement from insurance company or agent</td></tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Element	Proof Required?			Examples of Acceptable Proof
	TANF and GC	SNAP	ABD Medicaid and IDA	
Medical expenses	No	Yes, to receive income deduction Only for persons who are 60 or older or persons with disabilities: ▪ At initial application ▪ At recertification or change of circumstances if source or amount has changed by more than $25, unless the information is incomplete, inaccurate, inconsistent or outdated	Yes, for expenses to meet spend-down	▪ Bills ▪ Receipts and prescriptions ▪ Statement from the provider ▪ Mileage log or receipt for medical transportation costs
Noncitizenship	Yes	Yes, for all noncitizen household members	Yes	▪ Acceptable documents vary by status. Refer to USCIS guidance for documents typically used by legal immigrants; see ***Section 5.4.2, Noncitizenship***, for additional details ▪ SAVE matches
Other property	No	No	Yes	▪ Written statement from an individual or agency in a position to know the value of the type of property ▪ The client's records verifying ownership or current value

Element	Proof Required?			Examples of Acceptable Proof
	TANF and GC	SNAP	ABD Medicaid and IDA	
Paternity	Yes	No	No	**Verified by:** ▪ Mother and father were married either when the child was born or conceived ▪ Judicial determination ▪ Father's name on a DC birth certificate ▪ Genetic test indicating at least 99 percent probability of paternity ▪ Written acknowledgment by the father **Paternity in additional ways if:** ▪ The child ever lived in another state; and ▪ During that time, circumstances existed that established paternity according to the state's laws. **In Maryland, also:** ▪ Marriage after the birth and the father verbally acknowledging being the father ▪ Father openly acknowledging the child to be his **In Virginia, also:** ▪ Father's name on a Virginia birth certificate ▪ Father's open cohabitation with the mother during all of the 10 months prior to the child's birth ▪ Father claiming the child on any statement, tax return or other document filed with any local, state or federal agency

Element	Proof Required?			Examples of Acceptable Proof
	TANF and GC	SNAP	ABD Medicaid and IDA	
Pregnancy	For exemption from work requirements	For exemption from GWRs or ABAWD requirements	No	**For TANF, GC, and SNAP GWRs Exemption (second or third trimester)** ▪ Written or collateral statement from medical professional or clinic ▪ Client statement of a positive result of pregnancy test ▪ SNAP Work Requirements Medical Report signed and dated by an allowable professional and client (not applicable for TANF and GC) **For SNAP ABAWD Exemption (any stage of pregnancy)** ▪ SNAP Work Requirements Screening Form or written and signed declaration from the customer ***If questionable:*** ▪ SNAP Work Requirements Medical Report signed and dated by an allowable professional and client ▪ Other proof of pregnancy
Participation in a Qualifying Work Activity	No	At initial application and recertification for individuals subject to the ABAWD requirements	No	▪ SNAP Verification of Employment or Qualifying Work Activity Form ▪ Documentation of weekly or monthly hours from the program provider
Participation in workfare	No	At initial application and recertification for individuals subject to the ABAWD requirements	No	▪ SNAP Verification of Employment or Qualifying Work Activity Form ▪ Documentation of weekly or monthly hours from ESA's SNAP E&T staff and providers

Element	Proof Required?			Examples of Acceptable Proof
	TANF and GC	SNAP	ABD Medicaid and IDA	
Real estate	No	No	Yes	■ Deed, mortgage, purchase agreement or contract ■ Property tax record ■ Attorney or court records ■ City records ■ Written statement from real estate agent or financial institution ■ Telephone contact with real estate agent or financial institution to verify property as nonsaleable
Relationship	Yes, at application and when a child is added	No, unless questionable	Spousal relationships for long-term care	■ Birth certificate ■ Marriage license ■ Legal document ■ Written statement
Residency	Yes	Initial application: Yes Mid-certification or recertification: only if ESA has information that indicates the customer may no longer be a District resident	Yes	■ Rent receipt/agreement showing address ■ Mortgage payments showing address ■ Utility bill showing address ■ Current identification cards ■ Written statement from a shelter ■ The Work Number showing an Active Employment status and the employee's address in the District ■ Any other document showing name and address ■ Collateral contact if no other documentary proof is available ■ For households experiencing homelessness, composed or migrant/seasonal farmworkers or for other unusual circumstances where documentary evidence or a collateral contact cannot verify residency: – Household self-attestation of residency is sufficient when combined with ESA's documentation in the case file of all efforts made to independently verify the household's residency

Element	Proof Required?			Examples of Acceptable Proof
	TANF and GC	SNAP	ABD Medicaid and IDA	
Retroactive SSDI or SSI payments	Yes	Yes	Yes	▪ Data match via SOLQ/SOLQ-I, SVES or BENDEX ▪ SSDI/SSI Award Letter
Refugee Training Program Participant	No	For exemption from GWRs	No	▪ SNAP Verification of Employment or Qualifying Work Activity Form signed and dated by the customer and employer ▪ Other documentary evidence/written statement from program ▪ Collateral contact with the program administrator to verify the customer's participation
Savings certificate	No	No	Yes	▪ Certificate itself ▪ Written statement from financial institution
School enrollment and attendance	Yes for: ▪ Dependent children aged 16 and older ▪ Teen parents	Yes for 16- and 17-year-old persons to be exempt from work requirements Only if questionable for members who claim to attend an institution of higher education at least half time	No	▪ Verification of school attendance completed by a school official with a school stamp must be affixed to the form. Other verification sources for school enrollment and student status include school records such as the following: ▪ Most recent report card for the current school year ▪ Correspondence from school authorities ▪ Correspondence from scholarship boards or other similar organizations ▪ Information from school records obtained through data sharing agreements and exchanges with schools
Shelter costs	No	Yes, to receive income deduction	No	▪ Landlord statement ▪ Current lease ▪ Rent or mortgage receipts ▪ Property tax and insurance statements ▪ Collateral contact

Element	Proof Required?			Examples of Acceptable Proof
	TANF and GC	SNAP	ABD Medicaid and IDA	
SSN	Yes	SSN must be provided for all members seeking SNAP benefits at initial application and when a new member is added; verification is done through SSA data match	Yes	■ Federal verification of the number through DCAS, which includes SOLQ/SOLQ-I or SVES
SSN: applied for or good cause	Yes	Yes, if no SSN has been provided	Yes	**Applied for SSN:** ■ Receipt from SSA of submitted application for an SSN, such as the SSA-5028, Receipt of Application for a Social Security Number ■ Collateral contact with SSA **Good cause:** ■ Documentary evidence or collateral information that the member has applied for an SSN or made every effort to provide SSA with required information to apply for an SSN
Stocks or savings bond	Yes	Only if the household is not categorically eligible and the asset would affect eligibility	Yes	■ Certificates or bonds themselves ■ Written statement from the broker or company ■ Information from local brokerage firms, banks or newspapers about the current value of stocks or bonds
Student exemption (for persons attending institutions of higher education)	Yes	Yes Only request verification if member claims an exemption that cannot be verified in case file (see Section 5.10.2, Student Exemptions)	Yes	■ **Physically or mentally unfit**: receipt of temporary/permanent disability, statement from physician/doctor ■ **Federal/state work study participation**: Financial Award Letter of Work Study or documentation from institution ■ **On-the-job training**: Letter from program or employer ■ **Allowable E&T programs**: Letter from program ■ **Care of dependent**: Only if questionable; collateral contact is sufficient ■ **Other exemptions**: Only request verification if case file does not already include proof

Element	Proof Required?			Examples of Acceptable Proof
	TANF and GC	SNAP	ABD Medicaid and IDA	
Substance abuse	No	For exemption from ABAWD work requirement	No	**Dependency:** ▪ SNAP Work Requirements Medical Report signed and dated by an allowable professional and client, OR other documentary evidence from an allowable professional **Waitlist:** ▪ Completed SNAP Work Requirements Screening Form or written and signed declaration from the customer
Trust fund	Ony if funds are accessible to household	Only if funds are accessible to household and the household is not categorically eligible and the asset would affect eligibility	Yes	▪ Information from the administrator or trustee of the estate or long-term care facility ▪ Court or attorney records
Utility expenses	No	No, unless questionable	No	▪ Utility bill ▪ Bank statement showing utility charge ▪ Receipt ▪ Written and signed statement from landlord or person whom utility expenses are paid to
Vehicle	No	No	Yes	▪ Department of Motor Vehicles inquiry ▪ Vehicle title, registration or proof of insurance ▪ Blue book or NADA book wholesale (trade-in) value ▪ Written statement from one auto dealer (or junk dealer if appropriate) ▪ Loan statement ▪ Payment book (only to verify ownership and not value)

Element	Proof Required?			Examples of Acceptable Proof
	TANF and GC	SNAP	ABD Medicaid and IDA	
Work hours	No	At initial application and recertification for individuals subject to the ABAWD requirements	No	**For employment at a paying job:** ▪ Paystub (see Income; must show hours or a way to calculate hours) ▪ Work Number ▪ Signed statement from the employer ▪ SNAP Verification of Employment or Qualifying Work Activity Form signed and dated by the customer and employer **For self-employment:** ▪ Business receipts ▪ Accounting/business records **Note:** If self-employment verification does not provide a way to determine the number of hours worked, ESA must request the client also submit a statement that documents the number of hours worked. **For in-kind or working in exchange for goods** ▪ SNAP Verification of Employment or Qualifying Work Activity Form signed and dated by the customer and employer ▪ Signed statement from the in-kind employer that includes the number of hours worked each month **For unpaid work:** ▪ SNAP Verification of Employment or Qualifying Work Activity Form signed and dated by the customer and employer ▪ Signed statement from the organization providing the unpaid work that includes the number of hours worked each month
Questionable information	Yes	Yes	Yes	▪ Varies based on what information is questionable; refer to eligibility element that is in question

ABAWD = able-bodied adult without dependents; ABD = Aged, Blind and Disabled (Medicaid); BENDEX = Beneficiary Data Exchange; CSSD = Child Support Services Division; DCAS = District of Columbia Access System; E&T = Employment and Training; GC = General Assistance for Children; IDA = Interim Disability Assistance; N/A = not applicable; NADA =

National Automobile Dealers Association; SAVE = Systematic Alien Verification for Entitlements; SSA = Social Security Administration; SSI = Supplemental Security Income; SOLQ = State On-Line Query; SSDI = Social Security Disability Insurance; SSN = Social Security number; SVES = State Verification & Exchange System; TANF = Temporary Assistance to Needy Families; USCIS = US Citizenship and Immigration Services; VA = Veterans Administration

25.3 SNAP Benefit Tables

Table 25.3.a SNAP Monthly Income Eligibility Standards

Household Size	Maximum Gross Monthly Income Eligibility Standard for Expanded Categorically Eligible Households 200% FPG[a]	Maximum Gross Monthly Income Eligibility Standard 130% FPG[a]	Maximum Net Monthly Income Eligibility Standard 100% FPG[a]	Maximum Allotment[a]
1	$2,660	$1,729	$1,330	$306
2	$3,608	$2,345	$1,804	$562
3	$4,554	$2,960	$2,277	$808
4	$5,500	$3,575	$2,750	$1,023
5	$6,448	$4,191	$3,224	$1,217
6	$7,394	$4,806	$3,697	$1,463
7	$8,340	$5,421	$4,170	$1,616
8	$9,288	$6,037	$4,644	$1,841
Each additional member	+$948	+$616	+$459	+$225

FPG = federal poverty guidelines

[a] Effective October 1, 2026

Table 25.3.b. SNAP Minimum Allotments

	Eligible Household Size	Minimum Allotment[a]
Federal SNAP	1 or 2	$25
District-funded	Any size	$30

Note: District-funded minimum brings any federal benefits up to the $30 District minimum and does not add $30 to any federal SNAP benefits the household receives.

[a] Effective October 1, 2026

Table 25.3.c. SNAP Standard Deduction

Household Size	Standard Deduction[a]
1	$217
2	$217
3	$217
4	$229
5	$268
6 or more	$308

[a] Effective October 1, 2025

Table 25.3.d. SNAP Maximum Shelter Deduction and Homeless Shelter Deduction

Household Composition	Maximum Shelter Deduction[a]
No elderly or disabled member	$769.00
Homeless	$205.66

[a] Effective October 1, 2026

Table 25.3.e. Standard Utility Allowance

Standard Utility Allowances	Allowance[a]
Heating and cooling standard utility allowance (HCSUA)	$397
Limited utility allowance (LUA)	$360
One utility allowance (OUA)	$93
Telephone	$79

Note: ESA only applies the HCSUA (see ***Section 12.7.3.1, Heating and Cooling Standard Utility Allowance***) to households that qualify for a standard utility allowance.
[a] Effective October 1, 2026

Table 25.3.f. Threshold for Required Reporting of Changes in Household Income for Mid-Certification Report

SNAP Threshold for Required Reporting of Changes in Household Income[a]
$150

[a] Effective October 1, 2026

Table 25.3.g. Asset Limits

Policy Category	Group	Size	Limit[a]
SNAP	Household with categorical eligibility or expanded categorical eligibility	All	None
	Households with no elderly or disabled member	All	$3,000
	Households with at least one member who is 60 or older or is disabled	All	$4,750

Note: The asset limit for household with at least one member who is 60 or older or is disabled also serves as the threshold for substantial lottery or gambling winnings.
[a] Effective October 1, 2025

25.4 Work Quarters by Year

Table 25.4. Minimum Earnings for Social Security Administration Qualifying Quarters for Work by Year

Year	Earnings Needed for One Quarter	Year	Earnings Needed for One Quarter
1978	$250	2002	$870
1979	$260	2003	$890
1980	$290	2004	$900
1981	$310	2005	$920
1982	$340	2006	$970
1983	$370	2007	$1,000
1984	$390	2008	$1,050
1985	$410	2009	$1,090
1986	$440	2010	$1,120
1987	$460	2011	$1,120
1988	$470	2012	$1,130
1989	$500	2013	$1,160
1990	$520	2014	$1,200
1991	$540	2015	$1,220
1992	$570	2016	$1,260
1993	$590	2017	$1,300
1994	$620	2018	$1,320
1995	$630	2019	$1,360
1996	$640	2020	$1,410
1997	$670	2021	$1,470
1998	$700	2022	$1,510
1999	$740	2023	$1,640
2000	$780	2024	$1,730
2001	$830		

Source: Social Security Administration

25.5 Desk Aids

Documentation

Documentation is the written record of the case history. The goal of documentation is to create a clear and complete record that follows the case actions to ensure any person reading the case record can understand the status of a case, case contacts, information received, decisions made and notices sent on the case.

To be used as verification, a document or statement must meet the following criteria:

- Reasonably show the eligibility factor it is being used to verify.
- Be from a person, business or organization that would have knowledge of the information.
- Be updated and unaltered. Verification more than 60 days old is considered outdated, and current verification must be obtained unless the verification currently in the case record is dated specifically for the application time period.

The documentation recommendations, shown below by topic, identify information that someone reviewing a case in the future may be looking for but does not provide an all-inclusive list of every element that may need to be documented.

Table 25.5.a. Documentation Recommendations

Topic	Documentation Recommendations
Applications	Record the actions taken for the determination, including the following: ■ Cold-call dates and times ■ Eligibility and benefit level ■ Ineligibility ■ Interview notes ■ Issues and questionable information ■ Verification sources ■ When processing is delayed for any reason
Assets	For programs with an asset test, enter case notes to support the asset determination.
Case notes/narrative	Provide documentation, as follows: ■ To support eligibility, ineligibility and benefit level determinations ■ Whenever ESA sends a manual notice Provide a clear explanation of actions taken and why, including the following: ■ Information used to determine eligibility and benefit amount, including: – The source of information – The verification supporting the information – The method used to determine monthly income and expense amounts such as conversion, averaging, etc. – Why the information was used ■ Actions taken and the reasons to support those actions, such as: – Interviews: who was interviewed, when the interview was completed, how it was completed (home visit, in person, phone)

Topic	Documentation Recommendations
	– Collateral contacts: who the collateral contact is, the phone number, date of the contact and the information the collateral contact provided – Questionable information: why it was questionable and how it was resolved – Differences: resolution of any differences between information in the application, provided at the interview, from an automated source or during verification
Change processing	Document the following: ▪ The reported change ▪ The date the change became known ▪ The actions taken on the case based on the change ▪ The source reporting the change
Determining income, expenses and deductions	Document information to support case actions when determining eligibility, including the following: ▪ Dates and amounts of income verification used ▪ Unverified expenses that were not used to determine benefit level and the notice informing the customer to provide verification to receive an income deduction ▪ Customer's statement about their anticipated circumstances ▪ Explanation of changes ▪ Pay date versus pay period ending date ▪ Questionable or unclear information
Fair hearings	Document the following: ▪ Actions taken causing the hearing request ▪ If the customer chooses not to have a Department conference ▪ If the customer chooses to waive continued benefits ▪ Receipt of the hearing request ▪ The time and place of a Department conference ▪ If the customer/authorized representative requests to withdraw their fair hearing request, how the issue was resolved or, if the issue was not resolved, that the customer/authorized representative still requests to withdraw their fair hearing request ▪ Requests by the customer/authorized representative to withdraw their hearing request ▪ Verification used ▪ Other information related to the hearing request and hearing ▪ Actions taken after the hearing decision
Identity	Document the following: ▪ Verification received to show identity ▪ Collateral contacts and how questionable information was verified
Intentional program violation (IPV)	Document the following details about IPV: ▪ Actions taken on the case ▪ The individual and the reason they are suspected of or responsible for the IPV ▪ The disqualification period ▪ Whether the individual signed a hearing waiver or disqualification consent agreement or was found guilty through an administrative disqualification hearing or court decision ▪ Verification used in the determination

<table>
<tr><th>Topic</th><th>Documentation Recommendations</th></tr>
<tr><td></td><td>Other information related to the IPV</td></tr>
<tr><td>Overpayments and claims</td><td>Document the following:
The date the overpayment was discovered
The date the claim was established
The reason for the overpayment
The overpayment calculation
The time period of overpayment
Information provided by the customer
Other information about the overpayment and claim, including trafficking benefit determinations
How the claim will be repaid
Payments made on the claim, if outside of the regular collection system
Example: Customer asks to make a one-time payment from their EBT account
Whether underpayments were used to offset a claim
The amount of the claim before and after an offset, if applicable</td></tr>
<tr><td>Recertifications and renewals</td><td>Document information related to determining eligibility for ongoing benefits, including the following:
Cold-call dates and times
Delayed processing, including the reason for the delay
Eligibility and benefit level
Ineligibility
Interview notes
Issues and questionable information
Verification sources
Work registration changes</td></tr>
<tr><td>Residency</td><td>Document the following:
Verification used to show residency
Collateral contacts
How questionable information was verified
Reported moves</td></tr>
<tr><td>Simplified reporting</td><td>Document the actions taken based on the mid-certification report, including any phone conversations made to complete the report</td></tr>
<tr><td>Social Security number</td><td>Document the following:
Collateral contacts
How questionable information was verified</td></tr>
<tr><td>Transitional SNAP</td><td>Document any actions taken when moving the customer from SNAP to Transitional SNAP or back to SNAP</td></tr>
<tr><td>Underpayments</td><td>Document the following:
The reason for the underpayment
The underpayment calculation
The months restored
Whether benefits were used to offset a claim
The amount of the underpayment before and after an offset, if applicable</td></tr>
</table>

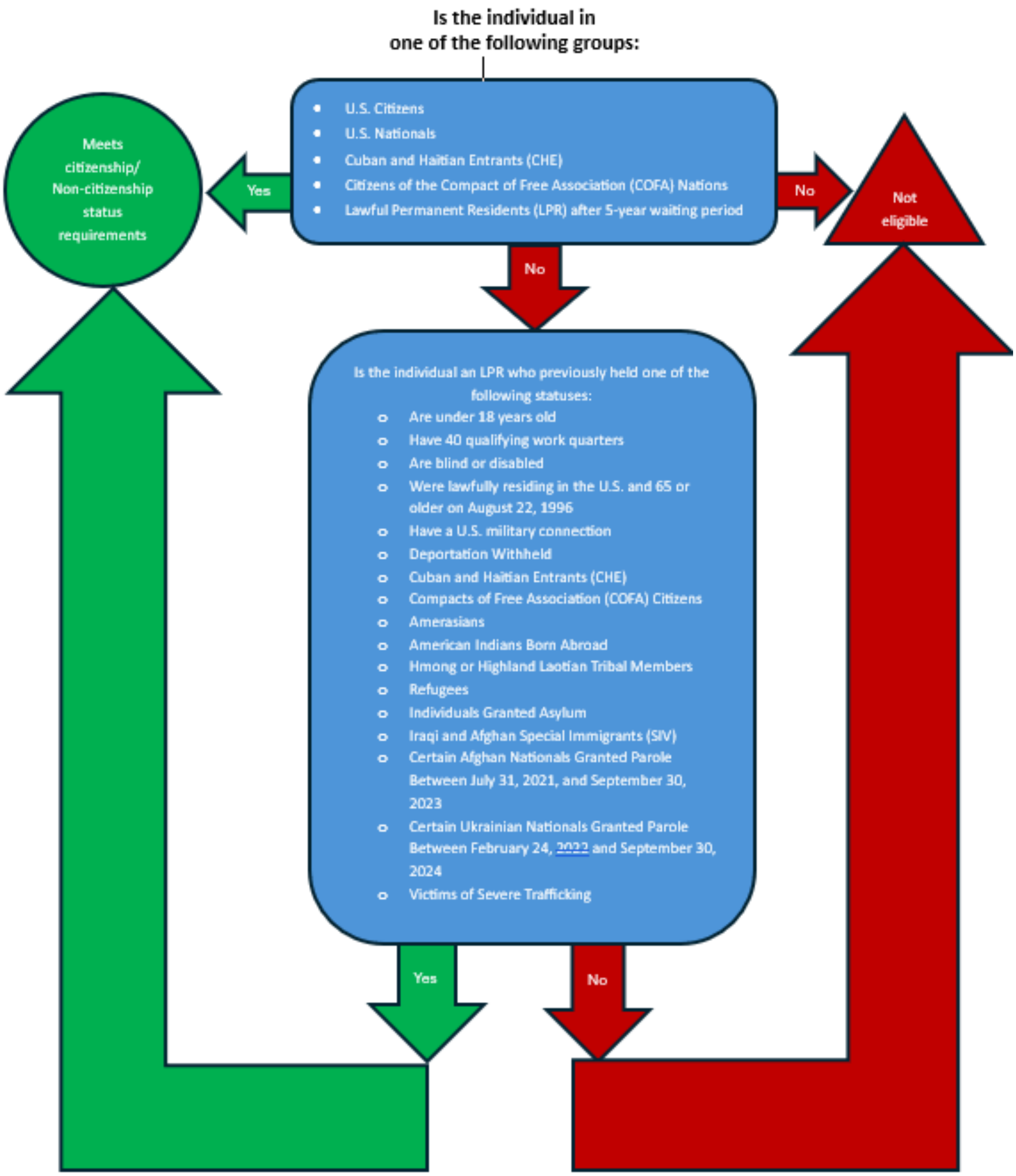
Topic	Documentation Recommendations
Unusual circumstances	Document the following: ■ Description of the situation ■ Date of occurrence ■ Impact on the household ■ Verification provided to support situation ■ Any actions taken ■ Any follow-up action required
Work requirements	Document information to support actions taken about the following: ■ Exemptions ■ Good cause ■ Disqualifications

Table 25.5.b. Self-Employment Business Structure

	Sole Proprietorship	Partnerships		LLC	Corporations		
		General Partnership	Limited Partnerships		S Corporation	C Corporation	Nonprofit Corporation
Ownership and liability	All income and assets are owned by and available to sole proprietor	Partners share income and assets, as defined in partnership agreement	Partners share income, assets and losses, as defined in partnership agreement	Members share income and assets, as defined in the LLC agreement; members have limited liability in business losses	Income, losses and deductions are passed through to shareholders	Assets are owned by the corporation and not the individual; shareholders may receive wages in addition to distributions	The CEO of a nonprofit may receive a salary, distributions of excess income and other compensation
Income	Self-employment (SE): allow deductions	SE: allow deductions	General partner: SE income Limited partner: may be unearned income	Refer to tax structure; 1065: SE income; allow share of deductions 1120: Distributions: Unearned Actual wages: Earned	Wages: earned Distributions: unearned Value of nonmonetary compensation in distributions: unearned	Wages: earned Distributions: unearned Value of nonmonetary compensation in distributions: unearned	Wages: earned Distributions: unearned Value of nonmonetary compensation in distributions: unearned
IRS forms used	1040 Schedule C or Schedule F	1065 (partnership) 1040 (individual)	1065 (partnership) 1040 (individual)	1040 with C or F schedules (sole proprietor) 1065 (partnership) 1120 (corporation)	1120 S 1040	1120	Tax returns are public documents; 1040 for CEO
Licensing: supporting documentation of business structure	Licensed with DLCP	Licensed with DLCP	Partnership agreement filed with DLCP	LLC agreement filed with DLCP	Incorporation documents filed with DLCP	Incorporation documents filed with DLCP	May be registered

CEO = chief executive officer; DLCP = Department of Licensing and Consumer Protection ; IRS = Internal Revenue Service; LLC = limited liability company

Table 25.5.c. SNAP Immigrant Eligibility Decision Guide



Determining Qualifying Quarters (QQs) of Work for SNAP

When determining QQs, the dates the person earned the income do not matter. Someone can qualify for all four QQs for the year in a single quarter if their earnings are high enough.

Example 1

In 1998, an individual must have earned $700 to earn a single QQ for the year:

- If a customer earned less than $700 in 1998, they would not earn a QQ of work for the year.
- If a customer earned at least $1,400 in 1998, they would earn two QQs.
- If a customer earned $3,000 in 1998, they would earn all four QQs for that year, even if they earned all the income in a single month in that year.

Example 2

In 2020, an individual must have earned $1,410 to earn a single QQ for the year.

- If a customer earned less than $1,410 in 2020, they would not earn a QQ of work for the year.
- If a customer earned at least $2,820 in 2020, they would earn two QQs.
- If a customer earned $5,640 in 2020, they would earn all four QQs for that year, even if they earned all the income in a single month in that year.

Whose QQs Count Toward the 40-Quarters Criteria

When determining if an immigrant has 40 countable quarters, use the earnings and work quarters of the immigrant or their family as follows:

- Immigrant's earnings and work quarters
- Immigrant's natural or adoptive parents before the immigrant turned 18; this includes work quarters the parents earned before the immigrant was born or adopted
- Immigrant's spouse if they are still married or the marriage ended in the spouse's death
- Immigrant's stepparent for quarters the immigrant was under age 18 and the stepparent was married to the immigrant's parent

Determining Whether Applicant Could Have Met 40-Quarter Requirement

In some cases, the applicant will not have been in the US long enough to have met the 40 QQs requirement. Use the following process to determine whether someone may meet the requirement:

- Ask how many years the applicant and each of the people whose QQs may count toward the applicant's 40-quarter requirement have lived in the US.
- Total the years in the US for the people whose earnings may count toward the 40-quarter requirement.
  - If the total is at least 10 years, they might meet the 40-quarter requirement. ESA must help verify QQs.
  - If the total is less than 10 years, ask whether the applicant, their parents or their spouse ever worked in the US before achieving status as a legal resident.

- If the answer is yes, determine the number of years and add them to the total. (SSA counts quarters worked while a person is living in the US regardless of their immigration status when they performed the work.)
- If the total is at least 10, the individual could meet the 40-quarter requirement. Continue to verify their QQs.
- If the total is less than 10, the person cannot meet the 40-quarter requirement. **Do not continue**.

Determining QQs

An applicant can earn four quarters each year based on their work history. In addition, the work history of a parent up to the applicant's 18th birthday and the applicant's spouse can be credited up to four quarters per year toward the 40-work quarter requirement.

- ESA receives information about QQs through the DCAS interface with the SSA's Quarters of Coverage History System (QCHS).
- This system provides an array of all QQs from work covered by the Social Security Act.
- Beginning in 1978, it also includes all creditable noncovered earnings.
- Beginning in 1978, the number of quarters an individual earns is based on annual earnings, not on the number of quarters within the calendar year in which the individual was employed.

Example

Mr. Ling applies for SNAP. He is a 22-year-old lawful permanent resident who has lived in the US since he was 10. Both of his parents worked when he was a child.

In addition to the quarters he accrued based on his own earnings (up to four per year), Mr. Ling can earn up to four quarters in any year that his father worked and an additional four quarters in any year that his mother worked while Mr. Ling was a minor.

When he was 17, both of Mr. Ling's parents worked. Mr. Ling's father earned four quarters, and his mother earned three quarters. Mr. Ling did not work that year.

Mr. Ling is credited with seven QQs for that year.

Process for Determining QQs

1. Credit the applicant's own work quarters first. Request verification of work quarters using the 40 QQ History DCAS interface if, when discussing their work history, the immigrant indicates the following:
   - They meet the 40-quarter requirement.
   - They may meet the 40-quarter requirement.
   - They do not expect to have 40-quarters with SSA but indicate they have earnings for additional quarters that could reach the 40-quarter requirement.
2. If the applicant does not have 40 QQs based on their earnings alone, ESA must determine whether the applicant's parent or spouse has QQs that can be credited to the applicant as described in the section Whose QQs Count Toward the 40-Quarters Criteria above.
   - Establish the necessary relationship to the applicant.
   - Obtain a complete Consent for Release of Information, Form SSA-3288, from the parent or spouse of the applicant.
   - Keep the signed consent form in the case file.
3. Request history of QQs from SSA:
   - For persons who have signed the consent form, request a QQ history through the DCAS interface.
   - For persons who have not signed the consent form, **do not** use the DCAS interface. Submit the SSA-513 to SSA identifying the following information:
     - The person whose work quarter information is being requested (the spouse or parent of the applicant), person's SSN, date of birth and relationship to the applicant
     - The years (and quarters) for which the individual's work history can count toward the applicant's 40-quarter requirement

   SSA will return the form with information about the QQs the individual earned during the relevant period.
4. Exclude the quarters earned by someone when they received SSI, SNAP or Medicaid in 1997 or later:
   - Information about SSI receipt is provided by SSA as part of the query.
   - Determine whether the applicant, their parent or their spouse received SNAP, TANF or Medicaid (excluding emergency Medicaid) in the District during any quarter counted toward the applicant's 40-quarter requirement.
   - For quarters earned in 1997 or later, ask the applicant and the other individuals whose quarters are being credited whether they received any of the following benefits in any part of the US:
     - Medicaid, other than emergency Medicaid
     - TANF cash assistance
     - SNAP
     - Housing assistance (living in public housing or receiving a federal rental subsidy such as through the Section 8 or Section 202 housing programs)

- Accept the statement of these persons regarding receipt of the above benefits in 1997 or later.
- If unable to contact the parent or spouse of an applicant, ask the applicant if they know whether the parent or spouse received any such benefits. If the applicant does not know or indicates that such benefits were not received, credit the quarters toward the applicant.

Example

Mrs. Santos and her two children apply for SNAP. Mrs. Santos came to the US in 2010 and got her lawful permanent resident status two years ago. Mrs. Santos' children are US citizens. Mrs. Santos has 20 QQs based on her own earnings.

Mrs. Santos is separated but still legally married. Her estranged husband, who does not live with her, refuses to sign a consent form. Mrs. Santos was married in June 2008.

- Complete an SSA-513 form to submit to the SSA.
- Indicate the years Mr. Santos' earnings can be credited toward Mrs. Santos' 40-quarter requirement.
- Because they were married in the second quarter of 2010, request that SSA provide information from the second quarter of 2010 to the most recent quarter for which data are available.

Overview of the 40-Quarter Exception

The 40-quarter exception applies to immigrants who are otherwise ineligible for SNAP benefits but can demonstrate they have accumulated 40 qualifying quarters (QQs) of work. These quarters can include the individual's own work history, as well as quarters credited from their parents or spouse, under specific conditions outlined.

Using the Query Output

The output received from SSA may only be used to determine QQs that can be credited toward an immigrant applying for benefits. It is not valid for determining earnings for SNAP.

SSA output includes the following:

- Verified SSN
- SSN submitted to the SSA
- Last name
- First name
- Middle initial
- Date of birth
- Minimum number of QQs (1937–1950)
- Maximum number of QQs (1937–1950)
- Railroad service months (1937–1946)
- Condition code
- QQ pattern

Quarters of Coverage Pattern Values

The pattern values are letter-based codes used to identify the source of the earnings that count toward a quarter of coverage. Some common pattern values include:

- A: agricultural quarter of coverage
- C: wage quarter of coverage (most common quarter of coverage)
- D: military quarter of coverage
- F: federal, state or local government wage quarters of coverage
- G: gift quarter of coverage
- J: Japanese interment quarter of coverage
- M: military quarter of coverage
- R: railroad quarter of coverage
- S: self-employment quarters of coverage
- X: wage quarter of coverage, which occurs for 1951 or 1952
- *: a covered quarter of coverage

An N code, meaning a quarter with no earnings, and non-QQ codes cannot be counted as a QQ.

When the SSA record does not have enough information to determine a QQ, the pattern will show one of the following codes:

- #: questionable quarter of coverage that can occur 1952 through 1977
- Z: questionable quarter of coverage that can occur 1952 through present

If the # or Z codes appear in a quarter and the applicant does not meet the 40-quarter requirement without them, contact SSA. SSA will investigate the earnings and either confirm or deny the quarter.

The record ESA receives will not show the current year's earnings or possibly last year's earnings, depending on when ESA makes the request. SSA processes the QQ by the fall of the year following the year of earnings. Earnings for this period are called "lag" earnings.

SSA will not develop these earnings because they will appear on SSA records when they are processed. See the section Reconciliation of QQs below for guidelines on how to develop the existence of lag earnings if these are needed to establish 40 quarters of work for the immigrant. If the immigrant has recent work activity, they should have acceptable evidence readily available.

Making the Determination of a Qualified Noncitizen Based on Work Quarters

ESA cannot count any QQ after December 31, 1996, if the applicant or the person whose SSN is being used received a federal means-tested public benefit during the quarter.

Review the codes for QQs. Do they add up to 40 quarters of work?

- If yes, the applicant meets the exception requirement.
- If no, are there current or prior years' earnings that are not shown in the QQ pattern?
- If yes, develop as described in the section Reconciliation of QQs below.

If the total now equals 40 or more, the applicant has met the 40 QQ requirement.

Review other records for the periods that can be used (during the marriage for a spouse and under age 18 for a parent). Add the codes for QQs for these periods to the applicant's record to see if they equal 40 or more.

- If yes, the applicant meets the exception requirement.
- If no, are there current or prior years' earnings that are not shown in the QQ pattern?
- If yes, develop as described in the section Reconciliation of QQs below.

If the total now equals 40 or more, the applicant has met the 40 QQ requirement.

On all records, ESA should review the field Minimum Number of Quarters of Coverage 1937–1950.

- If these can be used, add them to the total. Does the total equal 40?
  - If yes, the applicant meets the exception requirement.
  - If no, continue.

Review the Maximum Number of Quarters of Coverage 1937–1950 field and look at the quarters of coverage patterns for codes # and Z.

- If the maximum number or the code # and Z will equal 40 when added to the total, refer the case to SSA as described in the section Reconciliation of QQs below.
  - If the total still does not equal 40, continue.

Review the QQ pattern with the applicant.

- If the applicant believes that quarters are missing, refer the case to SSA as described in the section Reconciliation of QQs below.
  - If the applicant believes the records are correct, they **do not** have 40 QQs.

To determine whether an individual has enough earnings to earn a QQ, refer to ***Table 25.4, Minimum Earnings for SSA Qualifying Quarters of Work by Year***.

SSA may include a current year quarter and a quarter earned information in the immediately preceding year even if SSA does not have information about those earnings in the automated system.

- ESA can use the individual's earnings (earned to date) to determine the number of quarters earned in a current year that is not showing in the automated system.

- ESA has elected to credit the applicant for a quarter even if the year is not yet complete but does not allow credit for future quarters even if the individual had enough earnings in one quarter to cover the full year.

Example

The applicant entered the US in 2014. The applicant's spouse entered on or before that time. They married in June 2019. ESA determined that a QQ history for both SSNs would be needed for the applicant to meet the 40-quarter exception.

ESA obtained a Consent for Release of Information from the spouse and requested information on their quarters of work through the automated DCAS interface. The QQ history received is shown below.

The quarter display begins on the left with the first quarter and ends on the right with the fourth quarter. If ESA receives data in a format different than what is presented below, it will be clearly labeled.

	Applicant	Applicant's Spouse
2014	AANA	CCCC
2015	CAAC	CCCC
2016	AAAA	ZZZC
2017	NNAA	CCCZ
2018	AAAA	CCCC
2019	AAAA	CCCC

The applicant has a combination of wage and agricultural quarters totaling 21. The spouse's quarters earned during the marriage must be added to the applicant's QQs. The spouse has 20 quarters during the marriage. When added to the applicant's quarters, the total exceeds the 40-quarter requirement.

In this case, ESA does not need to reconcile the Z quarters with SSA because they are not needed to reach the 40-quarter requirement.

Reconciliation of QQs

Lag Quarters

When the applicant or other individual does not agree with the QQ pattern provided by the query and the problem is missing quarters in the current year, do the following:

- For current year earnings, accept a current employer-prepared wage statement as proof of earnings and credit a quarter for each increment, as outlined in Table 25.4, Minimum Earnings for SSA Qualifying Quarters of Work by Year. Assume the earnings are covered employment if the wage statement shows FICA withholding.
- QQ information for a particular calendar year will not show up in the automated system until September of the following year. For quarters in the prior calendar/taxable year, which do not show up in the SSA automated system because the information is requested on or before September of the following year, accept forms such as W-2 or W-2 C, employer-prepared wage

statements or an IRS copy of the individual's tax return. Credit QQ as outlined in Table 25.4, Minimum Earnings for SSA Qualifying Quarters of Work by Year.

- If the request is made on or after September 1 for the prior calendar year and the information does not match the applicant's claim that they worked during the year, do not treat the discrepancy as a lag quarter issue. See the next section, Non-Lag Quarters.

Non-Lag Quarters

When a customer does not agree with the quarters of coverage patterns provided by the query, ESA must reconcile the discrepancy. If the applicant believes the work they performed was in covered employment or Medicare-only federal, state or local wage and the earnings do not fall within the lag period, SSA must investigate the discrepancy and correct the record.

Refer all covered employment or Medicare-only federal, state or local wage cases to SSA as follows:

- If the customer indicates that they used more than one SSN or allowed others to use their SSN, they will need to contact their local SSA office to resolve the issue or call (800) 772-1213 to set up an appointment. The customer should take a copy of the QQ pattern, identifying information and any proof of earnings they may have to the SSA office with them.
- To develop a Z indicator for 1977 or earlier or a # sign indicator from the QQ pattern, refer the case to the SSA Office of Central Operations. Send a written request containing the following information:
  - Name
  - SSN
  - Date of birth
  - Year in question
  - Return address
  - Copy of the output from the query

Send a separate request for each SSN to be investigated. Mail the request along with the copy of the output from the query to the following address:

SSA, OCRO
POB 17750
Baltimore, MD 21235-0001

To follow up on the status of an existing query, request another QQ history query 45 days after the original request. If the entry has been updated, the # or Z will be overlaid with N or C. If the QQ pattern has not been updated after 60 days, call (800) 775-7802 (SSA-OCRO, Earning Discrepancy).

If the customer indicates that there are missing quarters or the code Z is 1978 or later, ask the applicant, if they are the number holder of the SSN, to complete Form SSA-7008, Request for Correction of Earnings. Provide proof of earnings such as W-2s, pay stubs, tax returns or a statement from the employer. On top of the SSA-7008, write "Welfare Reform."

If the customer is not the number holder, tell the applicant that the number holder must complete the SSA-7008 and provide proof of earnings as shown above. Mail all SSA-7008s with documentation to the following address:

SSA, OCRO
POB 17752
Baltimore, MD 21235-0001

If the applicant has no documentation, refer them to the local SSA office or call (800) 775-7802 to arrange for an appointment.

SNAP Noncovered Employment

Discuss any claim of noncovered quarters with the administrator's office at (202) 698-3900.

When an applicant cannot meet the 40-quarter exception using covered earnings or Medicare-only federal, state or local wages but alleges that they had additional work that is not documented by the SVES query of the QCHS, follow these steps to establish the existence of the earnings and convert them to QQs:

1. Review the QCHS response with the applicant to determine whether QQs are missing from the record.
   - If QQs are not missing from the response, make the determination based on the information already obtained.
   - If QQs are missing from the response, obtain sufficient information from the individual so that ESA can use the Credit of Qualifying Quarters Chart in Making the Determination to determine whether the alleged earnings are covered or uncovered. The following are examples of questions ESA might ask:
     - Name and address of employer
     - Dates of employment
     - Amount of earnings
     - Type of business or self-employment
     - Rate of pay
     - Work performed

   Ninety-seven percent of all employment is now covered under the Social Security Act.

   - If ESA determines the earnings are from covered employment or federal, state or local Medicare-only wages, refer to development guidelines in the section Determining QQs.
   - If ESA determines the earnings are from other noncovered employment, obtain evidence that the earnings exist before using the earnings to credit QQs. For acceptable means by which evidence necessary to credit QQs can be found, see the section Determining QQs.
2. If ESA is satisfied that the noncovered earnings exist, use the Minimum Earnings for SSA QQs of Work by Year to determine the number of QQs that can be credited. Covered and noncovered earnings can be combined for a year. The dollar amount indicates the amount needed to credit one QQ beginning with 1978.

   A current year quarter may be included in the 40-quarter calculation. Use the current year amount as the divisor to determine the number of quarters available. A quarter may be counted once it has started, even if it is not yet complete.

To credit quarters from 1937 through 1977, use the following guidelines:

- A credit was earned for each calendar quarter in which an individual was paid $50 or more in wages (including agricultural wages for 1951–1954).
- Four credits were earned for each taxable year in which an individual's net earnings from self-employment were $400 or more.
- A credit was earned for each $100 (limit to a total of four) for agricultural wages paid during the year for the years 1955–1977.
- Do not credit a QQ before 1937.

Timeliness for Verifying Quarters

When an immigrant has provided documentation that indicates they would be eligible for assistance, but ESA has been unable to verify their status with USCIS or their 40 QQs with SSA within application timeliness standards, the following occurs:

- ESA must approve the application for up to six months if the immigrant meets all other financial and nonfinancial eligibility requirements.
- After the six-month period, USCIS or SSA should be able to provide the needed information regarding the immigrant's eligibility for benefits.

Example 1

Mr. Gull applies for SNAP. He can only be eligible if he meets the 40-quarter criteria. The SSA interface indicates that he has 35 QQs, but there are six quarters with a Z indicator. Mr. Gull states that he worked during those years and earned enough to earn QQs.

ESA submitted a request for information to the SSA Office of Central Operations, but the office did not resolve the issue prior to the end of the 30-day application processing time period. ESA must approve the SNAP application for up to six months from the date the Department requested SSA to investigate the applicant's work quarters.

If SSA later finds that Mr. Gull did not have sufficient QQs and he cannot provide further evidence that he did earn sufficient quarters, ESA will terminate benefits, and the benefits received in error are a household-caused overpayment.

Example 2

Additional information was requested from USCIS using the G-845 and the G-845 Supplement forms because information in verification and the immigration documents presented by the applicant do not match. USCIS has not responded by the end of the application processing timeframe.

ESA must accept the documentation provided by the customer and certify the case for up to six months from the date the Department requested the proof from USCIS.

If USCIS later provides additional information indicating that the documentation provided by the applicant does not establish eligibility, ESA would terminate benefits, establish a household-caused overpayment and, if applicable, refer for investigation if the documents appear fraudulent.

Chapter

26

Chapter 26. Appendix 2

26.1 SNAP Manual Revisions

26.1.1 Previous SNAP Manual Revisions

Welcome to the historical revisions page of the ESA SNAP Policy Manual. In 2024, the ESA SNAP Policy Manual was established. Any future modifications or updates to the manual will be documented here.

If you have any questions about these revisions, please contact the ESA Division of Policy, Training and Quality Assurance at ***esapolicy@dc.gov***.

Version Number	Date of Change	Section	Description of Changes
FY2026-1	October 7, 2025	Cover page	Updated version number and date
FY2026-1	October 7, 2025	1.1	Added meeting the ABAWD requirements, if applicable, to be eligible. Added failing to the meet the ABAWD requirements as ineligible members.
FY2026-1	October 7, 2025	1.5.5	Added responsibility for screening for exemptions from the work requirements
FY2026-1	October 7, 2025	2.7	Added clarity to bullet on ABAWDs as ineligible household members
FY2026-1	October 7, 2025	3.5	Added verbal notification of work requirements and screening requirements during the application interview
FY2026-1	October 7, 2025	5.3.4 (new), 12.7.3,	Changes to SUA law and regulations. Revised which households qualify for the HCSUA. Added which households qualify for the LUA and telephone standard. Updated verification requirements for utility expenses.
FY2026-1	October 7, 2025	5.11 (redesignated)	Redesignated as ABAWD Verification and added section 5.11.1 and 5.11.2 to cover mandatory and optional ABAWD verification

FY2026-1	October 7, 2025	5.11 – 5.16 (redesignated)	Redesignated section numbers to accommodate addition of ABAWD Verifications at 5.11. Resignation as follows: 5.11 is now 5.12 5.12 is now 5.13 5.13 is now 5.14 5.14 is now 5.15 5.15 is now 5.16 5.16 is now 5.17 References to redesignated sections updated throughout manual.
FY2026-1	October 7, 2025	5.12.3 (previously 5.11.3)	Rephrased sentence about data matches not considered verified upon receipt.
FY2026-1	October 7, 2025	5.12.3.1.6 (previously 5.11.3.1.6	Removed reference of the NDNH match at mid-certification.
FY2026-1	October 7, 2025	5.15 (previously 5.14)	Corrected typos
FY2026-1	October 7, 2025	5.15.1	Added requirements to verify countable months from another state when adding a new SNAP household member between the ages of 18 and 64
FY2026-1	October 7, 2025	5.16 (previously 5.15)	Clarified ABAWD verification requirements at recertification
FY2026-1	October 7, 2025	8.6.1	Updated to remove categories of non-citizens that are no longer eligible for SNAP
FY2026-1	October 7, 2025	8.6.2.2	Removed reference to refugees and asylees as they are no longer eligible for SNAP
FY2026-1	October 7, 2025	8.6.3	Removed entire section as Severe Form of Trafficking and Battered Noncitizens are no longer eligible for SNAP
FY2026-1	October 7, 2025	8.6.4.2 (previously 8.6.3.2)	Removed reference to battered spouses, partners, or children from list of exceptions to deeming
FY2026-1	October 7, 2025	8.6.4 – 8.6.6 (redesignated)	With removal of section 8.6.3, the following sections were redesignated 8.6.4 is now 8.6.3 8.6.5 is now 8.6.4 8.6.6 is now 8.6.5
FY2026-1	October 7, 2025	Chapter 9	Sections redesignated to more clearly define the general work requirements from ABAWD work requirements. Added new section 9.2 covering the ABAWD work requirements, section 9.3 covering screening requirements, and section 9.4 covering verbal notification requirements
FY2026-1	October 7, 2025	12.7.1	Updated Example 2 to algin with new SUA policy.
FY2026-1	October 7, 2025	13.6	Add policy on ABAWD certification periods

FY2026-1	October 7, 2025	15.2	Updated language on what households are required to report during the certification period for customers subject to the ABAWD work requirements
FY2026-1	October 7, 2025	15.4.2	Clarified policy for processing mid-certifications submitted within 30 days after termination. Added declaration for corresponding policy option 7 CFR § 273.12(a)(5)(iii)(F).
FY2026-1	October 7, 2025	17.21	Added ABAWD screening and verbal notification requirements at recertification
FY2026-1	October 7, 2025	22.6 (new)	Added new section 22.6 on replacement of stolen benefits.
FY2026-1	October 7, 2025	Table 25.1.b	Added ABWD, LUA, and OUA
FY2026-1	October 7, 2025	Table 25.1.a.	Added ABAWD to glossary
FY2026-1	October 7, 2025	Table 25.2.c.	Added verification requirements for utility expenses, GWR exemptions, ABAWD exemptions, ABAWD countable months, and ABAWD work hours
FY2026-1	October 7, 2025	Table 25.3	SNAP benefit tables updated to reflect annual cost of living updates.
FY2025	January 1, 2025	Entire manual	ESA SNAP Policy Manual was established.