

MANUAL MATERIAL TRANSMITTED					
MANUAL: INCOME MAINTENANCE			CHANGE NUMBER: 144		
DELETE			INSERT OR CHANGE		
PAGES	CHAPTER	DATED	PAGES	CHAPTER	DATED
21-22	1	3/97	21	1	3/97
			22	1	6/99
23-24	1	9/95	23	1	6/99
			24	1	9/95
7-8	2	5/98	7	2	5/98
			8	2	6/99
OFS-RR1	FORM	6/98	OFS-RR1	FORM	6/99
DATE: JUNE, 1999			TO: ALL INCOME MAINTENANCE MANUAL HOLDERS		

This change adds new Food Stamp policy on reporting expenses for deductions. A statement concerning this policy is also being added to the RR-1. An initial supply is being sent to each county. Upon receipt, destroy any copies dated prior to 6/99. This change is being made to address a specific error reduction factor, so it is crucial that outdated copies of the RR-1 not be used.

Questions should be directed to the OFS Policy Unit.

B. REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

Changes must be reported within 10 days of the date the change becomes known to the benefit group. Form ES-FS-2 is one means by which this may be done. See item A,1.

**EXCEPTION:** The benefit group is not required to report any mass changes in federal benefits, such as the yearly increase in RSDI or SSI benefits. RSDI/SSI increases are handled by the Department in accordance with instructions in Appendix B of this Chapter. All other federal benefit cost-of-living increases are treated as any other change, except that the client is not penalized for failure to report these mass changes.

**NOTE:** This does not apply to an individual change affecting the level of a client's benefits, only to mass changes.

All benefit groups must report any change that could affect eligibility and benefit amount. These changes include, but are not limited to:

- Income:

Reporting requirements vary depending upon 2 factors -- the presence of at least 1 WV WORKS or SSI recipient in the FS benefit group and the type of income, earned or unearned, as follows:

- WV WORKS recipient included
  - Earned - more than \$80
  - Unearned - more than \$25
- No WV WORKS recipient included
  - Earned - source, hourly rate, employment status
  - Unearned - more than \$25

- Changes in household composition;
- The benefit group moves or there is a change of address;
- A change in the amount of rent or utilities when the benefit group moves;
- A change in the amount of assets;
- Someone buys, sells or trades a vehicle;

The Worker must send written notification to the affected benefit group and the authorized representative 30 days prior to the date of the disqualification. The letter must include: the fact that disqualification of the authorized representative is proposed, the reason for the action, the benefit group's right to a Fair Hearing, the telephone number of the office and the name of the person to contact for additional information.

This disqualification provision does not apply to drug and alcoholic treatment centers and GLF's which act as authorized representatives for their residents.

F. WHO MUST SIGN

More than one signature is never required for a Food Stamp application.

If an applicant for, or recipient of TANF or WV WORKS is applying for Food Stamps, Food Stamp benefits cannot be denied solely because of the absence of the two signatures required for TANF or WV WORKS. The rules governing who must sign are the same as below.

The individual who is interviewed signs the application. If more than one individual is interviewed, both may, but are not required, to sign.

G. CONTENT OF THE INTERVIEW

All Food Stamp applicants must be screened for Expedited Service on the day the application is made, whether the client is applying for Food Stamps only or Food Stamps in combination with any other Program.

**NOTE:** For Food Stamp purposes, the applicant may bring any person he chooses to the interview.

All individuals who apply for Food Stamps are interviewed in a face-to-face contact, unless the application is taken by SSA, or unless the Food Stamp applicant requests the office interview be waived due to the following:

- He is unable to appoint an authorized representative; and
- There is no benefit group member able to come to the office because of transportation difficulties or similar hardships. Hardship conditions include, but are not limited to, illness, care of a benefit group member, hardships due to residence in a rural area,

in time to meet the Food Stamp processing time limit, the Food Stamp application is processed using separate case number. If the Food Stamp application is approved and, at a later date, the AFDC/U application is also approved, action is taken to close the F case and add Food Stamps to the C or U case, with no interruption in benefits. If the Food Stamp CA decreases, advance notice must be given.

J. AGENCY DELAYS

If, because of an agency error, an application has not been acted on within the required time limit, corrective action must be taken immediately.

It is a requirement that the ES-6 be given to applicants no later than 30 days after the date of application, if one is required. If the agency failed to request the necessary verification, the Worker must immediately send an ES-6 to the applicant and note that the application is pending. When the information is received, benefits are retroactive to the date of application.

When the client fails to appear for a scheduled intake interview, the Worker must reschedule the initial interview within 30 days following the date of application.

If the agency failed to act promptly on the information already received, benefits are retroactive to the date eligibility would have been established had the agency acted in a timely manner.

**EXAMPLE:** Application was made November 2. The pending information was received November 17, but the Worker overlooked the application until December 17. It was processed on December 17 when the Worker discovered the error. The client was found eligible. The client is issued benefits retroactive to November 2.

K. PAYEE

The term payee identifies the individual whose name is entered in the case name block of the data system and in whose name the Food Stamps are issued.

When determining if the Food Stamps are placed in the AFDC/U, SSI or F case, the following listing is in priority order.