

20.5 REFERRALS TO THE FRONT-END FRAUD UNIT

The Front-End Fraud Unit (FEFU) is operational only in select counties. The FEFU currently operates in Boone, Cabell, Fayette, Kanawha, McDowell, Mercer and Raleigh counties. FEFU verifies questionable information to assist in reducing errors and the potential for fraud. Staff of the FEFU are known as Front-End Verification Specialists (FEVS).

Programs of assistance are investigated by the FEFU in the following priority order:

- Non-PA Food Stamps
- PA Food Stamps
- Cash Assistance

Priority for referrals is as follows:

- Applications
- Reapplications
- Redeterminations
- Active Cases

NOTE: FEFU does not investigate inactive cases.

A. REFERRAL CRITERIA

Below are some of the most frequent eligibility elements subject to error-prone findings. This is a guide for referral to FEFU but referrals are not limited to these items only.

1. Identification

The client presents identification document that appears to have been altered and/or does not appear to be authentic.

2. Residency

The client presents verification of residency, such as: rent receipt, mortgage payment, utility bill, etc., that appears to have been altered and/or written by applicant.

3. Household Composition

Reports that a person with income has recently left the household.

Reports that a person who was previously employed and not previously included in the Food Stamp AG is presently in the home and is not employed.

Reports a large increase in the household size, or provides inconsistent information about Social Security numbers, dates of birth or relationship.

Unreported individual(s) with income in the home.

4. Assets

Reports savings accounts for children but no savings accounts for adults. Unreported bank holdings such as CD's, stocks, bonds, checking accounts, etc.

Unreported holdings of real property.

Households with wage earners and no reported vehicles.

5. Earned Income

Households in which the principal wage earner has a long history of unemployment but reports receipt of UCI benefits. Subsequently, the termination of UCI is reported, but the wage earner continues to be unemployed.

Households where paid expenses are consistently higher than reported income.

The client presents an employment verification document that is not signed, does not appear to be authentic, or appears to have been altered or changed.

Reported earnings do not appear to be consistent with earnings reflected on wage-match reports.

Household in which a member has a history of employment that does not appear on wage match reports, such as domestic, babysitting, etc., but is reportedly no longer employed.

6. Unearned Income

Household where the wage earner loses a job and UCI is not reported, or a wage earner has been injured on the job and is not reporting Workers' Compensation.

Households reporting enrollment in institutions of higher learning but not reporting scholarships or loans.

7. Living With A Specified Relative

The client presents documentation to establish relationship to the child(ren) when it appears to be altered and/or does not appear to be authentic. Examples: birth certificates, marriage licenses, divorce records, adoption papers, statements of persons in a position to know about the relationship, etc.

8. Deprivation Factor

The client reports residency with a member of the opposite sex, claims no marriage and reports no blood/legal relationship to children or others in the AG.

Situations in which the client provides contradictory information about the absent parent's location.

B. REFERRAL PROCESS

Referral is made by the Worker using RAPIDS ACCH screen. To accomplish the referral, the Worker:

- Prints the ACCH screen
- Summarizes questionable eligibility issues at the bottom of the screen
- Signs and dates the bottom and forwards to the Front-End Verification Specialist.

1. Investigative Priorities

Applications/redeterminations have priority.

Investigative findings on applications/reapplications are reported within 10 working days of receipt.

Investigative findings for all other referrals are reported to the Worker preferably within 30 working days.

2. Referral Disposition

The FEVS reports his investigative findings by completing Section A of the FEFU-1 and forwarding it to the Worker. A copy of the ACCH referral is attached to the FEFU-1. The Worker must take appropriate case action based on the investigative findings.

The Worker notifies the FEVS of action taken by completing Section B of the FEFU-1 and returning it within 10 days of receipt. See Appendix A for an example of a completed FEFU-1.

If an overpayment appears likely, the FEVS makes the appropriate referral to the Claims and Collections Unit or Criminal Investigations Unit.