### 1.4 SNAP APPLICATION PROCESS

This Section describes the process for determining initial and ongoing eligibility for the SNAP Program.

### A. APPLICATION FORMS

Applications may be submitted using the **DFA-2** or inROADS. See Section 1.2,K,2 for the inROADS process.

Usually an application form is required to reapply for SNAP benefits. However, there are times when an AG may reapply without completing a new form. See Section 1.3,F,2 for reopening benefits during a certification period.

If an applicant AG fails to provide the verifications requested on the DFA-6 or verification checklist within the specified time limit and the application is denied, the AG must be given an opportunity to have its eligibility established for up to 60 days from the date of application without completion of a new form.

If the client brings in the verifications before the 60-day period has expired, the Worker determines the AG's eligibility based on the original application, noting in Case Comments any changes which have occurred since the form was completed. If the application is approved, SNAP benefits are not retroactive to the date of application because the approval delay was the fault of the client. Benefits are issued from the date the client provides the verification. The Worker provides benefits using information reported during the original application and any other pertinent information provided prior to approval.

**EXAMPLE:** An application for SNAP benefits was made on November 1<sup>st</sup>. A DFA-6 was issued requesting verification of income by November 30<sup>th</sup>. The verification was not provided by this date and the application was denied. The client brought in the requested information on December 5<sup>th</sup>. No new application form is required since the client reapplied within 60 days of the date of application. However, if the client is eligible, SNAP benefits are issued from December 5<sup>th</sup>.

- Different procedures apply when the case is closed because of failure to provide needed verification at the time of redetermination. When the client provides the verification within 30 days of the end of the certification period, it is still considered a redetermination and a new application is

not required. See Section 1.4,S,4 for instructions on proration due to delayed processing.

- Categorically Eligible AG's, as defined in item R,3, do not require a new form when all of the following conditions are met:
  - There is a WV WORKS application pending; and
  - SNAP benefits were denied; and
  - Subsequent to the denial, they are determined eligible to receive WV WORKS; and
  - The AG is otherwise Categorically Eligible.

The Worker provides benefits using the original application and any other pertinent information provided subsequent to that application. Benefits are paid from the date for which WV WORKS eligibility is established or the date of the original SNAP application, whichever is later. Changes must be recorded in CMCC.

**NOTE:** If an active WV WORKS case, also certified for SNAP benefits, is closed and there is enough information to continue the SNAP certification, benefits are continued with no interruption. A new application must not be required. See Chapter 2.

- When an individual's SNAP work requirement penalty expires, or he becomes exempt, he is added to the AG, if otherwise eligible, without having to complete an application, unless he is the sole AG member.
- When an ineligible ABAWD begins a new 36-month period, becomes exempt, or the county in which he resides or moves to becomes an NILC, he is added to the AG, if otherwise eligible, without having to complete an application, unless he is the sole AG member.
- When a SNAP AG is closed for failure to return the 12-month contact review form, the DFA-SNAP-12, a new application form is not required when the completed DFA-SNAP-12 is returned by the last day of the 13th month. Benefits are prorated from the date the DFA-SNAP-12 is returned.

## B. COMPLETE APPLICATION

When the applicant signs a **DFA-2** which contains, at a minimum, his name and address, his application is complete, and must be acted upon. When the applicant submits his application by inROADS, the application is considered complete when the signed signature page is received. An interview must be scheduled. See Sections 1.2,K, and 1.4,R,2 for mail-in and inROADS applications. See Section D, Interview Required, below.

**NOTE:** The **DFA-5** is used only in conjunction with an application completed in RAPIDS when the **DFA-2** cannot be printed for signature. Completion of the form, with no corresponding application in RAPIDS, does not protect the date of application.

An application is considered incomplete when the applicant chooses not to sign the **DFA-2** or no signed signature page is received for an inROADS application. When this occurs, it is a withdrawal and appropriate data system action and client notification must be completed. The recording in Case Comments must specify that the client did not want to sign the application and the reason for his decision. The client should always be encouraged to sign the application to avoid a misunderstanding that he was denied the right to apply.

When the applicant chooses to leave or end the interview before it is complete and does not indicate to the Worker that he wants to withdraw his application, it is considered a withdrawal and appropriate action is taken.

#### C. DATE OF APPLICATION

The date of application is the date the applicant submits a **DFA-2**, in person or by mail which contains, at a minimum, his name and address and signature. When the application is submitted by mail, the date of application is the date that the form with the name, address and signature is received in the local office.

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#### Application/Redetermination Process

When the application is submitted by inROADS, the date of application is the date the signed signature page is received. These forms must be date-stamped when received.

**NOTE:** When the applicant has completed an in-office interview and there is a technical failure that prevents printing the **DFA-2**, Form **DFA-5** must be signed by the applicant. Form DFA-RR-1 must also be completed and signed. He must not be required to return to the office to sign the **DFA-2** when a **DFA-5** has been signed. However, completion of a **DFA-5** alone, without a corresponding application in RAPIDS, does not protect the date of application.

When a new **DFA-2** is not required, the date of application depends on the situation. See item A above.

## D. INTERVIEW REQUIRED

An interview is required when an application form is required. See item A above and Section 1.3 for situations when an application form is not required. See item E below about authorized representatives.

All individuals who apply for SNAP benefits using any method, are interviewed in a face-to-face contact, unless the application is taken by SSA, or unless the applicant requests the office interview be waived due to the following:

- All adult AG members are at least age 60 or disabled with no earned income or only excluded earned income; or
- All adult AG members are not elderly or disabled, but the AG is unable to appoint an authorized representative and there is no AG 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 an AG member, hardships due to residence in a rural area, prolonged severe weather, work or training hours which prevent participation in an office interview.

In these situations only, the intake interview may be conducted by telephone or a scheduled home visit.

When the intake interview is conducted by either of these methods, a DFA-2 is still required. The Worker must either complete the DFA-2 during the interview or print the DFA-2 from RAPIDS after the interview and mail it to the client with the DFA-RR-1 for signature on both forms. If the applicant has submitted a completed DFA-2 and DFA-RR-1 prior to the interview and no changes have been made to either form during the interview, then no additional DFA-2 or

DFA-RR-1 is required. If changes are made during the interview, the Worker must either complete or print a new **DFA-2** and mail it to the applicant with the DFA-RR-1 for signatures on both forms.

When a SNAP application is submitted using inROADS, the Worker must schedule an interview with the client after the signed signature page is received. If the applicant keeps the appointment for the interview, procedures for the intake interview and application processing apply. See Section 1.4,R,4 for procedures for missed interview appointments.

Waiver of a face-to-face interview does not affect the length of the assigned certification period.

### E. WHO MUST BE INTERVIEWED

The identity of the applicant AG member and/or authorized representative must be verified and documented in the case record prior to benefit approval.

#### 1. AG Member

Any adult member of the AG may be interviewed and sign the **DFA-2**. If there is no member of the AG age 18 or over, any member may apply.

The applicant may bring any person he chooses to the interview. This person may participate in the interview only to the extent the applicant wishes. The AG must be informed that it is responsible for repayment of any overissuance caused by erroneous information provided by this person.

### Authorized Representative

An adult non-AG member may participate in the interview as an authorized representative of the AG, either with or without an AG member. This individual must be authorized and designated in writing by an adult member of the AG or by any AG member if there is no member at least age 18. The authorized representative must have sufficient knowledge of the AG's circumstances to provide the necessary information. The authorized representative may act on the AG's behalf in making an application, completing a redetermination or reporting information during the certification period. See Section 2.2,B for reported changes.

Different individuals may be selected for each activity which requires an authorized representative, i.e., one person may complete an application and another may report a change. Unless it is otherwise documented from the AG, the authorized representative who completes the application

**EXAMPLE:** Mr. B applies for SNAP benefits on May 1 and is found eligible for Expedited Service. He is certified for one month only and verification is postponed. He reapplies on May 12 for June. He provides all verification that was postponed from the previous expedited certification. He has \$0 income and is eligible beginning in June. He qualifies for Expedited Service because he provided the postponed verification from the previous expedited certification.

## 2. Screening For Expedited Service

Every applicant must be screened on the date of application for eligibility for Expedited Service whether or not the applicant requests this service.

In addition, an Expedited Service eligibility decision must be made on the date of application.

If, for any reason, an AG is not identified on the date of application as being eligible for Expedited Service, or is not eligible at that time, and the Worker subsequently discovers that the AG is entitled, the Worker provides Expedited Service as if entitlement had been established on the date of application. However, the time limits are calculated from the date the Worker discovers the entitlement, not from the date of application.

AG's requesting, but not entitled to Expedited Service, have their applications processed according to normal standards. See Section 6.2,E for notification requirements.

The **DFA-2** or CMCC must show that the application was screened for Expedited Service and the justification for the Worker's decision at application. Any changes in the original decision are recorded on CMCC.

#### Variations In Usual Procedures

AG's which qualify for Expedited Service are entitled to receive faster service. To ensure faster service, some exceptions to standard procedures apply.

## a. Verification/Work Requirements

Only verification of identity is required prior to approval. Verification of eligibility requirements is temporarily waived, unless it can occur within the Expedited Service time frame. This does not mean that eligibility requirements are waived prior to approval, only that the

routine verification of them is postponed. This also applies to the verification of and the application for an SSN. All reasonable efforts must be made to meet all routine verification requirements prior to confirmation. See Chapter 4.

Postponed verification must be received prior to the second issuance.

**EXCEPTION:** Combined issuance procedures require verification be received prior to the third issuance.

If the applicant is able to verify identity, before, or at the same time, the additional information for which the case was pending is received, procedures for Expedited Service apply. The client also qualifies for Expedited Service if the verification of identity is received at the same time the pending information is received. In addition, if the pending information is received, but not acted on, and then the verification of identity is received, Expedited Service procedures are appropriate. This must be explained to the client.

Prior to approval, the non-exempt individual(s) who completes the application process is subject to the work requirements that apply at application. The Worker must also attempt to have all other non-exempt individuals in the AG comply with the work requirements prior to approval. When this is not possible within the Expedited Service time frame, all other non-exempt individuals must comply with the work requirements by the second issuance.

**EXCEPTION:** Combined issuance procedures require compliance prior to the 3rd issuance.

#### b. Time Limits

Federal regulations require that SNAP benefits be received by an eligible Expedited Service AG no later than the close of business on the **7th** calendar day following the date of application.

To ensure this happens, consideration must be given to the following factors:

- SNAP benefits are available in the client's EBT account the day after approval in RAPIDS.

## 2. Mail-In SNAP Applications

If the client calls to request an application be mailed to him, the Worker must screen the client for Expedited Service over the telephone and advise him of his potential eligibility.

The Worker schedules an interview no later than 5 working days after the **DFA-2** is received. The interview can be scheduled by telephone or by letter.

If the applicant keeps the appointment for the interview, procedures for the intake interview and application processing apply. See item 4 below for procedures for missed interview appointments.

# 3. Categorical Eligibility

Categorical Eligibility may be determined at any time as long as the eligibility requirements are met.

## a. Who is Eligible

## (1) Mixed AG's

When an AG has at least one member who is authorized to receive benefits from TANF-funded programs or is authorized to receive information and referral services about TANF and other department programs, the AG is categorically eligible. Authorized to receive means the AG is coded in the data system as active for a benefit whether they are receiving it or not. Those authorized to receive include individuals who have been determined eligible for benefits and notified of the determination, even if benefits have not been received or accessed or the benefits have been suspended, recouped or not paid because they are less than a minimum amount or they have not yet received the information or referral.

**EXAMPLE:** A WV WORKS case was closed 5 months ago but is still enrolled in WP as the AG is still eligible for support service payments. The AG last received a payment 4 months ago, but is still categorically eligible.

**EXAMPLE:** A WV WORKS case is closed for the third sanction in June. In July, the AG applies for WVSCA and is eligible. The AG is categorically eligible from July through October, when the clothing vouchers expire.

**EXAMPLE:** A person applies for SNAP benefits and is authorized to receive information and referral services about TANF-funded programs. The DFA-SNAP I&R-1 is mailed out the day of approval and the client receives it 5 days later. The client is categorically eligible from the day of application even though the DFA-SNAP I&R-1 is received 5 days later.

## (a) TANF-funded Programs

The following are TANF-funded programs:

- WV WORKS: Any month for which benefits are received
- Employment Assistance Program (EAP): Any month for which benefits are received
- DCA: 3 months beginning with the month of approval
- Support Service Payments: As long as actively enrolled in Work Programs (WP)
- SCA and WVSCA: Until the voucher expiration date

## (b) Authorized for Information and Referral Services

AG's with income at or below 130% FPL are authorized to receive information and referral services. The DFA-SNAP I&R-1 is mailed to the AG by RAPIDS to inform the client of potential programs or services available to him. The DFA-SNAP I&R-1 is paid for by TANF/MOE funds.

## (2) Pure AG's

When the AG contains only recipients of SSI, or SSI and a combination of one of the items specified in Section 1.4,R,3,a,(1),(a) and (b), the AG is categorically eligible. This also includes the following:

 Persons determined eligible for SSI even though benefits have not been paid yet.

- A person who is normally required to be a member of the AG
  is disqualified due to an IPV.
- The AG refuses to cooperate in providing information necessary to make an eligibility determination.
- The AG is ineligible due to the striker provisions.
- The AG is in a penalty for transfer of assets.
- The AG does not meet any of the requirements in Section 1.4,R,3,a.

## c. Presumed Eligibility Requirements

Once it is determined that an AG qualifies for Categorical Eligibility, the following eligibility requirements are presumed to be met.

- Asset limit. The transfer of assets policy is applied as appropriate.
- Gross income limit, when applicable
- Net income limit
- Sponsored alien information
- Residency
- SSN information

If any of the presumed information is questionable, it is verified. All other eligibility requirements of the SNAP Program are applicable to categorically eligible AG's.

## d. Special Processing Requirements

The following special processing requirements apply:

## (1) TANF Benefit Applicants

- To determine if an AG is categorically eligible due to its status as a recipient of TANF-funded benefits, the Worker may temporarily postpone, within the 30-day processing limit, the SNAP eligibility determination if the AG is not eligible for Expedited Service and appears categorically eligible.

The Worker must not deny an AG that could be categorically eligible until the 30th day to determine if the AG is eligible to receive a TANF-funded benefit.

This applies to AG's that:

- Have an application for TANF-funded benefits pending; and
- Are denied SNAP benefits; and
- Are later determined eligible for TANF-funded benefits; and
- Are otherwise categorically eligible.

The Worker must provide benefits using the original application and any information supplied later. Benefits are issued from the date for which TANF-funded benefit eligibility is established or the date of the original SNAP application, whichever is later. The client cannot be required to complete a new DFA-2 or another interview. The Worker may contact the client to update the DFA-2 information by mail or by telephone.

#### (2)SSI Applicants

Persons who apply for SSI and SNAP benefits at the same time have SNAP eligibility determined as any other AG until Categorical Eligibility is met.

SSI applicants who are denied SNAP benefits, must be informed in the denial notice of the possibility of potential Categorical Eligibility should they become SSI recipients.

#### 4. Procedures For Missed Scheduled Interviews

When an application is received in person, by mail or by inROADS, and the client subsequently misses a scheduled interview, the following procedures apply.

Notice must be sent to the client informing him that he missed the scheduled interview and that it is his responsibility to reschedule. RAPIDS notice NA3I must be sent to the client within a reasonable amount of time to insure that the interview and/or application can be completed within the 30-day application processing period.