

2.2 SUPPLEMENTAL NUTRITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (SNAP) BENEFITS

Case maintenance and corrective procedures specific to SNAP are outlined in this Section.

When **reported information results in a change in benefits and** additional or clarifying information **is** needed, the Worker must first request the information by using the DFA-6 or verification checklist. If the client does not provide the information within the time frame specified by the Worker, the appropriate action is taken after advance notice. **Each reported change is evaluated independently for the appropriate action to be taken. Examples are not limited to the chart below.**

Changes **returning** to the original benefit amount because of the client's failure to verify are subject to advance notice. See Section 6.3. When a reported change results in the change of the certification period, the client must receive **advance** notice of the change.

Action on a Reported Change

Reported Change	Increase/Decrease Benefit	Action Necessary if Requested Information is Not Returned
Increased Deduction	Increase	Return to original amount
Increase Income	Decrease	No verification required
Decrease Deductions	Decrease	No verification required
Decrease Income	Increase	Return to original amount
Add AG member	Increase	Return to original amount
Remove AG Member	Decrease	No verification required

When additional or clarifying information is needed, the Worker must first request the information by using the DFA-6 or verification checklist. If the client does not provide the information within the time frame specified by the Worker, the appropriate action is taken after advance notice. Changes reverting to the original benefit amount because of the client's failure to verify are subject to advance notice. See Section 6.3.

When a reported change results in a change in the certification period, the client must receive notice of the change.

A. SOURCES OF INFORMATION

In addition to the sources listed in Section 2.1, the following are specific to SNAP.

1. Report Form, DFA-SNAP-2

The DFA-SNAP-2 is mailed with computer-generated notification letters and provides the client with a means to report changes.

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When the Worker receives a DFA-SNAP-2, he makes any appropriate changes in the data system. When the information is unclear or follow-up is needed, the Worker contacts the client before taking action. Another DFA-SNAP-2 must be sent to clients who submit a completed DFA-SNAP-2.

2. Data Exchange, Reports, and Alerts

See Chapter 3 for IEVS information. All SNAP benefit reports are found in MOBIUS.

B. REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

All SNAP AG's must report changes related to eligibility and benefit amount at application and redetermination. SNAP AG's are subject to Limited Reporting requirements and the reporting requirements in this Section apply to recipient AG's only.

The reporting requirements for SNAP recipients are only for SNAP benefits and do not affect the reporting requirements of any other program of assistance that the AG also receives.

Regardless of the SNAP reporting requirement, all changes reported directly by an AG member, the AG's authorized representative and/or authorized EBT cardholder, or from a source that is listed as verified upon receipt below must be acted on, even if the AG is not required to report the information.

EXCEPTION: The AG is not required to report any periodic cost-of-living increases (COLA's) in federal benefits, such as the yearly increase in RSDI, SSI, Black Lung or VA benefits. This exception does not apply to an individual change affecting the level of a client's benefits, only to mass changes. See item D below.

1. Limited Reporting

Once approved, all AG's must report when the total gross earned and unearned income of the AG and all other individuals who reside with the AG exceeds the AG's gross income limit. This must be reported no later than the 10th calendar day of the month following the month in which the change occurs.

No other changes are made for these AG's unless the information is reported by an AG member, comes from a source which is verified upon receipt, or from a source which is considered reported. See Item 2 below.

EXAMPLE: A 2-person AG is certified in April. On May 20th, one of the AG members begins working full-time. When the AG calculates the income received in May, it is below the gross limit. In the middle of June the client receives a raise. He receives one pay check in June with his new rate of pay. When the AG calculates the income received in June it is still below the gross limit. No changes are required to be reported at this point. When the AG calculates its income in July, it exceeds the limit. The AG is required to report this by August 10th.

EXAMPLE: An AG consists of a mother and 2 children. In the 3rd month, the children's father moves into the residence. At the end of each month, the AG must consider all income sources. The father's income, when combined with the AG's, exceeds the limit for the original 3-person AG. The AG must report this by the 10th day of the 4th month. The mother calls to report that the household's combined income exceeds the limit. The Worker determines the cause of the income change and must add the children's father since he is required to be included in the AG. See Section 9.1.

Even when the new household member is not required to be included in the AG, the excessive income must still be reported. When there is no required change to the AG, a recording must be made in case comments to explore other possible changes at the next redetermination.

EXAMPLE: Using the same situation above, if the man who moved in was not related to any of the AG members, and purchased and prepared his meals separately, the AG is still required to report the income change since the combined income exceeds the AG's limit. Once the Worker determines the cause of the income change, since no change is made to the AG, a recording is made and the situation is explored at the next redetermination.

2. Changes Acted On For SNAP AG's

a. Information Verified Upon Receipt

Action must be taken for all AG's when information is received from a source that is considered verified upon receipt. Verified upon receipt sources are not subject to independent verification and the provider is the primary source of the information. The only sources considered verified upon receipt are:

- BENDEX and SDX from SSA
- COLA Mass Change and reports in Appendix B
- SAVE from INS and 40 Qualifying Quarters information from SSA
- Unemployment Compensation from WV BEP data exchange

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\$200 does not put her over the gross income limit and the change occurred during the certification period. No change is made to the sister's benefits except to note the income and living arrangements in case comments.

- Information received on behalf of a client that results in changes being made in RAPIDS for another program of assistance.

EXAMPLE: Mail is returned with a Postal Service sticker which indicates that the client moved out of West Virginia. If the case contains only SNAP benefits, then no action is taken and the case is noted for the Worker to address this at the next redetermination. However, if the case contains other benefits, such as Medicaid, and the Worker is required to update RAPIDS for the other benefits, the SNAP benefit is also updated.

EXAMPLE: A call is received from the hospital informing the agency of the birth of a baby for Medicaid purposes. If the baby is added to the Medicaid AG, he is also added to the SNAP AG.

NOTE: This does not include information reported solely to verify eligibility for a TANF supportive service. See Section 24.14.

- Information received from any source which the client was required to report for his SNAP benefits. See item 1 above.

EXAMPLE: A report is received from QC that the income of a SNAP AG exceeds the gross limit. The information is acted on because the client is required to report it.

3. Unclear Information

During the certification period, the **agency may receive information about changes in a household's circumstance from a member of the AG or from a third party in which the Worker cannot readily determine the effect the change on the household's benefit amount based solely on the information provided.** The Worker must pursue clarification and **required** verification of unclear information related to these reported changes.

When additional or clarifying information is needed, the Worker must first request the information by using the DFA-6 or verification checklist. If the client does not provide the information within the

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timeframe specified by the Worker, the appropriate action is taken after advance notice. Examples of unclear information include but are not limited to the following:

EXAMPLE: An AG member reports her boyfriend has moved into the home and she wishes to add him to her SNAP case. She does not offer any additional information. Since it is unclear how his addition to the case will affect the benefits, the Worker must ask if he has earned or unearned income. If this information is not known, a DFA-6 will need issued and proper procedure followed for pending a case.

EXAMPLE: An AG member reports her boyfriend has moved out of the home. She does not offer any additional information. The case is coded indicating he is paying the rent. The Worker must ask who is now paying the rent and continue to make the appropriate changes to remove him from the case.

EXAMPLE: A woman reports her boyfriend moved in but they are going to purchase and prepare separately. The Worker notices the boyfriend has the same last name as the newborn that was added to the case last month. The Worker must ask the relationship between the boyfriend and the child as this could affect benefit amount.

Example: An AG member reports they have moved. They offer no other information. The Worker must ask how the shelter and utility costs have changed and make the appropriate changes to the case. In this example, it is not appropriate to ask about income and other household members if this information is not provided.

Example: An AG member reports the household rent has increased. The previously verified income is not sufficient to cover the increase in rent. The worker must take appropriate action to update the rent expense; however, it is not appropriate to ask how the increased rent will be paid until the next redetermination.

EXAMPLE: Worker sees an obituary for a client. The newspaper obituary is an acceptable third-party source. The Worker may take action on the case.

EXAMPLE: A landlord reports a client have moved out of state. The client is not required to report this information. The Worker must make case comments and evaluate this information at the next redetermination.

4. Timely Reporting And Follow-Up

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To determine if a claim must be established or a lost benefit restored, a decision must be made as to whether or not a change was reported in a timely manner.

NOTE: Regardless of SNAP reporting requirements, when a client fails to report household expenses which would normally result in a deduction, the AG loses their entitlement to that deduction. They have a right to the expense once it is reported and verified, if necessary. Retroactive benefits are not issued.

Reported changes are not effective the month they are reported. See item C below to determine when a reported change is effective.

When the client does not report in a timely manner and the change could have been made earlier, a claim may be established. See Chapter 20.

Benefits are not restored when the change which would have increased benefits is not reported within the AG's appropriate time limit. See item 1 above.

5. Contact Reviews and Redeterminations for 24-Month AGs

a. 12-Month Contact Review Of Eligibility

All SNAP AG's certified for 24 months must have a review completed in the 12th month of eligibility. This review differs from a full-scale redetermination as follows:

- The 12-month contact review may be completed by mail, phone, or by inROADS; and
- No interview is conducted unless the client requests one; and

RAPIDS automatically mails a DFA-SNAP-12 to the 24-month AG's in the 11th month. Failure to complete the 12-month contact results in case closure. Changes reported during the 12-month contact review are treated as changes reported during the certification period, not as changes reported during the completion of a redetermination. All adverse actions require advance notice.

Verification is not requested on the DFA-SNAP-12, nor is it required for the form to be considered complete. If a change is reported that requires verification, it must be requested using form DFA-6. Failure to provide requested verification results in AG closure or loss of a deduction after advance notice.

Failure to complete a redetermination and interview results in case closure. Notice of closure is required, but advance notice is not required.

6. **SNAP AG's Eligible for Reinstatement of Benefits**

A SNAP AG can be reinstated from the date the household provides the information and/or necessary verification without a new application when they meet the following conditions:

- a. **The SNAP benefits must be in closed status.**
- b. **The SNAP AG has at least one full month remaining in the certification period after the last month benefits are received.**
- c. **The SNAP AG must report and verify a change in circumstances during the 30 days following the last month benefits are received, and**
- d. **The SNAP AG must be eligible for SNAP benefits during the reinstatement month and the remaining months of the certification period.**

C. **AGENCY TIME LIMITS**

The first month that a reported change is effective is the month following the month the change is reported. The only exception to this is when the Department had the information prior to the month it is reported and failed to act on the information in a timely manner.

1. **Increase In Benefits**

- a. **Addition of an AG Member or a Decrease in Income of \$50 or More**

The change must be effective no later than the month following the month in which the change is reported. When the change is reported after the data system deadline, supplemental benefits must be issued and received by the 10th of the following month or by the AG's usual issuance cycle in that month, whichever is later.

7. Cost-Of-Living Increases In Federal Benefits

Recipients of federal benefits such as RSDI, SSI, Black Lung or VA Benefits may receive periodic cost-of-living increases (COLA's). RSDI/SSI increases are handled 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 required to report the change nor is repayment required when the client fails to do so.

8. Change Of Address

A change of address is made in the data system as soon as the client reports it. Any other changes which the client reports, in addition to the address change, are also acted on at the same time, when notice requirements permit.

A change of address after deadline does not affect receipt of SNAP benefits in an EBT account. When the client requests a replacement EBT card and his address has changed, the address change must be made in RAPIDS before the new card is issued to insure the card is sent to the correct address.

NOTE: For EBT, changes in the payee, address and authorized cardholder can be made immediately since files are sent to the vendor overnight and changes are not restricted to RAPIDS deadlines.

9. Continuation Of Benefits

When a WV WORKS or Medicaid AG, also certified for SNAP benefits, is closed, and there is enough information to continue SNAP benefits, the SNAP benefits must continue with no interruption in benefits. When notification of the closure is sent, it must also state that the AG continues to be eligible for SNAP. See Chapter 6. It is expected most AG's will continue to be eligible.

b. Client Returns EBT Card

EBT cards are not accepted by the Worker. When the client mails his EBT card to the local office with or without a request to return benefits, or intentionally/unintentionally leaves his card at the local office, the Financial Clerk must secure the card and contact the EBT Project Office (WV EBT) by **email** with the card name and number and how it was received to have the card deactivated. The card is then destroyed, noted on the negotiable log, and the Worker is notified. This includes cards found in the office lobby or a store parking lot and returned by another person.

If the client wishes to return benefits from the EBT account, he must complete and sign the IFM-EBT-1 indicating the amount to be returned. When the client is unable or unavailable to sign the IFM-EBT-1, the Worker must write "Signature Not Available" and record the reason. Benefits are removed from the account by a Supervisor or IFM Repayment Investigator. The client retains the card, unless the request to return benefits is mailed to the local office along with the card. In this instance, the card is destroyed using the above procedures.