

Application Processing

100 APPLICATION PROCESSING

101 Definitions

101.1 TANF/Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)

The Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) Cash program has the following four purposes:

- a. Provide assistance to needy families so children may be cared for in their own homes or in the homes of relatives;
- b. End the dependence of needy parents on government benefits by promoting job preparation, work, and marriage;
- c. Prevent and reduce the incidence of out-of-wedlock pregnancies and establish annual numerical goals for preventing and reducing the incidence of these pregnancies; and
- d. Encourage the formation and maintenance of two-parent families.

The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) is federally funded and helps qualifying low-income families or individuals buy nutritious food from local retailers. The amount of SNAP benefits issued to each household size is based on the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Thrifty Food Plan, which is an estimate of how much it costs to buy food to prepare nutritious, low-cost meals. This estimate is changed every year to keep pace with food prices. See manual section C-210 charts for maximum allotments and income levels.

Nevada SNAP benefits are deposited into an Electronic Benefits Transfer (EBT) account for the household to access with an EBT debit card. SNAP benefits can only be used to purchase USDA approved food items. Once approved, the household's ongoing benefits are available the first day of the calendar month.

101.2 Prudent Person Principle

The policies and procedures included in the **manual** are rules for determining eligibility. It is impossible to foresee and give examples for all situations; therefore, staff must use reason and apply good judgment in making eligibility decisions when rare and unusual situations are encountered. Reasonable decisions made by staff based on the best information available using good judgment, program knowledge, experience, and expertise in a particular situation is referred to as the prudent person principle.

Document the rationale used to make a decision and any applicable **manual** references and policy interpretations. When it is impossible or inadvisable to follow the prudent person principle because of a lack of information or program knowledge, follow local office procedures for obtaining an interpretation from Eligibility and Payments (E&P) Program Specialists in Central Office, or submit Form 6018, Policy and Procedure Inquiry requesting clarification or directives, to the Chief of E&P.

Note: Suspicious circumstances should be referred to I&R using Investigative Referral Form (2683-EE).

110 APPLICATION REQUESTS

111 Request for Application

The household or their representative may request an application by contacting the local Division district office or downloading an application from the Division's Web Page at <http://dwss.nv.gov>. In addition, applicants can be referred to ACCESS Nevada, DWSS's online electronic application.

On the same day the request is received by the Division, mail or directly provide the household a packet that includes:

- Form 2905, Application for Assistance.
- Appropriate program pamphlets
- A return envelope if requested or the application is mailed to the applicant
- Form 2043-EE, Agreement of Cooperation
- Form 2906-EG, Non-Custodial Parent (NCP) Form, for each absent parent

112 Application Assistance

If an individual needs help completing the application, a volunteer or staff member must help. Anyone helping complete the paper application form must initial the parts completed or sign the form showing they helped complete it. Assistance will also be given, if needed, when the household is completing the application online through ACCESS Nevada.

120 APPLICATION EVALUATION

121 Receipt of Form 2905-EG–Application Form or Other Designated Forms

Accept any application form designated for the TANF and/or SNAP programs. Applications may be submitted over the counter, through the mail, faxed or through ACCESS Nevada (DWSS's electronic application). The application must contain the applicant's name, address, and the signature of:

1) the applicant (head of household). The applicant's signature establishes an application for themselves and automatically includes all required household members regardless if anyone is an "ineligible or excluded" member; OR
2) an authorized representative, if the applicant is incapacitated or incompetent.

the applicant (head of household), other responsible household member, or authorized representative. Only one person is required to sign the application for the household.

An application for TANF must be signed by a person 18 years of age or who is legally emancipated.

Individuals under 18 years of age may sign the SNAP application as long as they are not under the parental control of an individual age 18 or older.

An application which is not signed by the head of household or an authorized representative is an inquiry only and must be returned to the household for signature. Do not date stamp nor register these applications into the system.

121.1 Signature Validation

An application (electronic, faxed, or paper) with the original signature of the applicant (head of household) or authorized representative is required. The following signatures are considered an original signature;

- Original signature on a paper application submitted directly to DWSS either in person, through the mail or in a local office drop box.
- An electronic signature when the application is submitted through ACCESS Nevada.
- A signature on a faxed or scanned application.

122 Determining the Application Date

The application date is the day the district office receives an application form containing the applicant's name, address, and appropriate signature. Applications received by the agency outside of normal business hours, either through ACCESS Nevada, faxed or local office drop boxes, are considered received and date stamped the next business day. This is the first day these applications are available to the agency for processing.

Each office must ensure drop boxes are emptied at the close of business and that those applications received during business hours are date stamped the date of receipt and those received after 5 pm are date stamped the next business day.

Page one of the Application for Assistance must be accepted and date stamped on the day of receipt for TANF and SNAP to preserve the actual application date and begin the application process. The remainder of the application form can be requested by mail or obtained at the interview. Households should be encouraged to complete the application form.

Page one of the application, with only the applicant's name, address and signature, is always acceptable for SNAP without the remainder of the application form being completed by the household. SNAP rules require that households be allowed to file a one-page application. However, all essential information and verification needed to make an eligibility determination must still be obtained. The case manager must review the information that appears on the application, and must explore and resolve with the household unclear and incomplete information. The case manager must advise households of their rights and responsibilities during the interview, including the appropriate application processing standards and the household's responsibility to report changes.

123 Scheduling the Appointment

Interviews must be scheduled as promptly as possible to ensure eligible households receive an opportunity to participate within required processing time frames.

A decision on the TANF application must be processed within 45 days of the application date. Interviews should be scheduled no later than the 20th calendar day from the receipt of the application. This will allow 10 days for the applicant to provide needed verifications and 10 days for the case manager to process the case to ensure benefits are available no later than the 45th day.

Note: Joint TANF/SNAP applications must have the interview scheduled within the SNAP time frames. Households applying for both TANF and SNAP must have one single interview.

Exception: Deny the application without scheduling a face-to-face interview if information on the application form indicates the applicant is ineligible.

Screen the application for expedited service processing. The case record must contain documentation verifying the application has been screened for expedited processing.

Expedited service households should be seen the date of application or the next business day in the week of the application to ensure receipt of SNAP benefits by the 7th day after the application date (benefits must be approved on or before the 6th day to meet this requirement). Day one of the 7 days is the day after the date of the application.

Households not meeting expedited services should be scheduled no later than 7 days from the application date to ensure benefits are available to the household by the 30th day following the application date. This will allow days for the applicant to provide any needed verifications and 10 days for the case manager to process the case, ensuring benefits are available no later than the 30th day.

124 Registration of the Application

All applications must be entered into the system the day the application is received or the next business day. This is also done for individuals requesting to be included for assistance on an ongoing or pending case. Pending household members must be registered in the system to ensure other agencies/states can obtain correct eligibility information. Mailed/faxed applications are entered into the system the date received in office.

An additional program can be added to the pending application up to and including the day of the interview. If the applicant requests to add either TANF or SNAP to the current application, document the additional program in the case record and update the system. Process the additional program following the appropriate program policy. The effective date of the new program will be the original application date.

If the household requests medical coverage during the interview, complete Form 2110-EM Medical Assistance Addendum.

124.1 Duplicate Assistance Screening

During the registration process, all household members applying for or requesting initial or continued assistance must be screened by **Social Security Number** and **name** to avoid duplicating assistance. Applications received from a household reporting a move from another state must have duplicate assistance verified from the other state by the case manager. Case managers must also verify if any member of the household is currently serving an Intentional Program Violation (IPV) in another state.

Note: Individuals receiving food assistance from Puerto Rico are not considered to have received duplicate assistance from the SNAP program.

125 Withdrawal of Application

An individual may voluntarily withdraw an application anytime before a case decision is made.

Exception: When a TANF household is in conciliation and requests to withdraw from the program, they must be referred to an E&T case manager prior to withdrawal (see A-2170).

If the withdrawal request is made (verbally or in writing) by someone other than the head of household, spouse, a responsible household member, or an authorized representative, contact the household to confirm the withdrawal.

Note: An Administrative Closure action is **only** allowed when an incorrect program application is registered in the system.

130 INTERVIEW REQUIREMENTS

131 Interviews

All households must have an interview completed at initial application for TANF and SNAP benefits. Interviews may be conducted in person (face-to-face) or over the telephone in some circumstances. Interpretive services must be provided to individuals requesting assistance. See manual section B-1400 for scheduling of interpretive services.

A **face-to-face** interview *is* required for TANF at initial eligibility.

The use of an authorized representative in the interview process is allowable when the head of household's participation in the application process is limited because of their incapacity or incompetence.

Exception: A telephone interview for initial TANF eligibility may *only* be conducted if it is impossible for the household to come to the closest district office due to *unusual* circumstances. Unusual circumstances may include impassable roads, lack of available public/private transportation, remoteness /distance to the office etc., as determined by the office manager.

In lieu of the face-to-face interview, case managers may conduct interviews by telephone for all SNAP households. A face-to-face interview may be scheduled if deemed appropriate (i.e., household is homeless or does not have access to a telephone) or at the household's request.

When conducting telephone interviews, the following conditions must be met:

- A Notice of Missed Interview (NOMI) must be provided to the household if the telephone interview is missed; and,
- The quality of the application process must not be negatively affected. The same information should be requested during the interview and the same verification process should be employed regardless of the type of interview conducted.

All interviews must be pre-arranged in writing with the household. The appointment slip must announce the date and time of the interview. If the applicant does not have a telephone number for the agency to call, an internal office number (this must be a monitored number and cannot be Customer Service) must be provided for the applicant to call at the specified time to complete the interview. A home visit or alternative out-of-the-office interview location can be arranged in writing or verbally with the household or their authorized representative when there are special needs and the household is requesting this service.

An interview is only required once in a 12-month period at initial certification and once every 12 months thereafter at recertification. For 12 month certifications an interview must be completed at every recertification and 6 month certifications must be interviewed at every other recertification. A break in the receipt of benefits during the 12-month period would require an interview if the household reapplies.

132 Missed Interview Appointment

Households who fail to keep their TANF intake interview appointment are denied.

Households who fail to keep their scheduled SNAP appointment are sent a Notice of Missed Interview (NOMI) the business day following the appointment advising them of their missed interview appointment. It is up to the household to contact the office to reschedule an appointment or discuss any hardships in keeping an interview appointment. If the household contacts the office within the 30-day application processing period, the office must schedule a second interview. If the household misses the second interview, subsequent interviews will only be scheduled if the interview can be held within the 30-day period.

If the household does not contact the office or respond to the notice, deny the application for non-cooperation thirty (30) days following the date of the application. The date of the application is not counted in the 30-day count. Applications denied for failure to show for the interview must be denied **on** the 30th day.

133 Eligibility Factors

Explore these eligibility factors during the interview process:

- Residency
- Identity
- Age
- Household Composition
- Relationship
- Citizenship
- Social Security Number
- Income
- Resources
- Intentional Program Violations (IPV)
- Out-of-State Benefits–Duplicate Assistance
- Felony Drug Convictions
- Fleeing Felons, Probation or Parole Violations
- Child Care Expenses

- Earned Income Disregards
- NEON participation (Pre-Approval Work Activities-See A-800)
- State and Federal Time Limits on Receipt of Benefits (See A-2400)
- School Attendance-18 year olds and minor parents.

- SNAP E&T Registration/Sanctions
- Shelter Expenses
- Medical Expenses
- Child Support Expenses
- ABAWD Status

Under specified circumstances, substantiated victims of domestic violence may be granted a good cause waiver to not participate in CSEP and/or NEON participation requirements. A good cause waiver does not waive the requirement to meet all eligibility factors (see manual section A-2200).

133.1 Assessment

A Pre-Screening Assessment (PSA) of the household's circumstances must be completed at application or during the eligibility interview. (Refer to manual section A-2000 for PSA form and instructions).

The assessment results are used to evaluate which TANF Cash program is most appropriate for the household and build a foundation for the household's Personal Responsibility Plan. Once the assessment is complete, have the applicant complete Form 2136-EE, Temporary Assistance for Needy Families Cash Benefit Programs.

134 Rights and Responsibilities

Before ending the interview, ensure the following has been done:

- The required fields on Form 2905 or another designated application form are complete and signed.
- Any changes that occurred since the application was filed have been reported.
- The applicant has read, signed and understands the rights and responsibilities explained on the application form, regarding the information provided for all programs the household has applied for.
- The Affirmation/Declaration of U.S. Citizenship/Legal Non-Citizen Status has been signed.
- The NEON and Child-Only citizen TANF assistance applicant has read and completed Form 2906-EG, Non-Custodial Parent (NCP) form, and understands the rights and responsibilities of the Child Support Enforcement Program and the non-compliance penalty (see manual section B-900). Provide the Form 2906 to any applicant who requests information about claiming good cause. Ensure both the applicant and the case manager have signed the Form 2906.
- The applicant has read the Explanation of SNAP Rights/Responsibilities, and understands the household's reporting requirements, penalties for voluntary quit, SNAP Employment and Training (E&T) noncompliance, program violations and other disqualifications/sanctions. Explanation of limited benefits for certain able bodied adults without dependent children (ABAWDS) should also be provided to applicants.

- The applicant has read, signed and understands the Agreement of Cooperation, Form 2043-EE.

135 Pending Information

During the interview evaluate if all required verification can be obtained by the case manager through an electronic source available to the agency or collateral contact sources. Households are responsible for furnishing verification or information to establish and maintain eligibility.

If the required verification cannot be obtained during the interview, determine what sources of verification are readily available to the household and request them first if you expect them to be sufficient proof. Allow at least ten (10) calendar days (the day after the request date is the first day of the 10-day period) to provide requested information, unless a shorter time period is **agreed to** in writing. The due date must be a business day, therefore, if the 10th day falls on a weekend or holiday, the due date is the next business day. If all required information is received, process the case. If information is not provided or postmarked within the time period given, deny the application.

Give the applicant Insufficient Information Form 2429-EE, explaining what is needed, the date the information is due, and the date the application will be denied if the information is not received. File a copy of Form 2429-EE with the current application, reflecting the verification request due date. Form 2429-EE must be maintained in the case record even after the return of the requested information.

Deny TANF the day after the verification is due.

SNAP cases are not denied until the 30th day after the date of application. The day after the date of application is the first day of the 30-day count.

Example: The SNAP household applies on 12/1/01, is interviewed on 12/2/01 and required verification is requested with a due date of 12/11/01. Household fails to provide information as requested and there is no further contact. The application would not be denied until 12/31/01, which is the 30th day after the date of application, or the next business day if this date falls on the weekend or a holiday.

140 EXPEDITED SERVICE

All SNAP applications must be screened for expedited services at the time of receipt. Expedited service criteria is only evaluated for circumstances that exist in the month of application.

141 Expedite Eligibility Criteria

Households are entitled to expedited service if one of the following criteria is met at the time the application is received. All expedited criteria must be evaluated for the month of application only.

- The household has
 - reported liquid **resources** totaling **\$100** or less, **and**
 - reported gross monthly **income** totaling less than **\$150, OR**
- The household's reported liquid resources and reported gross monthly income total less than the current monthly expenses for rent/mortgage and utilities. Determine the household's allowable utility expense based on their appropriate utility allowance (SUA, LUA, IUA or TUA). For instance, if the household has rent of \$400 and pays heating and cooling costs, the monthly expense would be \$659, \$400 + \$259.

A household that reapplies during its last benefit month does not qualify for expedited service. Households who have received SNAP benefits from any source, including out of state benefits or SSI payments from a cash out state (California), in the application month, are not entitled to expedited services as benefits cannot be duplicated for the current month.

For households entitled to expedited service, the worker will:

- postpone all verification except identity until 10 days following the date of the interview, and
- if eligible, authorize benefits the day of the interview or the next business day in the same week they apply.

In the following situations, evaluate if benefits can or **cannot** be authorized the same day the application is received:

- Applicants who file late in the day and cannot be interviewed that same day — Interview the applicant the next business day within the same week of the application.

Note: Interview and approve the household the same day if the office will not be open the next business day.

- Households who submit their applications through the mail or drop them off either at the front desk or in the drop box must have their applications evaluated the **same day** the application is **received**. If the household meets expedited criteria and has a telephone number, contact the household the day the application is **received** and complete the interview while on the telephone, or schedule an appointment the next business day if the applicant is unable to complete the interview at that time.
- If the household cannot be contacted by telephone, mail Form 2565-EE, Application Information & Interview Appointment Notice, the **same day** the application is received, scheduling the appointment **no later than the 6th day** from the application date.

If the household is also applying for TANF, schedule a joint SNAP/TANF appointment at that time.

- Applicants in drug or alcoholic treatment centers or group living arrangements — Provide benefits so individuals receive their SNAP benefits by the seventh day after the application date.
- Joint SNAP/SSI applicants released from public institutions — Authorize benefits so the individual receives their SNAP benefits within seven days after release from the institution.

142 Limit on Expedited Service

There is no limit to the number of expedited certifications for a household if it:

- provides the verification postponed at the last expedited certification, OR
- was certified under normal processing procedures since the last expedited certification.

Note: Households not entitled to expedited service shall have their application processed according to normal standards. Households may request a conference to contest a denial of expedited service. Conferences shall be scheduled within two (2) working days, unless the household requests a later date.

143 How To Determine Eligibility for Expedited Service

	Yes	No
1. Does the applicant's application and statement indicate eligibility for expedited services based on eligibility criteria in section A-141?	<input type="checkbox"/> Go to Step 2	<input type="checkbox"/> Not Eligible - Stop
2. Has the applicant received expedited services before?	<input type="checkbox"/> Go to Step 3	<input type="checkbox"/> Go to Step 4
3. Has the applicant provided all postponed verifications from the previous certification or has the applicant been certified under normal 30-day processing since the last expedited certification?	<input type="checkbox"/> Go to Step 4	<input type="checkbox"/> Not Eligible - Stop
4. Does the applicant or authorized representative (AR) being interviewed have proof of identity?	<input type="checkbox"/> Stop - Eligible to Process	<input type="checkbox"/> Not Eligible Until ID Provided

144 Late Determinations/Date of Discovery

A Date of Discovery must be used for households that:

- are not identified as entitled to expedited service when the application is filed. Expedited processing begins on the day the office becomes aware the household is entitled to this service.
- miss their original expedited appointment. If the household subsequently contacts the office, conduct an interview the **earliest** date possible. Expedited processing begins the day the household is interviewed.
- do not provide proof of identity the day of the interview. Expedited processing begins when proof of identity is provided.

145 Verifications

Applicants entitled to expedited services must verify their identity before receiving their initial benefits, **unless** an authorized representative (AR) applies for the household. When an AR applies,

- verify the AR's identity, and
- postpone verification of the head of household's identity if necessary to meet expedited time limits.

Postpone all other verification until after the household receives its initial month's benefits, unless the verification

- is provided by the household at the interview, **and**
- **is acceptable.**

145.1 Social Security Numbers (SSNs)

Include household members for the initial month's benefit even if they fail to provide or apply for an SSN at the interview.

Disqualify those individuals who fail to provide or apply for an SSN without good cause before the next benefit month.

145.2 Work Registration

Every SNAP household member age 16 through 59 must be registered in the SNAP Employment and Training (E&T) program as a condition of eligibility, unless

- otherwise exempt from work registration, or
- an AR is applying for the household.

Registration of other household members may be completed, but will be postponed if verification or registration cannot be accomplished within expedited time frames.

145.3 Citizenship

Household members whose citizenship is questionable can receive benefits with the household in the initial benefit month. They must provide verification of citizenship, along with other postponed verifications.

Note: Eligible non-citizens subject to sponsor deeming, who are waiting for proof of information from the sponsor, are ineligible until the information is provided. The remaining household members may participate if eligible.

146 Certification Period Assignment

Assign usual certification periods even if verifications are postponed. See manual section A-1800 for certification policy. Households applying between the 1st and the 15th of the month will receive one month of benefits (prorated based on the application date) pending the return of the requested postponed verifications. Households filing an initial application after the 15th of the month are approved for two months if otherwise eligible. The initial month's benefit is prorated and the second month is a full month's benefit.

146.1 Postponed Verification

Provide Form 2429-EG, TANF/SNAP Notice of Insufficient Information, stating what information is needed, the date it is needed, and that the household must provide the postponed verification/information within ten (10) days from the date of the request.

If the household furnishes the postponed information timely, or by the effective date of the closure, the certification period continues uninterrupted.

If the household fails to provide the requested postponed verification, the case will be terminated for lack of cooperation, effective the end of the first month or at the end of the second month for households applying after the 15th of the month. Households who provide all postponed information, but fail to provide requested verification of medical, child support or child care expenses, will not have their benefits terminated but will have ongoing benefits calculated disallowing those unverified expenses.

Example: Household applies on 4/20, is approved expedited on 4/21. The household is approved for two issuances (one prorated for April and one full month's benefit for May). Because April and May benefits are issued at the same time, June is the first benefit month impacted by postponed verification rules. If the household does not provide postponed verification within 10 calendar days, benefits are terminated effective June 1.

Households terminated for failure to furnish postponed verification must submit a new application if they want additional benefits. To receive additional benefits, the household must satisfy the previous postponed verification **OR** be certified under normal 30-day processing standards.

A household whose verification is postponed is entitled to receive continued benefits pending appeal.

146.2 Benefit Issuance

Issue benefits for the initial approval month and second month where appropriate, based on the date of application, unless there is an ineligible period.

150 REMINDERS

Before concluding an interview, the following items must be completed:

1. Ensure all the questions (based on programs applied for) are answered and each item initialed (where required) on the application and it is signed and dated;
2. Provide the applicant the Change Report – TANF and SNAP, Form 2584, and explain the appropriate change reporting requirements;
3. Inform the household of the right to appeal any action that affects eligibility or benefits;
4. Document the status of any unpaid overpayments and explain any recoupment action;
5. Inform the household by completing the voter registration section of the application or declining to register will not affect eligibility or benefit amounts, and;
 - A decision to decline to register remains confidential and used only for voter registration purposes; and
 - A complaint can be filed with the Secretary of State, Capitol Complex, Carson City, Nevada 89710, if they believe someone interfered with their right to
 - register or decline to register to vote; or
 - privacy in deciding whether to register or apply to register to vote.

If the household member answers “Yes”, provide a Voter Registration Application. Explain:

- assistance, on request, will be provided in completing the voter registration application form;
- the registration application may be completed in private and mailed at their convenience; and
- information regarding the office where the form originated will remain confidential and will not be used for voter registration purposes.

If the household member answers “No”, request they sign and date the form indicating their declination. If there is no response on the form, it is treated as a declination.

If the individual completing the interview is an authorized representative (AR) or payee, request the AR give the head of household the Voter Registration Application form. Document the form was provided to the AR or representative payee.

Do not pend the case or delay benefits for completion of the voter registration section. This section is not an eligibility requirement.

Staff are prohibited from:

- influencing an individual's political preference or party registration;
- displaying any political preference or party affiliation; and
 - making any statement to an individual where the purpose or effect is to discourage them from registering to vote.

Provide the toll-free telephone number of the Secretary of State, Carson City, Nevada 89710 (1-800-992-0900) or the number of the local county voter registration, for voter registration questions.

6. Provide the applicant with all related program pamphlets.
7. Provide the applicant with community resource information and make referrals as needed.

160 CLIENT COOPERATION

All clients are required to furnish information and/or documentation necessary to establish initial and continuing eligibility in order to receive TANF cash assistance or SNAP benefits. If a caregiver or household fails or refuses to cooperate with the DWSS district office, Quality Control (QC) or other designated Division officials in providing information which would impact pending or ongoing eligibility/benefits, the case will be denied or terminated.

Households applying for or receiving TANF cash assistance must also cooperate with interview requests from Investigations and Recovery.

In a non-cooperation situation resulting in denial or termination, allow applicable adverse action and provide legal notification.

160.1 Quality Control (QC) Cooperation - SNAP

Failure to cooperate with Nevada's Quality Control can result in ineligibility to participate in SNAP until compliance or up to 125 days from the end of the federal review period in which non-cooperation occurred. The federal review period is from 10/1 through 9/30 each year. QC will notify the case manager in writing of SNAP non-cooperation and the period of ineligibility. If the household reapplies during the ineligible period wishing to cooperate, advise the client to contact the QC unit in Central Office.

If the household fails to cooperate and

reapplies after the ineligible period, the household will be subject to 100% verification of ALL eligibility requirements, even those that are not questionable. Due to the requirement to provide 100% verification these households are not eligible for expedited services until eligibility has been reestablished.

Notify QC of:

- terminations due to lack of cooperation with QC; and
- re-application during a QC determined ineligible period.

170 SNAP VOLUNTARY QUIT – INTAKE AND ONGOING

If an applicant or participating household reports the loss of a source of earned income, determine whether the individual voluntarily quit their job.

171 Applying Voluntary Quit

Voluntary quit procedures do not apply to people who

- Meet federal SNAP E&T exemption;
- End a self-employment enterprise;
- Resign a job at the employer's demand;
- Are currently on strike;
- Quit to take an equal or better job (See manual section A-800); or
- Obtain a job comparable to the one that was quit. A job is considered comparable if it involves:
 - equal or increased salary or hours; or
 - fewer hours or smaller salary, with the belief the new job offers better chances to improve job skills or better advancement opportunities.
- Have a good cause for terminating employment or reducing their work hours (See manual section A-800 for good cause reasons).

Voluntary quit procedures apply to

- Any local, state, or federal government employee who loses the job because of participation in a strike;
- A member who leaves a job unannounced or does not return to work without good cause. **Note:** If an employer states the client was fired or laid off, voluntary quit procedures do not apply.

171.1 How to Determine If Voluntary Quit Applies

1. Has a household member quit their most recent job(s) within 60 days before the application date or anytime after?

Yes

No

If the client voluntarily reduces their hours below 30 hours per week or reduces their hours so they earn below the equivalent pay of 30 hours per week at minimum wage, continue to evaluate voluntary quit.

Go to Step 2.

Not
Applicable.
Stop.

Example: Client works two jobs both at 15 hours a week and quits one job; the remaining job does not pay the equivalent to 30 hours per week at federal minimum wage, this is a voluntary reduction in hours.

2. Did the job(s) involve at least 30 hours per week at federal minimum wage or equivalent earnings? Or, if the applicant worked two jobs, did the job the applicant quit supplement the continued job's hours or earnings to meet 30 hours per week at federal minimum wage or equivalent earnings?
- Yes No
Go to Step 3. Not Applicable. Stop.
3. Did the person have good cause for quitting the job(s) or voluntarily reduce their hours? (Refer to A-800 for the determination of good cause).
- Yes No
Not Applicable. Stop. Go to Step 4.
4. The voluntary quit penalty applies. The household member is disqualified.

172 Apply the Voluntary Quit Penalty

Applicants are disqualified beginning with the first benefit month.

Ongoing individuals are disqualified with the first benefit month administratively possible if reported and acted upon in a timely manner. (See manual section B-900 for applicable penalties.)

If the individual quits but does not report the quit or the quit action is not acted on timely:

- Apply any remaining penalty after adverse action ends, and
- Calculate a claim for any months the household was issued a disqualification notice, but the disqualification was not imposed timely.

The disqualification continues even if the certification period ends before the end of the disqualification period.

If an individual who has voluntarily quit a job moves to another household, that individual is ineligible for the remainder of the penalty period.

The voluntary quit penalties are listed in manual sections A-800 and B-900. Disqualify the SNAP participant who voluntarily quits a job without good cause for the minimum time and until compliance. Apply the applicable time period based on the first, second and third violation.

Notify the household within 10 days of learning of the voluntary quit, even if the case is closed or denied for another reason, except:

If the quit is determined/discovered...	Then...	
prior to approval	disqualify the individual starting with the first benefit month. Note: If the household splits into more than one household, the sanction shall follow the member who caused the disqualification.	
after approval but early enough to prevent issuance of the last SNAP benefits,	disqualify the individual starting the first month after the adverse action notice period ends.	
too late in the certification period to prevent issuance of the last month's benefits,	If the household...	Then...
	reapplies before the end of the certification period,	disqualify the individual for the full disqualification period. Notify the individual they are ineligible beginning with the day after the last certification period expires.
	does not reapply by the last day of the certification period.	on the last day of the certification period <ul style="list-style-type: none"> send the individual notification they are ineligible for a specified period, and until they comply by obtaining a comparable job, beginning with the first day after the old certification period expires.

173 Reestablishing Eligibility During the Penalty Period

Once applied, re-establish eligibility during the penalty period only if:

- The individual who quit
 - meets a federal SNAP E&T exemption; or
 - obtains a new job comparable to the one that was quit. A job is considered comparable if it involves one of the following:
 - equal or increased salary or hours; or
 - fewer hours or smaller salary, with the belief the job offers better chances to improve job skills or better advancement opportunities.

180 CATEGORICALLY ELIGIBLE HOUSEHOLDS

Households meeting categorical eligibility are not subject to the normal gross income and resource tests. Categorically eligible households are exempt from resource verification for SNAP eligibility.

Categorically Eligible Households

Categorically eligible SNAP households are households where **all** members receive one of the following benefits:

- TANF;
- Supplemental Security Income (SSI);
- Interim Assistance, County or Indian General Assistance; or
- a combination of these benefits.

Households are also categorically eligible if at least one member receives one of the TANF benefits below, as long as the TANF benefit is considered to be for the entire household (i.e., ineligible, non-citizen members).

Categorical eligibility does not apply to households:

- if any member is disqualified from SNAP for Intentional Program Violation (IPV);
- if the SNAP head of household is disqualified because they failed to comply with SNAP Employment and Training work requirements or workfare;
- if any SNAP household member is ineligible due to a conviction for a drug-related felony.

180.1 Receipt of TANF Benefits

Categorical eligibility is limited to the month in which the household received one of the following TANF funded benefits:

- **TANF Cash** – Temporary Assistance for Needy Families cases including NEON, Child-Only, TEMP, SSG and ERP;
 - Have an active TANF case but benefits are suspended or recouped; or
 - Receive zero benefits because their TANF benefits are less than \$10.

- **Contracted Services** – TANF-funded contract services for substance abuse and/or domestic violence services when the TANF grant is zero due to a sanction or a case is pending TANF grant approval. Because contracted services cannot be anticipated, categorical eligibility will be applied to the current certification period when these services become known or retroactively upon discovery (e.g., SNAP benefits are approved March 1st through September 30th. On May 15th, the worker discovers a household member received TANF-funded services for substance abuse on May 10th. Categorical eligibility is applied to the month of May only.
- **Support Services** – TANF-funded supportive services which are available to applicants and recipients include transportation services, and special needs (e.g., bus passes, cab fare, clothing vouchers, reimbursements for vehicle repairs, etc.). Because these services cannot be anticipated, categorical eligibility will be applied when the services become known or retroactively upon discovery (e.g., SNAP benefits are approved March 1st through September 30th. On May 15th, the worker discovers that a household member received supportive services on May 10th, the categorical eligibility is applied to the month of May only.)

180.2 Expanded Categorical Eligibility

Categorical eligibility will be expanded to include all SNAP households whose gross income is equal to or below 200% of Poverty and who receive the updated “This Is Your Copy” page of the Application for Assistance that includes the following text:

Utilizing TANF funds, DWSS through the Nevada Public Health Foundation (NPHF), has developed a class to target pregnant and parenting teens receiving TANF cash assistance. Teen parents receiving TANF benefits and services are known as STARS (Supporting Teens Achieving Real-life Success) participants. This class has been expanded to include other pregnant and parenting teens receiving other forms of assistance such as SNAP and Child Welfare. This one-day class places emphasis on employment, success in the workplace, decision-making, money management and health, such as birth control and sexually transmitted diseases. In addition, Community Action Teams, an entity of the Nevada Public Health Foundation, conducts community assessments of teen pregnancy and its prevention and identify potential methods for reducing teen pregnancy through abstinence-based programs. Youths, parents, business, churches, health care providers, law enforcement, schools and other organizations are encouraged to serve on the Community Action Teams. Men of all ages are also encouraged to serve as positive role models, reinforcing the postponement of sexual involvement message.

180.2.1 Determination of the SNAP Household Size for Expanded Categorical Eligibility

When determining the household size and income limit for the 200% of Poverty, include all household members whose income is countable to the SNAP household. This includes individuals disqualified due to ineligible non-citizen status, SSN non-compliance, IPV disqualification, SNAP E&T disqualification, fleeing felons, ineligible drug felons and ineligible ABAWDS. This is a manual/offline determination made by the case manager.

181 Minimum Payment/Prorated Payments to Categorically Eligible Households

Households determined eligible for categorical eligibility receive a minimum benefit or are placed in suspense status if eligible for a zero benefit.

Households containing:

- One or two eligible members will receive
 - a pro-rated benefit based on the minimum monthly benefit for the application month; or
 - the current minimum monthly benefit.
- Three or more eligible members will:
 - receive a pro-rated benefit based on a benefit less than the current minimum monthly allotment for the application month; or
 - receive a reduced benefit if the calculated benefit is less than the current monthly minimum benefit; or
 - be placed in suspense status if determined eligible for a zero benefit.

182 SNAP Categorical Eligibility Screening Test (Form 2152-EF)

All SNAP cases being denied or terminated/closed for excess income or excess resources **MUST** be screened for categorical eligibility using Form 2152-EF, SNAP Program Categorical Eligibility Test, to ensure benefits continue to be available to categorically eligible households. Upon completion of the form, the original (white) copy of the form **must be** maintained in the case jacket to document the screening was done for federal and state compliance purposes.

190 TANF/SSI HOUSEHOLDS APPLYING FOR SNAP

191 Joint TANF/SNAP Applications

A household in which all members are applying for or receiving TANF cash may apply for SNAP at the same time the household applies for TANF cash. The case manager conducts a **single interview** for both programs.

Verifications provided for TANF or SNAP may be used for both programs.

Do not delay the eligibility decision in one program when all the verifications are completed for that program, but not for the other.

191.1 SNAP Approval When Receipt of TANF is Uncertain

When TANF eligibility is uncertain:

1. Determine the household's SNAP benefits using regular SNAP processing requirements;
2. assign a normal certification period;
3. send a Notice of Decision, including a statement of the amount of SNAP benefits, and notification that SNAP benefits may be adjusted upon the approval of TANF benefits.

192 Joint SSI/SNAP Applications Filed in the Social Security Office

192.1 Eligibility Requirements

Households whose members are all applying for or receiving SSI may apply for SNAP at the Social Security Administration office unless they already have an application for SNAP pending.

These households are not required to come to the local office to apply or reapply. If more information is needed, contact them by home visit, telephone, or mail.

192.2 Initial Application

SSA accepts and may assist the household in completing the Application for SNAP-SSA during the SSI interview. SSA offices maintain a supply of applications. SSA forwards the following items to the local office within one business day after the application is received:

- Form 2001-EF – Application for SNAP Benefits – SNAP uses a different application, Form 2001-EF, for SSI/SNAP recipients who apply through the Social Security Administration;
- a transmittal sheet (Form SSA-4233); and
- any verification SSA has received.

Once the application is forwarded, if SSA receives additional verification it will also be sent with Form SSA-4233.

Note: The date of application is the date SSA receives the application. SSA notes this date on Form SSA-4233. The 30-day processing time limit begins with this date.

192.2.1 Expedited Service

SSI households are entitled to the same expedited procedures as other households **except** expedited service processing time frames begin with the date the application is received in the DWSS office.

Staff at SSA

- screen the application for expedited service on the day the application is received;
- indicates “Expedited Processing” on the first page of the application if the household appears to be eligible; and
- forwards the application within one business day.

The household may also take the application to the local office.

192.3 Work Requirements and Voluntary Quit

Household members who apply jointly for SSI and SNAP at the Social Security office **are exempt from work requirements** until SSI eligibility is determined.

192.4 Special Review

Future action households who apply jointly for SSI and SNAP to verify their SSI status after three months.

192.5 Verification of SSI Status

Verification of SSI status may be obtained through the State Online Query (SOLQ), State Data Exchange (SDX) system interface, documentation provided by the household (e.g., copy of the check or award letter), or other information which shows the benefit amount.

192.6 Notice of Expiration

A Notice of Expiration (NOE) is sent to an SSI household using the same time frames as other households. The NOE informs the household they may reapply at the Social Security Office and are eligible for a telephone interview for recertification.

Note: A face-to-face interview is **not and cannot be required**; however, if a household requests a face-to-face interview, one must be conducted.

192.7 Reporting Changes

Households whose applications have been processed jointly are subject to the same change reporting or simplified reporting requirements as other SNAP households.

Information on the household’s SSI benefit is automatically provided through the interface screens via INFC. Information received through an interface is reacted to as any other change.

192.8 Recertification

Households in which all members are applying for or receiving SSI may file a reapplication for SNAP at SSA.

The SSA office sends

- the application,
- transmittal sheet (Form SSA-4233), and
- any available verification to the local office.

193 Joint SSI/SNAP Applications Filed in Public Institution

A resident of a public institution may jointly apply for SSI and SNAP while in the institution by completing a single application before they are released.

The Social Security Administration

- obtains the complete SSI/SNAP application and conducts the interview for both programs.
- forwards the application to the local DWSS office with any verifications for processing. The words “PRE-RELEASE” will be written in large letters on the first page of the application.

Upon receipt in the local DWSS office

- pend the application until notified of the impending release date of the inmate. This should be received prior to the inmate’s actual release. The release date is the date of application.
- once notified, SSA provides residence and household composition information about the inmate. If SSA does not have the information, the inmate or institution must be contacted.
- application processing time frames are effective the date of release. Process and certify the application normally, including entitlement to expedited service.

If the inmate is not released, deny the application, as the residence is an ineligible institution.

If the inmate is...	Then...
eligible for expedited services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • certify within expedited service time frames, and • issue benefits, or • transfer the case to the appropriate office if applicable.
not eligible for expedited services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • certify the application using normal time frames, and • issue benefits, or • transfer the case to the appropriate office if applicable.

IMPORTANT: Future action (FACT) the case in the system to verify SSI eligibility in the third month of certification.