



United States  
Department of  
Agriculture

Food and  
Nutrition  
Service

Western  
Region

550 Kearny Street  
San Francisco, CA 94108

Reply to  
Attn. of: WFS-100:FS-2-GEN|FS-10-GEN|CR-1-GEN

DEC 04 1992

Subject: Administrative Notice 93-11  
State Agency Local Welfare Office Hours

To: ALL WESTERN REGION FOOD STAMP PROGRAM COORDINATORS

We have learned that some local welfare offices have recently reduced their office hours and days open to the public, including relocating some offices, because of budget constraints. Many of the Food and Nutrition Service's (FNS's) regulations have been based on the concept of normal business practices, which have included normal operating hours, such as 8:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday. We believe continued adherence to these normal business practices is essential to providing food stamp clients the full services they need and deserve.

However, in light of current fiscal constraints and possible service cuts which States may be contemplating, we wish to remind you that such changes in office operations require strict adherence to Civil Rights legislation.

Specifically, both Department of Justice regulations, Title 28, Part 42, and FNS regulations (which implement the Civil Rights Act of 1964), 7 CFR 15, Part A, address discrimination in Federally assisted programs in which individuals are excluded from the participation in, are denied benefits of, or are subjected to discrimination under any Federal activity or program which States administer. Before making decisions that would substantially alter individuals' access to local offices, impact studies, such as demographic maps, racial composition of affected neighborhoods, and census data, are required to ensure against discrimination. These studies should be available for review.

Per FNS Instruction 113-7, Civil Rights Compliance and Enforcement of the Food Stamp Program (4/14/83), Section VI(3)[b], States are required to provide information pertaining to eligibility, benefits and services, the location of certification and issuance office, and hours of service, including any changes in existing services to applicants, participants, and grassroots organizations. The information can be communicated through such means as letters, publications, telephone hotlines, and face-to-face contact.

In choosing the hours/days of operation for the local offices, please remember it is imperative that States continue to meet the normal food stamp application processing standard and expedited service timeframes as set out in 7 CFR 273.2(g)(1) and 273.2(i) of the Federal regulations.

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If you have any questions concerning this notice, please contact your State Desk Officer.



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