

**FIELD OPERATIONS BUREAU
FOOD STAMP UNIT (FSU)**

TRANSMITTAL NUMBER 05-01 (FS)

July 11, 2005

~~TO: All Performance Measurement County and Field Operations
Bureau Staff~~

SUBJECT/PURPOSE: Requirement to Provide All Questions in Writing

RELATED REFERENCE: None

SUPERSEDES: None

EFFECTIVE DATE: Upon Receipt

BACKGROUND:

The purpose of this transmittal is to promulgate instructions when Performance Measurement County (PMC) and Field Operations Bureau (FOB) staff have questions on QC Procedures. While most inquiries answered verbally via the phone are successful, instances occur wherein state and county staffs disagree as to the nature of the response. Often, this disagreement can not be resolved as there is no documentation that can be consulted. This problem was addressed at past PMC meetings at which times counties were instructed both verbally and afterwards via email messages to provide a Situation/Question/Response format to state staff for response. This approach has not provided the desired results, hence this transmittal making this requirement mandatory.

INSTRUCTIONS:

Initial inquiries can be made either by phone or email. This allows inquirers to discuss the situation and/or the question before it is submitted for a definitive response. ALL inquiries must ultimately be submitted as a Word document attached to the cover E-mail message (to protect confidentiality) to the Food Stamp Unit (FSU) Michael Bowman-Jones (Mike.Bowman-Jones@dss.ca.gov) and the staff person responsible for re-reviewing your county's cases (Nancy Goldberg, Cheryl Henderson, Marie Thomas, Dianna Tollen) using the SITUATION/QUESTION/RESPONSE format for an official response. This written inquiry should be emailed by the close of the same business day the phone inquiry was made. A control number will be assigned to the written inquiry and emailed back to the county on the same day. DO NOT submit your inquiry via the Q5i Users Group or with copies to other counties. FSU staff shall attempt to provide a response within two business days or at a minimum inform the county that the response is still being researched.

When preparing the "SITUATION:", be as specific as possible so that the respondent has all of the information to more quickly process the response. (If a call or E-mail has to be sent because FSU staff need clarification, the response is inevitably delayed.) State staff can factor in the delay when determining when the response must be sent. If a clarifying question from the state is answered a day later, for example, the response may also be delayed a day. At a minimum, the inquiry should include:

1. the Sample Month;
2. The QR Data Month and Payment Quarter;
3. Case Name and Review Number;
4. Household composition, including who is in the Food Stamp household and who else is in the residence if appropriate;
5. A description of the problem, including background information describing how the problem occurred and the potential impact on the error determination;
6. The FNS 310 Handbook citation and State Manual of Policy and Procedures Food Stamps Division 63 regulation(s).

When preparing the "QUESTION:", be sure that your question is a QC issue and not a program/policy issue. For instance, a question concerning Transitional Food Stamps eligibility should be handled by County Policy staff. However, that answer can be used in preparing the SITUATION if the issue is a QC review matter.

Attached are examples of the format to be used

INQUIRIES: Michael Bowman-Jones, Program Analyst

Attachment

Original Signed by Hector Hernandez

**Hector Hernandez, Chief
Field Operations Bureau**

EXAMPLES

Example 1

SITUATION: The Sample Month is December; the quarter is October/November/December. The household consists of a mother, father, and child, all of whom received CalWORKs through September. The household was transitioned into Transitional Food Stamps (TFS) effective October 1. The QC reviewer discovers that the household never was eligible for the CalWORKs benefits it received because of the mother's unreported income.

QUESTION: Since the household was never eligible to receive CalWORKs, does that mean that the case would be reviewed using standard review procedures per FNS Handbook 310 Section 727.3?

RESPONSE: No. Per ACL 03-66, TFS eligibility applies to those households whose CalWORKs is discontinued. Since QC does not review to CalWORKs eligibility/ineligibility, the household is able to receive TFS as long as it does not fall into one of the three ineligibility criteria listed in FNS Handbook Section 727.1. (See also Transmittal 04-01(FS).)

Example 2

SITUATION: The sample month is January; the quarter is January/February/March. The November 2004 QR 7 (used to establish the benefit amount for this quarter) is received by the CWD on December 22. The reviewer discovers that the December and January allotments are the same even though a review of the QR 7 shows there should have been a decrease for the January/February/March quarter. Based on the QR 7, the reviewer cites an over issuance error. The CWD disagrees with the error citing the Saldivar court case.

QUESTION: Is Saldivar still in effect?

RESPONSE: Per Manual Section (M.S.) 63-508.621, Saldivar is still in effect so the error cited by the reviewer is incorrect as the county could not provide ten-day notice to reduce the benefits for the following quarter. Per M.S. 63-508.623, an over issuance would be established by the CWD, which does NOT affect the QC finding. (See also Transmittal 99-09(FS).)