

Operations Memorandum - Food Stamps
OPS040503
(Revised 7/16/04)

5/4/04

SUBJECT: Addendum to Application for Benefits (AAB) for the Food Stamp Program (FSP)

TO: Executive Directors

FROM: Christine M. Bowser, Director, Bureau of Operations

Purpose

To implement the use of the AAB with all FSP application and recertification forms to reduce Quality Control (QC) errors.

Background

Households have the responsibility to report and verify the information necessary to enable the Department of Public Welfare (DPW) to correctly certify their food stamp (FS) benefits.

Currently, if households fail to inform the County Assistance Office (CAO) of household expenses, and subsequently report these expenses to a QC reviewer, an agency caused error is taken. However, no errors will be taken if households sign a statement at application and recertification indicating they understand that failure to report and/or provide proof of household expenses will be regarded as a statement that the household does not want to receive the deduction.

Discussion

In an effort to reduce QC errors, DPW is implementing the use of the attached AAB that contains language approved by the Food and Nutrition Service (FNS). The AAB will be used with all application and recertification forms including the on-line Commonwealth of Pennsylvania Access to Social Services (COMPASS). The AAB informs households that they are waiving receipt of a deduction if they fail to report and verify any expense listed on the application and recertification form.

CAOs must obtain the FS household's signature on the AAB with all FS application and recertification forms. Households must be advised of their right to FS expenses as a deduction. Efforts must be made to ensure that FS applicants/recipients understand the full impact of not reporting and/or verifying household expenses. Applicants/recipients must be informed of their right to report these expenses to the CAO at any time during the certification period.

Print the attached AAB as needed until the application/recertification forms include the approved language explaining the consequences of not reporting and verifying deductible expenses. Please note that it is not the intent of the AAB to deny benefits to households. It is the responsibility of the CAO to make appropriate collateral contacts or offer other assistance to verify expenses and deductions. Households are entitled to extra time to produce verification, if necessary.

Next Steps

1. Review this information with appropriate staff.
2. Implement the use of the AAB immediately upon receipt for all applications and recertifications.
3. Direct all questions to your Area Manager.
4. This Operations Memorandum becomes obsolete when the AAB language has been incorporated into all the application and recertification forms.

Attachments [PA 600 AAB](#) - Addendum to Application for Benefits
 [PA 600 AAB-S](#) - Addendum to Application for Benefits