

**Policy Clarifications  
Cash Assistance – All  
Medical Assistance – All  
SNAP  
PCA17075178  
PMA17075378  
PFS17075578**

Submitted: 3/14

Agency: CAOs

**Subject: Verification Requirements and Options**

**Question:**

What types of verification are necessary when authorizing or continuing benefits? What sources are available for this verification?

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**Response By: Bureau of Policy**

**Date: 4/14**

Traditionally, the applicant or recipient has had the burden of verification for our programs. But with the advent of electronic data sources and matches, CAOs must avoid unnecessary requests of verification from individuals and ensure that all available sources of information are utilized.

CAOs must:

- Determine what information requires verification based on the benefit (TANF, MA or SNAP) and the action to be taken (application, renewal, SAR, or whenever a change occurs). Use guidance in the program Handbooks and policy updates posted on OIM's MyDPW pages. Also use [The Verification Guide](#) (accessible from the WLD or the Staff Development website) and [Verification at Application for All Programs](#) (accessible from the Staff Development and BPE websites).
- Remember that, particularly for the SNAP program, some information requires verification only when it is questionable - incomplete, unclear, or contradictory. When determining if information is questionable, the decision shall be based on each household's individual circumstances ([OPS-13-08-05](#) and [PFS16703578](#)).

- Accept self-attestation for residency, household composition, caretaker relative status, and American Indian/Alaska Native status for MAGI based MA, unless there is a reason to question that information ([OPS-13-09-04](#)).
- Accept self-attestation of pregnancy for all MA categories both MAGI and non-MAGI ([PMA17017378](#)).
- Conduct an ex parte review of information at every MA application, renewal and SAR in accordance with [OPS-12-10-04](#) before requesting paper documentation from the individual.
- Check the case record and Imaging Repository for verification that may have been already provided. When appropriate, use other available resources such as the Income Eligibility Verification System (IEVS) Data Exchanges, The Work Number, Pennsylvania Automated Child Support Enforcement System (PACSES), and Pennsylvania's Enterprise to Link Information for Children Across Networks (PELICAN) before asking the client for verification.
- Not close or reject a benefit if verification of a **deduction** is not provided. Eligibility should be determined without allowing the deduction.
- Not deny or close benefits if the CAO is unable to obtain verification electronically through automated sources but the individual is cooperating in providing the requested information. The CAO must make a collateral contact with anyone who can be expected to give reliable information.
- Not deny or close MA benefits for failure to be interviewed. An interview is not required for the review of MA eligibility. [OPS-12-10-04](#)

Following these guidelines will result in an increase in accurate and timely eligibility decisions and a more efficient use of time for applicants and recipients and caseworkers.