

DATE: **January 30, 2023**
December 6, 2022

OPERATIONS MEMORANDUM #22-12-02

SUBJECT: **Revised** Procedures for Handling Returned Mail

TO: Executive Directors

FROM: Tanoa Fagan
Director
Bureau of Operations

PURPOSE

To inform County Assistance Offices (CAOs) of the procedures for handling returned mail.

BACKGROUND

This document provides CAOs with guidance for different programs on how to handle cases when returned mail is received.

Note: For Medical Assistance (MA) budgets, MA should not be closed during the COVID-19 Public Health Emergency (PHE). For exceptions to maintaining MA during the PHE, refer to [Ops Memo 20-12-03](#). CAOs must continue to act on changes in circumstances during the PHE.

DISCUSSION

If the CAO receives returned mail, the CAO will check the case file, including narratives and imaging for a new address. If the CAO is able to verify that the individual has reported a new address, the CAO will update the address and complete appropriate actions necessary as a result of the change of address. The CAO will still need to send a PA 253 requesting updated shelter and utility expenses for the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) if they were not already provided. If the household fails to respond, the CAO should remove the shelter and utility expenses and review these at the next Semi-Annual Reporting (SAR) or Renewal.

If there is nothing in the case file to indicate a new address, the CAO will attempt to contact the household by phone to confirm the address. If the CAO is able to confirm

the new address with the individual, the CAO will update the address, update shelter and utility expenses, and complete appropriate actions.

If the CAO is unable to reach the individual by phone, the CAO will send a PA 253 pending verification letter to the address on file requesting confirmation of the new address. The CAO will also send a CACLET letter through the Correspondence Notice/Letter Generation module to the forwarding address if available on the returned mail with the request to confirm the address. The CAO should also request updated shelter and utility expenses for SNAP when sending out the request(s) for information. See sample language for CACLET in [Attachment 1](#).

- If the individual confirms or provides an updated address, the CAO will update the case and complete appropriate actions.

Note: Remind an individual receiving the State Supplementary Payment (SSP) to update their address with the Social Security Administration (SSA).

- If the individual does not confirm or provide an updated address by the due date on the pending letter, the CAO will take the following actions:
 - Keep MA open as it may not be closed during the PHE except as specified in [Ops Memo 20-12-03](#).
 - Close SNAP if the household is not enrolled in SAR and Temporary Assistance for Needy Families.
 - If the SNAP household is enrolled in SAR, their benefits must remain open as they are not required to report a change of address except at SAR or Renewal and this information will be reviewed at the next SAR or Renewal, however the shelter and utility costs should be removed. If the change of address is not reported during SAR or Renewal, the CAO will need to send a request to the household to verify their address.
 - If the individual does not confirm or provide an updated address for a case with an SSP budget, the CAO will not close an SSP budget if resident address on the Exchange 6 has not been updated and individual is in a current pay status. The CAO will notify the SSA that the CAO received returned mail and has been unable to verify the recipient's address if the budget's Program Status Code (PSC) is other than 44. The CAO will notify the Central Unit that the CAO has received returned mail and been unable to verify the recipient's address if the PSC is 44.

If the CAO receives additional returned mail for cases with MA and/or SNAP budgets enrolled in SAR, the CAO will attempt to confirm the address again following

the process outlined in this document if returned mail indicates any new address information. Otherwise, the CAO does not need to act on the subsequent returned mail.

Note: CAO should make sure that returned mail is scanned and imaged in the case record and should narrate the action taken as well as the new address. This includes narration for SNAP households that remain open but have not verified the new address to be reviewed at SAR or Renewal, whichever is sooner.

If the CAO closes the case but the individual confirms the address within the reconsideration period for SNAP and Cash, the CAO will reinstate benefits with no gap in coverage and will complete an Inter-County Transfer if an address is in another county. Again, MA should not be closed during the PHE except as specified in [Ops Memo 20-12-03](#).

NEXT STEPS

1. Share and review this information with appropriate staff members.
2. Direct questions regarding this Operations Memorandum to your Area Manager.
3. This Operations Memorandum will become obsolete when the Public Health Emergency ends.

ATTACHMENT

Attachment 1: [CACLET Language](#)