



# **FOOD ASSISTANCE ACTION COMMITTEE**

**A Federal, State and County Partnership for policy interpretation and review, food stamp outreach, Quality Control and corrective action activities.**

## Meeting Minutes Jan. 13, 2009

**Riverside County DPSS  
3950 Reynolds Rd.  
Riverside, CA 92503**

### **1. Welcome/Housekeeping**

### **2. Review of Previous Minutes -**

The review of minutes from November was waved as participants had not received them timely. Comments on the minutes will be addressed in the subsequent meeting to be held in Sacramento.

A request was made to have the agenda come out earlier than has been done previously due to counties need to obtain travel approval. Daphne volunteered to send out a general agenda along with the specific dates for each meeting for 2009. Participants believed this would suffice. The schedule was set during the meeting for the remainder of the calendar year.

There were no volunteers for future meeting minutes.

### **3. RADEP Report -**

Kim Murdock has distributed RADEP Users Manuals to FOB and the counties for our ongoing use. A RADEP Update was also emailed to participants for this meeting.

- A system fix has been installed to correct the age calculation in the system.
- Cert/Recert question has been reprogrammed due to the upcoming policy waiver of the face-to-face. If a telephone interview is conducted, the reviewer will be required to enter additional answers to pertinent questions.
- CDSS has not approved creation of the budget worksheet requested by the counties. However, RADEP has identified this item as a future enhancement in the system for counties. Richard asked for volunteers to form a committee for this products developments. Solano, Fresno, Alameda, and LA were chosen because of the creation of excel spreadsheets currently available.

#### 4. FS Program Policy Updates -

##### Legislative Update

AB 1331 - Initiative to assist persons at risk leaving foster care system. This will allow FC recipients to be approved for food stamps before going off foster care.

AB 433 - Expanded CE effective July 2009 with statewide implementation January 2010. References households and individuals. Advocates believe this bill applies to single people Finance estimates. If interpretation stands, this will lead to significant costs for the program. Legal may not agree with the advocates.

##### Court Litigation

Heathcock Case impacts the Over-Issuance NOA's in CalWIN Counties. Asking for budgets to be included with the NOA's.

Loves and Fishes settlement has been reached with the county and CDSS will only provide oversight. Impacts processing time for PA cases.

Be Vu – no change in status

New Law Suit in the US Civil Rights Divisions that indicates we are not meeting our voter registration requirements as required by law. Dept of Justice may file litigation against California.

##### Policy Development

1) Deduction language is still in review for the DFA 285A3, SAWS 2A, and the FS SAWS 1 forms. The language being added to the forms would allow counties to avoid providing deductions in the food stamp budget when the client fails to report the deductions (and any needed verifications). FNS, and some counties agreed that this change will prevent some QC errors. The revised forms should be available in 2-3 months.

2) ACL forthcoming that will allow for waiver of the face-to-face interview on applications and RE's for elderly or disabled applicants. There is a new proposal to waive the interview for certain working families as well. FNS has only approved this group for applications. There is a third waiver request to FNS for ALL applicants and RE's.

3) PIX Update – ACIN I 96-08 is out. It addresses the new on-line data base for regulations from CDSS. The ACIN provides instructions on how to register for use of the system.

4) ACIN pending for Non-Citizen Guide. It will be available to counties in 2 months.

**5. FS Field Operations Bureau Quality Control Updates**

**Error Rates Actives/Negatives**

<b>ACTIVE</b>	<b>4.75%</b>	<b>National Average</b>	<b>4.71%</b>
<b>NEGATIVE</b>	<b>8.90%</b>	<b>National Average</b>	<b>9.09%</b>

FNS provided negative review training for FOB staff in August. Counties’ past NOMI issues have decreased considerably. The negative error rate has dropped by approximately 5% and most counties have improved their results considerably.

**QC Sample Completion Rates**

California’s review completion rate continues to be too low. This will affect county’s error rate in the weighting and tolerance formulas. Counties who have not met the minimum completion rate on their samples will be getting additional cases to review to bring them up to the needed levels.

**Federal Differences/Arbitrations**

Negative Case involves a missed interview and a NOMI. Active Case pending on a casual labor employee and the process used for forecasting earnings.

**QC Policy Updates/Releases**

- 1) Food Stamp cases where the issuance is under \$100 will allow for the QC review to be conducted on the telephone effective with the March Sample.
- 2) Timeliness of FS Application – There was a lengthy discussion on coding RADEP on application processing timeframes. It is important that QC clearly narrate the date that benefits were available to the client when we cannot prove the client accessed their benefits through EBT within the timeliness timeframes.

Counties should only reference the date that the benefits were available to the client through use of the client’s signed TEMP 2215 and Temp 2214 filed in cases. If the EBT records do not show that benefits were accessed by the client within the timeframes needed to prove cases were processed timely. These forms identify that clients were trained on how to use their EBT cards, thus proving their accessibility.

## **QC Training Requests**

Counties were reminded that they may request state training through FOB when needed. Several counties indicated they will be requesting training for new staff.

## **7. FS Field Operations Bureau Management Evaluation Updates**

### **2009 Schedule of Reviews**

Richard Terwilliger indicated that several counties are in ME Reviews at this time. New state findings are showing that counties are meeting ES requirements. There have been significant increases in the number and percentage of cases qualifying for ES cases.

### **Corrective Action Issues**

Because of counties successes in reducing error rates, there is no county who will need to do an Active Corrective Action Plan. Only certain counties will be required to do a Negative Action Corrective Action Plan.

### **SEP Funds**

All FFY'08 funds are closing out. No FFY '09 SEP Projects are pending except for those in Kern, San Diego, and San Joaquin counties.

Pat Cruise would like to have SEP monies set aside for a FFY'09 Conference and Best Practices Meeting. There are no counties who have submitted SEP proposals.

## **8. USDA FNS Federal Updates**

### **Operations**

\* Pat Cruise reported on California is at the bottom of the large state SNAP increases. FNS will be meeting with CDSS today regarding the need to increase participation in the program.

\* Disaster SNAP Training will be provided starting in April '09. FNS has met with the CIV Consortia already regarding their processes. A new federal policy indicates that SSI recipients will be able to participate in SNAP benefits for disaster situations.

\* FNS held a Best Practices Meeting in October in Sacramento where counties learned about Call Centers and Voice response Systems. There will be another meeting on March 11<sup>th</sup> 2009.

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\* The California Chapter of the National EW Conference will be meeting in San Diego on January 28<sup>th</sup> through the 30<sup>th</sup>. One topic will include “What policy changes would make the EW’s job easier?” Persons interested in attending can go to the website for more information.

**Quality Control**

Dawn indicated that the Face-to Face waiver does NOT forbid the reviewer from using the face-to face process for their interviews.

Dawn is interested in seeing any automated budgets used by the counties. Fresno will forward theirs to her as this was the product most counties preferred. Their product was also the one we wanted CDSS to take over updating.

**9. IMAGING Project**

FNS wants to receive their QC cases needed for re-review in an electronic format. There will be a meeting of the committee to discuss imaging issues and formatting on December 1, 2008. FOB would like the counties to use WinZIP when forwarding cases to them. FOB indicated that if a county was not able to meet the December 1<sup>st</sup> deadline for initiation of electronic files in their county, they should send the paper files to them and they would set up the electronic files for the FNS re-reviews.

There needs to be a uniform identifier developed for use by all counties. It was suggested that the identifier must at least include the review number for the sample case.

A federal Admin Notice was sent out that lists the order, top to bottom, of how the files need to be set up. Counties were encouraged to review these guidelines. Questions from the counties on this federal guideline can be directed to FNS.

**10. COUNTY QC/QA/CA STAFFING LEVELS**

Richard Trujillo asked for input from the counties on the affect California’s budget may be having on staffing dedicated to the above areas. Information was reported as follows:

COUNTY	QC	QA	CA
Alameda	No change	No change	No change
Contra Costa	Lost 1 QC	n/a	Next month
Fresno	No change	No change	No change
Kern	No change	3 lost	No change
Orange	No change	Retaining all positions Hiring freeze	Staff changing due to lay offs

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COUNTY	QC	QA	CA
RIVERSIDE	Adding one position for WPR	Lost 21 positions	Still pending
Sacramento	Will only lose positions through attrition	same	<b>n/a</b>
San Bernardino	No change	No change	no change
San Francisco	Hiring Freeze	Bumping	No change
San Diego	No change	No change	No change
San Joaquin	No change	n/a	No change
Solano	No change	Hiring freeze	
Tulare	No change	Lost 7 positions	No change
Ventura	No change	n/a	No change
Los Angeles	No change	Revise audit schedule but not staffing	No change
Merced	No change	n/a	No change
Monterey	No change	n/a	No change

**11. County Reports**

All County Meeting is scheduled for later in the month. There was no report from this committee.

FAAC Meetings - They will continue to be held every other month as planned.

**12. ADJOURN**

Next meeting schedule for February in Sacramento.

Respectfully Submitted,

*Daphne Criswell Regional Manager*