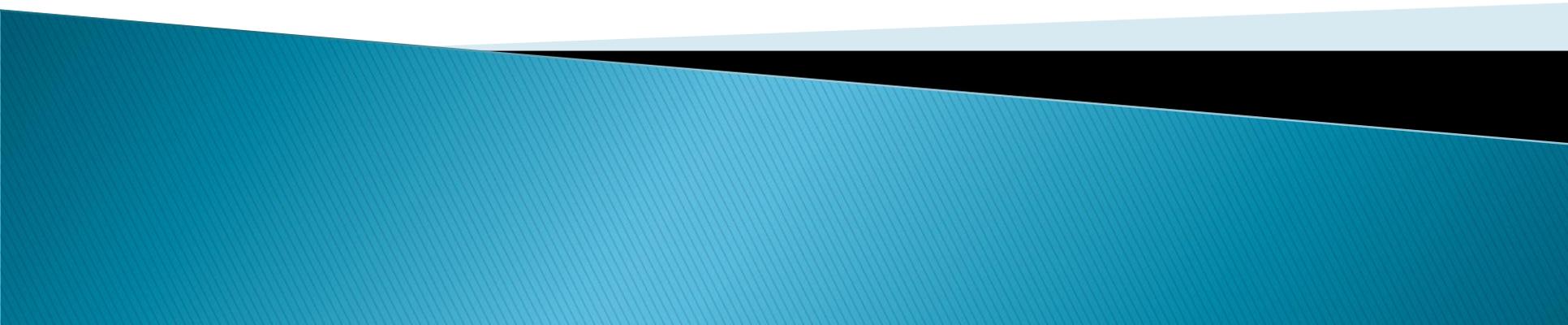


**Food & Nutrition Service**

**Broad Based  
Categorical Eligibility**



## Broad Based Categorical Eligibility

The State may extend categorical eligibility to non CalWORKs households.

We refer to this as Broad Based Categorical Eligibility (BBCE).

The household must receive or be authorized to receive **non-cash or in-kind services or benefits.**

FNS has funding requirements for the non-cash or in-kind service. There are also has federal poverty limit (FPL) caps for the service or benefit.

## Who Cannot Be Categorically Eligible (CE)

Household shall not be considered CE if:

- Any member is disqualified for an IPV
- The household is DQ for failure to comply with workfare
- Head of the household is DQ for failure to comply with work requirements
- Any member ineligible by virtue of a conviction for a drug-related felony.

# What Does Categorical Eligibility Mean?

Being CE means you have been authorized to receive a benefit or service.

**Traditional CE** means you have been authorized to receive a **cash benefit** (TANF/CalWORKS)

**Broad Based CE (BBCE)** means you have been authorized to receive a **non-cash benefit or service**.

# “Authorized To Receive”

Household has been determined eligible for benefits and has been notified of this determination, even if the benefits have been *authorized but not received* or *authorized but not accessed.*

# BBCE

**A non-cash or in-kind service or benefit.**

**State may provide informational materials, such as a pamphlet,**

**1-800 number that offers services,**

**Language on an FSP certification approval letter that describes available services.**

## Categorical Eligibility

**CE means you have already met some requirements of the FSP program.  
If you are CE you do not have to meet every FSP program requirement.  
The FSP requirements that are met (deemed) are:**

**Gross Income Test  
Net Income Test  
Resource Test**

**Other requirements the other program (TANF) looked at.**

## Non Deemed Items

**The State agency must collect and verify factors relating to benefit determination that are not collected and verified by the other program.**

**For BBCE if state agency did not verify residency, alien status, or SSN, then FSP worker would still have to verify that factor for FSP.**

# Criteria for BBCE

Qualifying for the non-cash or in-kind service or benefit.

Federal Poverty Level (FPL) Test 130% up to 200%  
Generally uses unlimited resources.

States may limit types of households eligible or  
State may provide to all SNAP households.

Let's take a look.

STATE AGENCIES (39)	TANF PROGRAM DESCRIPTION	TANF PROGRAM ASSET LIMIT	GROSS INCOME LIMIT OF TANF PROGRAM (% OF FPG) <sup>1</sup>
<b>Alabama</b>	All households are eligible (brochure)	No limit on assets <sup>2</sup>	130%
<b>Arizona</b>	All households are eligible (referral on application)	No limit on assets	185%
<b>California</b>	Only households with children under 18 are eligible (pamphlet)	No limit on assets <sup>2</sup>	130%
<b>Connecticut</b>	All households (Help for People in Need brochure)	No limit on assets	185%
<b>Delaware</b>	All households are eligible (application refers to pregnancy prevention hotline)	No limit on assets	200%
<b>District of Columbia</b>	All households are eligible (brochure)	No limit on assets	200%
<b>Florida</b>	All households are eligible (notice)	No limit on assets	200%
<b>Georgia</b>	All households are eligible (TANF Community Outreach Services brochure)	No limit on assets <sup>2</sup>	130%
<b>Guam</b>	All households are eligible (brochure)	No limit on assets	165%
<b>Idaho</b>	All households are eligible (flyer about referral service)	No limit on assets	130%
<b>Illinois</b>	All households (guide to services brochure)	No limit on assets <sup>2</sup>	130%
<b>Kentucky</b>	All households (resource guide)	No limit on assets <sup>2</sup>	130%

Only

FPL

<b>Louisiana</b>	All households (information handout)	No limit on assets	130%
<b>Maine</b>	All households (resource guide)	No limit on assets	185%
<b>Maryland</b> <b>Only</b>	Only households that include related children age 17 or under or a related child age 18 or 19 who will graduate from high school by 19 (referral to services on application)	No limit on assets	200%
<b>Massachusetts</b>	All households are eligible (brochure)	No limit on assets	200%
<b>Michigan</b>	All households are eligible (domestic violence brochure)	No limit on assets	200%
<b>Minnesota</b>	All households are eligible (domestic violence brochure)	No limit on assets	130%
<b>Mississippi</b>	All households are eligible (language on notice)	No limit on assets	130%
<b>Montana</b>	All households are eligible (brochure)	No limit on assets	185%
<b>Nevada</b>	All households are eligible (pregnancy prevention information on application)	No limit on assets	200%
<b>New Hampshire</b> <b>Only</b>	Households with at least one dependent child (brochure)	No limit on assets	185%
<b>New Mexico</b>	All households are eligible (brochure)	No limit on assets	165%
<b>New Jersey</b>	All households are eligible (brochure)	No limit on assets	185%
<b>New York</b>	All households are eligible (brochure mailed yearly)	No limit on assets <sup>2</sup>	130%
<b>North Carolina</b>	All households are eligible	No limit on assets	200%

**FPL**

**FPL**

# Why Use Broad Based Categorical Eligibility?

**Allows applicants with low income, who would otherwise be denied onto SNAP.**

**Eliminates SNAP Resource Test.**

**No resource test means–  
Less verification to require  
Less documents to image & file.**

**Reduces error risks for excess income & resources**

# Low Income Benefit

Can Make a low income household eligible to SNAP

**BBCE with 165% FPL  
Family A , 3 in home  
\$2000 Earnings, gross  
\$ 500 Childcare  
\$1600 Mortgage**

**Met BBCE 165% income Test  
SNAP income 'deemed'  
Allotment based on net income**

**Still needs to meet other SNAP  
qualifiers.**

**Family B  
Same except  
Without BBCE  
Deny SNAP  
Income exceeds 130% SNAP FPL  
Max gross is \$1984 (130% FPL)  
Over by \$16**

# Resource Eligible

Can make a household with more than \$2000 in resources eligible to SNAP

**BBCE with 130% FPL &  
Unlimited Resource Test  
Family A , 3 in home  
\$800 Earnings  
\$3500 Resources**

**Met BBCE 130% income Test  
Met BBCE Resource test  
SNAP resources 'deemed'**

**Still needs to meet other SNAP  
qualifiers.**

**Family B  
Same Except  
Without BBCE  
Deny SNAP  
Resources exceeds  
\$2000 SNAP limit**

# Sounds Complicated

## **Another State's Handbook**

**Categorical eligibility for SNAP can be very easy.**

**It is simply developing a habit for every certification or recertification.**

**To establish categorical eligibility:**

- Check financial group countable income against the 185% FPL standard.**
- Give the group a copy of the brochure.**

**Code the Cat El field in the automated system.**

**Do not count any resources.**

**Exception: People are not categorically eligible if: .....**

# Quality Control

Might make a non-reported change less of an error

\$1984 130% FPL Gross max for 3

Apply in January  
Authorized MCE  
Family A , 3 in home  
\$1000 Gross earnings

April QC Review

\$ 2100 Gross Income—unreported

In part,  
QC error will be based  
on difference between the  
allotments based  
on net income.

\$1000 vs. \$2100

Family B  
Same but  
Without MCE  
QC will find case  
Totally Ineligible.  
Fails SNAP Gross Test  
Max gross is \$1984  
\$2100 Gross Income

# Quality Control

Can eliminate errors for unreported resource increases

## Family A

Apply in January  
\$3025 in Resources  
Authorized MCE

April QC Review  
\$ 5000 In Resources  
QC will deem resources  
No need to review resources  
BBCE/MCE

## Family B

Apply in January  
\$800 in Resources  
Did Not Authorized BBCE

April QC Review  
\$ 5000 In Resources  
QC will find case ineligible  
Excess Resources

If they had been BBCE in January  
Then QC would treat  
same as Family A

# Considerations

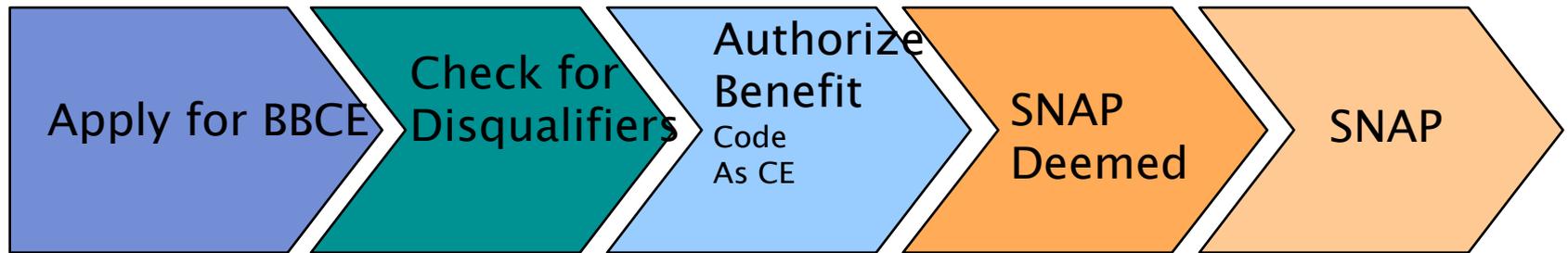
## Elderly & Disabled Households

**Under regular SNAP rules  
Elderly & Disabled households are  
Not subject to Gross Income Test**

**Don't use BBCE if these households  
have income in excess of the BBCE limit**

**Some states were denying SNAP cases in error.  
Only need to use BBCE if  
income is below the FPL limit (for BBCE)  
Resource Deeming is the only benefit**

# Process Flow



- Income 165%
- 185% FPL
- 200% FPL
- Unlimited Resources
- Pass income

- IPV
- Work requirement
- Other

- Authorize:
- Brochure
- 1-800 #
- Other service
- Code CE
- Or document

- Deem:
- Gross test
- Net test
- Resource test
- Other items already met.

- If meets other SNAP requirements approve

# Quality Control

Can eliminate errors for unreported resource increases

## Family A

Apply in January  
\$3025 in Resources  
Authorized BBCE

April QC Review  
\$ 5000 In Resources  
QC will deem resources  
No need to review resources  
BBCE.

## Family B

Apply in January  
\$800 in Resources  
Did Not Authorized BBCE

April QC Review  
\$ 5000 In Resources  
QC will find case ineligible  
Excess Resources

If they had been BBCE in January  
Then QC would treat  
same as Family A

# California Model

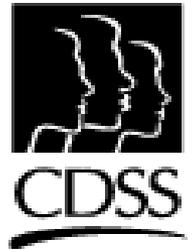
## *MCE*

- ▶ 130 % FPL, brochure provided
- ▶ Limited to households with minors
- ▶ Some interpret as limited to only those households that exceed the resource limit
- ▶ FNS recommendations for CA's MCE:
  - Expand to all households
  - Increase FPL



*California's  
Annual Food Stamp Program Conference*

**Los Angeles County  
Department of Public Social Services**



Philip L. Browning  
Director

**MASTER CASE REVIEW CHECKLIST  
FOR CALWORKS/FOOD STAMPS**

September 15,  
2010

# *Purpose*

- The Master Case Review Checklist was developed to assist eligibility staff and District Quality Control (QC) Monitors by streamlining the case review process.
  - This policy is part of the Department's overall corrective action plan to reduce audit and case errors.
- 

*It is expected that use of the  
Master Case Review Checklist will:*

- Reduce audit errors;
- Maximize deliverance of cash assistance and food stamp benefits to eligible participants;
- Increase the general awareness of CalWORKs and Food Stamp issues or problems;
- Ensure second party reviews are being conducted uniformly in order to improve case accuracy;
- Provide a tool to improve corrective action efforts in local offices.

# *Master Case Review Checklist Overview*

- Eligibility staff will use the Master Checklist to review CalWORKs and Food Stamp cases;
- The Master Checklist shall be completed on every application and recertification/ redetermination as they are filed;
- Supervisors shall review the case record and Master Checklist prior to authorization to ensure the correct action was taken by the worker;

# *Master Case Review Checklist Overview*

- Eligibility staff shall review the following “error prone” areas:
  - ✓ **Income**
  - ✓ **Household Composition**
  - ✓ **Shelter**
  - ✓ **Case Documentation**

NOTE: If discrepancies or errors are identified, corrective action shall be completed for each case as appropriate.

# *Master Case Review Checklist Overview*

- QC Monitors shall request cases using the Master Checklist QC Case Request Form to identify cases for the second level review process;
  - Error findings shall be incorporated into the district's corrective action plan and reinforcement training held as appropriate.
- 

# *Procedures*

## *Responsibilities:*

### **Intake/Approved Eligibility Worker**

- ☑ Must complete the Master Checklist when taking disposition on **each** new application and recertification/redetermination;
- ☑ Uses the Master Checklist to identify the accuracy of the case ensuring all required verification is on file and all eligibility points have been met;
- ☑ Submits the completed Master Checklist with the case record to the Eligibility Supervisor for review and final authorization;
- ☑ Takes corrective action on cases that are returned indicating “Corrective Action” needed by the due date.

# *Procedures*

## *Responsibilities:*

### **Intake/Approved Eligibility Supervisor**

- ☑ Ensures the Intake/Approved EW follows the outlined procedures, including the completion of the Master Checklist for all new applications and Recertifications/Redeterminations;
- ☑ Receives Recertifications/Redeterminations ready for approval from the EW with a completed Master Checklist attached;
- ☑ Reviews the case for accuracy, ensuring required verification is on file and all eligibility points have been met as noted on the Master Checklist;
- ☑ Documents the Corrective Action section of the Master Checklist noting any discrepancies or errors;

Returns the case (s) to the EW with the Master Checklist listing requesting corrective action and due date. Controls for correction;

# *Procedures*

## *Responsibilities:*

### **Intake/Approved Eligibility Supervisor**

- ☑ If no discrepancies or errors, case is authorized. Retains a copy on the Master Checklist on the case document folder;
- ☑ Receives the Master Checklist QC Case Request Form from the QC Monitor;
- ☑ Pulls the case(s) from the worker(s) file and forwards all requested cases to the QC Monitor;
- ☑ Ensures correction action is taken on cases that are returned by the QC Monitor indicating “Corrective Action” needed by the due date.

# Procedures

## *Responsibilities:*

### Quality Control Monitor

- ☑ Using Case Assignment and the Recertification Listing in LEADER, randomly selects a minimum of 30 cases per month.
  - 1) 10 Intake (New approvals)
  - 2) 10 Approved cases
  - 3) 10 Recertifications/Redeterminations
- ☑ Completes the Master Checklist QC Case request Form to request cases for review;
- ☑ Completes a case review for each selected case using the Master Checklist and documents the Corrective Action/Comments section of the Master Checklist noting any discrepancies or errors;

# *Procedures*

## *Responsibilities:*

### **Quality Control Monitor**

- ☑ Returns all reviewed cases back to the Unit Supervisor with a copy of the QCM Review Checklist listing required corrective action and due date for corrections, if any;
- ☑ Retains a copy of the QCM Review Checklist for cases requiring action;
- ☑ Controls for ES response and ensures all corrective action has been taken;
- ☑ Files the Master Checklist in a QC Folder separate from the case and retains for one year;
- ☑ Discusses review findings with Supervisors and District Management identifying District Corrective Action/Training needs.

# *Procedures*

## *Responsibilities:*

### **District Management**

- ☑ Ensures all applicable staff have these instructions and that they are being followed;
- ☑ Ensures that the QC Monitor is reviewing a minimum of 30 cases per month;
- ☑ Discusses the review findings with the EW, ES, QC Monitor, and District Administration as appropriate;
- ☑ Shares review findings at monthly General Staff Meetings and/or District Corrective Action committee Meetings.

# Master Case Review Checklist

## WORK & FOOD STAMPS MASTER CASE REVIEW CHECKLIST

Attachment I

### SECTION I - CASE INFORMATION

Case Name:	Case #:	Title:	Worker:	District:
Quarterly Reporting Cycle: 1 2 3	Current Case Status:	<input type="checkbox"/> Approved <input type="checkbox"/> Denied <input type="checkbox"/> Terminated		Review Month:
Program: <input type="checkbox"/> DV <input type="checkbox"/> PARS <input type="checkbox"/> NAFS	Case Review:	<input type="checkbox"/> Intake <input type="checkbox"/> Approved <input type="checkbox"/> <del>Rec'd/Rep'd</del> <input type="checkbox"/> Other		

### SECTION II - ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

Eligibility Factors	CW Y/N	PA Y/N	Documentation On file	Case Record vs LEADER
<b>APPLICATION</b>			<input type="checkbox"/> SAWS IV SAWS2 <input type="checkbox"/> DFA 255 NDM <input type="checkbox"/> DFA 255 AJA2/A3 <input type="checkbox"/> CW/SA Add <del>app</del> <input type="checkbox"/> F522 OR PS App <input type="checkbox"/> CIV4 (app) Need <input type="checkbox"/> F522 OR PH changes <input type="checkbox"/> CR3 Report <del>Comp</del> <input type="checkbox"/> DFA 277-1 Exp 505 <input type="checkbox"/> Applicant ID/IS	Info on LDR? Y/N Mandatory person(s) included? Y/N County Use Section complete? Y/N Forms complete, dated & signed? Y/N
<b>DEVIATION</b>			<input type="checkbox"/> Absence - SAWS 2 <input type="checkbox"/> Unemployment <input type="checkbox"/> Death - Cert, Obituary <input type="checkbox"/> Other <input type="checkbox"/> Incapacity - CW 51, Medical Statement	Info on LDR? Y/N If no deprivation case denied? Y/N
<b>IDENTITY</b>			Citizen/Eligible Non-citizen: <input type="checkbox"/> U.S. Passport <input type="checkbox"/> USCIS Documents Naturalization <input type="checkbox"/> PA220 Birth Death Cert <input type="checkbox"/> SSA 2552 CP2 <input type="checkbox"/> Michigan Consular <input type="checkbox"/> Employer ID <input type="checkbox"/> Military Documents <input type="checkbox"/> PA 552 Affidavit <input type="checkbox"/> Other  Sponsored Non-citizen: <input type="checkbox"/> USCIS (app) <input type="checkbox"/> G-5455 SAWS <input type="checkbox"/> 40 Quarters <input type="checkbox"/> CR22/CR22 Sponsors Income & Resource <input type="checkbox"/> CPAP	Info on LDR? Y/N Sponsorship Screen completed? Y/N SAWS or G5455 on file? Y/N Correct Date of Entry? Y/N If PT refused to cooperate, case denied/diac? Y/N If sponsor refused, person exc? Y/N
<b>SSN</b>			<input type="checkbox"/> SS card or LDR History <input type="checkbox"/> SSA Award Letter <input type="checkbox"/> W605 "J" verified <input type="checkbox"/> SSA Check <input type="checkbox"/> MIC 194A	Info on LDR? Y/N Requirements met? Y/N
<b>SPIS</b>			<input type="checkbox"/> PA 59 Finger Imaging Result Info <input type="checkbox"/> Exempt	Info on LDR? Y/N If requirement not met, case denied/diac? Y/N
<b>NON-PARENT CARETAKER</b>			<input type="checkbox"/> Birth/baptismal cert <input type="checkbox"/> PA 552 Affidavit <input type="checkbox"/> Court/School record <input type="checkbox"/> OCF5 Record <input type="checkbox"/> Other	Info on LDR? Y/N Relationships requirement met? Y/N
<b>FELONY VIOLATION</b>			<input type="checkbox"/> SAWS 2 <input type="checkbox"/> WFP6/359 <input type="checkbox"/> CR 7 <input type="checkbox"/> WFP6/392 <input type="checkbox"/> F526 Drug Felon <input type="checkbox"/> Law enforcement	Info on LDR? Y/N Ineligible person excluded? Y/N
<b>ASAWWS</b>			<input type="checkbox"/> Child under 6 in HH <input type="checkbox"/> PA 1555 <input type="checkbox"/> GRAN participant <input type="checkbox"/> AEP 511	Info on LDR? Y/N In compliance? Y/N
<b>IMMUNIZATION</b>			<input type="checkbox"/> Immunization book <input type="checkbox"/> Health plan record <input type="checkbox"/> Sirt from physician/clinic <input type="checkbox"/> PA 1650, 1651 Immunization	Info on LDR? Y/N If requirement not met, parent's needs not allowed? Y/N
<b>STUDENT</b>			<input type="checkbox"/> PA 126 Student <input type="checkbox"/> Report card <input type="checkbox"/> PA 1725 Absences <input type="checkbox"/> Exempt	Info on LDR? Y/N If 10+ absences, parent's needs not allowed (if child over 18)? Y/N
<b>PREGNANCY</b>			<input type="checkbox"/> Doctor's statement <input type="checkbox"/> CW 25 <del>Supp</del> SDF	Info on LDR? Y/N Was pregnancy verified? Y/N
<b>MINOR PARENTS</b>			<input type="checkbox"/> CR 25A Senior Parent Payee <input type="checkbox"/> CR 72 Senior Income <input type="checkbox"/> Exempt	Info on LDR? Y/N If requirement not met, ac denied/diac? Y/N
<b>FINANCIALS</b>			<input type="checkbox"/> CW 2199 DV Waiver <input type="checkbox"/> PA 552 Affidavit <input type="checkbox"/> PA 1913 DV Self <del>Comp</del> <input type="checkbox"/> GN 6196 <input type="checkbox"/> WDR/PT time Clock	Info on LDR? Y/N DV Services Refused? Y/N Timed out adult excluded? Y/N
<b>MFC</b>			<input type="checkbox"/> CW 2102 MFG rule <input type="checkbox"/> CW 2102A Rules	Info on LDR? Y/N
<b>CHILD SUPPORT</b>			<input type="checkbox"/> CW 21 <del>Appd</del> Rights <input type="checkbox"/> CW 271 Referral <input type="checkbox"/> CS 909 <del>Comp</del> Paternity <input type="checkbox"/> CW51 Good Cause <input type="checkbox"/> PA 6010 Parent Info <input type="checkbox"/> Exempt	Info on LDR? Y/N If refused to assign support order, PT excluded? Y/N

### SECTION III - HOUSEHOLD

Eligibility Factors	CW Y/N	PA Y/N	Documentation On file	Case Record vs LEADER
<b>SHRDL/RENT/ROOF/RENT/RENTS</b>			<input type="checkbox"/> Rent Receipt, Contract, Lease, Mortgage <input type="checkbox"/> Utility Bills <input type="checkbox"/> Subsidized/HUD Housing Contract <input type="checkbox"/> PA 1556 Shared Housing <input type="checkbox"/> PA 146 Homeless Shelter Allowance <input type="checkbox"/> PA 1616 Mailing Address <input type="checkbox"/> Pro-rated Contributions <input type="checkbox"/> Expense - Child Spousal Support <input type="checkbox"/> Other Expenses _____ <input type="checkbox"/> Dependent Care <input type="checkbox"/> Medical	Info on LDR? Y/N If shelter exceeds income, discrepancy clarified? Y/N Correct expense/deduction allowed? Y/N
<b>INCOME</b>			<input type="checkbox"/> Earned Income - Verified? <input type="checkbox"/> Anticipated <input type="checkbox"/> Stable <input type="checkbox"/> Fluctuating <input type="checkbox"/> Wages & Salaries-YTD <input type="checkbox"/> Sponsor's Deemed \$ <input type="checkbox"/> Other JTPA, OJT, SIC <input type="checkbox"/> Self-Employment Income (if available, provide on 400/990 2022 form) <input type="checkbox"/> Unearned Spouse - Verified? <input type="checkbox"/> Business Expense - 40% Actual <input type="checkbox"/> Child Spousal Support <input type="checkbox"/> Grants, Loans, Scholarships <input type="checkbox"/> In-Kind <input type="checkbox"/> RSD/SSA <input type="checkbox"/> SSI/SSP <input type="checkbox"/> UIB/DB/A <input type="checkbox"/> Workers Comp <input type="checkbox"/> Sponsor's Deemed Non-El <input type="checkbox"/> PA Grant <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____	Info on LDR? Y/N If refusal to cooperate, signed affidavit or VCL on file? Y/N Complete CR 7 on file? Y/N If requirement not met, was case denied/diac? Y/N Abstract processed timely? Y/N Info on abstract/taking known to LDR? Y/N If unreported income, verification requested? Y/N
<b>EXCLUDED INCOME</b>			<input type="checkbox"/> Child under 18 <input type="checkbox"/> EITC Lump Sum	Info on LDR? Y/N Requirements met? Y/N
<b>APPLICATION OF AVAIL. INCOME</b>			<input type="checkbox"/> Award Letters <input type="checkbox"/> UIB/DB <input type="checkbox"/> Life Insurance <input type="checkbox"/> SSI/SSP <input type="checkbox"/> RSD/SSA <input type="checkbox"/> OASD <input type="checkbox"/> CW's Veterans Referral <input type="checkbox"/> Worker's Comp	Info on LDR? Y/N If requirement not met, was case denied/diac? Y/N
<b>RESOURCES</b>			<input type="checkbox"/> PA 55 Restricted Asset <input type="checkbox"/> Bank Account <input type="checkbox"/> Life/Health Insurance <input type="checkbox"/> Stocks/Bonds <input type="checkbox"/> Real Estate Deed <input type="checkbox"/> Vehicle Lien <input type="checkbox"/> Non-recur Lump Sum <input type="checkbox"/> Cash on Hand <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____	Info on LDR? Y/N Verification on file? Y/N

### SECTION IV - CASE RECORD

Eligibility Factors	CW Y/N	PA Y/N	Documentation On file	Case Record vs LEADER
<b>CASE COMMENTS</b>			<input type="checkbox"/> PAS52 Affidavit - Clarify Discrepancies Comments must contain sufficient information for case review to determine what action was taken amounts used in comparison, income for reported by participant, and/or amounts used in 2022 substantiation	Comments match action taken? Y/N Household Comp identified? Y/N LEADER VCL generated? Y/N Correct NCA issued? Y/N Threshold NCA issued? Y/N Were changes authorized? Y/N

### SECTION V - CORRECTIVE ACTION REQUIRED

<input type="checkbox"/> Correct Case, No Further Action Required	CORRECTIVE ACTION DUE DATE:
---	-----------------------------

### SECTION VI - CASE REVIEW CONFIRMATION

YES	DATE REVIEWED	AGREEMENT	DATA

# Master Case Review Checklist

Attachment II

## Master Checklist QC Case Request Form

### Section I – GCM Information

District: \_\_\_\_\_

GCM Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Request Date: / /

Due Date: / /

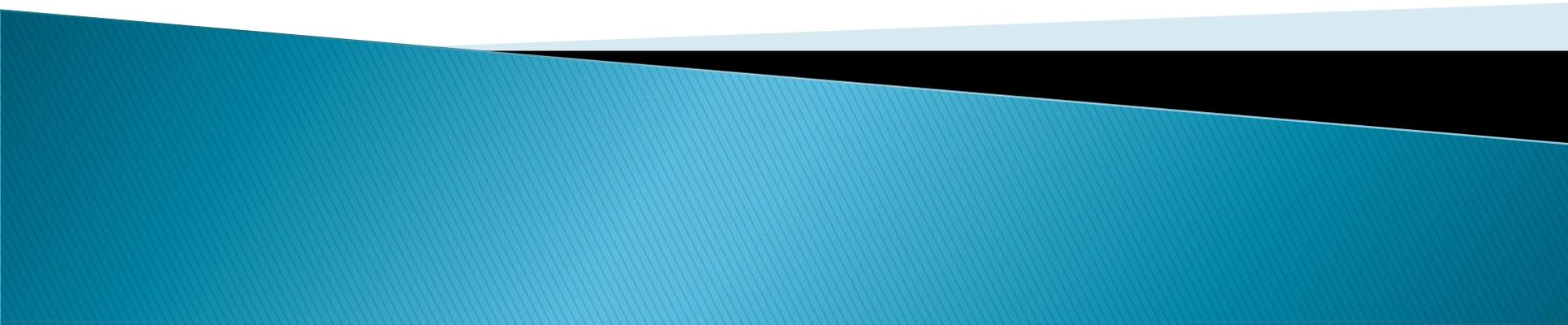
### Section II – Case Information

	Unit	File #	Case Name (Last, First)	Case Number	Case Received		Case Returned	
					Date	GCM Initials	Date	E-8 Initials
1								
2								
3								
4								
5								
6								
7								
8								
9								
10								
11								
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30								

RETENTION: 1 Year

# Waiver of the Face-To-Face Interview Requirements

Food and Nutrition Service



# Overview

- ▶ Interview Requirements
- ▶ Waiving under regulation
- ▶ Waivers of the regulation

# Interview Requirements

- Interview Initial Application: FNS requires a face-to-face interview at initial certification.
- Interview Recertification FNS requires a face-to-face interview at least once every 12 months for households certified for 12 months or less.

January apply & interviewed

June, paper recertification, no interview required at 6 months.

Next recertification will require a face-to-face interview

# Who May Be Interviewed

- The head of household,
- A spouse
- Any other responsible member of the household, or
- An authorized representative.

The applicant may bring any person he or she chooses to the interview.

Denying a case for failure of both adults/parents to attend the FSP interview is not a correct action.

Rescheduling the interview and requiring more than one adult to attend the interview may be a barrier.

Denying the applicant the right to bring another person to the interview with them is also incorrect.

## Who Must Conduct the Interview

- ▶ 7 CFR 272.4(a)(2)
- ▶ Merit system employees shall conduct the interviews.
- ▶ Volunteers and other non-State agency employees shall **not** conduct certification interviews or certify food stamp applicants.
- ▶ FNS encourages the use of volunteers for:
  - outreach
  - prescreening
  - application assistance and securing verifications

## Scheduling the Interview

- ▶ 7 CFR 273.2(e)(3)
- ▶ The State agency must schedule an interview for all applicants who are not interviewed on the day they submit their application.
- ▶ The state must schedule all interviews as promptly as possible to ensure the household has an opportunity to participate within 30 days.
- ▶ The State must notify each applicant that misses its interview appointment that it is responsible for rescheduling a missed interview. (NOMI)
- ▶ If the household contacts within 30 days of applying, the state must schedule a second interview.

## Recertifications NOE

All households will receive a Notice of Expiration (NOE)  
**Before the first day of the last month of the recertification**  
But  
**Not before the first day of the second to the last month**  
of the certification period.

Example–

Certification ends on October 31, 2010

NOE has to be sent by September 30, 2010 (or before Oct. 1, 2010)  
But cannot be sent August 31 or earlier  
(cannot be sent before September 1, 2010)

## NOE Language Requirements

- ▶ The NOE must advise:
- ▶ That failure to attend an interview may result in delay or denial of benefits;
- ▶ That the household is responsible for rescheduling a missed interview and for providing required verification information.
- ▶ (iii) To expedite the recertification process, State agencies are encouraged to send a recertification form, an interview appointment letter that allows for either in-person or telephone interviews, and a statement of needed verification required by §273.2(c)(5) with the NOE

# Expedite Service Processing

- ▶ In California, before the agency certifies a household using expedited service the agency **must interview the household**.  
This is true in expedited service cases; it is true no matter why the interview has not taken place.

## Current FSP regulations

### Elderly/Disabled no earnings

- ▶ *The State agency may opt to replace the face-to-face interview in favor of a*
- ▶ *telephone interview for all households which have no earned income and all*
- ▶ *members of the household are elderly or disabled. 7 CFR 273.2(e)(2)*
  
- ▶ The State agency can offer a telephone interview instead of a face-to-face interview for these households.
- ▶ The state does not need to look at hardships for these households.

## Regulations & Interviews

- ▶ **Regular FSP Rules**
- ▶ **On a case-by-case basis**
- ▶ *The State agency must notify all applicants that it will replace the face-to-face interview in favor of a telephone interview on a case-by-case basis because of household hardship situations as determined by the State agency.*
- ▶ *Hardship conditions include, but are not limited to: illness, transportation difficulties, care of a household member, hardships due to residency in a rural area, prolonged severe weather, or work or training hours which prevent the household from participating in an in-office interview.*

# Regulations & case-by-case waiving of an interview

## Documentation

- ▶ *“The State agency must document the case file to show when a waiver was granted because of a hardship”. 7 CFR 273.2(e)(2)*
- ▶ If the State replaced (waived) the face-to-face interview with a telephone interview they must document the hardship reason used for the case.
- ▶ Although the State agency is allowed to request verification from households of their hardship, State agencies may not require households to present verification in person at the food stamp office.  
7 CFR 273.2(f)(5)(i)

# Interview Waivers, FNS Test the Waters

- ❖ FNS allowed telephone interviews rather than face-to-face interviews for **blanket hardships** (*rather than case-by-case*)–  
*Example*– all earners, all households with child care, etc.  
State defined who was covered under the blanket hardship
- ❖ FNS required reports and QC coding to capture data on any increased errors
- ❖ States had to document what the blanket hardship was
- ❖ Initially FNS only approved for states with low error rates & those not in QC liability
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- ❖ Generally state's chose one or the other; initial or recertification interviews
- ❖ Face-to-face interviews must occur if the household requests one
- ❖ FNS approved waivers for only two years

# FNS Evolution of Waiver Approvals

October, 2006 –

- Stop limiting waiver approval to low error states,
- Acknowledge that high error rate states need relief.

August, 2007 –

- Extend approval to states that are in QC liability status,

October, 2008 –

- Stop limiting states to waive only 50% of the caseload,

February, 2009 –

- Stop requiring that hardship reasons be coded on waived cases, promoted waiving  
Stop requiring coding of waived cases for QC purposes – no increased errors identified
- Extend waivers to 4 years.

## More Recent Expansion

- ▶ Waive entire interview for some households, no FTF, no telephone
- ▶ Postpone the interview for expedite service processing (not in CA)
- ▶ Still haven't allowed text message interviews or email interviews, though some states have asked.
- ▶ Currently no waiver to allow a telephone interview for QC.

## 2010 Standard FTF Waiver

- ▶ Allows State to **broadly** define hardship
  - Broad definitions encouraged, most states use phone interview for all except some high-risk cases
- ▶ Waives the requirement to **document** the hardship
- ▶ Used for both initial and recertification interviews, up to 100%
- ▶ Replaces face-to-face interview with telephone interview
- ▶ Does not require QC error data capturing
- ▶ Does not require State's error rate to be at a certain level

## Standard Requirement

- ▶ State agency must conduct a face-to-face interview if requested by the household
- ▶ Must conduct face-to-face if determined to be appropriate (high risk, other special circumstance)
- ▶ Same information still required for certification
- ▶ Application process quality must not be negatively affected.

# Why the Change?

- ▶ **Budget Crisis– State & Local**
- ▶ **Economics– price of fuel, costly to drive to local office**
- ▶ **Increased applications**
  - State resources lost on missed interviews & scheduling complications
- ▶ **Technology advances**
  - Electronic applications, scanned verifications, cell phones
- ▶ **Promoting Community Partners**
  - Submitting applications
  - Avoids applicant having to enter a traditional FSP office

# Complications

## Telephone Interviews

- ▶ Scheduling the interview when the client is available
- ▶ Frequent missed telephone interviews
- ▶ No telephone number available to reach household
- ▶ Blocked numbers
- ▶ Securing the signed application & verifications

# Work Around

**Utah, Washington** – Allows clients to call a call center during normal business hours for an unscheduled telephone interview the day they file an application. If no interview completed within a set # of day, NOMI is sent

**Oregon** – NOE allows household to elect a phone or FTF interview when submitting recertification documents. Had telephone waiver option, and still mailed hard copy applications. When received completed application, would mail telephone interview appointment, but little success in completing interviews.

Interview Scheduling Waivers 7 CFR 273.2(e)(3)

# Oregon Waiver

## Food Stamp Recertification Interview Information

Your food stamp benefits will end at the end of next month. To keep getting food stamps without a break, you must fill out this form and return it as soon as possible.

To reapply, please fill out the attached application and return it in the attached envelope. Please send in proof of all money received by your household in the past 30 days.

We must talk to you about your application. This is called an interview. We can do this over the phone or you can have the meeting at a branch office. To keep getting food stamps, you must have an interview and give proof of your statements.

I want a phone interview.

For the phone interview, you prefer a call on these days of the week:

Monday  Tuesday  Wednesday  Thursday  Friday

The best time to call is in the  morning or  afternoon.

Please give us the phone number you want us to call you at: \_\_\_\_\_.

You will be contacted within 15 days from the date you turn in the paperwork. Please mail the completed forms and the proof of income in the business reply envelope at the back of this packet. Please do not send back the pink forms. They are for you to keep.

Please check here if you need an interpreter. Language? \_\_\_\_\_

I want to go to a branch office for the interview. Our office will send you instructions regarding how to schedule the appointment date and time and the location for the interview.

# Interview for Special Populations

**Massachusetts–**  
Elderly & disabled with no earnings, no interview at recertification; not even a phone one.

# Interview for Expedited Service

**Wisconsin, Indiana, Florida\*, others–**

Allows state to issue 1 (or 2) months of benefits under expedite service processing rules provided :

- household meets ES criteria and
- identity has been verified and
- agency attempts to contact applicant

Or

–agency determines an interview cannot be scheduled in time to meet ES standards

The interview becomes one of the postponed items.

•  
\*90% of FL application are received on line,  
they are required to provide data on cases for this waiver.

# Alternate Interview

**New York:** Non-public assistance households with elderly or disabled with no income and no change in household circumstance may complete recertification via an Interactive Voice Response System (IVRS) rather than a telephone interview.

# Alternate Interview

**Chicago:** Most households with earned income complete interview through the State Phone System Interview (PSI), an automated phone system.

•

# Partners

**Michigan:** Allows community partners to conduct initial interview for SNAP through a demonstration project.

Also limited use in OR, NV,  
other

# In Closing

FNS recognizes benefit of alternatives to the face-to-face interview requirement.

FNS encourage states to apply for additional waivers to the interview requirements as needed.

END

**Los Angeles County  
Department of Public  
Social Services**

**FOOD STAMP WAIVER OF THE  
FACE-TO-FACE INTERVIEW**

# Food Stamp Waiver of Face-to-Face Interview

## **PURPOSE/BACKGROUND**

- To provide Food Stamp policy and implementation on waiving the face-to-face interview.
- To provide staff with instructions on telephone interviews to households at initial certification and recertification, of Non-Assistance Food Stamp households.

# Food Stamp Waiver of Face-to-Face Interview

## OBJECTIVES:

- Waiver will reduce the application process burden for the household.
- Remove barriers that prevent households from completing interview.
- Decrease the volume of activity in the District Offices.

# Food Stamp Waiver of Face-to-Face Interview

## **POLICY**

- ▶ There are no changes in the current eligibility determination process.
- ▶ The same actions taken during a face-to-face interview are required for a telephone interview.
- ▶ This Policy does not apply to households applying for Expedited Services.
- ▶ Staff must continue to inform households of their Rights and Responsibilities.

# Food Stamp Waiver of Face-to-Face Interview

## Non-Assistance Food Stamp Households

- ▶ Telephone interviews may be conducted at initial certification AND recertification;
- ▶ Hardship is not a requirement to waive the face-to-face interview.

## Face-to-Face interview must be conducted when:

- ✓ Requested by household or household's Authorize Representative (AR);
- ✓ Necessary to determine conditions of eligibility; or
- ✓ At recertification, if household has not complied with Statewide Fingerprint Imaging System (SFIS).

# Statewide Fingerprint Imaging System Requirements

- ▶ Mandatory household members who has not met SFIS requirement during initial certification, must be finger imaged by the end of the household initial certification period, or prior to being recertified.
- ▶ If a mandatory individual is not able to comply, and a valid reason has been verified, the SFIS process may be deferred.
- ▶ Staff must determine, on case-by-case basis, when a household member will received a deferral or postponement.

# Statewide Fingerprint Imaging System Requirements

## **Exemptions include the following:**

- ▶ A Household member who has a medically verified physical condition;
- ▶ Household member under the age of 18, unless applying as own household; or
- ▶ Household certified by out-of-office interview. (Outreach)
- ▶ Household member who has no fingers, (must be photo imaged);

# Food Stamp Waiver of Face-to-Face Interview

## New Appointment Types

Three new appointment types have been added to the Los Angeles Automated Determination Evaluation and Reporting (LEADER) System.

1. Telephone Interview Intake
2. Telephone Interview Recertification
3. 2<sup>nd</sup> Telephone Interview Recertification

# Food Stamp Waiver of Face-to-Face Interview

## Telephone Interview Intake

- ▶ A telephone interview, have the same functionality as Screening & Intake.
- ▶ When a scheduled telephone appointment is missed at Intake, a DFA 386 Notice of Missed Interview (NOMI) will be mailed out the following day.
- ▶ If applicant does not contact the District Office, application will be denied on the 30<sup>th</sup> day following the application day.

# Food Stamp Waiver of Face-to-Face Interview

## Telephone Interviews

- ▶ Staff must review all questions on the DFA 285-A2, and fill in any unanswered questions with information obtained in the telephone interview,
- ▶ Initial any entry to indicate that information was completed by the Eligibility Worker.
- ▶ If no telephone number has been provided, offer household the option of face-to-face interview, or ask them to provide a telephone number where they can be reached.

# Food Stamp Waiver of Face-to-Face Interview

## Case Comments

- ▶ LEADER System will track the type of interview conducted.
- ▶ LEADER will automatically insert case comments (Document) upon completion of the authorization process. However, staff will need to supplement any additional documentation on the **Case Comments** screen.

# Food Stamp Waiver of Face-to-Face Interview – Scenario #1

- A Non-Assistance Food Stamp household consists of a mother and two small children.
- The household certification period will end on May 30, 2010. The mother has not fulfilled the SFIS requirements, as she had an out-of-office (Outreach) initial interview certification.
- A Notice of Expiration of Certification (QR377.2) is sent to the mother on March 2, 2010, notifying her of the impending expiration.
- The FS 29–LA 2 requests her to come into the District Office for a face-to-face interview on March 30, 2010.

# Food Stamp Waiver of Face-to-Face Interview – Scenario #1 (Cont.)

- The mother was scheduled for a face-to-face interview because she is a mandatory adult who has not complied with the SFIS requirements.
- Participant mails back the DFA 285 A1, A2, A3, and the supporting documents, but fails to attend the face-to-face interview.
- Can a telephone interview be conducted?

# ACTION TAKEN ON SCENARIO #1 (Cont.)

- No, the head of household missed her scheduled face-to-face interview appointment, a NOMI must be sent to the household.
- This action is initiated on the day the household fails to complete their face-to-face interview.
- A mandatory non-exempt individual who fails to comply with SFIS requirements will not be entitled to a face-to-face waiver, unless a good cause is determined.
- Staff must update the Case Comments screen.

# Food Stamp Waiver of Face-to-Face Interview – Scenario #2

- A household applies for Food Stamp Only benefits on June 8, 2010. The household requests to have the face-to-face interview waived.
- The Receptionist will provide an intake packet and explain the telephone interview process.
- The assigned EW schedules the household for their telephone interview appointment on June 18, 2010.
- The household fails to keep the telephone interview appointment.
- What action should the EW take?

# ACTION TAKEN ON SCENARIO #2

- The EW will go to LEADER and enter “no show”.
- This action is done on the day the household fails to complete their telephone interview.
- LEADER will generate and send the household a DFA 386 NOMI.
- The EW will update the LEADER **Case Comments** screen.

# Food Stamp Waiver of Face-to-Face Interview – Scenario #3

- A Household applies for Food Stamp Only benefits on July 6, 2010. The household requests to have the face-to-face interview conducted at the District Office.
- The assigned EW schedules the household for their face-to-face interview appointment on July 16, 2010.

# Food Stamp Waiver of Face-to-Face Interview – Scenario #3 (Cont.)

- The household calls prior to their interview and requests that the EW re-schedule the face-to-face interview appointment for July 19, 2010.
- The EW records the July 19, 2010 appointment in LEADER, per existing procedures.
- The household fails to keep their second interview appointment.
- What action is taken by the EW?

# ACTION TAKEN ON SCENARIO #3

- The EW will go to LEADER and enter “no show”.
- This action is done on the day the household fails to complete their face-to-face interview.
- LEADER will generate and send the household a NOMI.
- The EW will update LEADER **Case Comments** screen.

# REMINDERS

- ▶ The Food Stamp Waiver of Face-to-Face Interview allow telephone interview to be conducted in place of the face-to-face interview.
- ▶ Waiver of the face-to-face interview for all other households, due to hardship conditions can still be allowed, on a case-by-case basis.

# SUMMARY

- ▶ Food Stamp requirements have not change.
- ▶ Food Stamp Waiver of Face-To-Face Interview is not a condition of eligibility.
- ▶ The Waiver of the Face-to Face interview is for all NAFS households at intake and recertification period.

# QUESTIONS?



# Waiver of the Face – To– Face Interview

Food and Nutrition Service  
September 2010

# Overview

- ▶ Interview Requirements
- ▶ Waiving under regulation
- ▶ Waivers of the regulation

## *Interview Requirements*

- Interview Initial Application: FNS requires a face-to-face interview at initial certification.
- Interview Recertification FNS requires a face-to-face interview at least once every 12 months for households certified for 12 months or less.

## *Who May Be Interviewed*

- The head of household,
- A spouse
- Any other responsible member of the household, or
- An authorized representative.

**The applicant may bring any person he or she chooses to the interview.**

## *Scheduling the Interview*

- ▶ 7 CFR 273.2(e)(3)
- ▶ The State agency must schedule an interview for all applicants who are not interviewed on the day they submit their application.
- ▶ The state must schedule all interviews as promptly as possible to ensure the household has an opportunity to participate within 30 days.
- ▶ The State must notify each applicant that misses its interview appointment that it is responsible for rescheduling a missed interview. (NOMI)
- ▶ If the household contacts within 30 days of applying, the state must schedule a second interview.

## ***Recertifications NOE***

**All households will receive a Notice of Expiration (NOE)–  
*NEC***

**Before the first day of the last month of the recertification**

**But**

**Not before the first day of the second to the last month  
of the certification period.**

**Example–**

**Certification ends on October 31, 2010**

**When does the NOE/NEC go out?**

Before the first day of the last month of the recertification, but  
 Not before the first day of the second to the last month of the certification period.

No NEC in this third to last month of the certification	Second to last month of the certification is	1 <sup>st</sup> day of the last month of certification is	Last Month of Cert
August 31 <sup>st</sup> ←	September	← October 1	October
Too Early Not before first day of the second to the last month of the certification period	<b>Send NEC 9/1 ↔ 9/30</b>	Too Late NEC has to go out before Oct 1.	Certification Ends October 31 <sup>st</sup>



# Expedited Service Processing

- ▶ **In California, before the agency certifies a household using expedited service processing the agency must interview the household.**

# *Regulations & Interviews*

## **Current FSP regulations**

### **Elderly/Disabled no earnings**

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# ***Regulations & Interviews***

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- ▶ ***The State agency must notify all applicants that it will replace the face-to-face interview in favor of a telephone interview on a case-by-case basis because of household hardship situations as determined by the State agency.***
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## Regulations & case-by-case waiving of an interview

### Documentation

- ▶ *“The State agency must document the case file to show when a waiver was granted because of a hardship”. 7 CFR 273.2(e)(2)*

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- ❖ FNS allowed telephone interviews rather than face-to-face interviews for **blanket hardships** (*rather than case-by-case*)–  
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- ▶ Used for both initial and recertification interviews, up to 100%
- ▶ Replaces face-to-face interview with telephone interview
- ▶ Does not require QC error data capturing
- ▶ Does not require State's error rate to be at a certain level
- ▶ Still no email or texting interviews recognized

# Standard Requirement

- ▶ State agency must conduct a face-to-face interview if :
  - requested by the household
  - High risk
  - Special Circumstance
- ▶ Same information still required for certification
- ▶ Application process quality must not be negatively affected.

# Complications

## Telephone Interviews

- ▶ Scheduling the interview when the client is available
- ▶ Frequent missed telephone interviews
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## Interview for Special Populations

**Massachusetts–  
Elderly & disabled  
with no earnings, no  
interview at  
recertification; not  
even a phone one.**

# Interview for Expedited Service

**Wisconsin, Indiana, Florida\*, others –  
Allows state to issue 1 (or 2) months of benefits  
under expedite service processing rules provided**

- :**
- household meets ES criteria and**
  - identity has been verified and**
  - agency attempts to contact applicant**

**Or**

- agency determines an interview cannot be  
scheduled in time to meet ES standards**

**The interview becomes one of the postponed  
items.**

**.**

**\*90% of FL application are received on line,  
they are required to provide data on cases for  
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# Alternate Interview

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Department of Public Social Services



# Los Angeles County Department of Public Social Services

Telephone Etiquette/Telephone Interviewing and  
Listening Skills

# Telephone Etiquette

## **Purpose:**

- ▶ To assist staff in strengthening their telephone etiquette, interviewing and listening skills.

## **Goal:**

- ▶ For staff to become skilled in the art of telephone etiquette.

# Objectives: At the completion of presentation, staff will better understand:

- ▶ The dimensions of telephone etiquette.
- ▶ Telephone interviewing techniques.
- ▶ Effective listening skills.

# Our Philosophy:

- ▶ A can-do-attitude
- ▶ Accountability
- ▶ Compassion
- ▶ Commitment
- ▶ Integrity
- ▶ Professionalism
- ▶ Respect for diversity and
- ▶ Responsiveness

# Guiding Principles

- ▶ Appropriately greet each caller.
- ▶ Listen carefully and patiently.
- ▶ Be responsive to all participants needs.
- ▶ Explain procedures clearly.

# Tips For Excellent Customer Service

- ▶ Respect
- ▶ Self-Determination
- ▶ Confidentiality
- ▶ Individuality
- ▶ Accountability
- ▶ Reliability
- ▶ You are DPSS

# Four (4) Basic Participant Service Needs

- ▶ The need to feel **Welcome**
- ▶ The need to be **Understood**
- ▶ The need to feel **Comfortable**
- ▶ The need to feel **Important**

# The Four A's in Meeting a Participant's Needs

- ▶ Available
- ▶ Accessible
- ▶ Acceptable
- ▶ Appropriate

# Telephone Etiquette

*It takes 17 muscles to smile but 43 to frown.*

- ▶ Put a smile in your voice. Verbal and non-verbal communications are utilized in telephone conversation.
- ▶ Staff who use the telephone at work are primarily responsible for DPSS customer service reputation.

# Telephone Etiquette

- ▶ It is important that you are courteous and professional when speaking to the participant on the telephone.
- ▶ Don't chew gum, eat food, or engage in other conversations or activities while talking on the Telephone.
- ▶ Never answer the telephone and let the caller hear you finishing another conversation).

# Telephone Etiquette (Cont.)

- ▶ When you speak to someone on the telephone, vocal quality counts for 70% of the initial impression you make, and the words spoken count for 30%.
- ▶ The participant bases his/her opinions of you not only on what you say, but how you say it and the tone of your voice.

# Telephone Etiquette Tips

- ▶ Use words that convey politeness and professionalism
- ▶ Say “yes” not “yea” or “ah ha.”
- ▶ Use “excuse me,” but always wait until the Applicant/Participant stops talking to continue to speak.
- ▶ Use please and thank you when appropriate.

## Telephone Etiquette

### Be Prepared

- ▶ Review the case before phone interview.
- ▶ Request previous case record, if any.
- ▶ Prepare a list of documents needed.
- ▶ Prepare a list of questions to ask participant.
- ▶ Review case summary documents.

# Interviewing Skills

- ▶ Know your role as an Eligibility Worker.
- ▶ Introduce yourself by using your title and name of your office.
- ▶ Verify that it is the participant to whom you are speaking.
- ▶ Establish if it's a convenient time for you to speak with the participant.

## Ending the Call – Summarize

- ▶ Summarizing is repeating back to the participant what has just been discussed during the interview.
- ▶ Confirm any necessary future action with the participant. Carefully, explain what type of action will be taken.

## County Policy

- ▶ There are policies and procedures that must be followed when providing services to non-English, or hearing impaired participants.
- ▶ The Department has established policies in place to follow when a request for an interpreter is made or the participant is hearing impaired.
- ▶ In the event your participant is hearing impaired you can access the TTY/TTD system at (1-800-735-2922).

# Listening Skills

- ▶ Good listening habits are created through experience, training, and practice.
- ▶ However, people often like to blame listening mistakes on an individual's intelligence, this is not the real cause.
- ▶ Good hearing doesn't necessarily lead to good listening.

## Formulate Your Questions

- ▶ When you listen to information, it's important that you ask both open and closed-ended questions to make sure you understand what the speaker is trying to say.
- ▶ If the participant's statements are unclear, you should ask the participant to explain or repeat the information.

## Formulate Your Questions (Cont.)

- ▶ Open-ended questions cannot be answered with a simple Yes or No. Use Open-ended questions when you want the participant to explain or discuss something.
- ▶ Open-ended questions begin with the words, **Why, When, Who, What, Where, and How.**

## Examples of Open-ended questions:

- ▶ How long have you lived a this address?
- ▶ What are your concerns?
- ▶ Where can you be contacted by telephone?

# Questions & Answers



All Roads Lead to . . .  
INCREASED CUSTOMER ACCESS  
and BETTER CUSTOMER SERVICE



The Face-to-Face Waiver

# Our F2F Waiver for Recertification was implemented October 1, 2008.

- ▶ We immediately saw the following benefits:
  - Decreased volume of associated activity in our Lobbies.
  - Reduced number of "Reschedules"
  - Removed many barriers that previously prevented customers from attending their recertification appointments.
  - Increased Customer Satisfaction over NOT having to arrange for transportation and/or childcare to complete a face-to-face interview.

# In Preparation for implementation of the waiver at Initial Application we . . .

- ▶ Provided staff with Training - "Telephone Interviewing ...Tips for Successful Outcomes" ;
- ▶ Provided a Phone Head-Set for each Intake case manager - Encouraged "Ergonomic Awareness";
- ▶ Established a 12 month deferral for the SFIS process. Customers are informed they must comply\* with the SFIS requirement within 12 months of their application date.

\*If they don't comply within 12 months, they must attend a face-to-face interview at recertification and comply with the SFIS requirement at that time.

# Our F2F Waiver for Initial Application was implemented June 1, 2010.

- ▶ In this short amount of time, we have seen the following benefits:
  - Decreased volume of activity in our lobbies due to shorter wait-times for customers who opt for a Phone Interview Appointment.
  - Currently we do not see Walk-In Customers "same day," requiring customers to return to the facility another day - Phone appointments offered a solution for those customers who had transportation or other issues with returning for their scheduled appointment.
  - Enhanced C4 Yourself Application process, allowing customers to apply and be interviewed in the privacy of their own homes.

# Now, Stanislaus County customers have FOUR “avenues” to choose from when Submitting an Application for the Food Stamp Program:

1. Visit one of our 7 Outstations conveniently located throughout the County;
2. Access the Web-based “C4 Yourself” application;
3. Use the “Self-Service Center” at our Main Facility Lobby;
4. Call in (or drop in) to schedule a Telephone Interview

# This Customer just completed his Food Stamp Phone Interview



... All Thanks to the  
Face-to-Face Waiver.

# The End



(. . . Whew)

# Fresno County Department of Social Services

## FOOD STAMP PROGRAM (FSP)

Waiver of Face-to-Face Interview



# Introduction

- ▶ ACL 09-62
  - ▶ Purpose
  - ▶ Timeline
  - ▶ Barriers/Resolutions
  - ▶ Business Process change
  - ▶ Role of the Supervisor
  - ▶ Benefits
  - ▶ Feedback
  - ▶ Conclusion
  - ▶ note: all interviews were for recertifications
- 

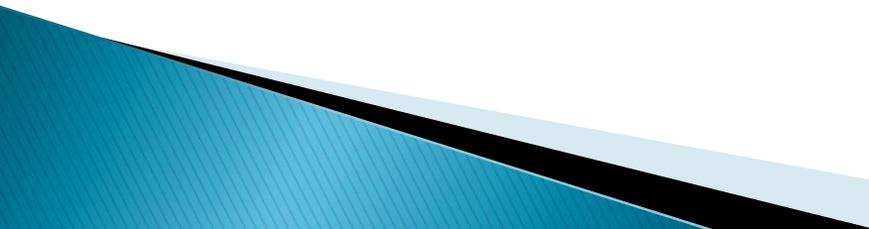
- ▶ ACL 09–62 – October 2009
  - 4 year waiver (replaced ACL 08–32)
    - June 1, 2009 – May 31, 2013
  - Waived face-to-face interview
    - All FS HH's
    - County-wide if implemented

# Purpose of Waiver

- ▶ Reduce application process burden for HH
  - ▶ Increase timeliness
  - ▶ Increase program access
  - ▶ Decrease volume of activity in the office
  - ▶ Remove barriers that prevent in office interviews
    - Transportation
    - Child care
    - Lost wages
- 

# Timeline

- ▶ 9/2009 – met with Executive Staff
- ▶ 10/2009 – formed a workgroup of Eligibility Workers (EWs)/Supervisors
- ▶ 11/2009 – compared 2 processes
  - SOF: 33% completion
    - Appt set, interview completed, documents mailed for review, signature and return
  - FS27: 100% completion
    - Appt set, documents mailed/returned, interview completed

- ▶ 12/2009 – used FS27 process only
    - 6 NAFS EW's
    - 2 Combo EW's
  
  - ▶ 1/2010 (same group of 8 EWs)
    - 226 scheduled interviews
      - 124 Recertified via telephone = 55%
      - 50 Recertified face-to-face = 22%
      - 52 Disc'd = 23%
  
  - ▶ 1/2010 staff trained
    - Initially one campus only
      - provided to approx 100 affected staff
- 

# Barriers / Resolutions

<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ FS 29 (appointment letter): confidentiality issues/envelopes</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ Slip page</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ Incorrect packets mailed</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ Extensive training for clerical staff</li></ul>

■ Prolonged use of phone uncomfortable

■ Ordered wireless headsets

■ Clients unfamiliar with change

■ EWs telephoned client to remind/encourage completion

■ NEC (notice of expiration of certification) not generated by CalWIN

■ Manually generate

# Business Process Changes

- ▶ Mailing FS27 early
  - Due the 5<sup>th</sup> of the phone interview month
- ▶ FS27 signed prior to the recertification month
  - No affect on benefits/eligibility
- ▶ NEC
  - Must be manually generated and mailed
    - Appointments being scheduled early to allow for timely mail in of application and other documents

# Role of the Supervisor

- ▶ Ensure proper training of staff
- ▶ Positive/Supportive
- ▶ Focused case reviews on new process
  - Thorough case comments (phone/face2face)
  - SFIS requirements met
  - Correct apps completed: fs27/sof/dfa
    - Phone/face2face
  - Preliminary In-House QA results
    - No increase in errors w/completion of new process

# Benefit to the County

- ▶ Less office traffic
- ▶ Time savings to workers
  - 30 to 45 min vs. 1 to 1 ½ hrs
- ▶ Preferred by staff

# Benefits to the Client

- ▶ No child care costs
  - ▶ No lost wages
    - Can complete interview during lunch break
  - ▶ No waiting in line/office
  - ▶ No transportation issues
    - Bus fare
    - Gas expense
    - Rural areas
- 

# Client Feedback

- ▶ “no, I didn’t realize it was a phone interview”
  - ▶ “my son has autism, this worked out perfect”
  - ▶ “can you call me during my lunch break so I don’t miss work?”
  - ▶ “is that all? Are we done? That didn’t take long”
  - ▶ “Thank you”
- 

# Staff Feedback

- ▶ Initial apprehension by some
  - ▶ Takes less time
  - ▶ Less chit chat
  - ▶ Preferred method
- 

# Where are we now?

- ▶ Fully implemented County-wide by August 2010
  - ▶ Training – Will be conducted by Staff Development for all impacted staff at several certification office sites
- 

# Conclusion

- ▶ 3/2010 – building-wide phone interviews began
  - 1167 scheduled interviews
    - 638 Recertified via telephone = 55%
    - 288 Recertified face to face = 25%
    - 241 Disc'd = 21%
  
- ▶ 8/2010 stats
  - 1168 Scheduled interviews
    - 665 Recertified via telephone = 57%
    - 305 Recertified face to face = 26%
    - 187 Disc'd = 16%

(+/-1)

# Thank you

Fresno County  
Department of Social Services

La Donna Lake  
Supervisor

Questions?



# Business Process Changes

FNS

September 2010

## Introduction

The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) is the cornerstone of nutrition assistance in the United States. The SNAP served an average of 40.2 million people in March 2010 – more than 1 in 8 Americans. A combination of factors – the 1996 welfare reform<sup>1</sup>, which has heightened the importance of SNAP as a safety net and a critical work support; the more recent economic downturn; and the challenges States face in serving rising caseloads with declining administrative resources – have led States to modernize the Program by making a variety of changes that affect SNAP application, case management, and recertification processes.

This summary describes the results of intensive site visits that were made in spring 2009 to 14 States with SNAP modernization activities. Modernization is defined broadly to include technological innovations as well as policy and organizational changes that affect the way SNAP is delivered to clients.

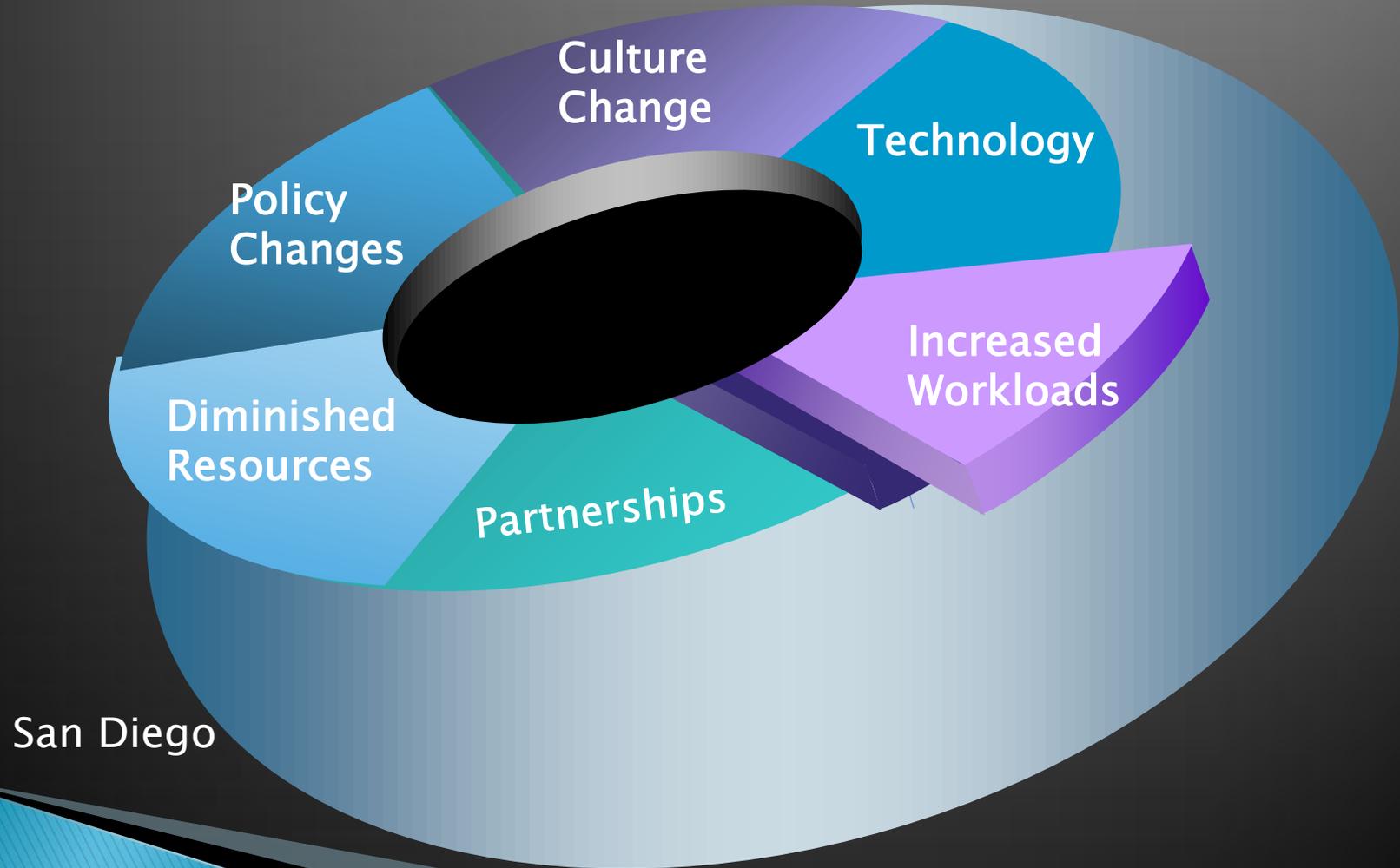
Several criteria were used to select the 14 States<sup>3</sup> for the intensive case studies, including type of SNAP administration, geographic representation of the modernization activities, types of modernization efforts being implemented, stage of implementation, and use of commercial or community-based partners. Colorado, the District of Columbia, Idaho, Illinois, Indiana, Kansas, Massachusetts, Mississippi, North Carolina, Pennsylvania, Texas, Utah, Washington, and Wisconsin were studied.

## Findings

The final report focuses on findings from the 14 State case studies and includes a synthesis of information from all three phases where appropriate. Key findings from the 14 case studies are presented below:

**Goals for Modernizing:** All 14 States mentioned increasing customer access and improving efficiency as primary goals for modernizing. Other related goals frequently

# Change What & Why?



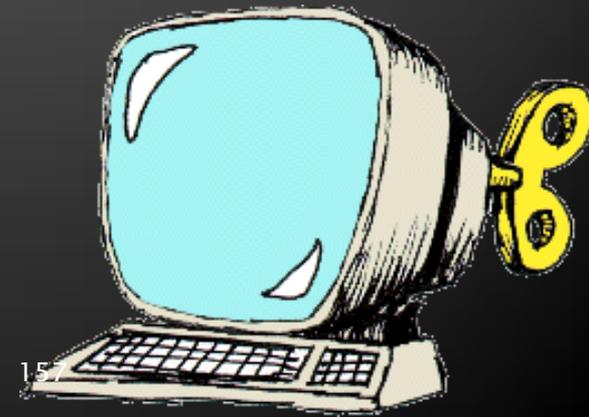
# FNS Recommendations

Culture  
Change

Policy  
&  
Procedural

Technology

Local  
Office  
Procedures



# Effective Administration of SNAP

State Exchange to Washington

Los Angeles  
Mendocino  
Riverside  
San Diego  
San Francisco  
Santa Clara  
Sacramento  
Solano  
Stanislaus

27<sup>th</sup>

# Project Management

- ▶ Project Manager
- ▶ Management Support
- ▶ Careful planning
  - internal or external (brings new perspective)
- ▶ Communication
- ▶ Incremental rollouts, roll out teams for all offices
  - Helps reduce local office autonomy & repeat solutions
- ▶ Measured outcomes
  - What were we trying to accomplish
- ▶ Flexibility
  - stop digging

# Culture Change



Changing the client experience when applying for benefits or conducting business.

# Culture Change

- ✦ Self-service lobbies
- ✦ New Staffing Arrangements
  - greeters, first point of contact resolution
- ✦ Any Counties using e/w's up front, admin support in back?

*The walk of the client...*



Lean focuses on the elimination of waste in a process

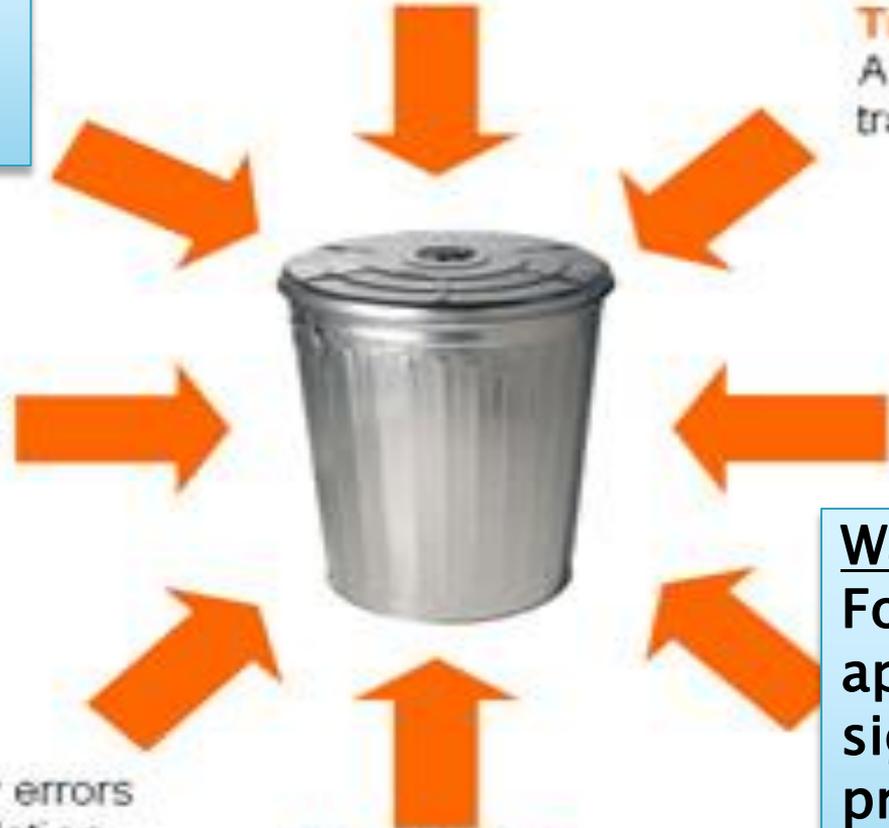
# Workflow Analysis

**Intellect**  
Failure to fully utilize time & talents of staff

**Overproduction**  
Producing too much, or producing too soon

**Transportation**  
Any nonessential transport is waste

**Motion**  
Any motion that does not add value e.g., re-entering information more than once



**Inventory**  
Any more than the minimum to get the job done

**Waiting**  
For an appointment, for a signature, for a printer or photocopier, for scanned docs

**Rework**  
Correcting any errors or doing completion steps not done before

**Processing**  
Over-processing, unnecessary steps, signatures, reviews

# Policy/Procedural Changes

- ▶ **Simplified Reporting** (1 report per year)
- ▶ **Broad Based Categorical Eligibility (BBCE)**
- ▶ **Interview Waivers**
- ▶ **Early Denial Waivers**
- ▶ **30– Day Restoration Waivers**
- ▶ **Simplified Verifications or**
- ▶ **Self–declaration–*anyone???***

# No More Culture of Local Office Autonomy

- ▶ Same experience from office to office
- ▶ Standardized:
  - documents,
  - narratives,
  - verifications
  - Processes—**anyone??**

*Helps with document imaging*



# Technology



# Data Sharing Systems

- ▶ *Electronically exchange customer data and documentation with one or more agencies.*
- ▶ A third of states nationally have data-sharing systems that reduce the amount of verification needed
- ▶ Data shared include:
  - Birth certificates
  - Residency Verification
  - Employment & Child Support Payments.

# Call & Change Centers

- ▶ Level of Service
  - Full Service–interviews, queries, other
  - Best with document imaging
- ▶ Standards of Service
  - Anticipated wait times for callers
  - Staffing level & expertise

# County Experience

- ▶ Some clients have no phone
- ▶ Capacity , wait times, dropped calls, complicated trees
  - Uses up client's cell phone minutes on extended waits
- ▶ Clients want to call *their* worker, “personal touch”
- ▶ Training needs for staff
  - Some prefer face-to-face interaction
  - Some staff still attempt to handle calls
- ▶ Client value added?
  - multiple handoffs?
  - Issue resolved?

Call center standards???



# Document Imaging & Electronic Storage

## Major components of imaging

- ✓ Scanning
- ✓ Indexing
- ✓ Workflow
- ✓ Search/retrieval
- ✓ Viewing and
- ✓ Error correction



# County Experience

- ▶ Imaging Backlogs
- ▶ Documents lost , misplaced, too hard to locate specific documents
- ▶ Too hard to transfer info between cases



# FNS Recommendation

- ▶ Pre-screening tools
- ▶ E-signature
- ▶ Download to the eligibility system
- ▶ Report Changes
- ▶ Check Status of
  - Application
  - Case

Eliminate unnecessary  
entries & screens  
Welcoming

On Line Application

Self Serv



## Self Service

# Check My Benefits (launched 9/05, Wisconsin model)

### FoodShare



RANDY



DAISY



MICKY

You are getting FoodShare in October 2007.

Your benefits started on Monday June 12, 2006.

In October 2007, your total monthly benefit amount is \$29.00.

Your next Six-Month Report Form (SMRF) must be completed and returned in February 2008.

Your next review must be completed in August 2008.

Your FoodShare benefits will be put on your QUEST card on the 12th of each month.

If the total gross income for this group goes over \$1,799.00 in any month, you need to let your worker know by the 10th day of the following month. By gross income, we mean the money that the people in this group get each month before taxes and other expenses are taken out. If the gross income stays below this amount each month, you do not need to report income changes to your worker until your next review or the next time you fill out your six-month report form (SMRF).

#### **We have found that:**

- As of September 2007, your FoodShare has changed from \$95.00 to \$29.00.

- *Detailed benefit information, including review dates, benefit amount, pending verification items and reason codes for denials or closures available on line*
- *Contact information for the local agency—anyone??*

# On Line Applications

## County Experience

- ▶ Securing signatures if no e-signature
- ▶ Scheduling interviews
  - Meeting expedited service timeframes
- ▶ Securing verifications
- ▶ Ability to file application with just name, address, signature



# On Line Applications

## County Experience

- ▶ Duplicate applications filed
  - 8% of applications in one state were duplicates
- ▶ Staff and applicants often have to work their way through numerous application screen pages even if no information is relevant (such as resource information for BBCE cases)
- ▶ No uploading of application info into eligibility system
- ▶ Higher denial rate for on line apps.
  - One state had 50% approval for online vs. 70% approval for in-office application

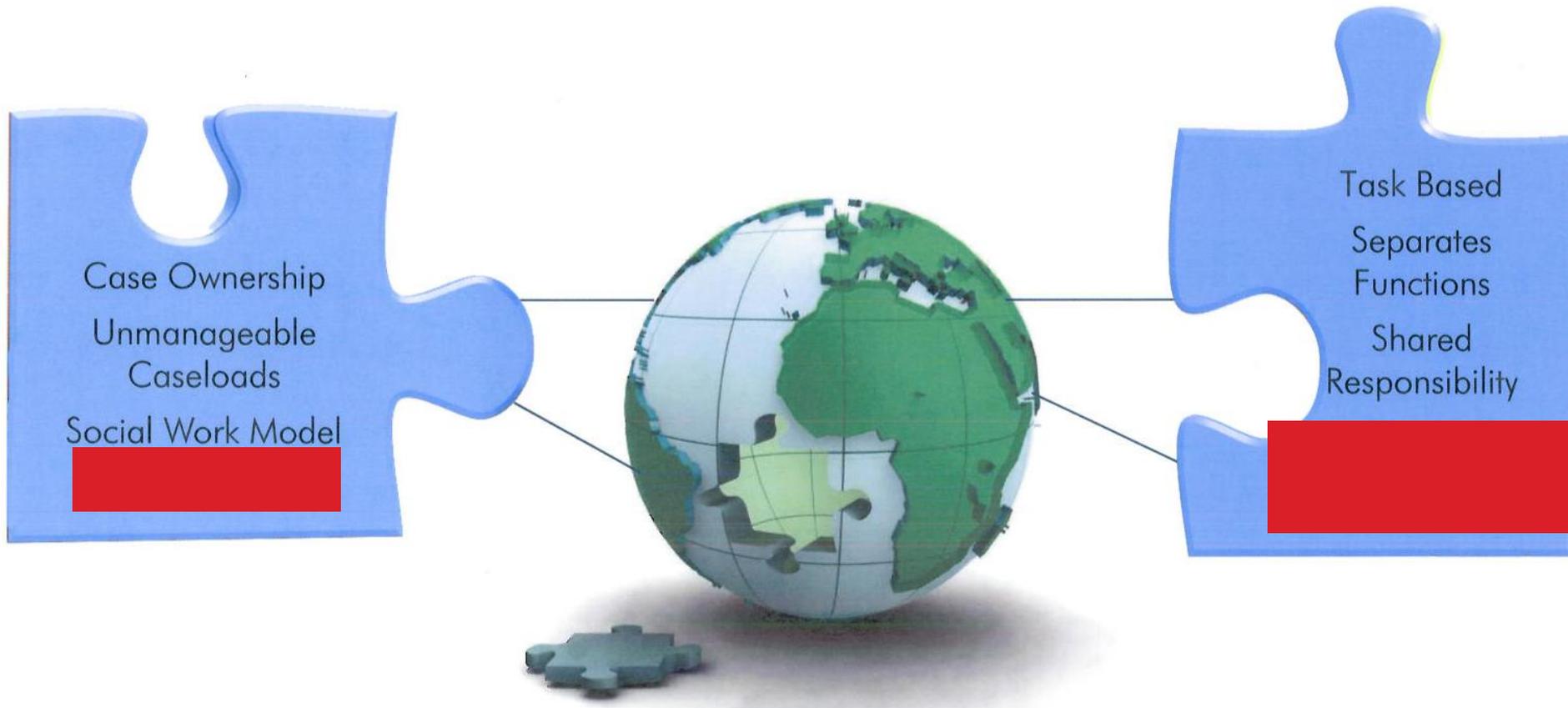


# Universal Caseload, Task Based Workload

Case Ownership  
Model



Universal Caseload  
Model



# Task Based Universal Caseload *County Experience*

- ▶ **Accountability**
  - Measuring staff performance
  - Equitable workloads
- ▶ **Shifting staff to where need is, varies in month**
- ▶ **Limited expertise**



# Increasing Access Points

## Customer Choice

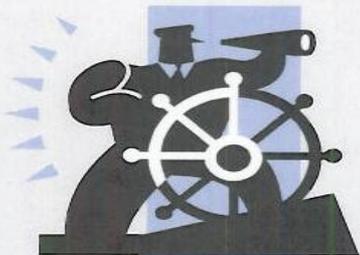
- Walk-in
- Mail-in
- Phone-in
- Online

## More Access Points

- Mobile CSO
- Fax Servers
- E-Mail
- Community Partners

Customer Driven Access

# Local Office Procedure

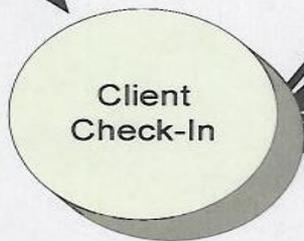


Navigators

Quick Questions  
Forms  
Directions



Online Application



EBT

Eligibility Reviews

Questions, Changes

Processing Pending Cases

Green track Interviews  
15-30 min. avg

Red track Interviews  
30-90 min. avg.

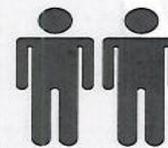
Partner 178



Interview Teams



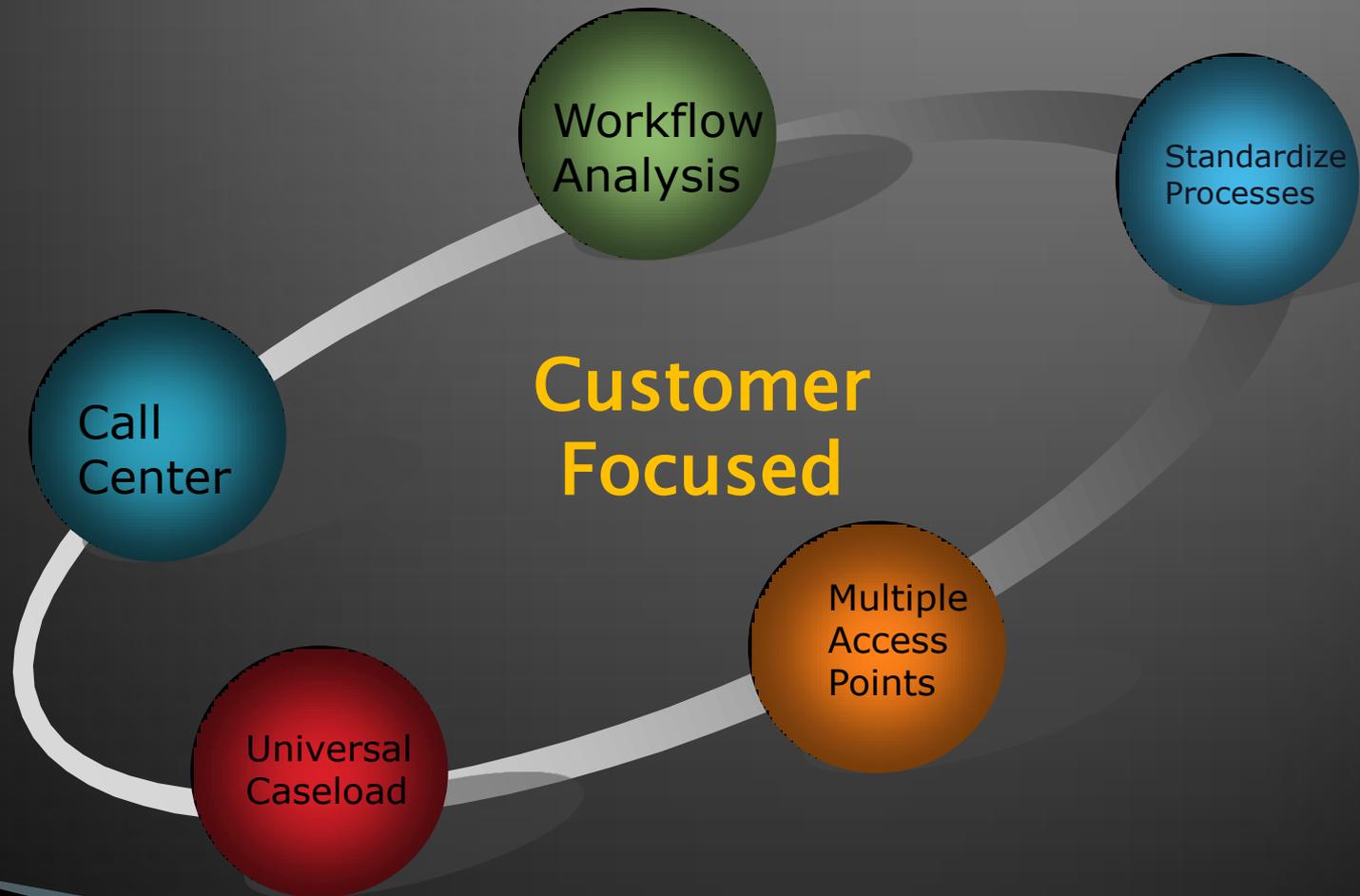
Processing Team



Eligibility Review Team  
(Maintenance)

Anyone- green/red track???

# What About FNS? We'd like to hear from you?



# References

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  - [http://www.fns.usda.gov/ora/menu/Published/SNAP/FILES/ProgramOperations/EnhancedCertification\\_FinalSummary.pdf](http://www.fns.usda.gov/ora/menu/Published/SNAP/FILES/ProgramOperations/EnhancedCertification_FinalSummary.pdf)
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- ▶ Florida Department of Children & Families, PowerPoint
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- ▶ Wisconsin Department of Health Services, PowerPoint
  - Lessons and Outcomes for Online Self-Service Tools(June 2008)
- ▶ Washington Department of Social and Health Services, PowerPoint
  - Service Delivery Review (2010)
- ▶ Public Consulting Group, PowerPoint, Providence, Rhode Island
  - Managing Rising Caseloads, Strategies for Improving Time Management & Reducing workload
- ▶ Idaho Department of Health and Welfare, PowerPoint
  - Changing the Human Service Delivery, Sacramento, CA (July, 2010)



# SNAP in San Diego County

Food Stamp Conference  
September 15 & 22, 2010

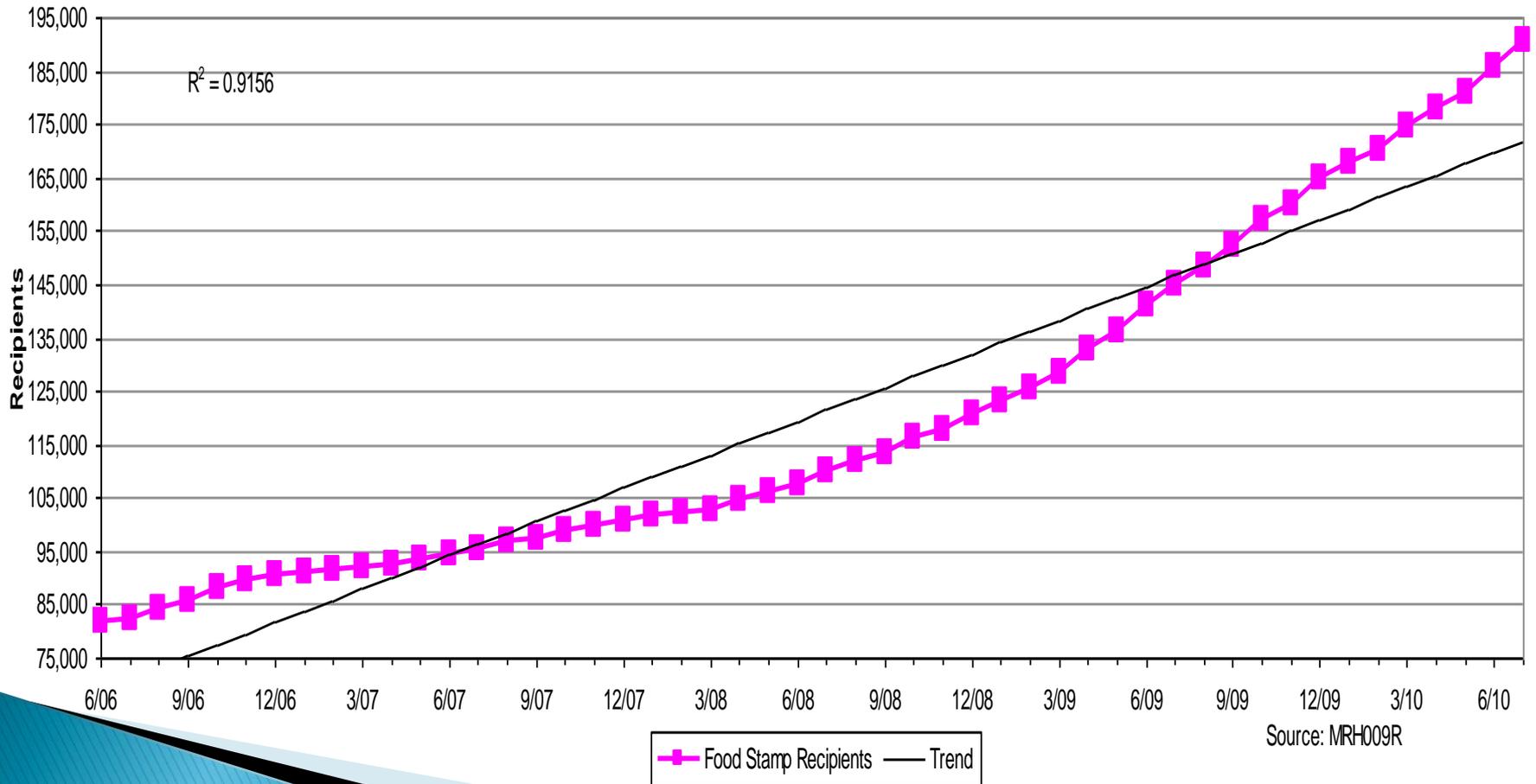
Kim Forrester, Assistant Deputy Directory

# Problem: Low Participation

- ▶ San Diego's participation rate ranked lowest in the nation among urban centers
- ▶ Lack of awareness of the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)
- ▶ Dissatisfaction with the eligibility process

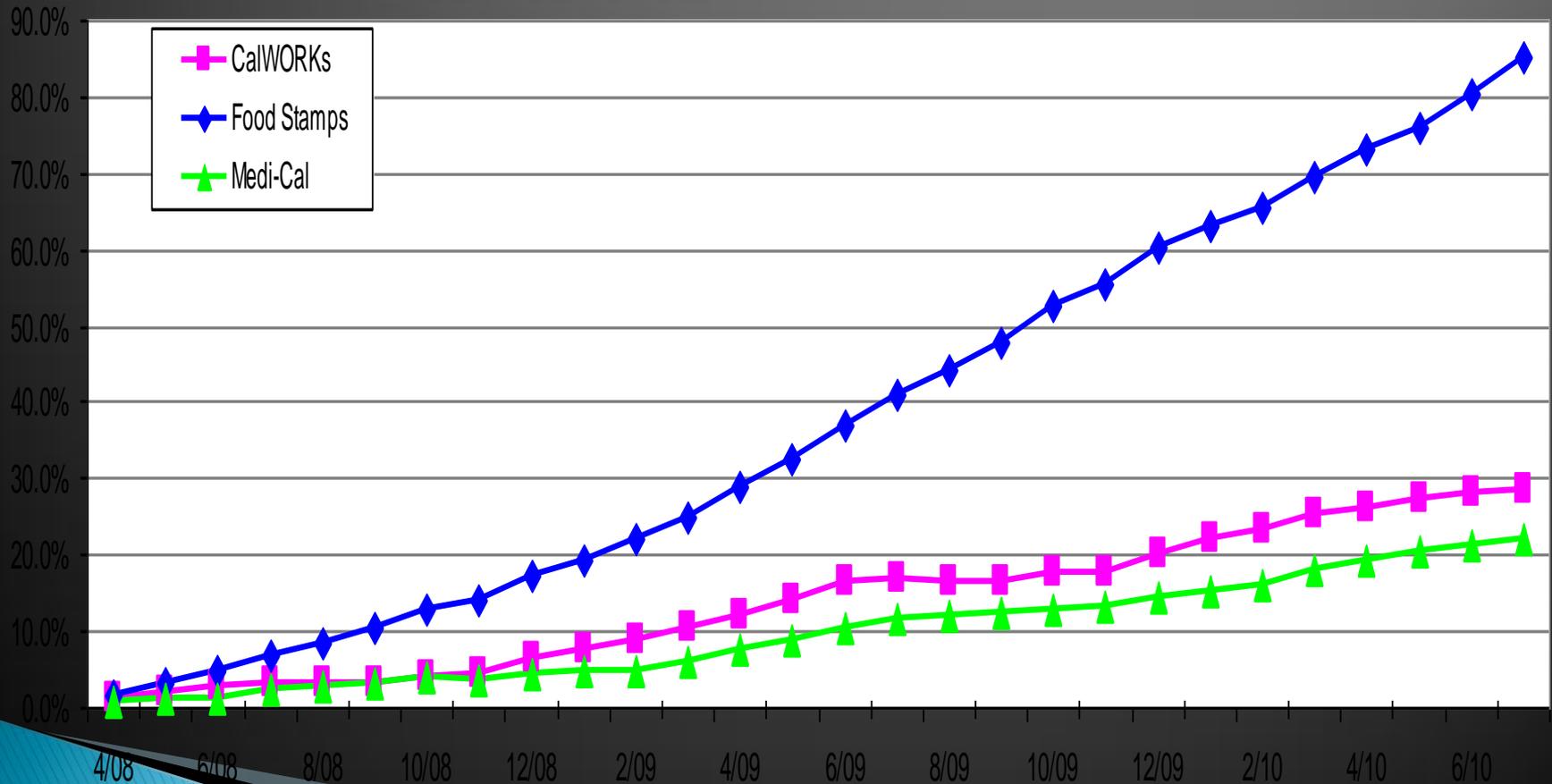
# SNAP Participation

County of San Diego  
Trend in Food Stamp Recipients



# SNAP vs. CalWORKs & Medi-Cal

Percent Change in Recipients Since March 2008



# Plan: Increase Nutrition Security

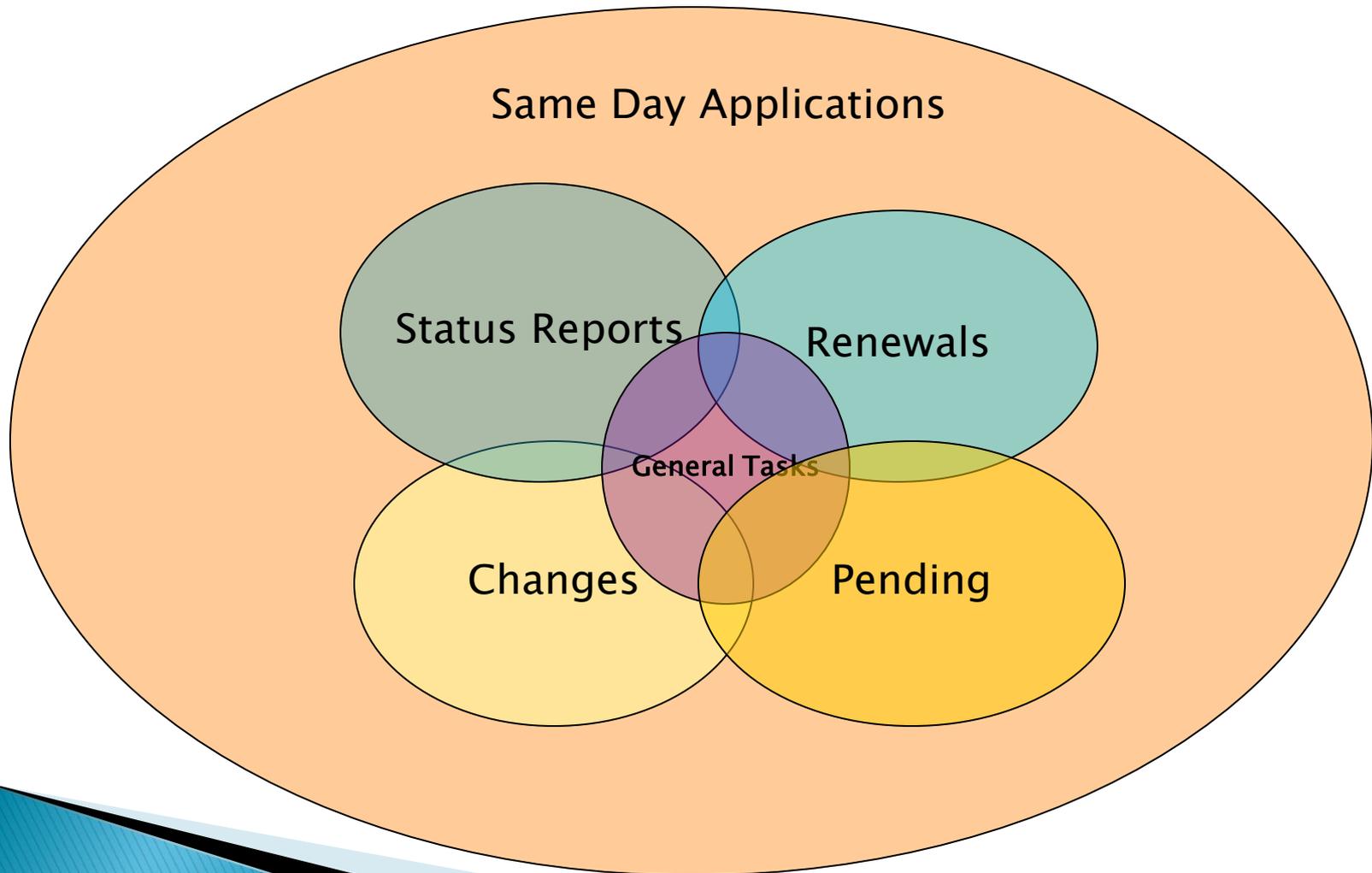
- ▶ Nutrition Security Plan
  - Add 50,000 kids and seniors by June 2012
  - Nutrition, outreach/in-reach, eligibility simplification & customer service
- ▶ Task Based Business Model
  - Document Imaging
  - Multi program worker
  - ACCESS Customer Service Center
  - No Wrong Door Policy

# Eligibility Business Process Re-Engineering (BPR)

Transformation status to date...

<i>Where we started...</i>	<i>Where we are headed...</i>	<i>Accomplished</i>
200,000 Paper Case Folders	Virtual caseload	<b>X</b>
Single-program specialty workers	Multi-program knowledge workers	<b>X</b>
15-18 days wait for application interview appointment	Same day application processing	<b>X</b>
Managing an individual caseload	Managing tasks as a team	<b>X</b>
Family Resource Center (FRC) tailored operations	Consistent uniform operations across FRCs	Implemented, being perfected
(Missed) Communication via voice mail and message desk	Response through centralized ACCESS Customer Service Center	Implemented, additional enhancements in progress
Customers assigned to a specific FRC	"No Wrong Door" access	<b>X</b>

# ***Task Groups Organizational Model***



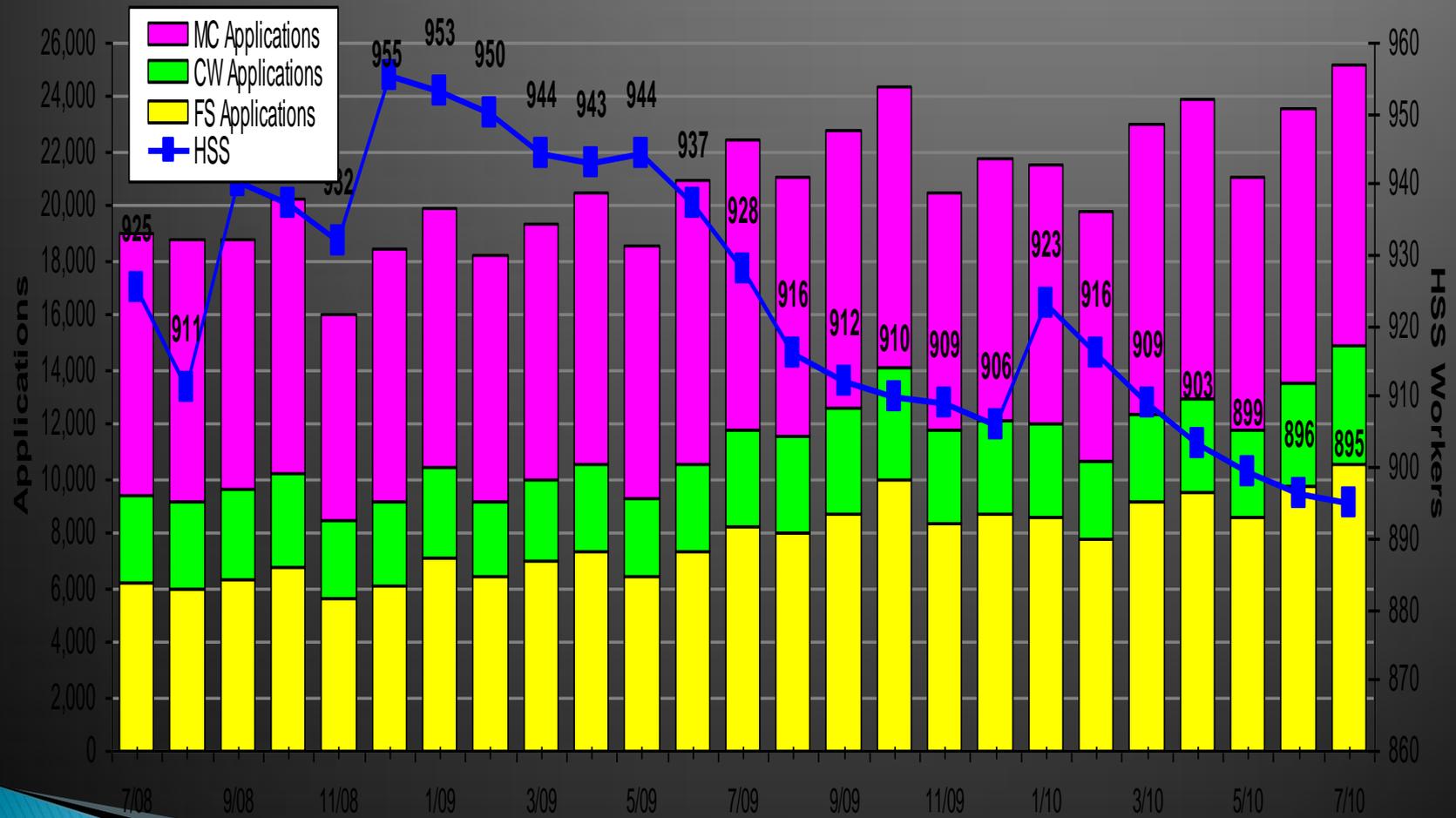
# Application Process

- ▶ Same-Day Intakes
- ▶ Electronic Applications
  - Benefits CalWIN
  - Community Partners
- ▶ Face-to-Face Waiver
- ▶ Working with Community Partners

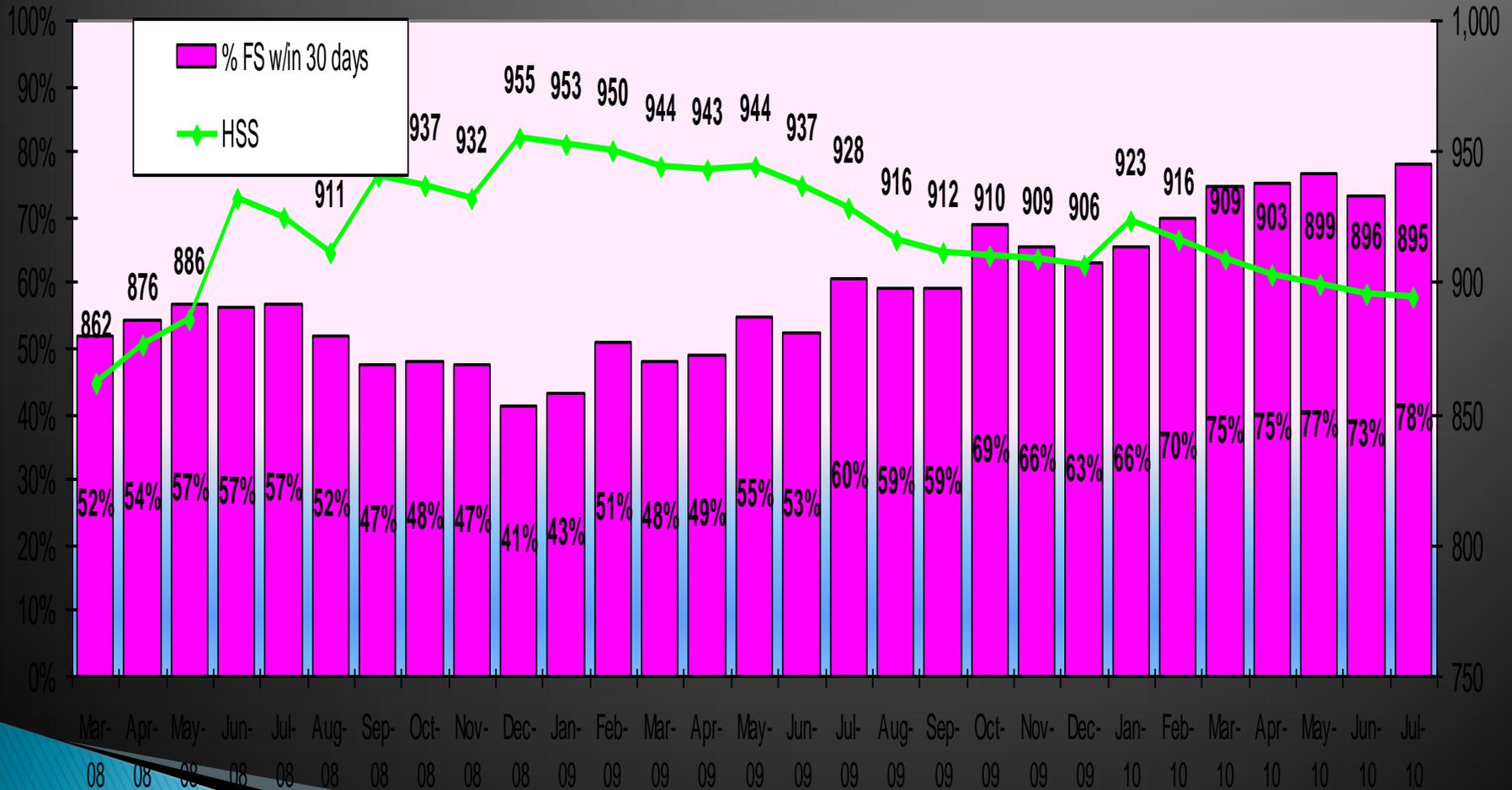
# Community Involvement in SNAP

- ▶ Provide application assistance
  - Mail-in or referral to FRC for same day interview
  - On-line application referral to ACCESS
- ▶ Inform applicants of needed verifications
- ▶ Explain the interview process and encourage applicants to comply
- ▶ Direct the applicants to a Family Resource Center

# Applications & Staff



# SNAP Applications Processed Timely & Number of Workers



# Outcomes: BPR

- ▶ Met increasing demand for public assistance without increasing staff
- ▶ Reduced wait times for an intake interview
- ▶ Reduced variation in service
- ▶ Increased productivity and efficiency
- ▶ Customer service training for eligibility staff

# Next Steps

## ▶ Technology

- Enhancing self-service (Benefits CalWIN, ACCESS)
- Automated case comments – Balderas calls
- Encrypted email for communication

## ▶ Processes

- Standardizing processes
- Initial point of contact resolution
  - Eligibility Workers at reception
  - ACCESS Customer Service Center
- Continuous improvement based on best practices