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440.1 Purpose

This section provides the general policy regarding recertification of Food Supplement Program (FSP) benefit eligibility.

440.2 General Policy

- A. No household can participate beyond the expiration of the assigned certification period without a determination of eligibility for a new period.
- B. The LDSS is responsible for:
 - 1. Notifying households of expiration dates,
 - 2. Providing application forms,
 - 3. Scheduling interviews, and
 - 4. Recertifying households before the expiration of certification periods.
- C. Households must:
 - 1. Apply for recertification, and
 - 2. Comply with interview and verification requirements.

Note: CARES will close the case automatically for failure to complete the recertification process.

440.3 Notice of Expiration

- A. CARES will provide each household with a notice of the expiration of its certification just prior to the last month of its certification period.
- B. The LDSS will provide households certified for one month or certified in the second month of a two-month certification period a notice of expiration at certification.

440.4 Interview

- A. As part of the recertification process the case manager must conduct an interview with a member of the household or its authorized representative at least every 12 months for households certified for 12 months or less.

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440.4 Interview (continued)

B. Local Department Option:

1. The local department may choose to interview households at interim recertifications within the 12-month period.
2. **This cannot be on case-by-case basis. The local department must establish categories and procedures that will be applied consistently to all cases to ensure non-discriminatory treatment.**

Example: The case manager assigns a 4-month certification period to a household that is in an unstable situation. The local department can send the household a mail-in application for the next two recertifications and schedule a face-to-face or telephone interview at the 12-month interval.

The policy about waiving a face-to-face interview for hardship reasons applies to the required interview at 12-month intervals.

- C. The local department may waive the face-to-face interview at recertification and conduct a telephone interview.
- D. The local department must schedule the interview so that the household has at least 10 days after the interview to provide verification before the certification period expires.

Note: CARES will schedule recertification interviews for most cases well before the end of the certification period.

- E. If a household misses its scheduled interview, CARES sends a notice of missed interview along with the notice of closing.
- F. If the household misses its scheduled interview and requests another interview, the local department must schedule a second appointment.

440.5 Verification

A. The local department must:

1. Verify information provided by the household as required in section 408,
2. Provide the household with a notice of required verification, and

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440.5 Verification (continued)

3. Notify the household of the date by which it must provide the verification information.
- B. The household must be allowed at least 10 days to provide required verification.
 - C. If the local department cannot determine a household's eligibility by the end of its certification period because of the time period allowed for submitting any missing verification, it must give the household the opportunity to participate, if eligible, within 5 working days after the household submits the missing verification.

440.6 Timely Application for Recertification

- A. The household completes the application process when it does all the following:
 1. Files a timely application for recertification.
 2. Has an interview, if required.
 3. Submits requested verification within 10 days of the date of the request.
- B. The local department will process a timely application for recertification and provide uninterrupted benefits to any household determined eligible.
- C. To be considered timely:
 1. Households that were certified for one month or certified in the second month of a two-month certification period will have 15 days from the date the notice of expiration is received to file a timely application for recertification.
 2. The LDSS will consider all other households that submit an application by the 15th of the last month of the certification period to have made timely application for recertification.
- D. For households certified at the Social Security Administration (SSA) office, an application is considered filed for normal processing purposes when SSA receives the signed application.
- E. In cases of dispute, the household may demonstrate that the notice of expiration was not received timely.

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440.7 Action on Timely Re – Applications

- A. Households that were certified for one month or for two months in the second month of the certification period and who have met all required application procedures must be:
1. Notified of their eligibility or ineligibility for FSP benefits, and
 2. Given an opportunity to participate, if eligible, not later than 30 days after the date the household obtained its last allotment.
- B. For other households that that have met all application requirements the local department will:
1. Notify the household of eligibility or ineligibility by the end of the current certification period.
 2. Provide, if eligible, an opportunity to participate by the household's normal issuance cycle in the month following the end of its current certification period.

NOTE: Households that re-applied timely, but due to local department error are not determined eligible in sufficient time to provide benefits in the household's normal issuance cycle for the following month, will receive an immediate opportunity to participate.

440.8 Delayed Processing

- A. Household Files an Application before the end of the Certification Period
1. If an eligible household files an application before the end of the certification period but the recertification process cannot be completed within 30 days after the date of reapplication because of local department fault (see 406.5 of the Food Supplement Program Manual), the case manager must:
 - (a) Continue to process the case, and
 - (b) Provide a full month's allotment for the first month of the new certification period.
 2. If a household files an application before the end of the certification period, but fails to take a required action (i.e. submit verification), the case manager will deny the case at the end of the certification period. (The case will automatically close if required verification is not updated.)

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440.8 Delayed Processing (continued)

- (a) The household has 30 days after the end of the certification period to complete the process and have its application be treated the same as an application for recertification. Counties that have simplified recertification applications could use these instead of a longer application. Also policy for verification at recertification would apply.
- (b) If the household takes the required action before the end of the certification period, the local department must provide a full month's FSP benefits for the initial month of the new certification period.
- (c) If the household takes the required action after the end of the certification period but within 30 days after the end of the certification period, the case manager will reopen the case and provide FSP benefits back to the date that the household took the required action.

Example: The household was interviewed for recertification on May 5, at which time the agency requested verification of earnings. The certification period ends May 31. The household provided the information on June 10. The case manager opens the household's case and prorates FSP benefits from June 10.

B. Household files an Application after the End of the Certification Period

1. If the household files an application within 30 days after the end of the certification period, the case manager will consider it as an application for recertification, but the FSP) benefits will be prorated from the date of the new application.
2. If a household's application for recertification is delayed beyond the first of the month of what would have been its new certification period through the fault of the local department, the case manager must restore FSP benefits back to the date the household's certification should have begun.

NOTE: Local departments are not required to apply expedited service policy at recertification if the household applies before the end of its current certification period. It must screen all applications filed after the end of a certification period for entitlement to expedited service.