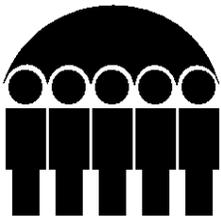


Revised December 17, 2004

Employees' Manual  
Title 7  
Chapter A

# ADMINISTRATION



Iowa  
Department  
of  
Human Services

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	<u>Page</u>
OVERVIEW .....	1
Purpose and Organization of the Program.....	1
Definitions .....	2
Disabled Member.....	10
RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE DEPARTMENT.....	12
Adjustments due to Changes in FIP or Federal Benefits.....	12
Adjustments due to Changes in Program Standards.....	13
Bilingual Requirements .....	13
Complaint System.....	14
Confidentiality .....	16
Social Security Numbers .....	18
Effect of Receipt of Food Assistance on Other Benefits.....	19
Nondiscrimination Compliance .....	19
Data Collection .....	20
Filing a Discrimination Complaint .....	20
Discrimination Complaint Requirements .....	21
Personnel.....	22
Hours of Operation .....	22
Volunteers.....	22
Records and Reports .....	23
Public Information .....	24
Program Informational Activities .....	24
Work Opportunity Tax Credit .....	24
ELECTRONIC BENEFIT TRANSFER.....	26
EBT Card Interstate Interoperability .....	26
Authorizing Food Assistance.....	27
Providing Access to the Food Account .....	27
Mailing EBT Cards.....	28
Food Assistance Availability Dates.....	29

---

	<u>Page</u>
Establishing Cardholders .....	30
The Primary Cardholder .....	31
Undocumented Aliens and Other Ineligible Members .....	32
Secondary Cardholders .....	32
Authorized Representative.....	33
Who Cannot Be an Authorized Representative .....	34
Person Representing Multiple Households.....	34
Households That Have Guardians, Conservators or Payees.....	35
Emergency Authorized Representative .....	35
Establishing a Secondary Cardholder or Authorized Representative.....	36
Replacing Secondary Cardholders or Authorized Representatives .....	36
Authorized Representative’s Request to Terminate .....	37
Disqualifying an Authorized Representative.....	37
Replacement EBT Cards.....	38
Returned EBT Cards.....	39
EBT Cards Returned to the Local Office.....	39
Law Enforcement Returns a Card or Inquires About a Cardholder .....	39
Reapplications for Food Assistance.....	40
Deactivating an Iowa EBT Card.....	41
Changes in Household Composition .....	42
When a Household Splits Up.....	42
Primary Cardholder Becomes Ineligible for Food Assistance.....	43
PARTICIPANT USE OF BENEFITS .....	43
What Food Assistance Can Be Used For.....	43
Where Food Assistance Can Be Used .....	44
Retailers Wanting to Accept EBT .....	45
Penalties for Misusing Food Assistance .....	45
Handling Complaints of Trafficking.....	47

---

	<u>Page</u>
MEAL PROVIDERS THAT ACCEPT FOOD ASSISTANCE .....	47
Homeless Meal Providers .....	48
FNS-Authorized Meal Service Facilities.....	49
Contacts for Facilities .....	50
Facilities Prohibited From Using Clients' EBT Cards and PINs.....	51
Facility Employee as an Authorized Representative .....	51
Residential Clients .....	52
Non-Residential Clients.....	52
Appointing the Authorized Representative .....	53
Reporting Requirements .....	53
Facilities Not Authorized by FNS as a Meal Service .....	54
Use of Food Assistance by the Facility .....	55
Appointing Facility Employee as Authorized Representative.....	56
Residential Facility Clients.....	56
Non-Residential Facility Clients.....	56
When a Facility Replaces the Authorized Representative.....	57
Authorized Representative's Reporting Requirements.....	58
When a Household Moves to a Facility .....	58
Resident Moves Out of a Facility .....	59
Facility Monitoring by DHS .....	61
Facility Monthly Reporting .....	61
Group Living Arrangements.....	62
Residents of Group Living Arrangement.....	63
Residents Who Do Not Use a Facility Authorized Representative .....	64
Facility Responsibilities and Authorized Representatives .....	64
Use of Food Assistance.....	65
Resident Moves Out.....	66
Monthly Reports and On-Site Reviews .....	67
Shelters for Battered Women and Children.....	68

	<u>Page</u>
MANAGEMENT EVALUATION.....	69
Review Process .....	70
Selecting Review Sites.....	70
Review Procedures .....	71
Payment Accuracy Review .....	71
Client Access Review .....	72
Claims Review .....	72
Civil Rights Requirements.....	73
Management Evaluation Findings .....	74
Local Office Responsibilities Relating to Management Evaluation.....	74

## **OVERVIEW**

This chapter details the overall administrative requirements of Iowa's Food Assistance program, including a list of definitions used in the program. The chapter explains the Department's administrative responsibilities, issuance of benefits by electronic benefit transfer, and the rights and responsibilities of Food Assistance participants, including program violations and how participants may use benefits. Also included are policies specific to facilities.

The policies and procedures in this chapter are based on the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008, as amended. The portion of the Code of Federal Regulations that interprets the Food and Nutrition Act is Title 7. Department rules in 441 Iowa Administrative Code Chapter 65 implement the Food Assistance program in Iowa.

### **Purpose and Organization of the Program**

**Legal reference:** 7 CFR 271.4(a) and (b), 273.18

The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program is a uniform nationwide program intended to promote the general welfare and safeguard the health and well being of the nation's population by raising the levels of nutrition among low-income households. The federal program is known in Iowa as the "Food Assistance" program.

The U.S. Department of Agriculture's Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) administers the program. FNS delegates to the Iowa Department of Human Services the responsibility for the administration of the program within the state. These responsibilities include, but are not limited to:

- ◆ Certification of applicant households in compliance with federal regulations.
- ◆ Issuance, control, and accountability of Food Assistance.
- ◆ Program information activities.
- ◆ Developing and maintaining complaint procedures.
- ◆ Developing, conducting, and evaluating training.
- ◆ Conducting performance reporting reviews such as quality control and management evaluation.

## OVERVIEW

### Purpose and Organization of the Program

Revised September 12, 2008

Iowa Department of Human Services

Title 7 Food Assistance

Chapter A Administration

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- ◆ Submitting accurate and timely financial and program reports.
- ◆ Keeping records necessary to determine whether the program is conducted in compliance with federal regulations.

FNS also delegates to the state agency, subject to the standards in 7-H, [ADJUSTMENTS](#), the authority to handle any claim that results from fraudulent or nonfraudulent overissuances to participating households. The state agency has the authority to:

- ◆ Determine the amount of a claim.
- ◆ Settle, adjust, or compromise a claim.
- ◆ Deny all or part of a claim.

Some of these responsibilities are delegated to the field offices, the central and field offices share some jointly, and some remain strictly a central office responsibility. Title 7 of the Employees' Manual explains the division of responsibilities and certification procedures.

### Definitions

**Legal reference:** 7 CFR 271.2, 273.10(a)(ii), 441 IAC 65.1(234)

**“Adequate notice”** is a written notice that informs the household of:

- ◆ An action the Department is taking,
- ◆ The reason for the action,
- ◆ When the action is effective,
- ◆ The manual number, chapter number, and subheading supporting the action,
- ◆ The household's right to a fair hearing, and
- ◆ How the household can request continuing assistance when it requests a hearing.

Adequate notice must be given no later than:

- ◆ Before the action;
- ◆ On the date benefits are available; or
- ◆ At the time benefits would have been received had they not been terminated.

**“Alien Status Verification Index (ASVI)”** means the automated database maintained by the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services, which state agencies use to verify alien status.

**“Allotment”** means the total value of benefits a household is authorized to receive during a month.

“**ARU**” means automated response unit. An ARU is a dial-in inquiry system. Use of the system requires a touch-tone or digital phone. Iowa’s EBT customer service is an ARU system. A customer service representative can be accessed through it.

“**Certification period**” means the period for which households are certified to receive Food Assistance benefits.

“**Communal dining facility**” means a public or nonprofit private establishment, approved by FNS, which prepares and serves meals for elderly people or for Supplemental Security Income (SSI) recipients and their spouses. It includes:

- ◆ Senior citizens’ centers.
- ◆ Apartment buildings occupied primarily by elderly people or SSI households.
- ◆ Public or private nonprofit establishments (eating or otherwise) that feed elderly people or SSI recipients and their spouses.
- ◆ Federally subsidized housing for the elderly at which meals are prepared for and served to the residents.
- ◆ Private establishments that contract with a state or local agency to offer meals at concessional prices to elderly people or SSI recipients and their spouses.

“**Date of entry**” or “**date of admission**” means the date an alien was lawfully admitted for permanent residence in the United States, as established by the federal government.

“**Disabled**” means meeting the requirements under [Disabled Member](#) later in this chapter.

“**EBT**” means electronic benefits transfer, the method the Department uses to issue Food Assistance benefits.

“**EBT card**” means the magnetic plastic swipe card that Food Assistance participants use to access their benefits at retail outlets.

“**EBT customer service**” in Iowa is accessed for cardholders by calling 1-800-359-5802. Retailers access customer service by calling 1-800-414-1422.

“**Elderly person**” means a person 60 years of age or older.

**“Emergency service”** means faster processing. Households must meet certain criteria to be eligible for emergency service. Households eligible for emergency service may receive their benefits within seven days after the date of application. Emergency service may also be referred to as “expedited service.”

**“Enrolled in an institution of higher education”** means a person is enrolled in:

- ◆ A business, vocational, technical or trade school that normally requires a high school diploma or equivalency certificate for enrollment in the curriculum.
- ◆ A regular curriculum at a junior, community, two-year, or four-year college or university that offers degree programs, regardless of whether a high school diploma is required. This does not include special programs such as courses for English as a second language that are not part of the regular curriculum.

**“EPPIC™”** means Electronic Payment Processing Inventory Control System, which is a trademarked data processing system owned by Affiliated Computer Systems Government Solutions Inc. (ACS), Iowa’s service provider for electronic benefits transfer. EPPIC™ provides an interface between the Department and ACS by transferring information from the Automated Benefit Calculation (ABC) system to ACS. EPPIC™ does not transmit information to ABC. (See [14-J](#) for more information on EPPIC™.)

**“Federal fiscal year”** means a period of 12 calendar months beginning with each October 1 and ending with September 30 of the following calendar year.

**“FIP”** means the Family Investment Program, which is Iowa’s Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) cash assistance program.

**“FMAP”** means the Family Medical Assistance Program. FMAP is the basis of Medicaid eligibility policy for coverage groups for pregnant women, families, and children.

**“FNS”** means the Food and Nutrition Service of the United States Department of Agriculture, which is the federal agency that administers the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program.

The **“Food and Nutrition Act of 2008”** is the federal law that authorizes the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance program and was formerly known as the Food Stamp Act of 1977 (Public Law 95-113), including any subsequent amendments.

**“General assistance”** means:

- ◆ Cash or another form of assistance, excluding in-kind assistance,
- ◆ Which is financed by state or local funds,
- ◆ As part of a program that provides assistance to cover living expenses or other basic needs intended to promote the health or well being of recipients.

This includes veterans’ relief (other than assistance for burial expense of deceased veterans and their survivors), general relief, and Indian relief. General assistance means government, as opposed to private, funds administered on the state or local level.

**“Homeless meal provider”** means a public or private nonprofit establishment (e.g., soup kitchen, temporary shelter) that the local office approves, upon presentation of sufficient evidence, as serving meals to homeless persons.

**“Homeless person”** means a person who lacks a fixed and regular nighttime residence or a person whose primary nighttime residence is one of the following:

- ◆ A supervised shelter designed to provide temporary accommodations (such as a welfare hotel or congregate shelter).
- ◆ A halfway house or similar institution that provides temporary residence for persons intended to be institutionalized.
- ◆ A temporary accommodation in the home of another person. (The situation is no longer considered “temporary” after a person has lived in another person’s home for 90 days.)
- ◆ A place not designed for, or ordinarily used, as a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings (a hallway, a bus station, a lobby or similar places).

**“Immigration and Naturalization Service”** or **“INS”** means the previous federal agency that dealt with aliens. These duties have been transitioned into the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS).

**“Initial application”** means an application made by or on behalf of a household that:

- ◆ Is not certified on the date of the application or
- ◆ Has made an untimely application for recertification more than 30 days after the household’s certification has expired.

**“Initial month”** means the first month the household is certified for Food Assistance following any break in participation. **Exception:** For migrant or seasonal farm worker households, “initial month” means the first month the household is certified following a break of at least one month in participation.

The initial month is the only month benefits are prorated. Benefits are considered prorated in an initial month even if the effective date is the first of the month.

**“Intentional failure to comply”:**

- ◆ In the FIP or veteran pension program means when fraud is established by a court.
- ◆ In the SSI program means when the Social Security Administration verifies that the client committed fraud.

**“Intentional program violation”** is any act that violates the Food and Nutrition Act, program regulations, or state statute relating to Food Assistance.

**“Liquid resources”** means resources that can readily be converted into cash. Examples of liquid resources are: cash on hand, money in checking or savings accounts, credit union accounts, savings certificates, current market value of stocks and bonds, and nonrecurring lump sum payments.

**“Manual voucher”** is a paper form that is used to complete a Food Assistance transaction when a retailer’s equipment is not working. Retailers that do not have equipment to accept an EBT card use only manual vouchers. A manual voucher is similar to an electronic check. Only FNS authorized retailers can have manual voucher forms.

**“Maximum allotment”** means the maximum amount of benefits a household can be authorized to receive during a month. The allotment is based on the Thrifty Food Plan.

**“Meal delivery service”** means a service provided by a political subdivision, a private nonprofit organization, or a private establishment with which the state or local government has contracted for the preparation and delivery of meals at concessional prices to:

- ◆ Elderly people and their spouses; and
- ◆ Persons who are physically or mentally handicapped or otherwise disabled such that the person is unable to prepare all meals adequately, and those persons’ spouses.

**“Meal service”** is a firm authorized by FNS to accept Food Assistance as payment for prepared meals.

**“Means-tested program”** means a program that uses income and resource guidelines to determine eligibility. SSI and FIP are examples of means-tested programs. Social Security benefits and Unemployment Compensation are not means-tested programs.

**“Medicaid”** means medical assistance under Title XIX of the Social Security Act, as amended.

**“Migrant”** means a person who moves on a regular basis to find work in harvesting crops or other agricultural activities.

**“Minimum benefit”** means the minimum monthly amount of benefits that one- and two-person households receive. The amount of the minimum benefit is equal to eight percent of the maximum monthly allotment for a one-person household. See 7-F, [Exceptions to Benefit Level](#).

**“Nonliquid resources”** means resources that cannot be easily converted into cash. Examples are personal property, licensed and unlicensed vehicles, buildings, land, and recreational property.

**“Nonprofit cooperative food purchasing venture”** means any private nonprofit association of consumers whose members pool their resources to buy food.

**“Normal issuance cycle”** is from the first of one calendar month to the first of the next calendar month for all eligible households. The required staggered issuance of Food Assistance does not alter this normal issuance cycle.

**“Overissuance”** means the amount by which benefits issued to a household exceed the amount it was eligible to receive.

**“PAN”** means the personal account number on the front of the EBT card.

**“Parent”** means a person who is the legal parent, natural parent, or stepparent of a child, and includes persons having parental control over a child.

**“Parental control”** means living with and fulfilling the role of parent, financially or otherwise, for a child under age 18. A child is not under parental control if the child is married, because state law defines a married person as an adult.

**“PIN”** means personal identification number. For EBT, the PIN is a four-digit number that the cardholder enters into a point-of-sale device using the device’s keypad to access the household’s food assistance account.

**“Primary cardholder”** means the food assistance case name on the Automated Benefit Calculation (ABC) system.

**“Program”** means the Food Assistance program conducted under the Food and Nutrition Act and regulations.

**“Prospective budgeting”** means that the assistance computation is based on an estimate of the income, expenses, and other circumstances that will exist in the certification period.

**“Public assistance household”** means a Food Assistance household in which at least one member is applying for or receiving assistance through the FIP, refugee cash assistance, refugee medical assistance or FMAP-related Medicaid programs. In a “pure” public assistance household, all members are applying for or receiving public assistance.

**“Seasonal farm worker”** means a person who works on a farm or ranch on a seasonal basis when the work is generally within commuting distance of the person’s home.

**“Secondary cardholder”** means a household member authorized by the primary cardholder to receive an EBT card on the household’s Food Assistance EBT account.

**“Shelters for battered women and children”** means public or private nonprofit residential facilities that serve battered women and their children. If a facility serves other people, a portion of the facility must be set aside on a long-term basis to serve only battered women and children.

Only shelters that function exclusively to serve battered women with or without children are included in this definition. Any residence that takes care of such women from time to time in addition to serving as a regular residence for others, such as a private home or boarding house, is not included unless a portion of the regular residence is reserved on a long-term basis to shelter battered women.

**“Single parent”** means a parent living with a child and not living with that child’s other legal or natural parent, or not living with a spouse.

**“Sponsor”** means a person who executed an affidavit of support or similar agreement on behalf of an alien as a condition of the alien’s entry or admission into the United States as a permanent resident.

**“Sponsored alien”** means those aliens lawfully admitted for permanent residence into the United States as described in [7-I](#).

**“Spouse”** refers to either of two persons who have a valid marriage. Only a marriage between a male and a female is a valid marriage. See Iowa Code section 595.2(1) for further information. This includes common-law marriage, as defined by the case law of the Iowa Supreme Court. The necessary elements of a common-law marriage are:

- ◆ Intent and agreement to be married,
- ◆ Continuous cohabitation, and
- ◆ Public declaration that parties are husband and wife.

**“State Income and Eligibility Verification System (IEVS)”** means a system of information acquisition and exchange for purposes of income and eligibility verification which meets the requirements of Section 1137 of the Social Security Act.

**“Supplemental Security Income (SSI)”** means monthly cash payments made under the authority of one of the following:

- ◆ Title XVI of the Social Security Act, to the aged, blind, or disabled, or
- ◆ Section 1616(a) of the Social Security Act, or
- ◆ Section 212(a) of Public Law 93-66.

**“Systematic Alien Verification for Entitlements (SAVE)”** means the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services program whereby state agencies may obtain information from a central data file to verify the validity of documents provided by aliens applying for benefits.

**“Thrifty Food Plan”** means the diet required to feed a family of four persons consisting of a man and a woman 20 through 50 years of age, a child aged 6 through 8, and a child aged 9 through 11, as determined by the Secretary of the U.S. Department of Agriculture. The cost of this diet is the basis for allotments for all households, regardless of their actual composition, after household-size adjustments taking into account economies of scale and other adjustments as required by law.

“**Timely notice**” means a notice is given at least ten calendar days before the date the action is effective. For a mailed notice, the ten-day period begins on the day after mailing.

“**Trafficking**” means buying or selling of electronic benefit transfer (EBT) cards. This includes trading benefits for firearms, ammunition, explosives, controlled substances, or anything other than eligible food. Trafficking is an intentional program violation.

“**Tribal TANF payments**” means assistance that Native American Tribes may provide in place of assistance from the Family Investment Program (FIP.) Treat a person who receives Tribal TANF payments the same as a FIP recipient for purposes of determining:

- ◆ Categorical eligibility, see 7-C, [Categorically Eligible FIP and SSI Households](#)
- ◆ Exemptions from work registration, see 7-C, [Exemptions From Work Registration](#)
- ◆ Countable resources, see 7-D, [Whose Resources to Count](#)
- ◆ Student eligibility, see 7-I, [Eligible Students](#)

“**Underissuance**” means less benefits were issued than the household was entitled to receive.

“**Untimely application for recertification**” means an application filed after the date specified on the *Review/Recertification Eligibility Document*.

“**U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services**” or “**USCIS**” means the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services of the Department of Homeland Security.

“**Wholesale food concern**” means an establishment that sells eligible food to retail food stores or to meal services for resale to households.

### **Disabled Member**

“Disabled member” means a household member who meets at least one of the following:

- ◆ Receives supplemental security income (SSI) benefits under Title XVI of the Social Security Act or disability or blindness payment under Titles I, II, X, XIV or XVI of the Social Security Act.
- ◆ Receives federal or state supplemental benefits under section 1616(a) of the Social Security Act, and eligibility for benefits is based on the disability or blindness criteria under Title XVI of the Social Security Act.

- 
- ◆ Receives federal or state supplemental benefits under section 212(a) of Public Law 93-66.
  - ◆ Receives disability retirement benefits from a governmental agency because of a disability considered permanent under Section 221(i) of the Social Security Act.
  - ◆ Is a veteran who, under Title 38 of the United States Code, either:
    - Has a disability rated or paid as total by the Veterans Administration, or
    - Is considered by the Veterans Administration to be in need of regular aid and attendance or to be permanently housebound.
  - ◆ Is a surviving spouse of a veteran who, under Title 38 of the U.S. Code, either:
    - Is considered by the Veterans Administration to be in need of regular aid and attendance or to be permanently housebound, or
    - Receives or has been approved for compensation for a service-connected death or a pension benefit for a nonservice-connected death, and has a disability considered permanent under Section 221(i) of the Social Security Act.
  - ◆ Is a surviving child of a veteran who, under Title 38 of the U.S. Code, either:
    - Is considered to be permanently incapable of self-support, or
    - Receives or has been approved for compensation for a service-connected death or a pension benefit for a nonservice-connected death, and has a disability considered permanent under Section 221(i) of the Social Security Act.
  - ◆ Receives an annuity payment under Section 2(a)(1)(iv) of the Railroad Retirement Act of 1974, and is determined eligible to receive Medicare by the Railroad Retirement Board or receives an annuity payment under Section 2(a)(i)(v) of the Railroad Retirement Act of 1974, and is determined disabled based on criteria under Title XVI of the Social Security Act.
  - ◆ Receives interim assistance benefits pending the receipt of SSI, disability-related Medicaid, or state general assistance disability.

## **RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE DEPARTMENT**

The following sections explain administrative requirements for:

- ◆ Eligibility and benefit adjustments due to changes in FIP or federal benefits
- ◆ Eligibility and benefit adjustments due to changes in federal standards
- ◆ Bilingual materials and interpreters
- ◆ The Food Assistance complaint system
- ◆ Confidentiality of Food Assistance records
- ◆ The effect of receiving Food Assistance on eligibility for other assistance
- ◆ Nondiscrimination in awarding benefits and the process for complaints about discrimination
- ◆ Personnel
- ◆ Records and reports on certification and benefit issuance
- ◆ Verification of Food Assistance benefits for the Work Opportunity Tax Credit program

### **Adjustments due to Changes in FIP or Federal Benefits**

**Legal reference:** 7 CFR 273.12(e)(2), (3)

When the state makes an adjustment to public assistance:

- ◆ If the Department has at least 30 days advance knowledge of the amount of the adjustment, the Department must recompute Food Assistance benefits to be effective in the same month as the change in public assistance.
- ◆ If the Department does not have enough notice, the adjustment in Food Assistance benefits must be effective no later than the month after the change in public assistance.

Typically, these adjustments are done through a mass change to the ABC system, which automatically generates notices of decision to notify households of the change.

When there is a federal benefit payment overall adjustment, such as social security cost-of-living increases, the change must be implemented no later than the second allotment after the month the change occurs. See 14-B(8), [\*COLA PROCESSING\*](#), for more information.

If the household requests a hearing, benefits are continued at the former level only if the issue appealed is that the calculation is wrong.

### **Adjustments due to Changes in Program Standards**

**Legal reference:** 7 CFR 273.12(e)

The state or federal government may initiate changes that affect all Food Assistance cases, such as adjustments to:

- ◆ Income eligibility standards.
- ◆ Shelter and dependent care deductions.
- ◆ The maximum Food Assistance allotment.
- ◆ The standard deduction.
- ◆ The utility standard.

These adjustments are implemented prospectively for all households.

### **Bilingual Requirements**

**Legal reference:** 7 CFR 272.4(b)

The Department must provide bilingual program information materials in the appropriate language for:

- ◆ Each service area with less than 2,000 low-income households, if approximately 100 or more of those households are of a single-language minority.
- ◆ Each service area with 2,000 or more low-income households, if approximately five percent or more of those households are of a single-language minority.
- ◆ An office that provides bilingual service as required below.

“Single-language minority” refers to households that speak the same non-English language and that do not contain adults fluent in English as a second language.

The Department must provide both certification materials in the appropriate language **and** bilingual staff or interpreters:

- ◆ In each individual certification office that provides service to an area containing approximately 100 single-language minority low-income households, **and**
- ◆ In each county with less than 100 low-income households, if a majority of those households are of a single-language minority.

Certification materials include the Food Assistance application form, the change report form, and notices to households.

In areas with a seasonal influx of non-English-speaking people, bilingual materials and interpreters must be provided if the number of single-language minority low-income households moving into the area during the seasonal influx meets or exceeds the requirements stated above.

### **Complaint System**

**Legal reference:** 7 CFR Parts 271 and 272, 441 IAC 65.16(234) and 65.116(234)

Federal regulations require a formal procedure for participants, potential participants, or concerned persons who have or have had problems resolving their concerns in dealing with the agency and choose to file a written complaint. It is not meant to preclude participants who contact the Department on a local or state level with an immediate concern or participants who do not wish to file a written report.

Complaints handled by this system do not include those that can be handled through an appeal hearing or through discrimination procedures. This complaint system is to be used when people have had problems resolving their concerns in dealing with the Department and want to file a written complaint based on unsatisfactory results.

The Department's Food Assistance complaint process is as follows:

1. Clients who want to file a formal written complaint about the Food Assistance program may file form 470-0323 or 470-0327(S), *Food Assistance Complaint*, with the Field Operations Support Unit. Clients can pick up forms at their local or service area office. If necessary, the complaint coordinator in the Field Operations Support Unit will mail out the form.
2. The complaint coordinator in the Field Operations Support Unit reviews the complaint forms and checks that the complaint is not appealable and not related to discrimination or fraud.

Appealable issues are referred to the Appeals Section. Discrimination reports are referred to the Diversity Programs Unit. Once the nature of the complaint is determined to be none of the above, the complaint is sent to the service area office to investigate.

3. The service area staff prepare a summary of the situation and the actions taken by the Department and give it to the complaint coordinator within 30 days of the date of the referral.

The complaint coordinator sees that a response to the client is written within three working days from receipt of the summary. When complainant is not the client, the complainant is informed in writing that the situation was investigated, but the Department cannot disclose the findings for confidentiality reasons.

4. At the end of each month, the complaint coordinator fills out form 470-0328, *Food Assistance Complaint Summary*, showing the number of each type of complaint.
5. The Field Operations Support Unit reviews the analysis of the total complaint forms received during the year with a representative from the Bureau of Measurement Development and Utilization. Any significant patterns of deficiencies and their causes are included as part of the state's corrective action plan.

The Field Operations Support Unit keeps complaints for three years from the month of response unless the complaint is about issuance. Issuance complaints are retained until the state office says that the issuance reports can be destroyed.

The system enables the Field Operations Support Unit to compile a report and make an analysis of certain types of complaints received by the Department. The analysis of these findings will be used to clarify program policies and procedures, improve service to applicants and participants, and provide information on patterns of deficiencies for inclusion in the State Corrective Action Plan.

Clients can also ask that FNS handle a complaint. Any complaint will be handled by FNS upon household request, unless the complainant wishes a hearing. Persons or agencies wishing to file a complaint or wanting program information from FNS may contact the FNS Regional Office. The address is:

Mountain Plains Regional Office  
U.S. Department of Agriculture  
Food and Nutrition Service  
1244 Speer Boulevard, Suite 903  
Denver, Colorado 80204

### **Confidentiality**

**Legal reference:** 7 CFR 272.1(c); Iowa Code Section 217.30

Use or disclosure of information from applicant or participant households exclusively for the Food Assistance program is restricted to the following people:

- ◆ People directly connected with the administration or enforcement of:
  - Food Assistance,
  - Family Investment Program,
  - Medicaid, or
  - Any state program administered under a plan approved under the Social Security Act that is required to participate in the state Income and Eligibility Verification System (IEVS).

Release is limited to the extent that the information is useful in establishing or verifying eligibility or benefit amounts under those programs.

- ◆ People administering:
  - Social Security benefits,
  - Supplemental Security Income,
  - School Lunch,
  - Child Support,
  - Food Distribution Programs and
  - Any other federally aided means-tested program.

**Note:** State law limits release of information to purposes directly connected to the administration of Department programs and requires a written request and comparable standards of confidentiality.

- ◆ Employees of the Comptroller General's Office of the United States, for audit examination, upon written request.
- ◆ Any local, state, or federal law enforcement officials, upon written request, for the purpose of investigating an alleged violation of the Food Assistance program. The written request must include:
  - The identity and authority of the person requesting the information.
  - The violation being investigated.
  - The identity of the person on whom the information is requested.
- ◆ Any local, state, or federal law enforcement official who requests in writing information necessary in the investigation of a felony crime or a probation or parole violation. The information that can be provided is limited to the address, social security number, and any available photograph of:
  - A Food Assistance recipient who is fleeing to avoid prosecution, custody, or confinement for a felony crime or a violation of parole or probation, or
  - A member who has information about another household member who is under investigation for a felony crime or probation or parole violation.

If the law enforcement officer provides documentation that there is a warrant for the arrest of the member for a felony, or a parole or probation violation, see 7-I, [FLEEING FELONS AND PAROLE AND PROBATION VIOLATORS](#).

- ◆ Persons directly connected with the verification of immigration status of aliens applying for Food Assistance benefits, through the Systematic Alien Verification for Entitlements (SAVE) Program, to the extent the information is necessary to identify the individual for verification purposes.

Anyone authorized above to receive information must adequately protect the information against unauthorized disclosure.

A responsible member of the household, its currently authorized representative, or a person acting in its behalf, may request in writing to review the case file. Make materials available during regular business hours. Do not furnish information such as the names of persons who have given information about the household without the household's knowledge, or the nature or status of pending criminal prosecutions.

Keep information received through IEVS confidential. Release it only to:

- ◆ Persons about whom IEVS information is printed.
- ◆ The head of household.
- ◆ An authorized representative of the client who is acting on behalf of the client.
- ◆ Other state agencies administering programs participating in IEVS.
- ◆ The Department of Inspections and Appeals.

Unauthorized disclosure of information received from the Social Security Administration or the Internal Revenue Service may be punishable by \$5,000 fine, five years imprisonment, or both.

### **Social Security Numbers**

**Legal reference:** 7 CFR 273.6(f)

The Department is authorized to use social security numbers in the administration of the Food Assistance program.

To the extent determined necessary by the Secretary of Agriculture and the Secretary of Health and Human Services, state agencies have access to information regarding individual Food Assistance program applicants and participants who receive SSI.

This information should be used to help:

- ◆ Determine a household's eligibility to receive assistance.
- ◆ Determine the amount of assistance.
- ◆ Verify information given by the household.
- ◆ Prevent duplicate participation.
- ◆ Facilitate mass changes in federal benefits.
- ◆ Determine the accuracy and reliability of information given by households.

### **Effect of Receipt of Food Assistance on Other Benefits**

**Legal reference:** 7 CFR 272.1(a)

Receipt of Food Assistance benefits cannot be the basis used to decrease any assistance otherwise provided to an individual or individuals.

### **Nondiscrimination Compliance**

**Legal reference:** 7 CFR 272.6(a)

Department offices cannot discriminate against any applicant or participant in any aspect of program administration for reasons of age, sex, race, color, handicap, religious creed, national origin, or political beliefs.

The Department is responsible for carrying-out public notification as defined in procedures issued by the Diversity Program Unit. All offices administering the Food Assistance program must also prominently display the poster "...and Justice for All" provided by USDA.

The following sections give more information on:

- ◆ [Requirements for collecting data on households' racial or ethnic category](#)
- ◆ [The process for filing a discrimination complaint](#)
- ◆ [Requirements for the content and handling of complaints](#)

### **Data Collection**

**Legal reference:** 7 CFR 272.6(g)

Obtain data on households by ethnicity and race. The ethnicity categories are:

- ◆ Hispanic or Latino
- ◆ Not Hispanic or Latino

The race categories are:

- ◆ White
- ◆ Black or African-American
- ◆ Asian
- ◆ American Indian or Alaskan Native
- ◆ Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander

Advise applicants that:

- ◆ The information is voluntary and will not affect eligibility or benefit levels.
- ◆ The reason for the information is to ensure that program benefits are distributed without regard to race, color, or national origin.

When the household chooses not to provide the information, record race and ethnicity data based on observation and your best judgment.

### **Filing a Discrimination Complaint**

**Legal reference:** 7 CFR 272.6(b)

People who believe that they have been subject to discrimination may file a written complaint with:

- ◆ The Diversity Program Unit, Iowa Department of Human Services, 1305 E. Walnut St., Des Moines, IA 50319-0114.
- ◆ The U.S. Department of Agriculture, Director, Office of Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Ave. SW, Washington, D.C. 20250-9410.

If a person expresses an interest in filing a discrimination complaint, explain both the FNS and the Department nondiscrimination complaint systems. Advise the person within ten days of the person's right to file a complaint in either or both systems. Explain what information is necessary for investigation.

### **Discrimination Complaint Requirements**

**Legal reference:** 7 CFR 272.6(c) and (d)

Make every effort to have the complainant provide all of the following information, to assist with investigations:

- ◆ Name, address, and telephone number or other means of contacting the person alleging discrimination.
- ◆ The location and name of the organization or office that is accused of discriminatory practices.
- ◆ The nature of the incident or action or the aspect of program administration that led the person to allege discrimination.
- ◆ The reason for the alleged discrimination (age, race, color, sex, handicap, religious belief, national origin or political belief).
- ◆ The names and titles (if appropriate), and addresses of persons who may have knowledge of the alleged discriminatory act.
- ◆ Dates on which alleged discriminatory actions occurred.

Accept complaints even if all the above information is not supplied. (However, investigations will not be conducted unless the first four items are provided.)

If a complainant makes allegations verbally and is unable or is reluctant to put the allegations in writing, document the complaint in writing.

A complaint must be filed no later than 180 days from the date of the alleged discrimination. However, the time for filing may be extended by the Secretary of Agriculture.

Complaints processed at the state level are reported to FNS. The report contains:

- ◆ As much information as is available to the state agency.
- ◆ The findings of the investigation.
- ◆ If appropriate, the corrective action planned or taken.

**Personnel**

**Legal reference:** 7 CFR 272.4(a)

Only qualified merit employees can conduct the required applicant household interviews. FIP certification personnel are used to meet the interview requirements for FIP households applying for Food Assistance.

**Exceptions:** Volunteers and other nonmerit employees can conduct certification interviews or certify applicants for USDA-declared disaster victims. Also, see 7-B, [JOINT APPLICATION PROCESS FOR SSI HOUSEHOLDS](#).

Only authorized employees of the Department, and federal employees involved in the administration of the program are permitted access to issuance documents.

**Hours of Operation**

**Legal reference:** 7 CFR 272.4(g)

The Department is responsible for determining the hours that Food Assistance offices are open. Adjust them if needed to ensure that working participants can be adequately served.

**Volunteers**

**Legal reference:** 7 CFR 272.4(a)(2)

Counties are encouraged to use volunteers in activities such as prescreening, assisting applicants in the application and certification process, and securing needed verification. Volunteers are not permitted access to issuance documents.

Individuals and organizations that are parties to a strike or lockout, and their facilities, cannot be used in the certification process, except as a source of verification for information supplied by the applicant.

## **Records and Reports**

**Legal reference:** 7 CFR 272.1(e), (f)

The Food Assistance office must keep records and submit reports and other information as required by FNS.

Certification records must be available for review or audit by FNS or by the Department for a period of three years from the month of origin of the record. **Exceptions:**

- ◆ If a household is owed a lost benefit forward adjustment credit balance, keep form 470-0318, *Record of Lost Benefits*, in the household's case record.
- ◆ If a household owes for an overissuance, keep forms 470-0311, *Documentation of Claim Determination*, and 470-0464, *Overpayment Recovery Information Input*, in the household's case record.

Certification records must include:

- ◆ Applications for certification or subsequent certification.
- ◆ Required FNS or Department forms.
- ◆ Worksheets used in the computation of income for eligibility and the basis of issuance documentation, including verification techniques employed by the worker.
- ◆ Copies of notices of adverse action and other notices sent to the client and the client's responses.
- ◆ Documentation of actions related to the fair hearing process.
- ◆ Fiscal adjustment, including claims, refunds, and credits for lost benefits.
- ◆ Any other data that affects a household's eligibility or basis of issuance.

Issuance records are all records and reports that relate to cash and Food Assistance accountability, and must be retained until the Bureau of Operations Services advises that the records can be destroyed.

**Public Information**

**Legal reference:** 7 CFR 272.1(d)

Federal regulations, federal procedures, corrective action plans, and the state plan of operation must be available upon request for examination by members of the public during office hours at the central office. Also, copies of the Employees' Manual must be available for examination upon request at each local office and the central office.

**Program Informational Activities**

**Legal reference:** 7 CFR 272.5(a), (b), 272.6(f), 273.2(C)(4), FNS Instructions 113-7

“Program informational activities” are those activities that convey information about the program (including household rights and responsibilities) to applicant and participant households through publications, telephone hot lines, and face-to-face contacts. This includes information about eligibility, benefits and services, the location of offices, and hours of service.

All offices must display:

- ◆ The nondiscrimination poster “And Justice for All,” or a similar FNS-approved poster.
- ◆ Signs that explain application processing standards and the right to file an application on the day of initial contact.

All offices shall encourage program participants to participate in the Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program (EFNEP). Offices should allow EFNEP personnel to distribute informational materials and speak with customers at the local office.

**Work Opportunity Tax Credit**

**Legal reference:** Public Law 104-188, as amended by the Taxpayer Relief Act of 1997 (Public Law 105-34) under Section 51 of the Internal Revenue Code.

The Work Opportunity Tax Credit (WOTC) is designed to help people move from economic dependency to self-sufficiency by encouraging employers in the private sector to hire from eight targeted groups of job seekers with significant barriers to employment.

The targeted groups are:

- ◆ Group A. Qualified IV-A recipient
- ◆ Group B. Qualified veteran
- ◆ Group C. Qualified ex-felon
- ◆ Group D. High-risk youth
- ◆ Group E. Vocational rehabilitation referral
- ◆ Group F. Qualified summer youth employee
- ◆ Group G. Qualified Food Assistance recipient
- ◆ Group H. Qualified SSI recipient

Food Assistance program participation is a qualifying factor for the following groups:

- ◆ Group B, qualified veterans, which includes a member of a family receiving Food Assistance for a three-month period ending during the 15-month period ending on the hiring date.
- ◆ Group G, qualified Food Assistance recipients, which includes:
  - Persons aged 18 to 24 who are members of a family receiving Food Assistance for a six-month period ending on the hiring date.
  - Able-bodied adults without dependents who cease to be eligible for Food Assistance under the work requirements but who received Food Assistance for at least three months of the five-month period ending on the hiring date.

Iowa Workforce Development (IWD) administers WOTC. IWD verifies eligibility and issues certifications to employers. DHS shares eligibility and program participation information electronically with IWD. Refer all employer and recipient requests for WOTC eligibility verification to IWD.

Employers who offer a job in the belief that a person is a member of one of the qualified groups can request certification from the WOTC coordinator. Employers and job applicants with questions should contact:

WOTC Coordinator  
Iowa Workforce Development  
150 Des Moines Street  
Des Moines, IA 50309

## **ELECTRONIC BENEFIT TRANSFER**

**Legal reference:** 7 CFR 274.12, 441 IAC 65.4(234)

All Food Assistance households receive benefits through Electronic Benefit Transfer (EBT).

This section explains procedures for:

- ◆ [Interstate interoperability of EBT systems](#)
- ◆ [Authorizing Food Assistance](#)
- ◆ [Providing access to the food account](#)
- ◆ [Establishing cardholders](#)
- ◆ [Replacing EBT cards](#)
- ◆ [Handling EBT cards returned to the local office](#)
- ◆ [Handling reapplications from cardholders](#)
- ◆ [Deactivating an EBT card](#)
- ◆ [Handling changes in household composition when cards need to be deactivated or issued](#)

### **EBT Card Interstate Interoperability**

**Legal reference:** 7 CFR 274.12

“Interstate interoperability” means that an EBT card issued by one state can be used in any other state at all businesses that are authorized by FNS to accept “Food Stamps.” The Iowa EBT card meets the requirements that allow it to be used in all places that accept “Food Stamps” anywhere in Iowa and in other states.

Most retailers having stores in more than one state will be able to accept the Iowa EBT card in all of their locations. Many retailers that do not operate in Iowa can also accept the Iowa EBT card. Iowa EBT cardholders reporting that they cannot use their Iowa card in another state should be advised to try using it at a “super center” store food department.

States that use a “smart card” may need to make special arrangements to provide a household with its benefits when the household is in Iowa. Contact DHS central office for assistance if necessary.

## **Authorizing Food Assistance**

**Legal reference:** 7 CFR 274.12

When an application is approved for Food Assistance, ABC entries transmit the authorization overnight to the EPPIC™ system. Upon receipt of the authorization, EPPIC™ sets up an EBT food account for the household. The EBT account is permanently established in EPPIC™, and is connected to the specific ABC case number under which the application is approved.

If a Food Assistance case is closed and reopened under the same case number, the ABC entries to reopen the case will authorize a deposit of Food Assistance to the same account as was initially established for that case number. See [Changes in Household Composition](#) for guidance on managing household composition changes and cardholders on accounts.

The only way to open a new food account is to establish a new ABC case number. A new food account may be needed if the original household is not intact and assistance is still available in the original account at the time a reapplication is approved.

The food account does not close when the Food Assistance case closes. Cardholders can continue to use the account until benefits are exhausted. Once benefits are exhausted, the account remains open indefinitely on the EPPIC™ system. Only DHS central office staff has the authority to close an account on EPPIC™.

## **Providing Access to the Food Account**

**Legal reference:** 7 CFR 274.12

An Iowa EBT card is used to access the Food Assistance account. The IM worker makes ABC entries to initiate the mailing of an Iowa EBT card to the cardholders authorized on the account. If a cardholder cannot be established through ABC entries, EPPIC™ entries are required. See policies in this chapter for when entries may or should be made directly to EPPIC™ to establish a cardholder. See Chapter [14-J](#) for EPPIC entries.

Each Iowa EBT card is issued to a specific individual, and has its own unique PAN and is permanently connected to a Food Assistance case. The card cannot be connected to a new Food Assistance account. The PAN identifies who the cardholder is, and identifies which card made transactions on the food account.

A new Iowa EBT card is not issued for each monthly allotment of Food Assistance. All cards are valid until 2049 unless deactivated. If a cardholder still has the card, the card is still active, and the cardholder is reapproved for Food Assistance, the cardholder can access the assistance as soon as it becomes available.

Retailers can ask to see the signature on the back of the card or ask for identification to prove that the person has the right to use the card. When a manual voucher transaction is attempted, the retailer may check to see that the correct person is using the card. Retailers can refuse purchases by anyone other than the person who signed the card.

While cardholders should not allow others to use their Iowa EBT cards to buy food for the household, there is no penalty for doing so. However, Food Assistance used from an account cannot be replaced. **Exception:** See [7-H](#) for when a household can appeal a request for replacement.

Selling or trading an EBT card is an illegal activity. If there is an indication that a cardholder sold or traded the Iowa EBT card, see [Handling Complaints of Trafficking](#) in this chapter.

### **Mailing EBT Cards**

ACS mails all Iowa EBT cards on an EBT food account to the household's address as entered on ABC. This includes cards issued for authorized representatives. If the authorized representative does not live at the household's address, it is the responsibility of the primary cardholder, not the Department, to give the authorized representative the card.

EBT cards are mailed within two business days following the ABC batch process that authorizes the card. ABC entries made just before a weekend or holiday will be sent to EPPIC™ on the following work day. Cards are mailed only on work days. Consider the batch process, mailing time, and weekends or holidays when determining system entry dates to ensure timely processing of a case.

A household may move or visit out of state and need a new card mailed to them. Cards may be mailed to an address anywhere in or out of the state, as the household desires.

**Food Assistance Availability Dates**

**Legal reference:** 441 IAC 65.4(234)

Food Assistance issued on an uninterrupted monthly schedule is issued on the same date each month even if the date falls on a weekend or a holiday. Food Assistance availability dates are based on the first letter of the last name of the person who is the ABC case name. Availability dates are listed on the following chart:

<b>Monthly Food Assistance Availability Schedule</b>	
<b>First Letter of Last Name</b>	<b>Date Benefits Are Deposited</b>
A – B	1st day of the month
C – D	2nd day of the month
E – G	3rd day of the month
H – I	4th day of the month
J – L	5th day of the month
M – O	6th day of the month
P – R	7th day of the month
S	8th day of the month
T – V	9th day of the month
W – Z	10th day of the month

## **Establishing Cardholders**

**Legal reference:** 7 CFR 264.2 441 IAC 65.4(234)

Establishing who will be a household's cardholders is the first step to take when preparing to issue Food Assistance. There is no age requirement for who can receive an Iowa EBT card. If the household wants more than one card, it is entitled to them. A maximum number of three EBT cards can be active on an EBT food account at any one time.

The requirements under [Establishing a Secondary Cardholder or Authorized Representative](#) must be met for a second or third person to receive an Iowa EBT card. Two cardholders' information can be entered on ABC.

The primary cardholder is established through entries to TD01 and TD02. A secondary cardholder or authorized representative is established using the EBTR screen. An additional cardholder can be added using EPPIC™. See [14-J](#) for establishing a cardholder in EPPIC.

When opening a Food Assistance case or making changes because the household composition changed, make sure you intend to replace the current cardholders. If you do not wish to replace a current cardholder, remember that overwriting a cardholder's information in ABC will deactivate the original cardholder's EBT card.

The following sections give more information on:

- ◆ [The primary cardholder](#)
- ◆ [The secondary cardholder](#)
- ◆ [Authorized representatives](#)
- ◆ [Establishing secondary cardholders or authorized representatives](#)
- ◆ [Removing secondary cardholders or authorized representatives](#)

### **The Primary Cardholder**

The person who is established as the ABC case name is the primary cardholder. To prepare to set up your case, ask at the application interview who does the household's primary grocery shopping. Establish the primary grocery shopper as the ABC case name. Document in the case record the household's choice of grocery shopper.

Tell the person interviewed:

- ◆ The grocery shopper will receive the Iowa EBT card in the shopper's name and is the only one who should use it.
- ◆ If Food Assistance is lost (misused) or stolen from an EBT food account, the assistance will not be replaced. **Exception:** See [7-H](#) for when a household can appeal a request for a replacement.
- ◆ EBT follows the same rules that apply to credit cards and bank debit cards. The card owner signs the back of the card. Retailers may ask for identification from the person using the card if they wish. Retailers can deny purchases from anyone other than the person who signed the back of the card.

Generally, only the primary cardholder can add more cardholders to the household's food account. See [Emergency Authorized Representative](#) for exceptions.

### **Undocumented Aliens and Other Ineligible Members**

**Legal reference:** 7 CFR 273.2(n)(1)(i)

A person does not have to be eligible to receive Food Assistance with the household to receive an EBT card. When the only adult household member is an ineligible member, issue the Iowa EBT card to that member. If there is more than one ineligible adult, issue the card to the person who is the primary grocery shopper.

If the ineligible person is established on ABC as the “case name” and coded according to the instructions in [14-B-Appendix](#), issue the Iowa EBT card through normal system entries.

### **Secondary Cardholders**

A household may have more than one person who shops for groceries. A secondary cardholder is a member of the Food Assistance household authorized to receive an EBT card. The person can be an eligible or ineligible member.

Do not refuse requests for additional cardholders. However, the household should clearly understand that only a responsible person should be designated to receive an Iowa EBT card on the household’s food account.

A secondary cardholder is usually established using the ABC EBTR screen. See [14-B-Appendix](#). Circumstances may apply that require adding the secondary cardholder through direct EPPIC™ entries. See [14-J](#) for EPPIC entries.

See the policy [Authorized Representative](#) when a primary cardholder requests a person outside of the Food Assistance household as a cardholder on the household’s food account.

When a primary cardholder asks for additional EBT cards on the household’s food account, see the policy [Establishing a Secondary Cardholder or Authorized Representative](#). No card can be issued until the requirements of this policy are met.

### **Authorized Representative**

**Legal reference:** 7 CFR 273.2(n)

The household's primary cardholder may designate one or more authorized representatives to act on behalf of the household to:

- ◆ Apply for Food Assistance benefits.
- ◆ Fill out the interim report or change report for the household.
- ◆ Receive an Iowa EBT card to use to buy food for the household.

The household may designate a separate authorized representative for each of these activities, or may designate a single authorized representative for all activities.

When a household asks for an authorized representative on the application form, make sure the household wants the authorized representative to receive an EBT card. If a household wants an authorized representative to receive an Iowa EBT card to use on the household's account, the primary cardholder must make the request in writing. See [Establishing a Secondary Cardholder or Authorized Representative](#).

When a household wants an authorized representative only to handle the household's business with DHS, inform the household that it is liable for any overissuance that results from wrong information given by the authorized representative. Do not issue an EBT card when the authorized representative's responsibilities are limited to handling business for the household with DHS.

The Department is required to assist households in obtaining an authorized representative to purchase the household's food when the household needs one but does not know someone to act in that capacity.

Always document the name of the authorized representative in the case record.

### **Who Cannot Be an Authorized Representative**

**Legal reference:** 7 CFR 273.2(n)(4)(i)

The following cannot be authorized representatives:

- ◆ Department employees involved in the certification or Food Assistance authorization process (unless the service area manager approves the designation in writing).
- ◆ Retailers authorized to accept Food Assistance (unless the service area manager approves the designation in writing).
- ◆ Homeless meal providers. (See [Homeless Meal Providers.](#))
- ◆ People disqualified for fraud. People who are disqualified for fraud cannot be authorized representatives during the period of disqualification.

**Exception:** If the disqualified person is the only adult member of the Food Assistance household who can shop for food, and there is no one outside the household available who can be the authorized representative, the disqualified person can serve as an authorized representative. See [Undocumented Aliens and Other Ineligible Members.](#)

### **Person Representing Multiple Households**

**Legal reference:** 7 CFR 273.2(n)(4)(m)

An authorized representative is not limited in the number of households that the person can represent. If a single authorized representative is responsible for a large number of households, or if an employer is the authorized representative for migrants or seasonal farm workers, make sure that:

- ◆ The household has freely requested the assistance of the authorized representative.
- ◆ The household circumstances are correctly represented, and the household is receiving the correct amount of benefits.
- ◆ The authorized representative is properly using the Food Assistance.

### **Households That Have Guardians, Conservators or Payees**

Households may have financial caretakers (guardians, conservators or protective payees) for different reasons. Having a financial caretaker does not automatically mean the caretaker should receive an Iowa EBT card on the household's food account.

Unless the household is incompetent to the degree that it cannot handle its affairs, or shop using EBT technology, the caretaker may not receive a card unless authorized by the primary cardholder.

If a household has an organization as its financial caretaker and wants or legally must have an authorized representative to buy the household's food, the organization must name a person to act as the authorized representative. A **person** must receive the Iowa EBT card.

If the household is not legally required to, but wants the financial caretaker as an authorized representative the primary cardholder must ask in writing. See [Establishing a Secondary Cardholder or Authorized Representative](#).

### **Emergency Authorized Representative**

When an emergency prevents all of the cardholders on an EBT account from shopping for the household, an emergency authorized representative may need to be established.

It is not necessary for the household to complete the process under [Establishing a Secondary Cardholder or Authorized Representative](#) in an emergency. The primary cardholder can name the emergency authorized representative in writing or verbally.

If the emergency is such that the primary cardholder cannot designate an emergency authorized representative, someone else in the household may do so. If you designate an emergency FIP payee, also designate that person as the emergency authorized representative for Food Assistance.

### **Establishing a Secondary Cardholder or Authorized Representative**

This policy does **not** apply to:

- ◆ Emergency authorized representatives.
- ◆ Households living in a facility.

If a household asks on the Food Assistance application (or in some other way) for an authorized representative to buy food for the household, tell the person who is interviewed that:

- ◆ The authorized cardholder will have complete access to all of the Food Assistance benefits in the household's account.
- ◆ The Department will not replace benefits used by the authorized cardholder.
- ◆ The primary cardholder must ask in writing by fully completing form 470-3983, *Request for EBT Secondary Cardholder or Authorized Representative*. The form must be:
  - Signed by both the primary cardholder and the secondary cardholder or authorized representative, and
  - Returned to the DHS local office.

Upon receipt of the completed form, issue an Iowa EBT card to the authorized cardholder.

### **Replacing Secondary Cardholders or Authorized Representatives**

A primary cardholder can change authorized representatives or secondary cardholders at any time. Do not issue a card to the newly requested cardholder until the requirements under [Establishing a Secondary Cardholder or Authorized Representative](#) have been met.

If the primary cardholder wants the original cardholder to stay in place until the new cardholder is established, deactivate the original cardholder's Iowa EBT card when you put the new cardholder in place. The ABC entries made to establish the new cardholder and issue the new cardholder's card will deactivate the old cardholder's card.

If it is necessary to stop the original cardholder's access to the household's food account right away, deactivate the cardholder's Iowa EBT card through EPPIC™ entries. See [14-J](#).

### **Authorized Representative's Request to Terminate**

An authorized representative has the right to end the person's agreement to represent a household at anytime. The authorized representative can deactivate the representative's own card by calling the EBT customer service number or by calling the DHS local office.

If the authorized representative asks DHS to be removed as a cardholder, deactivate the person's card through EPPIC™ entries and remove the person's information from ABC.

If the household is not aware of the authorized representative's decision to stop representing the household, send a note to the household to ask if the household wants to designate a new authorized representative. Send the household a new form 470-3983, *Request for EBT Secondary Cardholder or Authorized Representative*, in case the household needs a new authorized representative.

### **Disqualifying an Authorized Representative**

**Legal reference:** 7 CFR 273.2(n)(4)(i)(c)

Disqualify an authorized representative who knowingly gives false information or improperly uses Food Assistance for up to one year. (This provision does not apply to facility authorized representatives.)

At least 30 days before the disqualification begins, send a written notice to the affected household and to the authorized representative. Include in the notice:

- ◆ The proposed action.
- ◆ The reason for the proposed action.
- ◆ The household's right to request a hearing.

### **Replacement EBT Cards**

There is no charge to the cardholder for replacement Iowa EBT cards and no limit on the number of replacements a cardholder can have. A cardholder can request a replacement card from the EBT customer service or from DHS. Do not refuse requests for a replacement card. If a cardholder requests a replacement, do not refer the cardholder to the EBT customer service to request the replacement card.

EBT customer service uses the information displayed on the EPPIC™ system to verify a cardholder's identity. If a cardholder gives customer service information different than the information on EPPIC™, customer service will not replace the card. Example:

1. Household A has recently moved to another county. The cardholder gives customer service the new address when requesting a replacement card. DHS has not yet received or updated the address, so the information given by the cardholder and EPPIC™ do not match. Customer service deactivates the lost or stolen card and refers the cardholder to DHS to get a replacement card.
2. Same as example 1, except that the household moves to Illinois. The response is the same. There is no prohibition against mailing EBT cards out of state when the household has benefits in the account.

If the Food Assistance case is open, update the information in ABC to reflect household changes. Issue a replacement card through ABC entries. See [14-B-Appendix](#).

ABC cannot be used to update information on EPPIC and issue a card when the case is closed. If the Food Assistance case is closed, update the information on ABC as appropriate. At the same time, update the EPPIC™ information directly in the EPPIC™ system. Issue the replacement card through EPPIC™ entries. See [14-J](#).

## **Returned EBT Cards**

Envelopes used to mail the EBT cards are printed with the return address of the Department of Human Services, 1305 E Walnut St., Des Moines, IA 50319-0114. Cards that are undeliverable will be returned to the DHS central office. The DHS central office is responsible for handling the disposition of EBT cards returned to central office.

### **EBT Cards Returned to the Local Office**

If someone other than law enforcement returns an Iowa EBT card, accept the card. See [Law Enforcement Returns a Card or Inquires About a Cardholder](#) if a law enforcement officer returns a card.

It is not necessary to write a receipt when an EBT card is received in a local office. Check the status of the card on EPPIC™. If the card is still active, contact the client if possible. Remail the card to the client if the client cannot be reached or asks to have the card mailed. If the card is deactivated, destroy it.

### **Law Enforcement Returns a Card or Inquires About a Cardholder**

**Legal reference:** 7 CFR 272.1(c)(1)(vi);(vii)

Law enforcement may come into possession of an EBT card in various ways. An EBT card could be found at or near the scene of a crime. Another person's EBT card could be in the possession of a person detained by law enforcement or found on a crime victim.

Law enforcement may request information about the cardholder or request the name of the cardholder. You cannot provide law enforcement with the name of a cardholder.

See [Confidentiality](#) for details about what information DHS can share with law enforcement. If a request from law enforcement exceeds the limits set under [Confidentiality](#), refer the officer to the Department of Inspections and Appeals.

If a law enforcement officer surrenders an Iowa EBT card to DHS, accept the card. Do not destroy the card.

If the card was returned as found, and it is not connected to a criminal investigation, follow the procedures under [EBT Cards Returned to the Local Office](#).

If law enforcement indicates that the card is connected to a criminal investigation, immediately place the surrendered card in an envelope addressed to Chief, DIA Investigations Division, 3rd Floor, Lucas Building, 321 E. 12<sup>th</sup> Street, Des Moines, IA 50309-0083.

Include a note with the card stating that law enforcement returned the card, when the card was returned, who returned it and any other pertinent information that may be of assistance to DIA should law enforcement contact them for information about the cardholder. Immediately place the sealed envelope in the outgoing mail.

### **Reapplications for Food Assistance**

If a household reapplies and you use the household's original ABC case number to act on the application, check to see if the same person is the household's grocery shopper. If so, and the person still has an active Iowa EBT card, do not issue another card. Issuing a new card will deactivate the card the person still has.

If the cardholder does not know if the card is active, check the card's status in the EPPIC™ system. If the card is active, the cardholder can access the Food Assistance the morning after the ABC batch is passed to EPPIC™ or when the benefits become available if held for later release.

If the same secondary cardholder or authorized representative still has an active card, do not issue another card. A new *Request for EBT Secondary Cardholder or Authorized Representative*, form 470-3983, is not needed. Have the primary cardholder initial and date the original form to authorize leaving the second cardholder in place.

### **Deactivating an Iowa EBT Card**

A cardholder can deactivate the cardholder's own card using the EBT customer service or can ask DHS to deactivate the card.

The primary cardholder can deactivate a secondary or authorized representative card only by asking DHS to deactivate the card. Do not refer a cardholder to the EBT customer service when any card deactivation is requested.

Immediately act on all requests from a cardholder to deactivate a lost, stolen, or damaged Iowa EBT card. Also, immediately act on a primary cardholder's request to deactivate a secondary cardholder's or authorized representative's card. The request to deactivate a card does not need to be in writing.

Use EPPIC™ or ABC to deactivate the card, and issue a replacement if appropriate for the situation.

- ◆ Deactivation through ABC requires that the cardholder's information be overwritten and a new card issued. The action is completed through the ABC batch process and is not immediate.
- ◆ Deactivation through EPPIC™ entries is an immediate action. Requests to deactivate a lost or stolen card must be acted on using EPPIC™ entries.

Never delay deactivating a card that is missing. The Department is liable for loss of Food Assistance from the time of the report of the missing card until it is deactivated. Do not refer someone back to the EBT customer service if the person calls DHS first to report a missing card. Deactivate the card through EPPIC™ entries. Advise the person to call the EBT customer service right away the next time it happens.

If a cardholder leaves a voice mail message requesting the deactivation of a card, immediately upon retrieval of the voice mail, check EPPIC™ to see if the card is still active. Do not assume that because the caller did not reach a person to ask for the deactivation that the caller took action to deactivate the card through EBT customer service. Deactivate the card through EPPIC™ entries and issue a new one if appropriate.

Document the request for deactivation of the card, including the date of the request and whether the need was immediate or not immediate. Also document the date and time the request was acted on.

EPPIC™ tracks the date and time that cards are deactivated. Benefits accessed before the request to deactivate a card cannot be replaced. However, if a request is not timely acted on, benefits used by the secondary cardholder or authorized representative or a person who has unauthorized possession of a card during the delay may have to be replaced at the Department's expense. See 7-H, [REQUEST FOR REPLACEMENT OF FOOD ASSISTANCE](#).

An Iowa EBT card that is deactivated cannot be reactivated. If a cardholder finds a card that was reported as lost or stolen, it will not work.

### **Changes in Household Composition**

Changes in a household's circumstances may affect who should continue to have access to the household's Food Assistance account. Changes in who should be a cardholder on a Food Assistance account need to be addressed on a case-by-case basis.

Follow normal policy when determining who is removed from the case and who will retain the case. If some members will retain the case for another program's benefits, those members should also retain the Food Assistance case. It also may be necessary to close the existing Food Assistance case and open new cases for newly created households.

#### **When a Household Splits Up**

It is up to the household to decide how to share the Food Assistance that was issued for the month in which the household split. If timely notice prevents removing members from a household until the following month, it is up to the household to decide how to share the assistance issued before members are removed.

If the primary cardholder is one of the members who will be removed from the case, a new head of household will be established on ABC. Issue an Iowa EBT card to the household's new primary cardholder. Issuance of a card to the new primary cardholder will automatically deactivate the original primary cardholder's card.

If the primary cardholder will retain the Food Assistance case, deactivate all Iowa EBT cards belonging to the members who will be canceled from the case.

### **Primary Cardholder Becomes Ineligible for Food Assistance**

A cardholder's EBT card is still active even if the cardholder becomes ineligible for Food Assistance benefits and is removed from the case. Eligibility for benefits is not a consideration for determining who can be a cardholder. Do not deactivate a cardholder's card simply because the cardholder becomes an ineligible member.

## **PARTICIPANT USE OF BENEFITS**

The following sections explain:

- ◆ [What Food Assistance can be used for](#)
- ◆ [Where Food Assistance can be used](#)
- ◆ [Penalties for misusing Food Assistance benefits](#)
- ◆ [Handling complaints of trafficking](#)

### **What Food Assistance Can Be Used For**

**Legal reference:** 7 CFR 272.1, 271.2

Food Assistance can be used to buy all types of foods that are sold to be eaten at home. This includes snack foods, candy, ice, nonalcoholic beverages, soft drinks, and their bottle deposits. Tax cannot be charged on anything bought with Food Assistance.

Food Assistance can be used to buy meals served by meal providers if the meal provider is authorized to do so by FNS. Plants and seeds used to grow food can be purchased with Food Assistance.

Food Assistance cannot be used to buy foods that are already hot at the point of sale, foods meant to be eaten while the person is still in the store, vitamins, medicines, dietary supplements, pet foods, or any other nonfood item.

## **Where Food Assistance Can Be Used**

**Legal reference:** 7 CFR 274.10(a-e), 278.1

Food Assistance can be used at any FNS-authorized retailer. Retailers that accept Food Assistance will display a sign that says: “We Accept Food Stamps.” An FNS-authorized retailer may display a “Quest™” sign that has a grocery bag with “Food Stamps” on it. Retailers that may be authorized by FNS include:

- ◆ Bakery outlets
- ◆ Communal dining facilities
- ◆ Congregate meal sites
- ◆ Convenience stores
- ◆ Farmers markets
- ◆ Food cooperatives
- ◆ Grocery stores
- ◆ Group living arrangements
- ◆ Health food stores
- ◆ Meals on Wheels
- ◆ Meat markets
- ◆ Private nonprofit organizations or institutions providing drug and alcoholic treatment and rehabilitation programs
- ◆ Public or private nonprofit shelters that serve the homeless
- ◆ Roadside vendors
- ◆ Route sales
- ◆ Shelters for battered women and children
- ◆ Specialty stores such as pizza stores that prepare food to bake at home
- ◆ Stores that have food departments

### **Retailers Wanting to Accept EBT**

**Legal reference:** 7 CFR 271.2

If a retail food store or other food vendor or provider asks about becoming authorized to accept Food Assistance and EBT cards, direct the establishment to:

USDA Food and Nutrition Services  
Federal Building, Room 641  
210 Walnut St.  
Des Moines, IA 50309

### **Penalties for Misusing Food Assistance**

**Legal reference:** 7 CFR 271.5(a), (b) and (c); Sections 15(b) and (c) of the Food and Nutrition Act

Pursuant to Section 15(d) of the Food and Nutrition Act, the value of benefits provided through the Food Assistance program are an obligation of the United States within the meaning of 18 United States Code (USC) 8. The provisions of Title 18 of the United States Code, "Crimes and Criminal Procedure," relative to counterfeiting, misuse and alteration of obligation of the United States are applicable to EBT.

Per federal law, any unauthorized issuance, redemption, use, transfer, acquisition, alteration, possession, or presentation of coupons or authorizations to purchase food may subject any individual, partnership, corporation, or other legal entity to prosecution under Sections 15(b) and (c) of the Food and Nutrition Act or under any other applicable federal, state or local law, regulation or ordinance.

Federal penalties under Section 15(b) are:

- ◆ People who knowingly use, transfer, acquire, alter, or possess coupons, EBT cards, or authorization cards of the value of \$5,000 or more in any manner not authorized by the Food and Nutrition Act or regulations shall be guilty of a felony.

Upon conviction for this offense, a person shall be fined not more than \$250,000 or imprisoned for not more than 20 years, or both. Upon any subsequent conviction, the person shall be imprisoned for not less than six months nor more than five years and may also be fined not more than \$10,000.

- ◆ People who knowingly use, transfer, acquire, alter, or possess coupons, EBT cards, or authorization cards of less than \$100 shall be guilty of a misdemeanor. Upon conviction, the person shall be fined not more than \$1,000 or imprisoned for not more than one year, or both. Upon any subsequent conviction, the person shall be imprisoned for not more than one year and may also be fined not more than \$1,000.
- ◆ The court may permit a person convicted of one of these offenses as specified above, to perform work approved by the court to provide restitution. Upon the successful completion of the assigned work, the court may suspend the sentence.

Federal penalties under Section 15(c) for people who present EBT cards for payments or redemption (or cause EBT cards to be presented), knowing that the cards have been received, transferred, or used in any manner in violation of the Food and Nutrition Act or regulations, are as follows:

- ◆ If the value of the benefits is \$100 or more, the person shall be guilty of a felony. Upon the first conviction, the person shall be fined not more than \$20,000 or imprisoned for not more than five years, or both. Upon any subsequent conviction, the person shall be imprisoned for not less than one year nor more than five years and may also be fined not more than \$20,000.
- ◆ If the value of the benefits is less than \$100, the person shall be guilty of a misdemeanor. Upon the first conviction, the person shall be fined not more than \$1,000 or imprisoned for not more than one year, or both. Upon any subsequent conviction, the person shall be imprisoned for not more than one year and may be fined not more than \$1,000.

In addition to fines and imprisonment, the court may suspend any persons convicted of a felony or misdemeanor violation under either section from participation in the Food Assistance program for an additional period of up to 18 months.

### **Handling Complaints of Trafficking**

Under federal law, trafficking is the buying or selling of coupons, EBT cards or other benefit instruments for cash or consideration other than eligible food; or the exchange of firearms, ammunition, explosives, or controlled substances.

Selling an EBT card is trafficking. If you receive a complaint regarding selling, buying, or trading of EBT cards, refer the complaint to DIA. Do not make the referral to DIA on form 470-2998, *Referral for Front-End Investigation*.

Instead, contact DIA by memo or e-mail with all the information that you have about the situation. Send memos to: Chief, Department of Inspections and Appeals Investigations Division, 3rd Floor, Lucas Building, 321 E. 12<sup>th</sup> Street, Des Moines, IA 50309-0083.

### **MEAL PROVIDERS THAT ACCEPT FOOD ASSISTANCE**

Four types of facilities may have clients who can receive Food Assistance:

- ◆ Facilities authorized by FNS as a meal service. This is the most common type. A facility authorized as a meal service has a “point of sale” terminal where the facility clients use their EBT cards to pay for meals provided by the facility. Clients of these facilities may be residential or nonresidential, in substance abuse treatment, or homeless.
- ◆ Substance abuse treatment facilities that have a designated employee to use an authorized representative card on facility residents’ EBT accounts. The authorized representative uses the EBT cards to purchase food that the facility will prepare and serve to facility residents. This is a less common type of facility that is not authorized by FNS as a meal service.
- ◆ Group living arrangements.
- ◆ Shelters for battered women.

Homeless meal providers are not facilities. These providers are businesses approved by the Department and authorized by FNS to accept Food Assistance as payment from homeless people for meals.

The policies that apply to the different types of meal providers are described in the following sections:

- ◆ Homeless meal providers
- ◆ FNS-Authorized Meal Service Facilities
- ◆ Facilities Not Authorized by FNS as a Meal Service
- ◆ Group living arrangements
- ◆ Shelters for battered women and children

### **Homeless Meal Providers**

**Legal reference:** 7 CFR 272.9, 441 IAC 65.31(234)

A “homeless meal provider” may be:

- ◆ A public or private non-profit establishment (e.g. soup kitchen, temporary shelter) that feeds homeless persons; or
- ◆ A restaurant that contracts with DHS to offer meals at concessional (low or reduced) prices to homeless persons.

Authorize providers of meals to homeless people to accept Food Assistance dependent upon final approval from USDA. The provider must cooperate with the Food Assistance office in the determination of whether meals are served to homeless people.

If an establishment or shelter is interested in becoming authorized to accept Food Assistance, the person in charge of the administration of the establishment or shelter must sign and date a statement that includes:

- ◆ The approximate number of meals served per month.
- ◆ A statement that the establishment or shelter serves meals to homeless persons.
- ◆ How often meals are served by the establishment (for example, two meals a day, six meals per week).

Keep a copy of the provider's statement. Prepare a cover letter stating you have determined that the establishment or shelter serves homeless persons. Send the original statement and the cover letter to:

USDA Food and Nutrition Services  
Federal Building, Room 641  
210 Walnut St.  
Des Moines, IA 50309

### **FNS-Authorized Meal Service Facilities**

**Legal reference:** 7 CFR 273.11(e)

Clients of facilities authorized by the USDA Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) as a meal service are eligible to receive Food Assistance. The facility clients can use their Food Assistance to pay for meals provided by the facility. Clients of these facilities may be in substance abuse treatment or homeless. Clients of these facilities may be residential or non-residential.

An FNS-authorized meal service can accept Food Assistance as payment for meals the facility prepares. The facility clients use their EBT cards at the facility's point of sale (POS) terminal to pay for meals.

Facility clients must freely choose to apply for Food Assistance. A facility may not demand that a client apply. A facility may ask (but not demand) that a client use Food Assistance to pay for meals served by the facility. By federal law, a client's use of an EBT card and Food Assistance account to pay for facility meals is strictly optional. Refer complaints of infractions to the DHS central office.

No facility employee may receive an authorized representative Iowa EBT card on any facility client's food account. No facility employee may use a facility client's EBT card. See [Facilities Prohibited From Using Clients' EBT Cards and PINs](#) for details.

**Contacts for Facilities**

The DHS Central Office and FNS Field Office jointly administer policies specific to facilities authorized by FNS as a meal service. Contacts for facilities are as follows:

- ◆ **FNS:** Facilities wanting to accept Food Assistance as payment from clients for meals serviced by the facility or wanting information on Food Assistance program rules must contact the Iowa FNS Field Office.

Facilities can contact Iowa's FNS Field Office by mail, phone, or fax, as follows:

<b>FNS Field Office Mailing Address</b>	<b>FNS Field Office Phone and Fax</b>
USDA Food and Nutrition Services	Phone: 515-284-4035
Federal Building, Room 641	Fax: 515-284-4038
210 Walnut St.	
Des Moines, IA 50309	

The FNS Field Office will provide facilities with official program rules and information when the facility applies to become an authorized meal service.

FNS provides each facility with a copy of the Department's Comm. 221, *FNS Authorized Meal Service*. Facilities must follow this official guidance in setting allowable meal charges and requesting payment from clients' accounts.

The FNS Field Office monitors the facility clients' accounts each month. Questions about client account monitoring or allowable meal charges must be directed to the Field Office.

- ◆ **DHS:** The DHS local office serving a specific facility is responsible to answer the facility's questions specific to residents' Food Assistance certification and the amount of assistance issued or amount currently available to a resident.

The DHS central office is responsible to handle issues that may arise from suspected inappropriate use of a resident's EBT card, and similar issues. Forward complaints relating to improper use of EBT cards or accounts to central office.

- ◆ **ACS:** The EBT service provider, ACS, is responsible for all issues relating to EBT equipment and system errors. ACS is responsible to install EBT equipment and ensure that equipment is operational.

FNS-authorized meal service facilities must consult with the EBT service provider regarding:

- Obtaining “point of sale” equipment, and
- Questions or issues relating directly to the EBT system operation.

Before receiving a point of sale terminal, the facility must enter into a contract with ACS. Immediately upon notification of authorization by FNS, ACS will contact the facility to begin the contracting process.

ACS provides facilities with a contact phone number with the EBT contracting documents. Facilities should refer to the ACS documents for instructions.

Issues such as an equipment problem causing wrong amounts to be taken from an account must be directed to the ACS EBT customer service. The customer service number is included with the documents ACS provides to the facility.

### **Facilities Prohibited From Using Clients’ EBT Cards and PINs**

No employee of a facility that is an FNS-authorized meal service can receive an authorized representative card on any facility client’s account.

Facility employees cannot retain control of any client’s EBT card or personal identification number (PIN) for the purpose of accessing an EBT food account, with or without the consent of the person to whom the EBT card belongs.

A facility may hold residential client’s EBT cards for safekeeping until the time the client needs it to pay for meals or leaves the facility.

### **Facility Employee as an Authorized Representative**

A facility must designate an employee to act as an authorized representative to conduct business with DHS on behalf of all residential clients. Residential clients do not have the option of using a facility employee as an authorized representative for the application process. See [Residential Clients](#) for details.

The designated employee may act as an authorized representative for non-residential facility clients, if the client requests this, but is not required to. This is entirely at the discretion of a non-residential client. See [Non-Residential Clients](#) for details.

### **Residential Clients**

Residential clients do not qualify for Food Assistance unless they have a facility-designated authorized representative to conduct business with DHS. The authorized representative must make application on the client's behalf.

As long as the client is a resident of the facility, the client cannot elect to end the authorized representative relationship and continue to receive Food Assistance. When a residential client moves to a non-residential setting, the authorized representative relationship ends.

Until the client leaves the residential setting, the client severs the relationship, or the client's Food Assistance certification period ends, the authorized representative must continue to meet all reporting requirements for the client. See [Authorized Representative's Reporting Requirements](#).

### **Non-Residential Clients**

Non-residential facility clients are not required to have a facility employee as an authorized representative to qualify for Food Assistance. Non-residential clients can apply for Food Assistance on their own behalf.

Non-residential clients may ask for the designated facility employee to act as their authorized representative. As for residential clients, a non-residential client's authorized representative is responsible to meet DHS reporting requirements as detailed under [Authorized Representative's Reporting Requirements](#).

A non-residential client may end the authorized representative relationship at any time by informing DHS. Ending the authorized representative relationship has no impact on a non-residential client's continuing eligibility for Food Assistance.

### **Appointing the Authorized Representative**

Clients must freely choose to name an authorized representative from the facility. Clients show that they freely chose an authorized representative by writing the name of the person chosen in the space provided on the DHS application for Food Assistance.

When an applicant fills in the authorized representative's name on the application and signs the form, the facility employee is authorized to conduct business with DHS on behalf of the client. A separate form or any other type of additional authorization to name the authorized representative is not required.

The facility employee that is named as the applicant's authorized representative will conduct DHS business on the client's behalf until:

- ◆ The end of the Food Assistance certification period, or
- ◆ Permission is revoked by the client or
- ◆ The client leaves the care of the facility.

When a facility replaces its designated employee with a new person who will act as the clients' authorized representative, the new employee cannot act as an authorized representative for any resident until the facility notifies the local office that the original authorized representative is replaced.

### **Reporting Requirements**

DHS must tell the facility client's authorized representative what reporting requirement is assigned to the Food Assistance recipient. If the client's reporting requirement changes, DHS must tell the authorized representative.

The authorized representative must make the required reports to DHS within each client's specific reporting requirement. The facility's DHS office will provide appropriate reporting forms to the facility.

Failure on the part of the authorized representative to meet required reporting requirements results in the same consequences for the client as for other Food Assistance recipients in regard to continued eligibility.

A failure on the part of the authorized representative to report a change as required by DHS can result in an overpayment of Food Assistance to the client. Whether a failure to report is inadvertent or intentional, the facility, not the client, is responsible to repay a resulting Food Assistance overpayment.

The authorized representative is responsible for:

- ◆ Any misrepresentation or intentional program violation the representative knowingly commits when representing a facility client.
- ◆ All losses and misuse of Food Assistance that occur while representing the client.

An authorized representative who intentionally breaks Food Assistance program rules may be prosecuted under applicable federal and state statutes for those acts. Refer suspected program infractions to DHS central office.

### **Facilities Not Authorized by FNS as a Meal Service**

**Legal reference:** 7 CFR 273.11(e)

These policies apply specifically to substance abuse treatment facilities that are not authorized by FNS as a meal service. For residential clients of the facility to qualify for Food Assistance, these facilities must:

- ◆ Be non-profit, and
- ◆ Meet criteria to receive funding from the federal Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Authority (SAMHSA). The facility does not actually have to receive this funding, only meet the criteria to do so.

It is the responsibility of the facility to provide verification that it meets these criteria. Until the facility provides DHS with appropriate verification, all applications for Food Assistance made by facility residents must be denied.

Residential clients of these facilities who regularly participate in the facility's treatment and rehabilitation programs may qualify for Food Assistance only if they apply for Food Assistance using a facility employee as an authorized representative.

Non-residential clients of the facility may apply and receive Food Assistance without regard to the facility's certifications. Non-residential clients do not have to use the facility employee as an authorized representative.

Clients must freely choose to apply for Food Assistance. A facility may not demand that a client apply.

The DHS local office must provide Comm. 219, *Reference Guide for Drug and Alcohol Treatment Facilities*, to these facilities. Comm. 219 provides a complete description of policies that apply to substance abuse treatment centers that are not authorized to accept Food Assistance.

#### **Use of Food Assistance by the Facility**

A facility may ask (but not demand) that a client allow the facility to use the client's Food Assistance to pay for food used to prepare meals served by the facility. By federal law, a client's use of an EBT card and food account to pay for food for facility meals is strictly optional. Refer program infractions to the DHS central office.

A facility's designated employee cannot act as an authorized representative to purchase food for a resident using the resident's Food Assistance until the following is accomplished:

- ◆ The resident and authorized representative both sign the Food Assistance application, and
- ◆ The resident and authorized representative complete and sign form 470-4008, *Facility Authorized Representative for Electronic Benefit Transfer – EBT*, and return it to the DHS office.

The authorized representative is mailed an Iowa card for each resident's Food Assistance household. The authorized representative can use a resident's Food Assistance only for:

- ◆ Buying food to prepare meals for that resident.
- ◆ Buying delivered meals for the resident.

### **Appointing Facility Employee as Authorized Representative**

Clients must freely choose to name an authorized representative. Clients show that they freely choose an authorized representative by writing the name of the person chosen in the space provided on the DHS application for Food Assistance.

When an applicant fills in the authorized representative's name on the application and signs the form, the facility employee is authorized to conduct business with DHS on behalf of the client. A separate form or any other type of additional authorization to name the authorized representative is not required by DHS.

The facility employee named as the applicant's authorized representative will conduct business with the Department on the client's behalf until the client leaves the facility's care or revokes permission.

### **Residential Facility Clients**

Residential clients do not qualify for Food Assistance unless they have a facility-designated authorized representative to conduct business with the Department. The authorized representative must make application on the client's behalf.

As long as the client is a resident of the facility, the client cannot elect to end the authorized representative relationship and continue to receive Food Assistance. When a residential client moves to a non-residential setting, the authorized representative relationship ends.

The authorized representative must continue to meet all reporting requirements for the client until the client leaves residential treatment, or severs the relationship, or the client's Food Assistance certification period ends. See [Authorized Representative's Reporting Requirements](#).

### **Non-Residential Facility Clients**

Non-residential facility clients are not required to have a facility employee as an authorized representative to qualify for Food Assistance. Non-residential clients can apply for Food Assistance on their own behalf.

Non-residential clients may ask for the designated facility employee to act as their authorized representative. If acting as an authorized representative for a non-residential client, the facility employee is responsible to meet DHS reporting requirements as detailed under the heading [Authorized Representative's Reporting Requirements](#).

Non-residential clients may allow the facility authorized representative to have an EBT card on the client's account to purchase food for meals that will be eaten at the facility. To do this, the client and the authorized representative must complete and sign form 470-4008, *Facility Authorized Representative for Electronic Benefit Transfer – EBT*.

The facility is not allowed to use the client's own EBT card.

A non-residential client may end the authorized representative relationship at any time by informing DHS. Ending the authorized representative relationship has no impact on a non-residential client's continuing eligibility for Food Assistance.

### **When a Facility Replaces the Authorized Representative**

When a facility replaces its designated employee with a new person who will act as its residents' authorized representative, the new employee cannot use the former authorized representative's Iowa EBT cards.

The new employee cannot act as an authorized representative or receive an EBT card for any resident until the following is accomplished:

- ◆ The facility must immediately notify the local office that the original authorized representative is to be replaced.
- ◆ The resident and the new designated employee completes and signs the *Facility Authorized Representative for Electronic Benefit Transfer – EBT*, form 470-4008, and returns it to DHS.
- ◆ The facility must immediately return to DHS all Iowa cards that were issued to the original authorized representative.

### **Authorized Representative's Reporting Requirements**

The DHS local office must tell the authorized representative what reporting requirement is assigned to a Food Assistance recipient. If the client's reporting requirement changes, DHS must tell the authorized representative. The authorized representative must make required reports to DHS within each client's specific reporting requirement.

The facility's DHS office will provide appropriate reporting forms to the facility.

Failure on the part of the authorized representative to meet required reporting requirements results in the same consequences for the client as for other Food Assistance recipients, in regard to continuance of eligibility.

A failure on the part of the authorized representative to report a change as required by DHS can result in an overpayment of Food Assistance to the client. Whether a failure to report is inadvertent or intentional, the facility, not the client, is responsible to repay a resulting Food Assistance overpayment.

The authorized representative is responsible for:

- ◆ Any misrepresentation or intentional program violation (IPV) the representative knowingly commits when representing a facility client; and
- ◆ All losses and misuse of Food Assistance that occur while representing the client.

An authorized representative who intentionally breaks Food Assistance rules may be prosecuted under applicable federal and state statutes for their acts. Refer suspected program infractions to the DHS central office.

### **When a Household Moves to a Facility**

If a recipient household becomes a resident of the facility, the facility authorized representative must represent the household in the same way as the households who apply after becoming a resident. If the household does not want the facility authorized representative to act on its behalf, the household is ineligible to continue to receive Food Assistance.

If only one member of a household moved into the facility, handle this as a change in household composition according to the policy [When a Household Splits Up](#).

If the household is a non-residential client of the facility, benefits can continue uninterrupted.

### **Resident Moves Out of a Facility**

When a resident moves out of the facility, the authorized representative must:

- ◆ Give departing residents *Change Report*, form 470-0312, or form 470-0322 (Spanish), if appropriate under the resident's reporting requirement.
- ◆ Advise the resident to report the new address to DHS in order to receive DHS information to continue to be certified for Food Assistance.
- ◆ Return the authorized representative's Iowa card to the local DHS office.

Within three working days after a resident leaves the care of a facility, the authorized representative must return the representative's EBT card for the resident's account to DHS. The returned card must be accompanied by the completed form 470-4005, *Report of Returned Facility Authorized Representative Card*.

If the resident left without taking the resident's own EBT card, that card must also be returned to DHS within three working days of the date of departure.

DHS will check to see if the correct amount of Food Assistance is in the resident's account before destroying the returned authorized representative card.

- ◆ If the resident left before the 16<sup>th</sup> of the month, the resident's Food Assistance EBT account must have:
  - At least one-half of the allotment issued for that month, or
  - All of unspent Food Assistance if less than half has been spent.
- ◆ If a resident's allotment was issued as a combined allotment and the resident leaves before the start of the second month, the account must contain all of the second month's Food Assistance.

If too much Food Assistance was used, the facility must return to the local office and pick up the authorized representative's Iowa card. The facility must return food to the store if a credit is necessary.

1. Resident A receives \$141 for April's allotment. Resident A moves out of the facility on April 14. Resident A's EBT account must have at least \$70.50 left on the day of departure.
2. Resident B receives a combined allotment of \$70 for March and \$141 for April. Resident B moves out of the facility on April 12. Resident B's EBT account must have at least \$70.50, one-half of the April assistance ( $\$141 \div 2 = \$70.50$ ), left on the day of departure.
3. Resident C receives a combined allotment of \$70 for March and \$141 for April. Resident C moves out of the facility on March 29. Resident C's EBT account must have at least \$141 (the entire amount of the April allotment) left on the day of departure. Also, any portion of the March allotment that was not accessed before the resident's departure must remain in the account.

A client's EBT card or the authorized representative's card may arrive at a facility after the client has already left. Neither the client's card nor the authorized representative's card can be used by the facility once the client has left the care of the facility. If cards arrive after the Food Assistance recipient has left the facility, a facility employee must:

- ◆ Refuse delivery from the mail carrier, or
- ◆ Immediately mail the cards back to DHS if delivery was accepted, or
- ◆ Return the cards to DHS within three working days of arrival.

If a client leaves a facility without taking the EBT card, the abandoned EBT card must be returned to the DHS. The card must be returned within three working days from the date the client left the care of the facility.

### **Facility Monitoring by DHS**

The DHS local office must monitor non-FNS meal service facilities at least monthly to ensure that no more than the allowable amount of charges is debited from residents' accounts. This includes ensuring that:

- ◆ No more than one-half of any client's monthly assistance is used before the 16<sup>th</sup> of that month; and
- ◆ No part of a future months' assistance is used before the first day of the month for which the assistance is intended.

If a facility uses too much from an account, groceries must be returned to obtain the appropriate credit.

Facilities should keep records of clients' food charges for three years from the date of creation. The records may be needed in the event of a state or federal audit.

DHS is required to conduct random on-site visits to the center at least once a year to ensure that the lists provided by the center are accurate, consistent with DHS records, and up to date. Clients' Food Assistance accounts are audited at the same time.

### **Facility Monthly Reporting**

When a facility is not authorized by FNS to accept Food Assistance as payment for meals served by the facility, the facility uses authorized representative EBT cards at grocers and food suppliers to purchase food to serve.

These facilities must submit monthly reports to the DHS local office. Provide a supply of form 470-4035, *Facility Monthly Report (Not Authorized to Accept Food Assistance)*, to each facility. The report must be fully completed, signed, and provided to the DHS local office by the seventh working day of each month.

Only clients who receive Food Assistance or have filed an application for Food Assistance are to be listed on the monthly report. The report must contain new clients who arrived during the month and clients who left during the month. The local DHS office can require that a facility submit a list of all facility clients still at the facility during the month. FNS handles reporting discrepancies.

## **Group Living Arrangements**

**Legal reference:** 7 CFR 273.11(f)

Residents of a group living arrangement may qualify for Food Assistance only if:

- ◆ The facility is a nonprofit agency that is licensed under regulations issued under section 1616(e) of the Social Security Act (or comparable standards) to serve no more than 16 total residents under a single license or certification, and
- ◆ The resident either is disabled or is a veteran or a surviving spouse of a veteran, as described below.

“Disabled” means the resident:

- ◆ Receives supplemental security income (SSI) benefits under Title XVI of the Social Security Act or disability or blindness payment under Titles I, II, X, XIV or XVI of the Social Security Act.
- ◆ Receives federal or state supplemental benefits under section 1616(a) of the Social Security Act, and eligibility for benefits is based on the disability or blindness criteria under Title XVI of the Social Security Act.
- ◆ Receives disability retirement benefits from a governmental agency because of a disability considered permanent under Section 221(i) of the Social Security Act.

A “veteran” is a person who, under Title 38 of the United States Code, either:

- ◆ Has a disability rated or paid as total by the Veterans Administration, or
- ◆ Is considered by the Veterans Administration to be in need of regular aid and attendance or to be permanently housebound.

A “surviving spouse of a veteran” is a person who, under Title 38 of the U.S. Code, either:

- ◆ Is considered by the Veterans Administration to be in need of regular aid and attendance or to be permanently housebound, or
- ◆ Receives or has been approved for compensation for a service-connected death or a pension benefit for a non service-connected death, and has a disability considered permanent under Section 221(i) of the Social Security Act.

The facility is responsible to provide DHS with evidence it meets the qualifications for the residents to be eligible for Food Assistance. Applications for Food Assistance cannot be approved until the proof is provided. A facility is required to report to DHS within ten days the loss of the facility's certifications that meets criteria for its residents to be eligible for Food Assistance.

### **Residents of Group Living Arrangement**

After moving into a group living arrangement, a participant can continue to receive Food Assistance without an authorized representative if mentally and physically able to conduct business. If the facility determines that the person is mentally or physically incapable of handling the person's own affairs, the resident can continue to receive Food Assistance with a facility authorized representative.

Residents of group living facilities may apply for Food Assistance:

- ◆ For themselves, if the facility says they are physically and mentally able to handle their own affairs, or
- ◆ Through an authorized representative of their choosing, or
- ◆ Through a facility employee designated to act as the authorized representative for residents who are physically or mentally unable to apply for themselves. When the facility employee applies on behalf of a resident, the facility has determined the resident cannot apply independently.

A resident of a group living arrangement is always considered as a household of one when an employee of the group living arrangement is the resident's authorized representative. This is true even when the group buys and fixes food together.

If residents **are not** certified using the facility's employee as an authorized representative, the resident's household size is determined according to the policies in 7-C, [HOUSEHOLD COMPOSITION](#).

### **Residents Who Do Not Use a Facility Authorized Representative**

When the resident uses an authorized representative that is **not a facility** employee the resident may:

- ◆ Receive the EBT card; or
- ◆ Request that the authorized representative receive an EBT card using form 470-4008, *Facility Authorized Representative for Electronic Benefit Transfer – EBT*; or
- ◆ Receive an EBT card and also request one for the authorized representative using form 470-4008, *Facility Authorized Representative for Electronic Benefit Transfer – EBT*.

### **Facility Responsibilities and Authorized Representatives**

It is the responsibility of the facility to:

- ◆ Appoint employees to act as authorized representatives for residents.
- ◆ Monitor facility employees to ensure that no resident's Food Assistance is misused.

When a resident must have a facility employee to act as the resident's authorized representative, or chooses to use the facility authorized representative, the facility authorized representative must:

- ◆ Complete and sign the Food Assistance application.
- ◆ Maintain a sufficient supply of:
  - *Facility Monthly Report (FNS Authorized Meal Service)*, form 470-2724
  - *Change Report*, forms 470-0312 and 470-0322 (Spanish)
  - Local DHS return envelopes

The local office will offer these to the authorized representative at the certification of each resident applicant.

- ◆ Report to DHS any changes in certified residents' circumstances according to the residents' reporting requirements.

- ◆ Report the loss of an Iowa card immediately to the EBT customer service (1-800-367-8093) or to DHS.
- ◆ Report any overissuance or misuse by facility employees of a resident's Food Assistance within ten days of occurrence.

The authorized representative or designated employee can use a resident's Food Assistance only for:

- ◆ Buying food for the resident.
- ◆ Buying delivered meals for the resident.
- ◆ Buying food to be served to the resident.

### **Use of Food Assistance**

Group living arrangements are responsible for monitoring facility employees' actions in handling residents' Food Assistance when a facility employee is the residents' authorized representative.

When the facility employee is chosen by the resident or is required to be the resident's authorized representative:

- ◆ The facility can allow the residents to have and use their own EBT cards. The facility staff can assist residents in using their own cards. This option may be preferable for facilities that take residents on outings and help them shop for items of their choosing.
- ◆ The facility authorized representative can designate the resident's counselors, caretakers, or attendants to use the resident's own card and PIN for the resident. This option may be preferable for facilities that have residents who occasionally can go shopping or can demonstrate food likes and dislikes.
- ◆ The authorized representative can choose to receive a card on a resident's EBT account. With this option, do not also issue EBT cards to the residents in this situation unless the authorized representative requests it. (Use of the *Facility Authorized Representative for Electronic Benefit Transfer – EBT*, form 470-4008, **does not apply** in this situation.)

This option may be preferable for facility residents who are not able to go on facility initiated shopping trips or can't indicate food preferences so staff can shop for special items for them.

### **Resident Moves Out**

When **any** resident receiving Food Assistance moves out of the facility, the facility authorized representative must:

- ◆ Notify DHS immediately; and
- ◆ Give the departing resident a *Change Report*, form 470-0312 or form 470-0322 (Spanish), if required by the resident's DHS reporting requirement.

When a facility-designated authorized representative uses the representative's own EBT card to purchase food to be served to the resident, the authorized representative must return that EBT card to the local DHS office within three working days of the date the resident left.

(This policy does not apply to arrangements in which the resident uses the resident's own card, a staff member uses the resident's card for the resident, or the resident does not use the facility employee as an authorized representative.)

Residents are entitled to the following amount of Food Assistance when they leave the facility:

- ◆ When a resident leaves before the 16<sup>th</sup> of the month, the resident is entitled to:
  - At least one-half of the allotment issued for that month, or
  - All of the unspent Food Assistance if less than half has been spent.
- ◆ When a resident's allotment was issued as a combined allotment, and the resident leaves before the start of the second month, the resident is entitled to all of the second month's Food Assistance. Examples:

1. Resident A receives \$141 for April's allotment. Resident A moves out of the facility on April 14. Resident A's EBT account must have at least \$70.50 left on the day of departure.

2. Resident B receives a combined allotment of \$70 for March and \$141 for April. Resident B moves out of the facility on April 12. Resident B's EBT account must have at least \$70.50, one-half of the April assistance ( $\$141 \div 2 = \$70.50$ ), left on the day of departure.
3. Resident C receives a combined allotment of \$70 for March and \$141 for April. Resident C moves out of the facility on March 29. Resident C's EBT account must have at least \$141 (the entire amount of the April allotment) left on the day of departure. Also, any portion of the March allotment that was not accessed before the resident's departure must remain in the account.

### **Monthly Reports and On-Site Reviews**

Reporting requirements apply only if a facility employee is acting as an authorized representative to receive an EBT card on any resident's EBT food account to purchase food for the resident. For these residents, the facility must:

- ◆ Keep records of the usage of each resident's account
- ◆ Provide a completed form 470-2724, *Facility Monthly Report (FNS Authorized Meal Service)*, to the local DHS office by the seventh working day of the month following the report month.

Residents who use their own EBT cards (with or without help from facility employees) are not to be included in these reports. Reporting requirements also do not apply when the employee uses the resident's own card and PIN.

The facility may be penalized or disqualified from participation in the Food Assistance program if any resident's Food Assistance is:

- ◆ Misappropriated,
- ◆ Used to feed non-Food Assistance certified residents,
- ◆ Used to pay for food purchased on credit, or
- ◆ Used after a resident has moved out of the facility.

These may be discovered through a complaint received by DHS or through the review of a resident's EBT account when the facility employee has an authorized representative card on the account.

If a facility is found to have misused residents' accounts or you receive a complaint, contact the Food Assistance policy staff in Central Office for assistance. Conduct an on-site facility review when directed to do so by Central Office.

### **Shelters for Battered Women and Children**

**Legal reference:** 7 CFR 271.1 and 273.11(g)

When a resident of a shelter for battered women and children applies for Food Assistance:

- ◆ Verify that FNS authorized the shelter as a retailer, if the shelter claims to be a retailer, or determine and document that the shelter meets the definition of a shelter for battered women and children as specified under [Definitions](#).

**Note:** Only shelters that function exclusively to serve battered women with or without children are included in this definition. Any residence that takes care of battered women from time to time in addition to serving as a regular residence for others, such as a private home or boarding house, is not included unless a portion of the regular residence is reserved on a long-term basis to shelter battered women.

- ◆ Certify residents for duplicate Food Assistance when the household where they received Food Assistance before entering the shelter contained the person who subjected them to the abuse. Certify these shelter residents for duplicate allotments only once in a month.
- ◆ Certify the applicant who is a resident of the shelter on the date of application. Use the same certification provisions that apply to other households, including accessibility of jointly held resources, proration, and emergency service policies.
- ◆ Determine eligibility and benefits solely based on the current household size when entering the shelter and that household's income and resources and the expenses for which they are responsible. (Room payments to the shelter are a shelter expense.)
- ◆ Disregard the income and expenses of the former household, even when the applicant leaves the shelter.
- ◆ Adjust the former household's eligibility or allotment based on the change.
- ◆ Notify the office where the original household was certified of the change.
- ◆ Deny certification to the applicant as a separate household when the applicant has returned to the former household as of the date of the interview or before certification.

## **MANAGEMENT EVALUATION**

**Legal reference:** 7 CFR 275.2 and 275.5

| The Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 requires each state to have a system for monitoring and improving administration of the Food Assistance program. Iowa's system to monitor program administration and operations is called the performance reporting system. It is made up of:

- ◆ Data collection through management evaluation and quality control reviews.
- ◆ Analysis and evaluation of data from all sources.
- ◆ Corrective action planning.
- ◆ Corrective action implementation and monitoring.
- ◆ Reporting to the Food and Nutrition Service on program performance.

Management evaluation reviews are conducted to measure compliance with state manual policy, the Food Assistance state plan of operation, and any other USDA approved Food Assistance plans. The Management Evaluation Unit is a part of the Division of Results-Based Accountability.

The legal basis for establishment of the monitoring system is found in:

- | ◆ The Food and Nutrition Act of 2008, as amended.
- ◆ The Code of Federal Regulations Title 7, Part 275, "Performance Reporting System," Subpart B, "Management Evaluation (ME) Reviews," Sections 275.5 through 275.9.
- ◆ State policy set by rule 441 Iowa Administrative Code 65.3(234).

The objectives of management evaluation as identified in regulations are to provide:

- ◆ A systematic method of monitoring and assessing program operations by service area.
- ◆ A basis for service areas to improve and strengthen program operations by identifying and correcting deficiencies.
- ◆ A continuing flow of information between the service areas, central office, and FNS, necessary to develop the solutions to problems in program policy and procedures.

## **Review Process**

**Legal reference:** 7 CFR 275.8

During each federal fiscal year, the Management Evaluation Unit reviews the areas of program operations targeted by the USDA Food and Nutrition Service as national priorities. These areas are subject to change annually and may be added to during the fiscal year.

The Management Evaluation Unit also reviews compliance with those policies and procedures that have been identified as error-prone by state Food Assistance program improvement staff. Areas targeted as error-prone are reassessed and updated on an as-needed basis. In addition, the process gathers data regarding local level administrative operations and procedures that have an impact on the Food Assistance program.

### **Selecting Review Sites**

**Legal reference:** 7 CFR 271.2, 275.5, and 275.7

Iowa has chosen to monitor and assess program operations using the service area as the project area or “management unit.” The “subunits” of the “management unit” are the counties of the service area. A representative number of subunits within each service area are selected for review in each review cycle.

Currently, a federal waiver allows Iowa to focus management evaluation review efforts on some large and medium-sized counties that have the most impact or potential impact on the state’s payment error rate. The county chosen for a targeted management evaluation review is selected annually.

Additional monitoring continues in all counties not targeted for a management evaluation review, as management staff at the state and service area level monitor the semi-annual county payment accuracy enhancement plans and updates.

### **Review Procedures**

**Legal reference:** 7 CFR 275.9(a)

Federal regulations require that state agencies conduct reviews in a manner that will best measure project areas' compliance with each program requirement. Review procedures must be adequate to identify problems and the causes of those problems. Because the operational structure of each service area may differ, the procedure used to review these service areas may also differ.

In Iowa, management evaluation review methods consist of:

- ◆ Pre-screening a variety of available data sources (Quality Control findings, claims statistics, case reading system statistics, etc.).
- ◆ Review of county accuracy enhancement plans, claim records or logs, and case records.
- ◆ Clients are interviewed.
- ◆ Discussions with county and service area staff.
- ◆ A written report of findings and corrective action recommendations, with follow-up, as needed.

### **Payment Accuracy Review**

**Legal reference:** 7 CFR 275.9, 275.8

Payment accuracy is reviewed by pre-screening the county's accuracy enhancement plan. This provides background knowledge upon which specific follow-up questions are then formulated. Management evaluation staff ask these follow-up questions in discussion with local management staff at the on-site conference.

In addition, any components of the accuracy enhancement plan that lend themselves to case reading are reviewed through case scans. For instance, an accuracy enhancement plan indicating a program improvement measure such as the addition of particular divider tabs into the case files would be assessed through a scan of this during case reading.

Case scans for payment accuracy initiatives are conducted on cases already being sampled for other review aspects. See [Client Access Review](#) and [Claims Review](#) for case sample selection procedures.

### **Client Access Review**

**Legal reference:** 7 CFR 275.8, 275.9

Client access is reviewed both by case reading and by discussion with local office staff. Specific questions are asked to assess if the office:

- ◆ Makes applications and information readily available to all interested people,
- ◆ Provides emergency service to eligible households, and
- ◆ Ensures that Food Assistance benefits are provided to eligible households without regard to the loss of FIP or Medicaid eligibility.

A case record review is also done. The review period for each county or cluster is the most recent month available at the time the sample is selected. Cases are selected for review by local office staff.

The local office is asked to select a proportionate number of PA and non-PA Food Assistance cases and to include both emergency and non-emergency cases in the sample. Management evaluation staff request specific minority cases to ensure that the sample is representative of minority households in the county.

### **Claims Review**

**Legal reference:** 7 CFR 275.8, 275.9

Claims are monitored and tracked on a monthly and quarterly basis by review of printouts generated from the Overpayment Recovery (OPR) system to ensure that:

- ◆ Claims are being established within 90 days of discovery, and
- ◆ Backlogs of uncompleted claims do not exist.

A small sample of case records with established Food Assistance claims are also being reviewed to ensure that required source documents are properly retained.

## **Civil Rights Requirements**

**Legal reference:** 7 CFR 272.6, FNS Instruction 113-7

Management evaluation staff must review compliance with civil rights requirements in order to ensure that services are provided without regard to age, race, color, sex, handicap, religious creed, national origin, or political beliefs. Civil rights compliance includes these requirements:

- ◆ To provide applicants, participants, and grassroots organizations information about the program and program changes. This includes information pertaining to eligibility, benefits and services, the location of offices, and hours of service.
- ◆ To provide bilingual services in areas with a significant proportion of non-English speaking or limited-English-speaking persons.
- ◆ To inform applicants and participants of their rights and responsibilities, including their right to file a complaint.
- ◆ To provide applicants and participants with information regarding complaint procedures within ten days of the date of request.
- ◆ To display prominently the nondiscrimination poster “And Justice for All,” or a similar FNS-approved poster.
- ◆ To ensure participation of local office staff in civil rights training.

Management evaluation reviewers contact community service providers (grassroots organizations) to determine compliance with civil rights requirements.

Findings identifying concerns during the civil rights review process are submitted in writing to the affirmative action compliance officer for consideration and recommendation.

## **Management Evaluation Findings**

**Legal reference:** 7 CFR 275.5 through 275.9

Management evaluation reviewers hold conferences with field staff to:

- ◆ Discuss procedures and structures that affect the local operation of the program.
- ◆ Review findings from all available data sources and from case reading.
- ◆ Explore program improvement and error prevention activities.

The reviewer then prepares a written report of the findings based on the review of various data sources, case record review, the on-site conference, and the contacts with community service providers. The report must list:

- ◆ Areas needing improvement.
- ◆ Program improvement recommendations.

The reviewer sends the report to the service area manager, the Field Operations Support Unit, other units as needed, and the USDA Food and Nutrition Service regional office. When the reviewer finds corrective action is needed that is not a responsibility of service area staff, the proper functional unit is notified.

## **Local Office Responsibilities Relating to Management Evaluation**

**Legal reference:** 7 CFR 275.5

The local office shall:

- ◆ Respond to data and case sampling requests.
- ◆ Make required adjustments, if any, to individual cases under corrective action.
- ◆ Submit a corrective action plan through the service area manager in response to the management evaluation report and recommendations. The corrective action plan will:
  - Describe corrective actions already taken and corrective actions planned for deficiencies cited in the management evaluation report.
  - Give time frames for any actions still to be implemented.

Management evaluation staff then reviews the response and requests further information or action when appropriate.



TERRY E. BRANSTAD, GOVERNOR

DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES

CHARLES M. PALMER, DIRECTOR

May 30, 1995

GENERAL LETTER NO. 7-A-23

ISSUED BY: Bureau of Food Stamps, Division of Economic Assistance

SUBJECT: Employees' Manual, Title 7, Chapter A, "Administration," Title Page, revised; Contents, pages 1 and 2, revised; pages 1 through 24, revised; and pages 25 through 45, new.

Summary

The existing chapter VII-A, "General Provisions" has been reorganized and rewritten to incorporate the Department's updated manual format and writing style. The policy content of the chapter remains unchanged.

See the attached comparison chart that lists the sections and subsections of the current 7-A and where these sections and subsections are located in the revised chapter.

Effective Date

July 1, 1995

Material Superseded

Remove all existing pages from Employees' Manual, Title 7, Chapter A, and destroy.

Additional Information

Refer questions about this material to your regional benefit payments administrator.

## 7-A COMPARISON CHART

<i>Current Section or Subsection Title</i>	<i>New Chapter</i>	<i>New Section</i>	<i>New Subsection</i>
<b>Purpose of the Food Stamp Program</b>	A	Overview	Purpose and Organization of the Food Stamp Program
<b>Legal Basis</b>	A	Overview	Purpose and Organization of the Food Stamp Program
<b>Definitions</b>	A	Definitions	
			Disabled Member
<b>Responsibility of the Department</b>	A	Overview	Purpose and Organization of the Food Stamp Program
State and Local Office Responsibility	A	Overview	Purpose and Organization of the Food Stamp Program
Claim Delegation	H	Claims	
<b>Coupons as Obligations of the United States, Crimes and Offenses</b>	A	Participant Use of Benefits	Penalties for Misusing Food Stamp Coupons
Coupons as Obligations	A	Participant Use of Benefits	Penalties for Misusing Food Stamp Coupons
Penalties	A	Participant Use of Benefits	Penalties for Misusing Food Stamp Coupons
Security for Coupons	A	Responsibility of the Department	Coupon Security
Coupon Issuers	A	Responsibility of the Department	Coupon Security
<b>Complaint Procedure</b>	A	Responsibility of the Department	Complaint System
<b>No Aid Reduction</b>	A	Responsibility of the Department	Effect of Receipt of Food Stamps on Other Benefits
<b>Disclosure of Information</b>	A	Responsibility of the Department	Confidentiality
<b>Availability of Public Information</b>	A	Responsibility of the Department	Public Information
<b>Records and Reports</b>	A	Responsibility of the Department	Records and Reports

<i>Current Section or Subsection Title</i>	<i>New Chapter</i>	<i>New Section</i>	<i>New Subsection</i>
<b>Retention of Records</b>	A	Responsibility of the Department	Records and Reports
<b>Program Informational Activities</b>	A	Responsibility of the Department	Program Informational Activities
Minimum Requirements	A	Responsibility of the Department	Program Informational Activities
Restaurant Meals Program	A	Responsibility of the Department, and Participant Use of Benefits	Restaurant Meals Program Responsibilities, and Where Food Stamps Can be Used
Authorization of Homeless Meal Providers	A	Responsibility of the Department	Homeless Meal Provider Authorization
<b>Personnel Requirements</b>	A	Responsibility of the Department	Personnel
Merit Employees	A	Responsibility of the Department	Personnel
Volunteers	A	Responsibility of the Department	Volunteers
Hours of Operation	A	Responsibility of the Department	Hours of Operations
Bilingual Requirements	A	Responsibility of the Department	Bilingual Requirements
Division of Responsibility	A	Responsibility of the Department	Organization
Training	A	Responsibility of the Department	Training
<b>Nondiscrimination Compliance</b>	A	Responsibility of the Department	Nondiscrimination Compliance
Right to Participate	A	Responsibility of the Department	Nondiscrimination Compliance
Right to File a Complaint	A	Responsibility of the Department	Filing a Discrimination Complaint
Complaint Requirements	A	Responsibility of the Department	Discrimination Complaint Requirements
Public Notification	A	Responsibility of the Department	Nondiscrimination Compliance

<i>Current Section or Subsection Title</i>	<i>New Chapter</i>	<i>New Section</i>	<i>New Subsection</i>
Data Collection	A	Responsibility of the Department	Data Collection
<b>Use or Redemption of Coupons by Eligible HHs</b>	A	Participant Use of Benefits	
Eligible Food	A	Participant Use of Benefits	How Participants Use Coupons and Coupon Books
Meals on Wheels	A	Participant Use of Benefits	Where Food Stamps can be Used
Communal Dining	A	Participant Use of Benefits	Where Food Stamps can be Used
Residents of Certain Institutions	A	Participant Use of Benefits	Where Food Stamps can be Used
Homeless FS Households	A	Participant Use of Benefits	Where Food Stamps can be Used
Use of ID Card	A	Participant Use of Benefits	The Food Stamp Identification Card
Prior Payment Prohibition	A	Participant Use of Benefits	How Participants Use Coupons and Coupon Books
Cash Change	A	Participant Use of Benefits	How Participants Use Coupons and Coupon Books



TERRY E. BRANSTAD, GOVERNOR

DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES

CHARLES M. PALMER, DIRECTOR

June 28, 1995

GENERAL LETTER NO. 7-A-24

ISSUED BY: Bureau of Food Stamps, Division of Economic Assistance

SUBJECT: Employees' Manual, Title 7, Chapter A, "Administration," correction.

Summary

General Letter No. 7-A-23, dated May 30, 1995, stated that the existing Chapter VII-A, "General Provisions," was to be superseded by the rewritten Chapter 7-A, newly titled as "Administration," effective July 1, 1995. The effective date has been delayed.

The date that the rewritten chapter, dated May 30, 1995, is to become effective and supersede the existing Chapter A, has been changed to August 1, 1995.

Effective Date

July 1, 1995

Material Superseded

None.

Additional Information

Refer questions about this general letter to your regional benefit payment administrator.



September 2, 1997

**GENERAL LETTER NO. 7-A-25**

ISSUED BY: Bureau of Food Stamps, Division of Economic Assistance

SUBJECT: Employees' Manual, Title 7, Chapter A, *Administration*, Contents (page 1), revised; pages 2, 3, 6 through 10, 24, 25, 26, 34, and 36, revised; and page 26a, new.

**Summary**

This chapter is revised to remove the welfare reform policies. The definitions for "regular cases" and "welfare reform" have been removed.

The policies implemented by Manual Letter No. 7-A-1, dated September 24, 1996, have also been incorporated into this chapter.

**Effective Date**

July 1, 1997.

**Material Superseded**

Remove and the following pages from Employees' Manual, Title 7, Chapter A, and destroy them:

<u>Page</u>	<u>Date</u>
Manual Letter No. 7-A-1	September 24, 1996
Manual Letter No. 7-A-2	June 24, 1997
Contents (page 1)	May 30, 1995
2, 3, 6-10, 24-26, 34, and 36	May 30, 1995

**Additional Information**

Refer questions about this general letter to your regional benefit payment administrator.



TERRY E. BRANSTAD, GOVERNOR

DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES

CHARLES M. PALMER, DIRECTOR

December 16, 1997

**GENERAL LETTER NO. 7-A-26**

ISSUED BY: Bureau of Food Stamps, Division of Economic Assistance

SUBJECT: Employees' Manual, Title 7, Chapter A, *Administration*, page 26a, revised.

**Summary**

This chapter is revised to clarify the policy **Effect of a Reduction in Another Means-Tested Program's Cash Benefits**. Failure to cooperate with child support recovery and truancy of a child have been added as examples of reasons for which FIP is reduced as a penalty, which results in the 10% reduction being applied to the household's food stamp benefits.

**Effective Date**

Upon release.

**Material Superseded**

Remove from Employees' Manual, Title 7, Chapter A, page 26a, dated September 2 1997, and destroy it.

**Additional Information**

Refer questions about this general letter to your regional benefit payment administrator.



TERRY E. BRANSTAD, GOVERNOR

DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES

CHARLES M. PALMER, DIRECTOR

November 10, 1998

**GENERAL LETTER NO. 7-A-27**

ISSUED BY: Bureau of Food Stamps, Division of Economic Assistance

SUBJECT: Employees' Manual, Title 7, Chapter A, *Administration*, Contents (page 2), revised; page 33, revised; and page 32a, new.

**Summary**

This general letter transmits information about the Work Opportunity Tax Credit (WOTC) program. WOTC replaces the Target Jobs Credit (TJC) program. Iowa Workforce Development (IWD) administers WOTC. IWD verifies eligibility and issues certifications to employers.

DHS shares eligibility and program participation information electronically with IWD. Refer all requests for WOTC eligibility verification from employers and current or former Food Stamp participants to IWD. The coordinator's address is:

WOTC Coordinator  
Iowa Workforce Development  
150 Des Moines Street  
Des Moines, Iowa 50309

**Effective Date**

Upon release.

**Material Superseded**

Remove from Employees' Manual, Title 7, Chapter A, Contents (page 2) and page 33, both dated May 30, 1995, and destroy them.

**Additional Information**

Refer questions about this general letter to your regional benefit payment administrator.



THOMAS J. VILSACK, GOVERNOR  
SALLY J. PEDERSON, LT. GOVERNOR

DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES  
JESSIE K. RASMUSSEN, DIRECTOR

June 29, 1999

**GENERAL LETTER NO. 7-A-28**

ISSUED BY: Bureau of Food Stamps, Division of Economic Assistance

SUBJECT: Employees' Manual, Title 7, Chapter A, *Administration*, Contents (page 1), revised; and pages 5, 6, 27 through 30, 39, and 40, revised.

**Summary**

The policy **Effect of a Reduction in Another Means-Tested Program's Cash Benefits** is removed. This policy is still applicable but has been moved to Chapter 7-C, *Nonfinancial Eligibility*, under the heading **PENALTY FOR NOT FOLLOWING ANOTHER PROGRAM'S RULES**.

On page 30, information has been added to clarify who can conduct certification interviews.

Page 40 is changed to identify that the Management Evaluation Unit is part of the Division of Economic Assistance.

The name "Food and Consumer Service" has been restored to "Food and Nutrition Service" on these pages to reflect the reorganization of USDA. The name "Office of Equal Opportunity" is changed to "Diversity Programs Unit" to reflect reorganization in the Department.

**Effective Date**

Upon release.

**Material Superseded**

Remove the following pages from Employees' Manual, Title 7, Chapter A, and destroy them:

<u>Page</u>	<u>Date</u>
Contents (page 1)	September 2, 1997
5	May 30, 1995
6	September 2, 1997
26a	December 16, 1997
27-30, 39, 40	May 30, 1995

**Additional Information**

Refer questions about this general letter to your regional benefit payment administrator.



THOMAS J. VILSACK, GOVERNOR  
SALLY J. PEDERSON, LT. GOVERNOR

DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES  
JESSIE K. RASMUSSEN, DIRECTOR

October 12, 1999

## GENERAL LETTER NO. 7-A-29

ISSUED BY: Bureau of Food Stamps, Division of Economic Assistance

SUBJECT: Employees' Manual, Title 7, Chapter A, *Administration*, Contents (pages 1 and 2), revised; pages 1, 10 through 15, 19, 20, 27, 28, 32 through 38, 39, and 40, revised; and pages 38a through 38d, new.

### Summary

In response to field requests:

- ◆ The definition of "trafficking" is added under **Definitions**.
- ◆ Under the policy **Penalties for Misusing Food Stamp Coupons**, a cross-reference to 7-C, **Food Stamp Trafficking**, was added.
- ◆ A new policy was added to provide instructions on handling a request form a retailer to accept and redeem food stamp coupons and EBT cards.
- ◆ Policy under **Drug and Alcohol Treatment Centers** and **Group Living Arrangements** has been clarified. These sections have been reorganized to group them with policies for retailers, restaurants, and homeless meal providers.

A section of the policy **Disabled Members** has been removed, for two reasons. The list is the Social Security Administration's policy. Questions concerning whether a particular disability meets Social Security criteria should go to that Administration. Also, IM workers were using the list to establish disability during pending disability applications. The disabilities listed must exist in addition to a payment being received. It is not food stamp policy to make a disability determination.

### Effective Date

November 1, 1999

**Material Superseded**

Remove the following pages from Employees' Manual, Title 7, Chapter A, and destroy them:

<u>Page</u>	<u>Date</u>
Contents (page 1)	June 29, 1999
Contents (page 2)	November 10, 1998
1	May 30, 1995
10	September 2, 1997
11-16, 19, 20	May 30, 1995
27, 28	June 29, 1999
32	May 30, 1995
32a, 33	November 10, 1998
34	September 2, 1997
35	May 30, 1995
36	September 2, 1997
37, 38	May 30, 1995
39, 40	June 29, 1999

**Additional Information**

Refer questions about this general letter to your regional benefit payment administrator.



THOMAS J. VILSACK, GOVERNOR  
SALLY J. PEDERSON, LT. GOVERNOR

DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES  
JESSIE K. RASMUSSEN, DIRECTOR

June 6, 2000

**GENERAL LETTER NO. 7-A-30**

ISSUED BY: Bureau of Food Stamps, Division of Economic Assistance

SUBJECT: Employees' Manual, Title 7, Chapter A, *ADMINISTRATION*, page 8, revised.

**Summary**

This general letter transmits information adding the Spanish PAER, form 470-3719(S), *Reporte de Elegibilidad de Asistencia Publica*, to the definition of "monthly report."

**Effective Date**

Upon receipt.

**Material Superseded**

Remove page 8, dated September 2, 1997, from Employees' Manual, Title 7, Chapter A, and destroy it.

**Additional Information**

This Spanish PAER will not be system-generated. Hand-issue and manually track this form. Copy this form as needed until supplies are available from Anamosa. Refer questions about this general letter to your regional benefit payment administrator.



THOMAS J. VILSACK, GOVERNOR  
SALLY J. PEDERSON, LT. GOVERNOR

DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES  
JESSIE K. RASMUSSEN, DIRECTOR

February 13, 2001

**GENERAL LETTER NO. 7-A-31**

ISSUED BY: Bureau of Food Stamps, Division of Economic Assistance

SUBJECT: Employees' Manual, Title 7, Chapter A, **ADMINISTRATION**, Contents (pages 1 and 2), revised; pages 2, 3, 4, 7, 8, 12, 13, 17, 23, 31, 33, and 35 through 45, revised; and pages 46 through 50, new.

**Summary**

This chapter is revised to:

- ◆ Include in the definition of “parental control” that a child under age 18 cannot be under parental control if state law defines the child as an adult.
- ◆ Remove references to the restaurant meals program. The restaurant meal program for food stamps is being discontinued for two reasons. Restaurants are not participating in the program and we are preparing the program for electronic benefit transfer issuance system.
- ◆ Reflect current methods used to complete Management Evaluation reviews.

**Effective Date**

March 1, 2001

**Material Superseded**

Remove the following pages from Employees' Manual, Title 7, Chapter A, and destroy them.

<u>Page</u>	<u>Date</u>
Contents (pages 1 and 2)	October 12, 1999
2, 3	September 2, 1997
4	May 30, 1995
7	September 2, 1997
8	June 6, 2000

12, 13  
17, 23, 31  
33, 35-38, 38a-38d, 39, 40  
41-45

October 12, 1999  
May 30, 1995  
October 12, 1999  
May 30, 1995

**Additional Information**

Refer questions about this general letter to your regional benefit payment administrator.



# STATE OF IOWA

THOMAS J. VILSACK, GOVERNOR  
SALLY J. PEDERSON, LT. GOVERNOR

DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES  
JESSIE K. RASMUSSEN, DIRECTOR

May 8, 2001

## GENERAL LETTER NO. 7-A-32

ISSUED BY: Bureau of Food Stamps, Division of Economic Assistance

SUBJECT: Employees' Manual, Title 7, Chapter A, *ADMINISTRATION*, Contents (page 1), revised; and pages 8, 9, and 27 through 34, revised.

### Summary

The definitions of "minimum benefit" and "spouse" are revised.

Page 27 is revised to no longer require an annual review of office hours.

Page 31 is revised to reflect changes in program informational activities.

Page 32 is revised to remove the requirement for training.

### Effective Date

June 1, 2001

### Material Superseded

Remove the following pages from Employees' Manual, Title 7, Chapter A, and destroy them:

<u>Page</u>	<u>Date</u>
Contents (page 1)	February 13, 2001
8	February 13, 2001
9	September 2, 1997
27, 28	October 12, 1999
29, 30	June 29, 1999
31	February 13, 2001
32	October 12, 1999
33	February 13, 2001
34	October 12, 1999

### Additional Information

Refer questions about this general letter to your regional benefit payment administrator.



# STATE OF IOWA

THOMAS J. VILSACK, GOVERNOR  
SALLY J. PEDERSON, LT. GOVERNOR

DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES  
JESSIE K. RASMUSSEN, DIRECTOR

August 28, 2001

## GENERAL LETTER NO. 7-A-33

ISSUED BY: Bureau of Food Stamps, Division of Economic Assistance

SUBJECT: Employees' Manual, Title 7, Chapter A, *ADMINISTRATION*, pages 5 through 7, revised.

### Summary

This chapter is revised to clarify when a person is considered enrolled in an institution of higher education. The definition of "institution of higher education" is removed and a definition is added for "enrolled in an institution of higher education."

### Effective Date

Upon receipt.

### Material Superseded

Remove the following pages from Employees' Manual, Title 7, Chapter A, and destroy them:

<u>Page</u>	<u>Date</u>
5-7	February 13, 2001

### Additional Information

Refer questions about this general letter to your regional benefit payment administrator.



# STATE OF IOWA

THOMAS J. VILSACK, GOVERNOR  
SALLY J. PEDERSON, LT. GOVERNOR

DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES  
JESSIE K. RASMUSSEN, DIRECTOR

February 26, 2002

## GENERAL LETTER NO. 7-A-34

ISSUED BY: Bureau of Financial and Work Support  
Division of Financial, Health, and Work Supports

SUBJECT: Employees' Manual, Title 7, Chapter A, *ADMINISTRATION*, page 6, revised.

### Summary

This chapter is revised to change the definition of initial month.

### Effective Date

These policies are effective for applications and recertifications filed on or after March 11, 2002.

### Material Superseded

Remove the following page from Employees' Manual, Title 7, Chapter A, and destroy it:

<u>Page</u>	<u>Date</u>
6	August 28, 2001

### Additional Information

Refer questions about this general letter to your service area manager or designee.



April 9, 2002

GENERAL LETTER NO. 7-A-36

ISSUED BY: Bureau of Food Stamps, Division of Financial, Health, and Work Supports

SUBJECT: Employees' Manual, Title 7, Chapter A, ADMINISTRATION, pages 22 through 26 and 47, revised.

Summary

This chapter is revised to:

- Update the process for clients who want to file a formal written complaint about the food stamp program to reflect the reorganization of the Department.
Clarify that when a law enforcement officer requests information from the Department in regard to a felony investigation or a parole or probation violation:
- The request must be made in writing.
- The information requested must be about a food stamp recipient who is fleeing or who has information about another member of the household who is fleeing.
Identify use of monthly and quarterly Overpayment Recoupment (OPR) system printouts for monitoring and tracking the timely establishment of food stamp claims.
Change "regional office" reference to "service area offices".

Effective Date

May 1, 2002

Material Superseded

Remove the following pages from Employees' Manual, Title 7, Chapter A, and destroy them:

Table with 2 columns: Page, Date. Rows: 22 (May 30, 1995), 23 (February 13, 2001), 24-26 (September 2, 1997), 47 (February 13, 2001)

Additional Information

Refer questions about this general letter to your area income maintenance supervisor 2.



# STATE OF IOWA

THOMAS J. VILSACK, GOVERNOR  
SALLY J. PEDERSON, LT. GOVERNOR

DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES  
JESSIE K. RASMUSSEN, DIRECTOR

September 17, 2002

## GENERAL LETTER NO. 7-A-37

ISSUED BY: Bureau of Financial and Work Supports,  
Division of Financial, Health, and Work Supports

SUBJECT: Employees' Manual, Title 7, Chapter A, *ADMINISTRATION*, Contents (page 2), revised; and pages 2, 8, 20, 44, 45, 46, and 49, revised.

### Summary

The definition of "administrative area" is deleted and references to "administrative area" are revised. Other revisions are made to reflect the reorganization of the Department.

### Effective Date

October 1, 2002

### Material Superseded

Remove the following pages from Employees' Manual, Title 7, Chapter A, and destroy them:

<u>Page</u>	<u>Date</u>
Contents (page 2)	February 13, 2001
2	February 13, 2001
8	May 8, 2001
20	October 12, 1999
44, 45, 46, 49	February 13, 2001

### Additional Information

Refer questions about this general letter to your area income maintenance supervisor 2.



# STATE OF IOWA

THOMAS J. VILSACK, GOVERNOR  
SALLY J. PEDERSON, LT. GOVERNOR

DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES  
KEVIN W. CONCANNON, DIRECTOR

December 2, 2003

## GENERAL LETTER NO. 7-A-38

ISSUED BY: Bureau of Financial Support Programs,  
Division of Financial, Health and Work Supports

SUBJECT: Employees' Manual, Title 7, Chapter A, *ADMINISTRATION*, pages 3, 4, 7, 8,  
9, and 10, revised.

### Summary

This chapter is revised to:

- ◆ Remove policy related to monthly reporting and retrospective budgeting.
- ◆ Clarify policy for prospective budgeting.

### Effective Date

December 1, 2003

### Material Superseded

Remove the following pages from Employees' Manual, Title 7, Chapter A, and destroy them:

<u>Page</u>	<u>Date</u>
3, 4	February 13, 2001
7	August 28, 2001
8	September 17, 2002
9	May 8, 2001
10	October 12, 1999

### Additional Information

Refer questions about this general letter to your income maintenance supervisor 2.



December 17, 2004

**GENERAL LETTER NO. 7-A-39**

ISSUED BY: Bureau of Financial and Work Support  
Division of Financial, Health, and Work Supports

SUBJECT: Employees' Manual, Title 7, Chapter A, *ADMINISTRATION*, Title page, revised; Contents (pages 1 and 2), revised; Contents (pages 3 and 4), new; pages 1 through 50, revised; and pages 51 through 74, new.

**Summary**

Authorized representative policies have been removed from Chapters 7-B and 7-C and placed in this chapter.

The policies for substance abuse treatment facilities, group living arrangements and battered women and children have been removed from Chapter 7-C and placed in this chapter.

Theses policies and the entire chapter have been revised to add policy and procedure for electronic benefit transfer and to change "food stamps" to "Food Assistance."

**Effective Date**

Upon receipt.

**Material Superseded**

Remove the entire Chapter A from Employees' Manual, Title 7, and destroy it. This includes the following:

<u>Page</u>	<u>Date</u>
Title page	May 30, 1995
Contents (page 1)	May 8, 2001
Contents (page 2)	September 17, 2002
1	October 12, 1999
2	September 17, 2002
3, 4	December 2, 2003
5	August 28, 2001
6	February 26, 2002

7-10	December 2, 2003
11	October 12, 1999
12, 13	February 13, 2001
14, 15	October 12, 1999
17	February 13, 2001
18	May 30, 1995
19	October 12, 1999
20	September 17, 2002
21	May 30, 1995
22-26	April 9, 2002
27-34	May 8, 2001
35-43	February 13, 2001
44-46	September 17, 2002
47	April 9, 2002
48	February 13, 2001
49	September 17, 2002
50	February 13, 2001

**Additional Information**

Refer questions about this general letter to your area income maintenance supervisor 2.



# STATE OF IOWA

THOMAS J. VILSACK, GOVERNOR  
SALLY J. PEDERSON, LT. GOVERNOR

DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES  
KEVIN W. CONCANNON, DIRECTOR

June 30, 2006

## GENERAL LETTER NO. 7-A-40

ISSUED BY: Bureau of Financial and Work Supports,  
Division of Financial, Health and Work Supports

SUBJECT: Employees' Manual, Title 7, Chapter A, *ADMINISTRATION*, Contents (page 2), revised; and pages 29 through 32 and 36, revised.

### Summary

This chapter is revised to remove the instructions for establishing EBT cardholders when the FIP payee and the grocery shopper are different people. To make sure that an EBT card is issued on a new case, the ABC system will default the SEND/CARD field to "Y" if the worker doesn't make that entry.

### Effective Date

Upon receipt.

### Material Superseded

Remove the following pages from Employees' Manual, Title 7, Chapter A, and destroy them:

<u>Page</u>	<u>Date</u>
Contents (page 2)	December 17, 2004
29-32, 36	December 17, 2004

### Additional Information

Refer questions about this general letter to your area income maintenance administrator.



# STATE OF IOWA

THOMAS J. VILSACK, GOVERNOR  
SALLY J. PEDERSON, LT. GOVERNOR

DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES  
KEVIN W. CONCANNON, DIRECTOR

January 5, 2007

## GENERAL LETTER NO. 7-A-41

ISSUED BY: Bureau of Financial and Work Supports, Division of Financial, Health and Work Supports, and Bureau of Quality Assurance and Improvement, Division of Results-Based Accountability

SUBJECT: Employees' Manual, Title 7, Chapter A, *ADMINISTRATION*, pages 2 through 11, 68, 71, and 73, revised.

### Summary

This chapter is revised to:

- ◆ Update definitions and chapter to now refer to “expedited service” as “emergency service.”
- ◆ Add a definition of Tribal TANF payments and provide information about policies that apply to recipients of these payments.
- ◆ Give a definition of the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS).
- ◆ Replace references to the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) with references to the USCIS.
- ◆ Update a form name and an organizational reference.
- ◆ Add current methods used to complete Management Evaluation reviews.

### Effective Date

Upon receipt.

### Material Superseded

Remove the following pages from Employees' Manual, Title 7, Chapter A, and destroy them:

<u>Page</u>	<u>Date</u>
2-11, 68, 71, 73	December 17, 2004

### Additional Information

Refer questions about this general letter to your area income maintenance administrator.



# STATE OF IOWA

CHESTER J. CULVER, GOVERNOR  
PATTY JUDGE, LT. GOVERNOR

DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES  
KEVIN W. CONCANNON, DIRECTOR

July 6, 2007

## GENERAL LETTER NO. 7-A-42

ISSUED BY: Bureau of Financial and Work Supports,  
Division of Financial, Health and Work Supports

SUBJECT: Employees' Manual, Title 7, Chapter A, *ADMINISTRATION*, pages 19 and  
20, revised.

### Summary

This chapter is revised to:

- ◆ Update the Food Assistance data collection standards on ethnicity and race that were mandated by the Food and Nutrition Service effective April 1, 2007.
- ◆ Update the address for filing a discrimination complaint.

### Effective Date

Upon receipt.

### Material Superseded

Remove the following pages from Employees' Manual, Title 7, Chapter A, and destroy them:

<u>Page</u>	<u>Date</u>
19, 20	December 17, 2004

### Additional Information

Refer questions about this general letter to your area income maintenance administrator.



September 12, 2008

**GENERAL LETTER NO. 7-A-43**

ISSUED BY: Bureau of Financial and Work Supports,  
Division of Financial, Health and Work Supports

SUBJECT: Employees' Manual, Title 7, Chapter A, *ADMINISTRATION*, pages 1, 2,  
4 through 8, 45, 46, and 69, revised.

**Summary**

This chapter is revised to:

- ◆ Update the definition of "minimum benefit." Eligible one-person and two-person households shall receive a minimum benefit of 8% of the maximum Food Assistance allotment for a one-person household.
- ◆ Replace references to the Food Stamp Act with the new name of Food and Nutrition Act.
- ◆ Replace references to the Food Stamp Program with the new federal name of Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program. Iowa's program will continue to be known as the "Food Assistance" program.

**Effective Date**

October 1, 2008

**Material Superseded**

Remove the following pages from Employees' Manual, Title 7, Chapter A, and destroy them:

<u>Page</u>	<u>Date</u>
1	December 17, 2004
2, 4-8	January 5, 2007
45, 46, 69	December 17, 2004

**Additional Information**

Refer questions about this general letter to your area income maintenance administrator.



# STATE OF IOWA

CHESTER J. CULVER, GOVERNOR  
PATTY JUDGE, LT. GOVERNOR

DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES  
EUGENE I. GESSOW, DIRECTOR

January 30, 2009

## GENERAL LETTER NO. 7-A-44

ISSUED BY: Bureau of Financial and Work Supports,  
Division of Financial, Health and Work Supports

SUBJECT: Employees' Manual, Title 7, Chapter A, *ADMINISTRATION*, pages 3 through  
8, revised.

### Summary

This chapter is revised to remove references to the *Food Assistance Interim Report (FAIR)* and the *Combined PAER/FAIR* report forms.

### Effective Date

February 1, 2009.

### Material Superseded

Remove the following pages from Employees' Manual, Title 7, Chapter A, and destroy them:

<u>Page</u>	<u>Date</u>
3	January 5, 2007
4-8	September 12, 2008

### Additional Information

Refer questions about this general letter to your area income maintenance administrator.