

SUPPLEMENTAL NUTRITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM WORKLOAD MANAGEMENT MATRIX

The Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) is aware that State agencies continue to struggle with large caseloads as the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) responds to the needs for food assistance. The Workload Management Matrix has been developed as a tool for States that identifies workload management strategies during a time of large caseloads and reduced resources. The strategies in this tool vary in cost and complexity, giving States the option to choose the policy or procedure that addresses their unique circumstances. The Workload Management Matrix contains four areas of focus:

- Policies and procedures for managing workloads;
- Advantages and considerations for each policy or procedure; and
- States that are currently using the identified policy or procedure.

An important aspect of the matrix is the inclusion of States who have already used a particular strategy to improve administration of SNAP; if a State is interested in a particular strategy, the State can contact their Regional FNS representative or go directly to the implementing State for more information.

The contents of this guidance document do not have the force and effect of law and are not meant to bind the public in any way. This document is intended only to provide clarity to the public regarding existing requirements under the law or agency policies.

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1	Policies	Advantages	Considerations	States
A	<p>Reinstatement of Eligibility Waiver</p> <p>State Agency may reinstate recently ineligible households without requiring a new application if the household provides verification required to reestablish eligibility during the calendar month following the effective date of closure.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provides good customer service. Reduces application processing work for case workers. Allows worker to reopen case without a new application for households who return within the certification period. May be used to reinstate households who failed to provide complete periodic reports and are reinstated once the report is provided. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Requires waiver from FNS. Benefits begin on date of compliance rather than date of application. May shift work between functional areas. 	AL, AR, CA, CT, DC, DE, IA, IL, LA, MA, MD, ME, MN, MS, NE, NJ, NY, OH, OK, OR, PA, RI, UT, VA, VT, WI, WV
B	<p>Alignment of SNAP reporting requirements</p> <p>State Agency aligns reporting requirements by allowing households to report changes by the 10th day of the month following the month in which the change occurred.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provides households more time to report changes; reduces confusion about different requirements. May allow more time for workers to act on changes. Simplifies administration by applying uniform reporting timeframes. May result in fewer errors. Eases workload management over longer period of time. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Requires waiver from FNS for non-Simplified Reporting households. 	AL, AZ, CO, DE, FL, GU, ID, IL, IN, KY, ME, MN, MO, MS, NC, NH, NY, SC, VT, WA,
C	<p>Early Denial Waiver</p> <p>State Agency may deny an application before the 30th day, if the household does not respond to request for verification within 10 days.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reduces the number of pending cases on a worker's desk. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> May deter applicants from completing the application process. Requires waiver from FNS. Waivers may be approved by FNS Regional Offices without further National Office processing. If not implemented correctly, could increase invalid negative actions. 	AK, CA, CO, DE, FL, GA, ID, IL, IN, KS, KY, LA, MA, MD, ME, MI, NH, NY, NV, RI, TN, VT, WA, WV, WY

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D	<p>Self-Employment Deduction Standard</p> <p>State Agency utilizes simplified method to determine the cost of doing business in cases where a household member is self-employed.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Simplifies budgeting for workers, resulting in fewer computational errors. • Reduces verification clients must provide. • Eliminates the need for workers to itemize. • Provides flexibility for State Agency to develop a method to calculate this cost (e.g. a flat percentage, a figure based on average costs, etc.). • Allows State to use the same standard used for the TANF program. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is permitted by regulations; must be cost neutral. • Requires approval from FNS. • May result in clients with higher expenses receiving lower benefit level. 	AL, CA, DE, GA, IA, ID, IN, KS, MD, MI, OH, OK, OR, SC, SD, UT, WA, WY
E	<p>Combined Application Projects (CAP)</p> <p>State Agency uses demonstration project to simplify application process and improve delivery of SNAP to elderly and disabled Supplemental Security Income recipients.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Streamlines application procedures for individuals receiving disability benefits and the elderly. • Improves access to nutrition benefits for elderly and disabled populations. • Streamlines the administration of SNAP. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Requires waivers from FNS. • Requires evaluation to ensure project is cost neutral. • Involves partnership between FNS, State, and Social Security Administration to ensure proper administration of project. 	AZ, FL, KY, LA, MA, MD, MI, MS, NC, NJ, NM, NY, PA, SC, SD, TX, VA, WA
F	<p>Simplification of Application and Notices</p> <p>State Agency revises client application and notices to be clear and understandable.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Easies process for clients to apply. • Results in less confusion for both workers and clients. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Means that in workers need to cover areas more thoroughly in the interviews that are no longer covered in the application. • Takes time to develop new applications and notices and to train case workers. 	AK, AL, AZ, CA, CO, CT, DC, DE, FL, GA, HI, IA, ID, IN, KY, LA, MD, MO, MS, NC, ND, NM, NV, OH, OK, OR, PA, RI, SD, WA, WI, WV

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G	<p>Streamlined Verification Requirements</p> <p>State Agency considers regulation options and revises State policy on verifications to reduce administrative burden.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reduces amount of verification States require. Does not require a waiver under current regulations. Assists in improving timeliness and making the application process more efficient. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Must preserve mandatory verifications. Is advisable prior to implementation of document imaging. Should set standards for what items are “questionable” when the State moves away from broader verification. 	ID, CA, CO, DE, FL, GA, IA, KS, MA, MD, MO, NC, NM, OK, OR, SC, VT, WI, WV
H	<p>Postponed Expedited Interview</p> <p>State Agency postpones interview for expedited applications when it cannot be conducted the same day or in time to meet expedited service time frame.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improves application processing timeliness for expedited cases. Improves customer service for the neediest applicants. Improves service for on-line applicants who may be hard to reach immediately. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Requires waiver from FNS. Mandates verification of identity before certification. Requires attempt to interview the client before processing the application. Benefits from coordination with QC regarding errors for clients not reporting income. Requires evaluation. Is intended for online or drop-off applications, but may help manage other applications. 	CT, FL, GA, ID, MD, MO, NE, NH, NM, OK, OR, PA, RI, TN, WI
I	<p>Waived Interview at Recertification for Certain Elderly/Disabled Member Households</p> <p>State Agency waives recertification interview for households in which all adult members are elderly or disabled with no earned income.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Streamlines process for clients. Reduces work for caseworkers. Provides good customer service for eligible households. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Requires waiver from FNS. Requires extensive evaluation component to analyze the effects of the waiver on program integrity, access, and customer service. 	AR, LA, MA, NM, TX

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J	<p>Broad Based Categorical Eligibility (BBCE)</p> <p>State Agency applies policy simplification option which makes most households categorically eligible for SNAP because they qualify for a non-cash TANF or State maintenance of effort (MOE) funded benefit.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Simplifies State policies and administration of program. • Reduces work for caseworkers. • Improves customer service as clients do not have to provide as much verification. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Involves very specific program to confer categorical eligibility; the program must further a purpose of TANF and be funded through TANF or MOE funds. 	Refer to State Options Report
K	<p>Standard Medical Deduction</p> <p>State Agency replaces actual costs of medical expenses exceeding \$35/month with a standardized deduction.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Simplifies process, making computation process easier workers to budget. • Results in fewer computational errors. • Reduced burden for clients as they do not have to provide as much verification. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Requires a demonstration project waiver from FNS. • Must be cost neutral. • May raise benefits for some and lower benefits for others. • Consistent with medical deduction policy, only applies to elderly/disabled household members who incur more than \$35/month. 	AR, IA, IL, KS, MA, MO, NH, RI, SD, TX, VA, VT, WA, WY
L	<p>Averaged Student Work Hours</p> <p>State Agency averages work hours over a month to determine if the student meets the 20 hour per week work requirement.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Takes into account fluctuating client work schedules. • Eases application process and reduces work for caseworkers. • Reduced burden for clients by streamlining verification. • Reduces churning of cases. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Requires waiver from FNS (until final rulemaking, simple template is used). • Consistent with policy regarding student eligibility, still requires students eligible based on work to average 20 hours per week or 80 hours per month. 	AL, AR, AZ, CA, CO, DE, FL, GA, IA, ID, IL, IN, KS, KY, LA, MA, MO, MS, MT, NC, ND, NE, NH, NY, OK, OR, PA, SD, TN, UT, VA, WA, WV, WY

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2	Procedures: Phones	Advantages	Considerations	States
A	<p>Automated Voice Response/Interactive Voice Response System</p> <p>State Agency provides 24/7 access to information about program and case information through automated and interactive voice response hotline.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Allows workers not to be interrupted to answer basic questions (e.g. When will my benefits be issued? What are office hours? Etc.). • Can be set up to accept changes. • Provides clients access to immediate assistance. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Involves programming to enter information directly into system. • Should integrate seamlessly with eligibility system for best results. 	<p>AZ, CA, FL, GA, LA, IL, IN, MI, MO, NV, NY, OK, PA, UT, VT, WA, WI, TX</p> <p><i>Note: Some systems are not statewide and may be implemented on a limited basis in certain areas.</i></p>
B	<p>Call Centers/Contact Centers</p> <p>State Agency uses a centralized unit to receive or transmit a large volume of calls. Centers can provide range of services from general information, such as office hours, to more complex functions, such as intake and change reporting. More information on State SNAP call centers is available here: http://www.fns.usda.gov/snap/government/pdf/call_center.pdf</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Allows non-call center workers to focus on processing applications and primary case work. • Allows for expansion of service hours. • Reduces walk-in volume. • Provides client convenience. • Facilitates staff teleworking. • May focus on general information or be as specific as needed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Requires sufficient tools, system capacity, and personnel. • Should be publicized so that customers know to call the center. • Requires well-trained call center workers. • Aided by software to measure call volume and distribute work effectively and efficiently. • Must limit non-merit staff to basic functions only; eligibility workers are authorized to certify, recertify, or deny eligibility. FNS approval may be required for use of non-merit staff for some tasks. • For case management functions, requires document imaging/management system. 	<p>AZ, CA, CO, CT, DC, DE, FL, GA, IA, ID, IL, IN, LA, MA, MD, MO, MN, NV, NE, NY, OH, OK, PA, SC, TN, TX, UT, VA, WA, WI, VT, WV</p> <p><i>Note: Some systems are not statewide and may be implemented on a limited basis in certain areas.</i></p>

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2	Procedures: Phones	Advantages	Considerations	States
C	<p>Telephone Interviews</p> <p>State Agency allows interviews via telephone in lieu of a face-to-face interview without the need to document client hardship.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enables caseworkers to interview more applicants with less disruption from no-shows. • Fewer customers in lobby. • Allows for expansion of service hours. • Allows for teleworking. • Potential to improve service timeliness. • Customer service, clients do not have to come into office. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Requires waiver from FNS (until final rulemaking, simple template is used). • Requires special training to workers. • Can be initiated by client or worker. • Requires proper phone systems. • Requires the State provide a face-to-face interview if requested. • May involve challenges in connecting with client. • May benefit from use of telephonic or electronic signatures. 	<p>AL, AR, AZ, CA, CO, CT, DC, DE, FL, GA, HI, IA, ID, IL, IN, KS, KY, LA, MA, MD, ME, MI, MN, MO, MS, MT, NC, ND, NE, NH, NJ, NM, NV, NY, OH, OK, OR, PA, RI, SC, SD, TN, TX, UT, VA, VT, WA, WI, WV, WY</p>
D	<p>On-Demand Interviews</p> <p>State Agency conducts interviews by allowing client to contact a call center within a specific range of days; the interview is not scheduled.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provides State and client flexibility. • Reduces call wait times. • Improves eligibility process efficiency. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Requires a waiver from FNS. • Requires the State to provide a face-to-face interview if requested. • Needs sufficient administrative and automation controls in place. • Involves continuing to send households a NOMI for missed interviews. 	<p>AZ, CT, FL, SC, UT, WA</p>

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3	Procedures: Technology	Advantages	Considerations	States
A	<p>Online Application</p> <p>State Agency provides capability to fill out and submit an application online.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • May reduce time workers spend doing data entry. • Allows customers to apply anywhere with a computer and Internet access. • Allows customers to apply 24/7. • Results in fewer customers in lobby. • Facilitates work distribution throughout the State. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Must comply with SNAP application and application processing requirements. • Involves considerable upfront cost and maintenance. • Achieves best results if it auto-populates eligibility system and uses e-signature. • Requires programming to transfer directly into system. • Procedures needed to ensure expedited service timeframes are met • Can be made available on computers in local office lobbies. 	<p>AL, AR, AZ, CA, CO, DE, FL, GA, IA, IL, IN, KS, LA, MA, MD, MI, MN, MO, MT, ND, NE, NH, NJ, NV, NY, OH, OR, PA, RI, SC, SD, TN, TX, UT, VA, VT, WA, WI, WV</p> <p><i>Note: Some systems are not statewide and may be implemented on a limited basis in certain areas.</i></p>
B	<p>Real Time Data Access Services (e.g. E-Find or Spider)</p> <p>State Agency uses a system whereby a single query pulls information from multiple verification sources.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eliminates need for workers to wait overnight for regular data/wage matches before processing hits. • May improve program performance and integrity. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • May be developed by private contractor or State staff in-house. • May require significant amount of time and coordination with IT Departments and other agencies. • May be transferable from existing service (e.g. Utah's E-Find). 	<p>AZ, ID, LA, ME, MO, OK, TX, UT, VA, WA</p>
C	<p>Online Case Management and Status Access for Client</p> <p>State Agency provides secure environment for clients to access case information. Functionality can range from providing status only to full case maintenance.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Allows client access to case information 24/7. • Reduces phone calls and inquiries for workers. • Can be setup to accept changes. • May allow for use of electronic notices and/or correspondence (requires waiver from FNS). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Works well with on-line application. 	<p>AZ, CA, CO, FL, GA, IN, MA, MI, MO, NE, NV, NY, PA, UT, VA, VT, WI, WA, WV, TX</p>

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3	Procedures: Technology	Advantages	Considerations	States
D	<p>e-Notices</p> <p>State provides clients option to receive notices electronically (client must log into their case online).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Allows clients to access notices at their convenience. Reduces risk of clients losing notices. May reduce printing and postage costs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Requires waiver from FNS. May not allow notices to be sent directly to the client's e-mail address. The State must have online case access ("client Portal") where the client can log in to view notices. Must allow clients to opt out of receiving e-notices at any time. 	AZ, FL, KY, MS, NH, UT, WA
E	<p>Electronic Case Filing or Document Management</p> <p>State agency utilizes electronic imaging and storage system to manage cases instead of paper files.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Makes it easier to find and access case information. Reduces likelihood of losing cases and verification. Saves on filing, space and paper costs. Improves document management. Allows cases to be accessed by multiple staff and from different locations, facilitating work distribution throughout a State. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Must only allow access to authorized agencies within State. Should involve specialized staff to scan and index verification. Benefits from State reviewing verification policy and minimizing requirements prior to implementation. Need procedures to prevent scanning backlogs. Involves decisions about starting points for scanning. Achieves best results when documents are indexed to individual and not the case. 	AL,AR, AZ, CA, CO, DC,DE, FL, GA, IA,ID, IN, KY, LA, MD, MI, MN, MO, MS, MT, NC, ND, NE, NH, NV, NY, OH, OK, OR, PA, RI, SC, SD, TN, TX, UT, VT, WA, WI <i>Note: Some systems are not statewide and may be implemented on a limited basis in certain areas.</i>
F	<p>Check-In Kiosks</p> <p>State Agency provides computer stations in the lobby so clients can check themselves in for their appointments and access other client services.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reduces client lines at reception. May provide ability to track workflow and wait times. Combined with case banking may reduce lobby wait times by queuing checked-in clients to the next available worker. Combined with display screens, provides better information to clients on wait times. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> May be developed by in-house IT staff. Requires customer awareness and training. Involves maintenance costs. May require staff to provide assistance to clients. 	CA, MN, NE, NY, OH, OK, PA, UT, WA, WI <i>Note: Some systems are not statewide and may be implemented on a limited basis in certain areas.</i>

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	Procedures: Workflow	Advantages	Considerations	States
A	<p>Business Process Reengineering (BPR)</p> <p>State Agency conducts assessment to determine potential for workflow improvements in local and/or State offices. Also called workflow analysis or administrative process improvement.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identifies redundancies and eliminates unnecessary steps. Potentially improves forms, handbooks, notices, etc. Results in savings in staff time. Creates opportunity to channel savings into activities that improve customer service and payment accuracy. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Should be completed before any major technological improvements (e.g. call centers, document imaging, online applications, etc.) Should include input from staff input at all levels (front-line caseworkers to Agency leadership) in analysis and design. 	<p>AK, AL, AR, AZ, CA, CO, CT, DC, DE, FL, GA, HI, ID, IL, KS, KY, LA, NC, NJ, NM, NV, NY, MI, MN, OH, OK, OR, PA, RI, SC, SD, UT, VA, VT, WA, WV, WY</p> <p><i>Note: Some projects are not statewide and may be implemented on a limited basis in certain areas.</i></p>
B	<p>Targeted Interviewing and Case Processing</p> <p>State Agency categorizes cases according to complexity and triages casework (i.e. Red Track/Green Track).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Allows staff to spend more time on most complex cases. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Should involve case designation based on objective criteria. May meet resistance from workers who want to apply same procedures to all households. 	<p>AZ, CA, FL, IN, KS, NM, OH, UT</p>
C	<p>Same Day Service Interviews</p> <p>State Agency provides same-day interviews to all clients, including expedited cases.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reduces no-shows for subsequent interviews. Improves service. Delivers benefits to needy customers faster. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Requires appropriate capacity and procedures to schedule same-day interviews. May involve providing EBT card at screening to ensure expedited timeframes are met. 	<p>AK, AZ, CA, DC, DE, FL, HI, IA, ID, IL, IN, KS, KY, MD, ME, MI, MN, MO, ND, NH, NM, NV, NYC, OH, OK, OR, PA, RI, TX, UT, VA, WA, WI, WA, WV, WY</p> <p><i>Note: Some systems are not statewide and may be implemented on a limited basis in certain areas.</i></p>

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	Procedures: Workflow	Advantages	Considerations	States
D	<p>Case Banking (a.k.a. Caseload Sharing)</p> <p>State Agency organizes workers to share cases based on specialized functions or workload demands.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is better for handling rising caseloads when staffing levels are static. • May reduce stress for workers. • Allows office to shift workers to accommodate workflow needs. • Improves customer service; ensures a client can always reach a caseworker. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • May range from a single unit in local office to a State wide operation. • Should incorporate worker input to ensure success. • Is more efficient when used with electronic case filing/document imaging. • Requires client education. • Must be sensitive to client needs. • Achieves best results when tracking worker's actions. 	<p>AZ, AR, CA, CT, DC, DE, FL, GA, IN, KS, LA, MD, MN, MO, ND, NJ, NM, NY, OH, OK, OR, PA, SC, TX, UT, VA, VI, VT, WV</p> <p><i>Note: Some systems are not statewide and may be implemented on a limited basis in certain areas.</i></p>
E	<p>Change Processing Unit</p> <p>State Agency establishes unit to handle change processing including changes reported via mail, data matches, etc.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improves timeliness of change processing. • Results in efficiencies due to staff specialization. • May result in faster service to clients. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Achieves best results when tracking worker's actions. 	<p>AK, AZ, CA, DC, DE, FL, GA, HI, ID, IA, IN, MN, MO, NM, NV, NY, OH, SC, TX, VA, WA, WI, WV</p> <p><i>Note: Some systems are not statewide and may be implemented on a limited basis in certain areas.</i></p>
F	<p>Verification Unit</p> <p>State Agency allocates specialized staff to focus exclusively on verification of documents; the size of unit may vary.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improves timeliness of acting on information and processing. • May result in faster service to clients. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Should provide receipts for verification. • For offices with imaging, can also scan verification directly into document imaging system. 	<p>AK, AZ, DC, HI, NM, NY, OH, VA, WV</p> <p><i>Note: Some systems are not statewide and may be implemented on a limited basis in certain areas.</i></p>