

CSFP Caseload Allocation Process & Caseload Management

Carolyn Smalkowski

*Program Analyst, Policy Branch
Food Distribution Division
Food and Nutrition Service*

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Objectives

At the end of today's presentation, you will:

- Know what caseload is.
- Understand how caseload levels are set at the national level.
- Know how factors such as food prices and inventory levels affect national caseload levels.
- Understand how caseload and administrative funding is allocated to States.
- Be familiar with caseload management best practices.



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Determining Caseload Levels

- Caseload levels are set each year. First at the national level, then for individual States.
- The national caseload level is determined by the amount of funding appropriated by Congress.
- Once Congress passes the Agriculture Appropriations Bill, FNS staff from the Office of Financial Management calculate how many caseload slots can be supported nationally based on the funding level provided by Congress, as well as other factors.



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What is “caseload”?

The total number of people that may be served a CSFP food package on an average monthly basis from January 1 through December 31.



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Factors Affecting the National Caseload Level

- Available Funding
- Participation
- Food prices
- Estimated Bonus/Free
- Inventory Levels



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What is the National Caseload level for 2015?

604,000



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How Caseload is Allocated

Two Types of Caseload:

- **Base Caseload:** Reflects prior year participation.
- **Additional Caseload:** Gives additional caseload slots to States which show they can serve more participants efficiently. States must submit a request to be considered for additional caseload.

NOTE: States are not guaranteed to receive either base or additional caseload. Dependent on available funding/resources. If CSFP funding is not sufficient to support all base caseload, States may receive less.

How is Caseload Assigned to States?

- Step 1: Determine “Base Caseload” for currently participating States, should resources support it.
- Step 2: If “Base Caseload” for all States equals less than the total caseload available nationally, consider “Additional Caseload” requests from currently participating States.
- Step 3: If “Base Caseload” + “Additional Caseload” equals less than the total caseload available nationally, consider caseload requests from new States.
- Step 4: Assign Caseload



Assigning “Base Caseload” to currently participating States.

- Each State’s base caseload is determined through a formula provided in 7 CFR 247.21(a)(1).

- If a State is entering its 2nd Year of Participation:

➡ Base Caseload = 1st Year Caseload

- If a State is entering its 3rd+ Year of Participation:

➡ Base Caseload is determined by formula

The Formula for States in their 3rd+ Years

- Base Caseload cannot exceed prior year's caseload.
- Base Caseload equals the higher of:
 - a) Average monthly participation for the prior fiscal year (Oct. 1 through Sept. 30);
 - b) Average monthly participation for the final quarter of the prior fiscal year (July 1 through Sept. 30);
 - c) Participation during September of the prior fiscal year, but only if:
 1. Full-year appropriation for preceding fiscal year was enacted on or after Feb. 15;
 2. State agency received additional caseload equal to or greater than 10 percent of its base caseload in the previous caseload cycle; and
 3. October participation in the current fiscal year was equal to or greater than 95 percent of September participation in the previous fiscal year.



Exercise - Determining Base Caseload

State	Year of Participation in 2015	2015 Caseload	FY2015 Average Participation	FY2015 Final Quarter Average Participation	2016 Base Caseload
A	1st	2,000	1,500	1,950	2,000
B	2nd	10,000	9,500	10,100	10,000
C	10th	1,000	900	904	904



Assigning “Additional Caseload” to currently participating States

- Availability of additional caseload is dependent on program resources.
- Each State’s eligibility for additional caseload is determined by a formula provided in 7 CFR 247.21 (a)(2).
- Once a State is determined eligible for additional caseload, there is no regulatory formula for determining how much additional caseload a State should get.
- However, the regulations list factors FNS should consider in assigning additional caseload.



The Formula for Eligibility

- State agencies are eligible to receive additional caseload if the State achieved participation equal to or greater than **95 percent** of assigned caseload for the previous caseload cycle, based on the highest of:
 - a) Average monthly participation for the **prior fiscal year** (Oct. 1 through Sept. 30);
 - b) Average monthly participation for the **final quarter of the prior fiscal year** (July 1 through Sept. 30); or
 - c) Participation during **September of the prior fiscal year**, but only if:
 1. Full-year appropriation for preceding FY was enacted on or after Feb. 15;
 2. State agency received additional caseload equal to or greater than 10 percent of its base caseload in the previous caseload cycle (not a factor for states in 2nd year of participation);
 3. October participation in the current FY was equal to or greater than 95 percent of September participation in the previous FY.



Exercise – Eligible for Additional Caseload?

State	Year of Participation In 2015	2015 Caseload	FY2015 Average Participation	FY2015 Final Quarter Average Participation	2016 Base Caseload	Eligible for Additional Caseload?
A	1st	2,000	1,500	1,950	2,000	YES
B	2nd	10,000	9,500	10,100	10,000	YES
C	10th	1,000	900	904	904	NO



Assigning Additional Caseload

When Funding is Available...

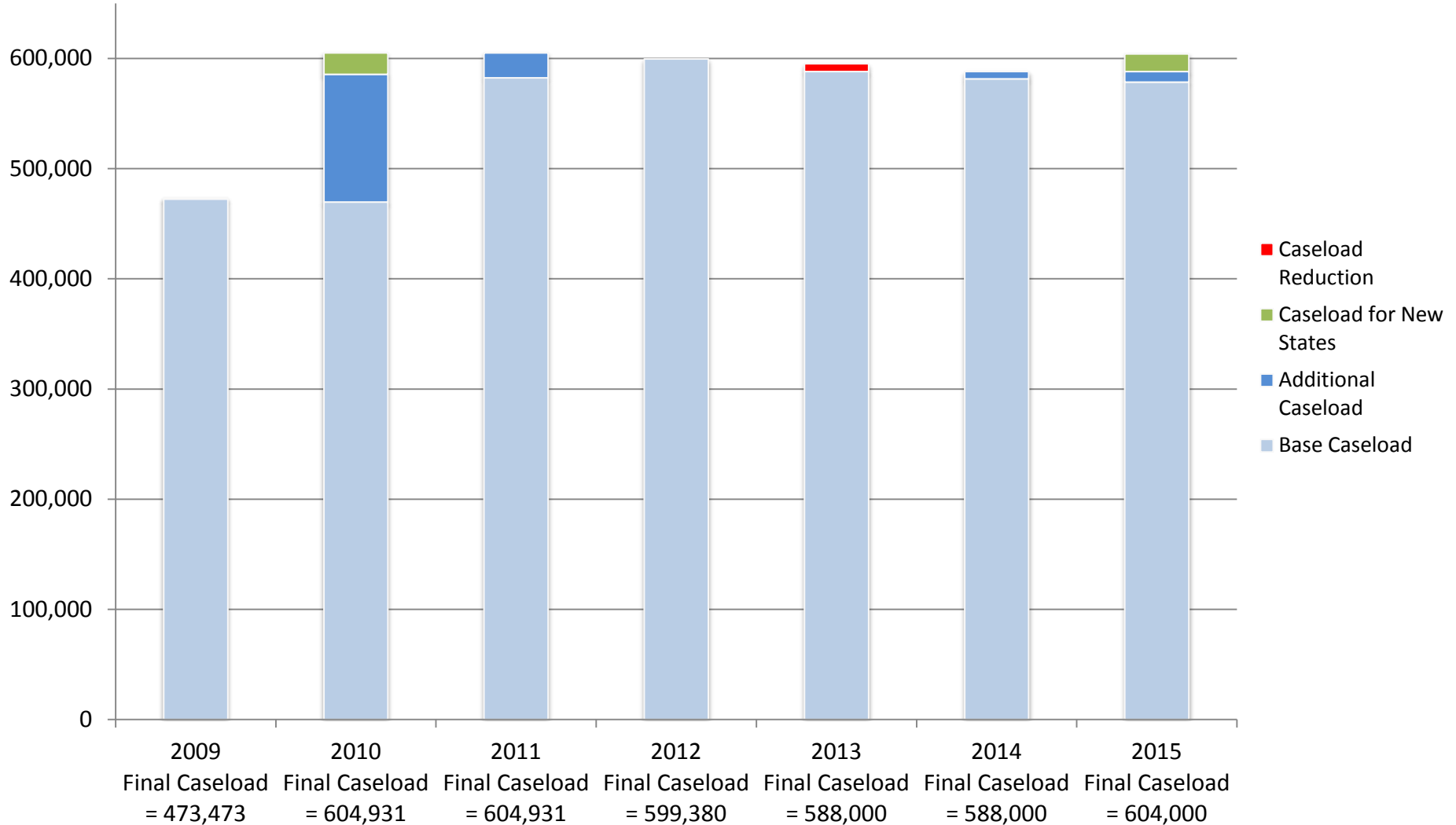
- FNS assigns additional caseload to those States most likely to use it, based on a list of factors outlined in the regulations.
- These factors include, in descending order of importance:
 - 1) Percentage of caseload utilized by the State in the previous fiscal year.
 - 2) Program participation trends in the State in previous fiscal years.
 - 3) Other information provided by the State agency in support of the request.



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Caseload in Recent Years



Key Caseload Dates

- Monthly – States submit the FNS-153 Report to their Regional Offices (ROs) and monitor caseload use
- August 15 - States wishing to participate in CSFP submit State Plans, including caseload requests
- November 5 – Currently participating States submit additional caseload requests to their ROs
- November – States verify previous fiscal year participation numbers reported in the FNS-153 Report



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Administrative Grants

- Administrative grants are provided each fiscal year to CSFP States and Indian Tribal Organizations (ITOs) based on a formula outlined in the law.
- Each fiscal year, the administrative grant per caseload slot is updated for inflation based on the State and Local Government Price Index, published by the Bureau of Economic Analysis at the Department of Commerce.
- Administrative grants are provided on a fiscal year basis, while caseload is assigned for the calendar year.
- New States received a prorated admin grant of \$55.33 per caseload slot for FY15 (returning States received \$73.78).



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Administrative Grants

- CSFP regulations (**Part 247.23**) require States to pass these administrative grants on to local agencies, except that States may **retain** for their own use a limited amount based on the following formula:
 - 1) 15% of the first \$50,000;
 - 2) 10% of the next \$100,000;
 - 3) 5% of the next \$250,000;
 - 4) A maximum of \$30,000, if the administrative grant exceeds \$400,000.

- States may request approval from their FNS Regional Office to retain a larger amount, but they must provide justification in writing of the need as well as ensure that local agencies will not suffer undue hardship.



Caseload management: Why is it important?

- CSFP is a discretionary program with limited resources.
- Because resources are limited, exceeding assigned caseload on an average monthly basis is prohibited.
- Conversely, using less caseload than what is assigned means that food resources could be going unused when individuals are in need of food assistance.



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Active Monitoring of Participation & Caseload Use

- State agency staff must actively monitor program participation rates and overall caseload use each month.
- The FNS-153, Monthly Report of the Commodity Supplemental Food Program and Quarterly Financial Status Report, is due to FNS each month. The data provided on this report will help you monitor participation and caseload use.
- Many current States use computer software to monitor and manage caseload use, such as Microsoft Excel. Trends can then be identified and addressed.



Communication

- Critical between the State and local agencies, and the local agencies and applicants/participants

- Local agency to inform the new participant of the time, location, and means of food distribution, as well as the length of the certification period. See **7 CFR 247.15**.

- Ideas for local agency communication:
 - Provide calendars with distribution times & locations
 - Call participants before distributions/after if they miss a pickup
 - Distribute earlier in the month to allow for alternate arrangements



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Proxies

- State agencies may permit their local agencies to use proxies.
- A proxy is any person designated by the participant, or the caretaker of the participant, to obtain CSFP foods on behalf of the participant.
- State agencies must require local agencies to:
 - Obtain proxy designations in writing, including the period of time for the proxy designation;
 - Maintain files of all written proxy designations;
 - Review proxy identification prior to each certification, recertification, and food package distribution; and
 - Meet all other requirements in **7 CFR Part 247**.



No-Show Policies

- States may institute no-show policies, or permit their local agencies to do so.
- In some States, after a participant misses two or three consecutive distributions, that individual is discontinued from the program with at least 15 days' written notice prior to the effective date. See **7 CFR 247.17**.
- No-show policies enable local agencies to better serve individuals on the waiting list.



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Certification Periods and Waiting Lists

- Maximum elderly certification periods are 6 months and may be extended an additional 6 months without a formal review of eligibility. See **7 CFR 247.16** for requirements.
- To fully use caseload, State agencies may permit issuance of temporary benefits to individuals on waiting lists.
 - Minimum certification period is one month per **7 CFR 247.10** and applicable guide rates.
 - Notification of placement back on the waiting list required at the time of issuance.
- No requirement to prioritize waiting lists in any particular order. However, must meet civil rights requirements at **7 CFR 247.37**. May decide to prioritize applications on a first come, first serve basis.

Caseload Adjustments

- State agencies are permitted to adjust local agencies' caseload and administrative funding allocations, based on past performance.
- Adjustments may be performed annually or at another frequency, provided the State communicates its performance expectations up front.
- State must ensure that participants currently being served are not discontinued from CSFP due to performance adjustments.

Questions?

Thank you!



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