

FOOD DISTRIBUTION PROGRAM ON INDIAN RESERVATIONS

– HOUSEHOLD CERTIFICATION TRAINING –



MODULE 2
Household Composition

Introduction:

- » The Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservations (FDPIR) is a federal program that provides USDA Foods to low-income households living on Indian reservations, in designated areas near reservations, and in the State of Oklahoma.
- » FDPIR Household Certification Training will help Indian Tribal Organization (ITO) and State agency certification workers and their supervisors successfully administer the program.
- » The training is comprised of nine modules, designed to be taken in any order. At the end of each module is a short quiz you may take to test your knowledge of the key learning points covered in the module. When you finish all nine modules, you may test your knowledge of the entire training by taking the post-test.
- » The knowledge gained in this training will help you provide the best support possible for current and potential FDPIR participants.

Acronyms Used in Module

The following acronyms appear in this module:

FDPIR – Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservations

FNS – Food and Nutrition Service

IPV – Intentional Program Violation

ITO – Indian Tribal Organization

SNAP – Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program

SSI – Supplemental Security Income

US – United States

USC – United States Code

USDA – United States Department of Agriculture

Learning Module 2: Household Composition

- » Refer to FNS Handbook 501 for more information about topics covered in this module.
- » On each slide in this module, you can find the specific section in the handbook where the topic is covered in more detail.

Learning Objectives:

After completing this module, learners will:

- » Understand the household definition, including non-household members and the head of household.
- » Know who is eligible and who is not eligible (including disqualified individuals) to participate in FDPIR.
- » Know who can, and who cannot, be designated as a household's authorized representative.

Household Definition

Source: FNS Handbook 501, Section 3400

» Under FDPIR, a household can be:

- An individual living alone.
- An individual living with others, but purchasing food and preparing meals separately (see FNS Handbook 501, Section 3417).
- A group of individuals living together and purchasing food and preparing meals together.

Spouses and Children

Source: FNS Handbook 501, Section 3400

- » Spouses who live together **MUST** be considered members of the same applicant household, even if they claim they are purchasing food and preparing meals separately,
- » Children under 18 years old living with the applicant household and under the parental control of someone in the household **MUST** be considered members of the applicant household, even if they claim they are purchasing food and preparing meals separately.

Foster Children and Adults

Source: FNS Handbook 501, Section 3415

- » If foster children and/or foster adults are living in a household, households may choose to count or not count a foster child or foster adult as a member of the applicant household.
- » If a foster child or foster adult is counted as a household member, the foster care payment must be counted as income to the household.
- » If a foster child or foster adult is not counted as a household member, the foster care payment is not counted as income to the household.
- » If a foster child or foster adult is not counted as a member of the applicant household, the foster child or foster adult cannot participate as a separate household. He/she would be considered to be a boarder and ineligible for FDPIR.
- » Multiple foster children or foster adults in a household are treated individually. For example, a household with two foster children may choose to count only one foster child as a household member for FDPIR eligibility determination purposes.

Case Study 1 Scenario:

A four-person household applies for FDPIR. The household includes a foster child. All of the household members purchase and prepare meals together. The household receives an \$800 per month foster care payment for housing, clothing, food, and miscellaneous expenses for the foster child.

The certifier first determines the household's net monthly income by including the \$800 foster care payment as household income and finds that the household's net monthly income exceeds the income standards for a four-person household.

The certifier then recalculates the household's net monthly income by not including the foster care payment and finds that the household would be eligible as a three-person household.

Should the certifier count the foster child as a member of the household for the purposes of receiving FDPIR benefits?

Case Study 1 Solution:

No. The household and the certifier can agree to exclude the foster child as a household member and certify the household as a three-person household.

The foster child would not be considered a household member in determining the household's eligibility and benefit level.

Temporary Absences of Household Members

Source: FNS Handbook 501, Sections 3401

- » A household may continue to receive USDA Foods for an individual that is temporarily absent from their FDPIR household (e.g., vacation, family emergency, school break, etc.).
- » FNS does not define “temporary”, so the ITO/State agency may establish its own definition. See your Plan of Operation for your ITO’s/State agency’s definition.
- » An individual who is temporarily absent from his/her FDPIR household cannot participate in another FDPIR or Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) household during the period of absence unless that person is removed from his/her original FDPIR household.

Ineligible Persons

Source: FNS Handbook 501, Sections 3410-3417

» There are a number of persons, known as “ineligible persons,” who are specifically prohibited from participating in FDPIR. They include:

- Boarders and residents of institutions are not eligible to participate in FDPIR because they receive meals as part of their room and board (see FNS Handbook 501, Section 3416).
- Individuals who are not residents of a reservation or other areas served by FDPIR are also ineligible to participate in FDPIR. FDPIR does not impose durational residency requirements, but to be eligible, persons must be living on a reservation serving FDPIR or in an FDPIR-approved near area the majority of time as their primary residence. Persons on the reservation for vacation, including weekend and holiday stays are not considered residents (see FNS Handbook 501, Section 4210).
- Supplemental Security Income (SSI) recipients in SSI “cash-out” States (currently only California) are not eligible for FDPIR benefits because they receive a State-funded cash supplement in lieu of SNAP benefits (see FNS Handbook 501, Section 3412).

Ineligible Persons (continued)

Source: FNS Handbook 501, Sections 3410-3417

» Ineligible persons also include:

- Non U.S. citizens and unqualified aliens, per 8 U.S.C. 1641(b), may be ineligible for FDPIR benefits if your ITO/State agency has chosen to serve only U.S. citizens and qualified aliens.
 - Unqualified aliens are individuals who do not meet the definition of qualified alien as defined in the Immigration and Nationality Act.
 - Your Plan of Operation must specify whether non U.S. citizens and unqualified aliens may participate in FDPIR on your reservation (see FNS Handbook 501, Section 3414).
- Disqualified individuals are also ineligible for FDPIR benefits (see FNS Handbook 501, Section 3413).

Disqualified Individuals

Source: FNS Handbook 501, Section 3413

» Disqualified individuals are persons who are ineligible to participate in FDPIR for a specific period of time (i.e., a disqualification period).

» Disqualified individuals are:

- Individuals disqualified from FDPIR for an Intentional Program Violation (IPV) (see FNS Handbook 501, Section 5720).
- Individuals disqualified from SNAP for a SNAP IPV (see FNS Handbook 501, Section 5740).
- Individuals convicted in a court of law of committing fraud under FDPIR (see FNS Handbook 501, Section 5730).
- All adult members of a participating household disqualified for failure to pay a claim for a FDPIR over-issuance (see FNS Handbook 501, Section 5710).

Non-household Members

Source: FNS Handbook 501, Sections 3410; 3411; 3415

» Non-household members are individuals living with the applicant household that are not considered part of the applicant household for FDPIR eligibility and benefit determination purposes. The following individuals are non-household members for FDPIR eligibility purposes:

- **Roomers** (see FNS Handbook 501, Section 3411). If otherwise eligible, roomers may participate as a separate household.
- **Foster children or foster adults**, if the household chooses to not count the foster care payment as income to the household (see FNS Handbook 501, Section 3415). If the foster child or foster adult is not counted as a member of the applicant household, the foster child or foster adult cannot participate as a separate household.
- **Visitors** Individuals who are visiting an applicant household solely for vacation, including weekend and holiday stays (see FNS Handbook 501, Section 4210). For example, the individual may be staying with the applicant household while on spring break from school, during a family emergency, or during a Tribal holiday.

Case Study 2 Scenario:

A six-person household applies for FDPIR on July 6. The household includes John and Mary, their adult daughter and her two children, and a grandson, Tom. Tom lives in Denver, but is visiting his grandparents for three weeks. All of the household members purchase food and prepare meals together.

The certifier learns in the interview that Tom is a member of a household that participates in SNAP in Denver. The certifier verifies that Tom's family received SNAP benefits for Tom in July.

Can Tom be considered a household member in determining the eligibility and benefit level of his grandparent's household?

Case Study 2 Solution:

No. Since Tom is visiting his grandparents on a temporary basis, he is considered a non-household member in determining the eligibility and benefit level of his grandparent's household.

The household is certified as a five-person household.

Head of Household

Source: *FNS Handbook 501, Section 3420*

- » Ahead of household must be designated by the household during the application process.

- » The certifier may designate a household member as the head of household if the household fails to do so.

- » If the head of household or spouse is unable to file the application another responsible household member or an authorized representative may apply for the household.

Authorized Representative

Source: FNS Handbook 501, Sections 3430-3435

- » An authorized representative is an adult who is not a member of the applicant household, but is designated in writing by the household to act on behalf of the household.

- » To apply on behalf of the household, the authorized representative must be designated by the head of household, spouse, or another responsible member of the household at the time of application (see FNS Handbook 501, Section 3431).

- » The certifier must record the name of the authorized representative and the information must be maintained in the household's case file (see FNS Handbook 501, Section 3435).

Authorized Representative (continued)

Source: FNS Handbook 501, Sections 3430-3435

- » The authorized representative must be sufficiently aware of the household's circumstances so he or she may properly represent the household in the certification process.

- » The household will be held liable for any over-issuances that are the result of erroneous information provided by the authorized representative (see FNS Handbook 501, Section 3433).

- » Households are encouraged to designate an authorized representative for picking up USDA Foods in case of illness or other circumstances that would prevent the household from obtaining its USDA Foods (see FNS Handbook 501, Section 3434).

Authorized Representative (continued)

Source: FNS Handbook 501, Sections 3430-3435

» The following individuals cannot be an authorized representative (see FNS Handbook 501, Section 3432):

- ITO/State agency employees involved in the certification of households and/or distribution of USDA Foods may not be authorized representatives, unless no one else is available to serve as the authorized representative and written approval is granted by a designated ITO/State agency official, such as the FDPIR Program Director.
- A disqualified individual may not be an authorized representative, unless that person is the only adult household member and the certifier determines that no one else is available to serve as an authorized representative for the household.

Conclusion:

» A Household can be:

- An individual living alone; or
- An individual living with others, but purchasing food and preparing meals separately; or
- A group of individuals living together and purchasing food and preparing meals together.

» If living with the applicant household, spouses and children under 18 year old under the parental control of a household member **MUST** be considered members of the same applicant household, even if they claim they are purchasing food and preparing meals separately.

» The applicant household may choose to include or not include foster children or foster adults as household members. If a foster child or foster adult is included in the household, the foster care payment is counted as income to the household.

» A household may continue to receive USDA Foods for a household member that is temporarily absent due to vacation, family emergencies, school breaks, etc, but that individual cannot participate in any other FDPIR or SNAP household during his or her period of absence. The ITO/State agency may define “temporary.”

Conclusion (continued):

» The following individuals are **not eligible** to participate in FDPIR:

- Boarders and residents of institutions;
- Individuals who are not residents of a reservation or other approved areas served by FDPIR;
- SSI recipients in SSI “cash-out” States (i.e., California);
- Non U.S. citizens and unqualified aliens (at the option of the ITO/State agency);
- Disqualified individuals – persons who are ineligible to participate in FDPIR for a specific period of time and include:
 - Individuals disqualified from FDPIR or SNAP for an intentional program violation;
 - Individuals convicted in a court of law of committing fraud under FDPIR;
 - All adult members of a household disqualified for failing to pay an FDPIR over-issuance claim.

» Certain individuals are not included in the household for eligibility and benefit determination purposes:

- Roomers;
- Foster children or foster adults (at the option of the household);
- Visitors staying temporarily with the applicant household.

Conclusion (continued):

- » Each household must designate a head of household. The certifier may designate a head of household if household fails to do so.

- » A household may designate an adult who is not a member of the household to be its authorized representative to apply on behalf of the household or pick up the household's monthly food package. The household is liable if it receives an over-issuance because of misinformation provided by the authorized representative.

- » The following individuals cannot be an authorized representative:
 - ITO/State agency employees who are involved in the household certification and/or distribution of USDA Foods unless a designated ITO/State agency official, such as the FDPIR Program Director, gives written approval.
 - A disqualified individual unless he or she is the only adult household member and the FDPIR certifier determines that no one else is available to serve as an authorized representative for the household.

Module 2 Quiz

Instructions:

The following quiz will test your knowledge of household composition under FDPIR.

1. Which of the following is NOT considered a household under FDPIR?

- A. An individual living alone**
- B. A individual living with others but purchasing food and preparing meals separately**
- C. An individual residing in an institution**
- D. A group of individuals who live together and purchase food and prepare meals together**

2. True or False? Spouses living together can apply as separate households, if they purchase food and prepare meals separately.

A. True

B. False

3. Which of the following statements is True about a foster child's participation in FDPIR?

- A. If the household does not count the foster child as a member, the foster child can participate as a separate household.**
- B. If the applicant household counts a foster child as a household member, the foster payment will not count as income to the household.**
- C. If the applicant household counts a foster child as a household member, the foster payment must be counted as income to the household.”**

4. True or False? Supplemental Security Income (SSI) recipients in all states are ineligible to participate in FDPIR.

A. True

B. False

5. Which of the following are not considered “ineligible persons”?

- A. Foster children**
- B. Boarders and residents of institutions**
- C. Supplemental Security Income (SSI) recipients in SSI “cash-out” states**
- D. Individuals convicted of committing fraud under FDPIR**

6. True or False? All non U.S. citizens and unqualified aliens are ineligible to participate in FDPIR.

A. True

B. False

7. A five-person household applies for FDPIR, and the household includes a foster child. All members of the household purchase food and prepare meals together. What options does the applicant household have in regards to the foster child?

- A. The household can include the foster child as a family member, and will be required to count the foster care payment as part of their household income.**
- B. The household can choose to not include the foster child as a family member and apply as a four-person household.**
- C. The household can choose to include the foster child as a household member, but is exempt from including the foster care payment as part of the household's net income.**
- D. Both a and b are correct.**

8. The children in a FDPIR household go to visit their grandparents for four weeks. The ITO that serves the area where the children reside has defined “temporary absences” to include vacations and other absences up to eight weeks. Can the children’s parents continue to receive USDA Foods for the children while they are visiting their grandparents?

A. Yes

B. No

9. True or False? Children under 18 who live in the applicant's household and who are under the parental control of someone in the household must be considered members of the applicant household even if they are purchasing food and preparing meals separately.

- A. True
- B. False

10. Which of the following individuals cannot be an authorized representative for a household, unless approval has been granted by the ITO/State agency?

- A. A neighbor**
- B. An adult relative not living in the household**
- C. An ITO/State agency employee**
- D. All of the above**