



Food and Nutrition
Service

1320 Braddock Place
Alexandria, VA
22314

Date: April 13, 2020

RE: Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) – Temporary Waiver of Claims Collection Activities Due to Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) – Blanket Approval

Dear SNAP State agencies,

As authorized by SNAP regulations at 7 CFR 272.3(c)(1)(i), the Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) will allow State agencies to suspend:

- SNAP regulations at 7 CFR 273.18(d) by allowing flexibility in the time frame for establishing or disposing of new claims.
- SNAP regulations at 7 CFR 273.18(e)(1) and (e)(5) by not requiring collection of active recoupment of SNAP overpayments, delaying collection on newly established overpayments, and not considering any payments delayed due to this suspension to be delinquent.

Under the authority of 7 CFR 272.3(c)(1)(i), FNS may authorize temporary waivers to deviate from specific regulatory provisions when they cannot be implemented due to extraordinary temporary situations. FNS has received multiple requests from State agencies for these flexibilities and has determined that approval is appropriate due to the COVID-19 Public Health Emergency.


These flexibilities are available through May 31, 2020. This waiver is contingent upon a State agency's compliance with the conditions and evaluation requirements detailed in the attached enclosures, which are due 45 days after expiration (July 15, 2020).

If the State agency elects to implement these flexibilities, it must notify its respective FNS Regional Office who will acknowledge receipt. State responses will be relayed to the FNS State Administration Branch.

FNS is ready to provide technical assistance to State agencies as they seek to maintain operations and serve clients during the current Public Health Emergency. If you have any questions or need additional information, please contact your respective Regional Office representative.

Sincerely,

4/13/2020

 Ronald K. Ward

Ronald K. Ward
Director, Program Accountability and Administrati...
Signed by: Department of Agriculture

Enclosure

TEMPORARY WAIVER OF TIME FRAME FOR ESTABLISHING NEW CLAIMS

1. **Regulatory citation:** 7 CFR 273.18(d)
2. **Regulatory requirements:** Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) regulations at 7 CFR 273.18(d) require State agencies to establish a claim before the last day of the quarter following the quarter in which the overpayment or trafficking incident was discovered and ensure that no less than 90 percent of all claim referrals are either established or disposed of according to this time frame.
3. **Description of alternative procedures:** State agencies are allowed flexibility in the time frame for establishing or disposing of new claims.
4. **Action and reason for approval or denial:** Under the authority of 7 CFR 272.3(c)(1)(i), FNS may authorize temporary waivers to deviate from specific regulatory provisions when they cannot be implemented due to extraordinary temporary situations. FNS has determined that approval of these flexibilities is appropriate due to the COVID-19 Public Health Emergency. FNS is approving the flexibility for a period of 3 months, effective March 1, 2020, through May 31, 2020.
5. **Conditions of approval:** FNS is approving this flexibility subject to the following conditions:
 - State agencies will meet the regulatory deadline when possible and will only exercise this flexibility when it is not possible to do so.
 - If the State agency elects to implement these flexibilities, it must notify its respective FNS Regional Office who will acknowledge receipt. State responses will be relayed to the FNS State Administration Branch.
6. **Evaluation Data Requirements:** The State agency must provide to FNS the data and analysis listed below required for evaluation of this waiver:
 - The number of households and aggregate dollar amount of newly established claims affected by this adjustment
7. **Expiration date:** May 31, 2020
8. **Quality control procedures:** A temporary delay in the establishment or disposition of some claims should have no impact on quality control procedures.

TEMPORARY WAIVER OF CLAIMS COLLECTION ACTION

1. **Regulatory citation:** 7 CFR 273.18(e)(1) and 7 CFR(e)(5)
2. **Regulatory requirements:** Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) regulations at 7 CFR 273.18(e)(1) require State agencies to begin collection action on claims unless it is not cost effective.

SNAP regulations at 7 CFR 273.18(e)(5) require State agencies to consider a claim delinquent if the claim has not been paid by the due date and a satisfactory payment arrangement has not been made; or if a payment arrangement has been established and a scheduled payment has not been made by the due date.
3. **Description of alternative procedures:** State agencies may temporarily suspend collection of active claims, delay collection action on newly established claims, and delay delinquency determination.
4. **Action and reason for approval or denial:** Under the authority of 7 CFR 272.3(c)(1)(i), FNS may authorize temporary waivers to deviate from specific regulatory provisions when they cannot be implemented due to extraordinary temporary situations. FNS has determined that approval of these flexibilities is appropriate due to the COVID-19 Public Health Emergency. FNS is approving the adjustment for a period of 3 months, effective March 1, 2020, through May 31, 2020.
5. **Conditions of approval:** FNS is approving this adjustment subject to the following conditions:
 - The State agency will not consider payments delayed due to this suspension to be delinquent.
 - SNAP claims suspended under this waiver must not be subject to the accrual of interest during the suspension period.
 - Households remain liable for their outstanding debts and the State agency will restart collection activity and delinquency determinations at the end of the suspension period.
 - If the State agency elects to implement these flexibilities, it must notify its respective FNS Regional Office who will acknowledge receipt. State responses will be relayed to the FNS State Administration Branch.
6. **Evaluation Data Requirements:** The State agency must provide to FNS the data and analysis listed below required for evaluation of this adjustment:
 - The number of households and aggregate dollar amount of active claims affected by this adjustment
 - An estimated number of households and aggregate dollar amount of claims that would have been newly established from March 1, 2020, through May 31, 2020, that will be deferred until the suspension period ends.
7. **Expiration date:** May 31, 2020

Enclosure

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8. **Quality control procedures:** A temporary claims suspension should have no impact on quality control procedures.