
**FOOD AND NUTRITION SERVICES CERTIFICATION
CASE ASSIGNMENT AND MAINTENANCE
Simplified Reporting Category**

**FNS 450 Simplified Reporting Category
Change #2-2012
May 1, 2012**

450.01 SIMPLIFIED REPORTING CATEGORY

- A. The Simplified Reporting Category applies to all FNS units except for:
1. A SNAP FNS unit.
 2. A Transitional FNS unit.
- B. FNS units subject to Simplified Reporting are identified in Field 13 of the DSS-8590. They are coded as follows:
- Code 'R' entered in Field 13 of the DSS-8590 indicates a DSS-2435R, Recertification Form, is required at the next recertification. The FNS unit will receive an automated DSS-2435R, Recertification Form, in the month prior to the month the certification period ends.
- Code 'I' entered in Field 13 of the DSS-8590 indicates that a DSS-2435I and a face-to-face or telephone interview is required at the next recertification. The FNS unit will be mailed an automated DSS-2435I, Recertification Form, in the month prior to the month the certification period ends.

450.02 HOUSEHOLD CHANGE REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

- A. FNS units subject to Simplified Reporting are required to report if one of the following changes occur during the certification period:
1. FNS units that include an ABAWD must report when the ABAWD stops working an average of 80 hours per month (non-waiver counties).
 2. Households whose income is at or below the 130% maximum allowable gross income limit are required to report an increase in household income that causes it to exceed the 130% maximum allowable gross income limit for its household size at certification. Do not consider ineligible or disqualified persons in determining the FNS unit size. This reporting limit will not change during the certification period regardless of changes in household size that may occur.

At the time a household's income exceeds their 130% maximum allowable gross income limit for reporting requirements the household has no further income reporting requirements.

- B. The FNS unit is required to report changes by the 10th of the month, following the month of change.

Households completing a recertification that incur changes prior to disposition of the recertification, are required to report changes by the 10th of the month, following the month in which the Notice of Eligibility is received.

EXCEPTION: See Section 605 for BENDEX/SDX time frames.

**FOOD AND NUTRITION SERVICES CERTIFICATION
CASE ASSIGNMENT AND MAINTENANCE
Simplified Reporting Category**

450.03 COUNTY RESPONSIBILITIES

The county agency has the following responsibilities regarding changes that occur to Simplified Reporting FNS units:

- A. Give the FNS unit a DSS-8550, Change Report Form, at certification and recertification. Explain the income reporting requirement for the appropriate FNS unit size and identify the maximum income amount on the DSS-8550. Indicate on the DSS-8550 that the household has no further income reporting requirements when the household's income exceeds the 130% maximum allowable gross income limit. Instruct the household to add the gross amount of all sources of income to get the total amount of monthly income (wages, WFFA, child support, SSI, unemployment benefits (UIB), Social Security, Veterans benefits, disability payments, income of new household members, etc.) on the last day of the month.

Provide the FNS unit with a new DSS-8550 if the FNS unit returns a DSS-8550 during the certification period. During the certification period the maximum allowable gross income limit that is identified for its household size at the time of certification does not change regardless of changes that may occur to the household size.

At the time a household's income exceeds the 130% maximum allowable gross income limit for reporting requirements send the DSS-8550 to notify the household that they no longer have to report changes in income.

- B. Changes are considered reported on:
1. The date the Change Report is received; **or**
 2. The date the change is reported by telephone, email, or fax (if received during non-business hours the date reported will be the next business day); **or**
 3. The date of the office visit to report the change; **or**
 4. The date the change is reported to WFFA.
- NOTE:** React to changes reported in person, by telephone, e-mail, or fax in the same manner as those reported on the DSS-8550, Change Report. The FNS unit is not required to confirm a verbal report in writing. Determine if the change affects the FNS unit's eligibility or benefit level. If multiple changes are reported on the same day, determine the cumulative effect and act accordingly.
- C. If the agency becomes aware of an income change that terminates benefits and fails to act on the change within the required time frame, determine if an overissuance occurred. Establish an Administrative Error (AE) claim if there is an overissuance. Refer to FNS Manual Section 800, Claims.

450.04 REACTING TO CHANGES DURING THE CERTIFICATION PERIOD

- A. Document the change in the case file stating how and when it was reported. Initial and date the change.
- B. Determine if the change affects eligibility or benefits. Refer to Section 605.01 to determine when on-line matches can be conducted during the certification period.

Do not react to a change in income that is not expected to continue for at least one month beyond the month in which the change is reported.

**FOOD AND NUTRITION SERVICES CERTIFICATION
CASE ASSIGNMENT AND MAINTENANCE
Simplified Reporting Category**

When a household reports a change in household composition, evaluate and determine the total number of people who live in the residence and who is a required member. Consider their relationship to each other, their ages and if the people purchase and prepare their food together.

- C. Follow procedures in Sections 450.05 through 450.12 when reacting to changes.
- D. React to the following changes reported during the certification period within 10 calendar days of the reported change:
 - 1. Income exceeds the 130% maximum allowable gross income limit for the FNS unit household size. This includes changes reported to WFFA that causes the FNS unit's income to exceed the 130% maximum allowable gross income limit.

If a change is reported and the household's income exceeds the 130% maximum allowable gross income limit, the change is reacted to regardless of the impact on the benefit amount. This includes certified households with no reporting requirements because the household income is already over the 130% at the time the change is reported.

Complete a manual calculation to determine if the income of the household exceeds the 130% maximum gross income limit; include all required household members in the household size. Include previously reported income that has not been included in the benefit calculation. The manual calculation is not necessary for certified households already over the 130% maximum gross income limit, react to the change.

If the income exceeds the 130% maximum gross income limit, react to the change regardless of the impact on the benefit amount. Calculate the payment in FSIS. Do not use a SLAW budget as it can not complete the 200% maximum allowable gross income limit test. Households lose categorical eligibility status when the income of the household exceeds the 200% maximum allowable gross income limit.

If the income does not exceed the 130% maximum allowable gross income limit, only react if the change results in an increase in benefits.

EXAMPLE 1: FNS unit of three with no income at the time of certification reports new wages. A manual calculation is completed and the income of the household does not exceed the 130% maximum allowable gross income limit. The file is documented and no change is taken as it would result in a reduction of benefits.

During the same certification period the FNS unit reports new UIB benefits. The household continues to receive the previously reported wages. A manual calculation is completed with the UIB and wages and the household income exceeds the 130% maximum allowable gross income limit for three. A payment calculation is completed and the household remains eligible with a reduced payment. A Notice of Adverse Action is necessary to add the wages and UIB income. This household has no further reporting requirements, a DSS-8550, Change Notice, is sent to notify the household.

EXAMPLE 2: FNS unit of one has baby and reports newborn in the household. The FNS is under the 130% maximum allowable gross income limit as it had no income at certification. Client is asked about other household composition changes since recertification and reports that the father of the child is in the home. The father of the child, who has countable income, is a required FNS unit member. A manual calculation is completed and it is determined that the income of the FNS unit exceeds the 130%

FOOD AND NUTRITION SERVICES CERTIFICATION
CASE ASSIGNMENT AND MAINTENANCE
Simplified Reporting Category

maximum allowable gross income limit for three. A payment calculation is completed and the household remains eligible with a reduced payment. A Notice of Adverse Action is necessary to add the income and new household members. This household has no further reporting requirements, a DSS-8550, Change Notice, is sent to notify the household.

EXAMPLE 3: FNS unit of three with income at the time of certification reports new wages. The FNS unit was over the 130% maximum allowable gross income limit at certification; therefore, a manual calculation is not needed. A payment calculation is completed and the new wages result in household ineligibility. A Notice of Adverse Action is necessary to terminate the benefits.

EXAMPLE 4: FNS unit of three reports addition of required household member with income. A manual calculation is completed and the income of the household does not exceed the 130% maximum allowable gross income limit for four. Since adding the new household member would result in a decrease in benefits, no action is taken.

Simplified Reporting policy overrides policy in Section 210.03, Individuals Who Must Be Included In The Same FNS Unit, when inclusion of the new household member results in a reduction in the benefits for households whose income does not exceed the 130% maximum allowable gross income limit during the certification period. Follow procedures in Section 210.03 at recertification.

2. A change that results in increased FNS benefits. This includes a change reported to WFFA that would increase FNS benefits. The WFFA payment amount does not have to change.

To determine if the change results in an increase include previously reported income that has not been included in the benefit calculation. If the change does not result in an increase in benefits do not react to the change. Use SLAW to complete budget calculations as verifications are required to increase FNS benefits.

EXAMPLE 1: FNS unit of three with UIB income at the time of certification reports termination of the UIB income. A payment calculation is completed and removal of the UIB benefits results in an increase in benefits. Complete the action to increase benefits.

EXAMPLE 2: FNS unit of three reports loss of Workman's Compensation income. At certification, the FNS unit was under the 130% maximum allowable gross income limit. Earlier in the same certification period, the household reported new wages. The new wages were not acted on because the household's income, including the new wages, did not exceed the 130% maximum allowable gross income limit and inclusion of the wages would have resulted in a reduction in benefits. A payment calculation is completed and removal of the Workman's Compensation income and inclusion of wages results in an increase of benefits. The action is completed to increase benefits by removing the Workman's Compensations income and including the wages.

EXAMPLE 3: FNS unit of three reports loss of the UIB income. At certification, the FNS unit was under the 130% maximum allowable gross income limit. Earlier in the same certification period, the household reported new wages. The new wages were not acted on because the household's income, including the new wages, did not exceed the 130% maximum allowable gross income limit and inclusion of the wages would have resulted in a reduction in benefits. A payment calculation is completed to determine if benefits will increase. The removal of the UIB and inclusion of wages results in a reduction of benefits so no change is made.

**FOOD AND NUTRITION SERVICES CERTIFICATION
CASE ASSIGNMENT AND MAINTENANCE
Simplified Reporting Category**

3. A change in a WFFA payment amount. This includes new payments, changes in payments, or the removal of payments. Determine the cause for the change in the WFFA payment amount. Act on the cumulative effect of the new WFFA payment amount, the changes that caused the WFFA payment amount to change and any previously reported income that has not been included in the benefit calculation. Issue a DSS-8562, Effect of Change Notice if benefits increase or a DSS-8553, Notice of Adverse Action if benefits decrease or terminate.

NOTE: See Section 450.09, Situations When Benefits Can Not Be Increased.

4. The FNS unit requests termination; this request can be verbal or in writing, refer to Section 635.06.
5. Removal of a FNS unit member if the FNS unit member has applied for separate FNS benefits or needs to be added to another FNS case.
6. A change that results in no eligible individual in the home due to the institutionalization or death of all FNS unit members.
7. Action to prevent overissuances as a result of an agency or client error.
8. A change that is considered **verified upon receipt**.

Verified upon receipt means that information:

- a. Is not questionable, **and**
- b. The provider is the primary source of the information as follows:
- (1) BENDEX, from the SSA;
 - (2) SDX, from the SSA;

NOTE: Do not react to information on Bendex and SDX unless SSA is the Primary Source of the information. (ie, VA benefits, earned income, etc.) SOLQ is not considered verified upon receipt since this is an inquiry. Refer to Section 605.01 to determine when on-line matches can be conducted during the certification period.

- (3) SAVE, from the Bureau of Citizenship and Immigration Services (BCIS);
- (4) Employment and Training (E&T) compliance information, received from Division of Employment Security (DES);
- (5) Intentional Program Disqualifications (IPV's), received from Program Integrity staff;
- (6) Non-cooperation with Quality Control (QC), received from QC staff;
- (7) UIB, from DES

NOTE: Refer to Section 605.01 to determine when on-line matches can be conducted during the certification period.

**FOOD AND NUTRITION SERVICES CERTIFICATION
CASE ASSIGNMENT AND MAINTENANCE
Simplified Reporting Category**

c. If the information is questionable, the information is not considered verified upon receipt and should not be acted upon.

9. The household no longer resides in North Carolina. Follow procedures in Section 215.06, Move By The FNS Unit Out Of The State.

NOTE: The EBT Out of State Activity Report is not verification that a household has moved out of state.

10. An ABAWD stops working an average of 80 hours per month.

E. Do not react to any other changes in situation.

NOTE: Mail sent to a household and returned as undeliverable with no forwarding address is not considered a change and should be reacted to at the next recertification.

450.05 NO CHANGE IN ELIGIBILITY OR BENEFIT

A. Obtain the necessary verifications. Refer to the appropriate manual section for verifications needed to process the change.

B. If the change does not affect the FNS unit's eligibility or benefits, use the Effect of Change Notice, DSS-8562, to notify the FNS unit that the change did not affect the allotment. If the FNS unit did not report the change (for example, the change was reported by the Work First Unit), a notice to the household is not required. An Effect of Change is not necessary unless the change was reportable.

450.06 TERMINATION OF BENEFITS

If the change will terminate eligibility and benefits, take the following actions.

A. Issue a Notice of Adverse Action, DSS-8553, within ten calendar days of the change being reported.

NOTE: Refer to Section 635.04, Exceptions To Notice of Adverse Action, for procedure to use when a termination does not require a Notice of Adverse Action (NOAA).

B. Verification of the change is not required prior to issuing the notice.

C. Terminate the benefits effective the month following the month in which the Notice of Adverse Action expires. Key the case termination in FSIS.

NOTE: Terminations not requiring a Notice of Adverse Action (NOAA) are effective the month the termination is keyed.

D. If the FNS unit requests a fair hearing and continuation of benefits prior to the expiration date of the Notice of Adverse Action, do not terminate the benefits. Follow instructions in Section 705, Fair Hearings.

450.07 DECREASE IN BENEFITS

If the change decreases the benefits, take the following actions.

A. Issue a Notice of Adverse Action, DSS-8553, to reduce benefits within ten calendar days of the change being reported.

**FOOD AND NUTRITION SERVICES CERTIFICATION
CASE ASSIGNMENT AND MAINTENANCE
Simplified Reporting Category**

- B. Do not require verification.
- C. Reduce benefits effective the month following the month in which the Notice of Adverse Action expires.
- D. If the FNS unit requests a fair hearing and continuation of benefits prior to the expiration date of the Notice of Adverse Action, do not decrease the benefits. Follow instructions in Section 705, Fair Hearings.

450.08 INCREASE IN BENEFITS

If the change increases the benefits, take the following actions.

- A. Obtain the required verifications. Refer to the appropriate manual section for verifications needed to process the change.

NOTE: This includes conducting ESC (DES), SDX or BENDEX on-line verifications; refer to Section 605.01.

- B. If the required verifications are not readily available, give or mail the Notice of Information Needed, DSS-8650, to the FNS unit. Allow ten calendar days for the FNS unit to provide the requested verification.

1. If the FNS unit provides verification within the allowed time period, take action on the change to provide benefits.
2. If the FNS unit fails to provide the required verification within the allowed time period but does provide the verification at a later date, the time frame for acting on the change will run from the date verification is provided rather than from the date the change is reported.
3. If a FNS unit reports a change that results in an increase in benefits but fails to provide the requested verification, **do not terminate the case for failure to provide verification**. Take no action to increase the allotment. Document in the case file the reason the reported change was not processed.

- C. When verification is provided timely, make the change effective the month following the month the change is reported to the county.

EXAMPLE: A FNS unit reports their income decreased by \$30 on May 15 and provides verification on May 25. The caseworker increases the FNS unit's June allotment.

EXAMPLE: A \$50 decrease in income is reported and verified on May 28; increase the FNS unit's June benefits. If the change is acted on after May 31, use the Transaction Authorization, DSS-8593, to issue June benefits.

- D. When verification is not provided timely, delay the increase in benefits. If verification is subsequently provided, make the change effective the month following the month in which the verification is provided.

EXAMPLE: A FNS unit reports their income decreased on May 15; the verification is provided on June 25. Increase the FNS unit's July allotment.

**FOOD AND NUTRITION SERVICES CERTIFICATION
CASE ASSIGNMENT AND MAINTENANCE
Simplified Reporting Category**

- E. If there is not a sufficient amount of time to increase the benefits, issue a supplement for the amount of the increase by the tenth of the following month. Issue a supplement via a Transaction Authorization, DSS-8593. Refer to Section 905, Restoration of Lost Benefits.
- F. Notify the FNS unit of the new benefit amount via the DSS-8562, Effect of Change.

450.09 SITUATIONS WHEN BENEFITS CAN NOT BE INCREASED

An increase in FNS benefits is prohibited when a FNS unit's countable income is reduced because of a Work First sanction for failure to perform a required action. Use the following criteria to determine if the gross or net amount of the WFFA check should be counted.

- A. If the WFFA check is terminated due to a sanction and the sanction is imposed during the certification period, continue to count the gross payment amount for the full sanction period. If a sanction is in place at reapplication/recertification, determine if it is the same sanction or a new sanction. Continue to count the gross payment amount if it is the same sanction. If it is a new sanction, determine when the sanction was imposed. If the WFFA check is terminated due to a sanction imposed effective the month of application/reapplication or in a non-certified month, no WFFA payment amount will be budgeted. Budget the gross payment amount if the sanction was imposed while the case was certified to receive FNS benefits.
- B. If the WFFA check is terminated due to a sanction imposed effective the month of application/reapplication or in a non-certified month, do not count the WFFA payment amount when determining benefits. If a sanction is in place at reapplication/recertification, determine if it is the same sanction or a new sanction. If it is a new sanction, determine when the sanction was imposed. If the WFFA check is terminated due to a sanction imposed effective the month of application/reapplication or in a non-certified month, no WFFA payment amount will be budgeted. Budget the gross payment amount if the sanction was imposed while the case was certified to receive FNS benefits.
- C. If a WFFA or TANF payment is reduced due to a client responsible overpayment, do not increase the households FNS allotment as a result of the decrease in WFFA or TANF payment. Count the gross amount of the WFFA or TANF payment as unearned income.

EXCEPTION: If the WFFA benefits **terminate** due to non-compliance or failure to meet an eligibility requirement, remove the payment from the FNS budget effective the month after the payment terminates. **The case must terminate for this rule to apply.** (Refer to Section 273.14, Non-Compliance With Work First Family Assistance (WFFA)).

NOTE: This does not include Benefit Diversion (BD), since BD is not countable income.

NOTE: The FNS unit is not required to report changes in the WFFA payment or cost-of-living increases (mass changes) in SSA or SSI income. Mass change instructions are issued via administrative letters.

450.10 CHANGES WITH UNKNOWN EFFECT

If the FNS unit provides information during the certification period about changes in their household's circumstances, attempt to determine the effect of the change on the FNS unit's eligibility. Determine if the change is increased income that exceeds 130% of the maximum allowable gross income limit. If the change does not relate to increased income that could exceed the 130% limit, disregard the change until the next recertification. If this cannot be determined, take the following actions.

**FOOD AND NUTRITION SERVICES CERTIFICATION
CASE ASSIGNMENT AND MAINTENANCE
Simplified Reporting Category**

- A. Give or mail the Notice of Information Needed, DSS-8650, to the FNS unit. Allow ten calendar days for the FNS unit to provide the requested information or verification.
- B. If the FNS unit responds to the Notice of Information Needed, DSS-8650, but refuses to provide sufficient information to determine eligibility or benefit level, issue a Notice of Adverse Action, DSS-8553, to close the case.
- C. If the FNS unit fails to respond to the Notice of Information Needed, DSS-8650, issue a Notice of Adverse Action, DSS-8553, to close the case.

450.11 CHANGES REPORTED TO WFFA

A WFFA recipient who reports a change to the WFFA Section is considered to have reported the change for FNS purposes.

- A. When a change is reported, the WFFA caseworker immediately forwards an Income Maintenance Transmittal Form, DSS-8194, to the FNS caseworker.
- B. When the WFFA caseworker changes the WFFA payment to reflect the reported change, the caseworker forwards another DSS-8194 to the FNS caseworker.
- C. Determine how the change affects the FNS benefits within ten calendar days of the date the change was reported to WFFA.
- D. If the WFFA payment is reduced or terminated, the family is issued a notice. Do not take action to increase the FNS unit's benefits until the family decides if it will request a hearing and continued benefits pending the hearing.
 - 1. If the family requests a hearing and the WFFA payment is continued, do not change the FNS benefits until after the hearing process is completed.
 - 2. If the family does not request a hearing, process the change based on the date the WFFA notice expires. Follow the instructions in FNS Certification Manual Section 550 to evaluate the case for Transitional FNS benefits if the WFFA terminates.

450.12 CHANGES REPORTED BY A THIRD PARTY SOURCE

When unverified information is received from a third party source such as through a Quality Control alert or an anonymous caller, take the following actions.

- A. Determine if the information is a reportable change according to the guidelines in 450.02. Do the following if the change is reportable:
 - 1. If the new information is different from what the FNS unit last reported, contact the FNS unit by phone, and give them the opportunity to resolve the discrepancy.
 - 2. If it is determined, as a result of this call, that the third party information is not valid, take no further action.
 - 3. If the caseworker is unable to reach the FNS unit by making at least two phone calls (or if the FNS unit does not have a phone or message contact number), or the discrepancy was not resolved during a phone conversation, determine whether additional information is needed or if verification is required. If information or verification is needed, send the FNS unit a Notice of Information Needed, DSS-8650.

**FOOD AND NUTRITION SERVICES CERTIFICATION
CASE ASSIGNMENT AND MAINTENANCE
Simplified Reporting Category**

4. Give or mail the Notice of Information Needed, DSS-8650, to the FNS unit. List the information that was reported, and give the FNS unit a chance to resolve the discrepancy by submitting the verification. Do not restrict the FNS unit to provide any specific type of verification. Allow the FNS unit to provide any reasonable documentary evidence or collateral contact. Allow ten calendar days for the FNS unit to provide the requested verification.
 5. If the FNS unit responds to the Notice of Information Needed, DSS-8650, but refuses to provide sufficient information to determine eligibility or benefit level, issue a Notice of Adverse Action, DSS-8553, to close the case.
 6. If the FNS unit fails to respond to the Notice of Information Needed, DSS-8650, issue a Notice of Adverse Action, DSS-8553, to close the case.
 7. Refer to Section 605, Automated Inquiry and Match Procedures, for changes due to the Income Eligibility Verification System (IEVS) requirement.
- B. Do not react to the change unless the change is a reportable change per 450.02.

450.13 FAILURE TO REPORT

- A. If the FNS unit fails to report income that exceeds the 130% maximum allowable gross income limit that results in the FNS unit receiving an overissuance, establish a claim against the FNS unit. See Section 800, Claims. **Do not establish a claim if the change is not required to be reported.**
- B. If the caseworker learns that a FNS unit failed to report the change timely within the certification period, the FNS unit is entitled to a Notice of Adverse Action, DSS-8553, before reducing benefits.
- C. Do not disqualify an individual for failing to report a change unless the individual is disqualified according to instructions in Section 710, Administrative Disqualification Hearings, and Section 800, Claims.
- D. If the FNS unit fails to report a change timely that would have resulted in increased benefits, do **not** restore those benefits.
- E. Restore benefits when the agency fails to act timely in processing an increase in benefits. Refer to Section 905, Restoration of Lost Benefits.

450.14 FAIR HEARING REQUESTS AND CONTINUED BENEFITS

If the FNS unit requests a fair hearing during the advance notice period and its certification period has not expired, do not take action to reduce or terminate benefits. Continue benefits at the same benefit level authorized immediately prior to the Notice of Adverse Action. Once the Notice of Adverse Action expires, so does the FNS unit's ability to request continued benefits.

- A. Explain to the FNS unit that continued benefits may be waived. If the FNS unit agrees to waive continued benefits, process the change to reduce or terminate benefits before the fair hearing.
- B. If not waived, explain that any continued benefits received may have to be repaid depending on the outcome of the fair hearing.

**FOOD AND NUTRITION SERVICES CERTIFICATION
CASE ASSIGNMENT AND MAINTENANCE
Simplified Reporting Category**

- C. When termination of benefits is due to non-compliance with work requirements, explain that the disqualification may be imposed following the hearing decision.
- D. Refer to Section 705, Fair Hearings.

450.15 SIMPLIFIED REPORTING CERTIFICATION PERIODS

Certification periods are determined by the household's situation. They are:

- A. FNS households that contain only specified individuals (as defined in Section 210, Household Concept) who are **without** earned income are certified for 12 months.
- B. FNS households that contain an ABAWD are certified for the appropriate non-compliant or bonus month time limits.

NOTE: The certification can be for 6 months if the county is under an ABAWD waiver.

- C. All other households are certified for up to 6 months. Document the reason for certifications that are less than 6 months.

450.16 SIMPLIFIED REPORTING RECERTIFICATION PROCEDURES

FNS units subject to Simplified Reporting are required to have a face-to-face or telephone interview once every 12 months. At each application or recertification the appropriate code is entered in field 13 of the DSS-8590 to track the 12 month period and to indicate if a face-to-face or telephone interview is due at the next recertification. The codes are:

- 'R' – DSS-2435R, FNS Notice of Expiration and Recertification Form, is required at the next recertification.
- 'I' – DSS-2435I, FNS Notice of Expiration and Interview Recertification Form, and a face-to-face or telephone interview is required at the next recertification.

- A. 'R' – DSS-2435R Mail-In Recertification Procedures

NOTE: If a DSS-2435R is returned with residence in another county, the FNS unit must apply in the new county. Deny benefits effective the end of the certification period.

1. The Food Stamp Information System (FSIS) will generate and mail the FNS unit a DSS-2435R in the month prior to the last month of the certification period.
2. Do not schedule interview appointments for the DSS-2435R recertification unless the FNS unit asks for assistance in completing the DSS-2435R. If the FNS unit requests assistance in completing the DSS-2435R, schedule the interview appointment for a date prior to the 16th of the last month of the certification period.
3. Faxed DSS-2435R's recertifications are acceptable (if received during non-business hours the date received will be the next business day).

- B. 'I' – DSS-2435I, Face-to-Face or Telephone Interview Recertification Procedures

NOTE: If a DSS-2435I is returned with residence in another county the FNS unit must apply in the new county. Deny benefits effective the end of the certification period.

**FOOD AND NUTRITION SERVICES CERTIFICATION
CASE ASSIGNMENT AND MAINTENANCE
Simplified Reporting Category**

1. The Food Stamp Information System (FSIS) will generate and mail the FNS unit a DSS-2435I in the month prior to the last month of the certification period.
2. When a complete DSS-2435I is returned to the local DSS, an interview must be conducted with the household.
 - a. Contact the FNS by telephone to conduct the recertification interview; or
 - b. Mail the FNS unit a DSS-8650, Notice of Information Needed, with a scheduled appointment. The DSS-8650 must include a specific date, time and method of the interview (telephone or face-to-face). The appointment may be either a telephone or office interview.

NOTE: If the household can not be contacted by the telephone a DSS-8650 must be mailed with a scheduled appointment.

The DSS-2435I must be documented with the date of the interview and the type of interview (telephone or office visit) conducted.

3. Conduct a face-to-face or telephone recertification interview for a Simplified Reporting household at one of the following locations:
 - a. The department of social services (DSS) agency; **or**
 - b. The FNS unit's residence; **or**
 - c. Any other mutually acceptable location.
4. If the FNS unit fails to complete the recertification interview or contact the agency to reschedule, deny the recertification using the processing time frame standards in the FNS Certification Manual, Section 450.

450.17 TIMELY DSS-2435R/I RECERTIFICATION FORMS

A timely recertification entitles the FNS unit to uninterrupted FNS benefits; therefore, if eligible, benefits must be available to the FNS unit on their normal issuance date.

- A. A recertification is timely if the FNS unit submits a DSS-2435R/I by the 15th calendar day of the last month of the current certification period. The DSS-2435R/I must be completed and signed by the applicant or an authorized representative, and include the applicant's name and address. The date the signed DSS-2435R/I is received in the agency is the date of application (if received during non-business hours the date received will be the next business day).
- B. Determine eligibility by the end of the current certification period.

EXCEPTION: If a FNS unit reports a change in situation prior to processing, mail a DSS-8650, Notice of Information Needed, and allow ten calendar days to provide the required verification information. Verify the change and process the recertification by the end of the current certification period if time frames allow. Do not deny an application for recertification before the last workday of the current certification period for failure to provide information.

If the DSS-8650 expiration date extends beyond the end of the current certification period, do not close the case on the last workday. Process the change within five calendar days of receipt of the information if provided by the DSS-8650 expiration date and do not prorate benefits. If the FNS unit fails to provide the requested verification, close the case on the DSS-8650 expiration date. If the DSS-8650 expiration date falls on a weekend or a holiday, close the case on the next workday.

**FOOD AND NUTRITION SERVICES CERTIFICATION
CASE ASSIGNMENT AND MAINTENANCE
Simplified Reporting Category**

450.18 UNTIMELY DSS-2435R/I RECERTIFICATION FORMS

- A. A recertification is untimely if the FNS unit submits a DSS-2435R/I between the 16th calendar day of the month and the last calendar day of the last month of the certification period. The DSS-2435R/I must be completed and signed by the applicant or an authorized representative and include the applicant's name and address. The date the signed DSS-2435R/I is received in the agency is the date of application. Process the untimely recertification within 30 days from the date of application. **(Note the exception in 450.17.)**
- B. If the FNS unit is eligible for benefits, the benefits must be available by the 30th day. An untimely recertification does not guarantee uninterrupted FNS benefits.

450.19 LATE DSS-2435R/I RECERTIFICATION FORMS

A recertification is late if the signed recertification form is returned to the DSS agency in the month following the last month of the certification period. Evaluate for expedited benefits. If eligible for expedited benefits, follow timeframes in 320.03. If ineligible for expedited benefits, process the case by the 30th day from the date of application. Prorate benefits from the date application for recertification is filed, or the date the DSS-2435R/I is received, if good cause is not established. Do not shift the base period for late recertifications.

450.20 PROCEDURES FOR SCHEDULING AND COMPLETING A SIMPLIFIED REPORTING RECERTIFICATION

- A. FSIS selects active cases that are subject to Simplified Reporting with a certification period that expires the following month. Cases are selected on the tenth calendar day of the month unless it falls on a holiday or weekend. During the month prior to the last month of the certification period, DSS-2435R's are mailed to FNS units coded **R** or a DSS-2435I is mailed to FNS units coded **I** in Field 13 of the DSS-8590. The DSS-2435R/I includes the Notice of Expiration. The DSS-2435R/I advises the FNS unit to return the signed form by the 15th calendar day of the last month of the certification period to be considered a timely recertification. The DSS-2435I advises the FNS unit that an interview is also required and that benefits will not be issued until the interview is completed.
- B. If the FNS unit requests assistance in completing the DSS-2435R/I, schedule the appointment for a date prior to the 16th of the last month of the certification period.
- C. Date stamp the signed DSS-2435R/I upon receipt. Date of receipt is the date of application (if received during non-business hours the date received will be the next business day). The DSS-2435R/I is accepted as a filed application if it contains the applicant or authorized representative's signature, and the applicant's name and address are included.
- D. Review the DSS-2435R/I for completeness in a timeframe that will allow for timely issuance of benefits. The form is complete if:
 - 1. All blocks are checked;
 - 2. The form is signed by applicant or authorized representative;
 - 3. Verification of the FNS unit's income (earned and unearned) for the base period is attached; **and**

**FOOD AND NUTRITION SERVICES CERTIFICATION
CASE ASSIGNMENT AND MAINTENANCE
Simplified Reporting Category**

4. Verification of reported changes is attached.
- E. Contact the FNS unit to complete the information on the DSS-2435R/I if it is incomplete due to unchecked blocks.
- F. Return the DSS-2435R/I for signature if it is unsigned. This is not a filed recertification.
- G. Send the FNS unit a DSS-8650, Notice of Information Needed, if the DSS-2435R/I is incomplete because required verification is missing. Give the FNS unit ten calendar days to return the required verification. Also request verification of child care, medical expenses, and changes in shelter expenses reported on the DSS-2435R/I. If the required verifications are not returned, deny the recertification on the last day of the processing time (follow timeframes in 450.17, 450.18 and 450.19). Do not deny the recertification if verification of allowable deductions is not returned, process without allowing the deductions.

NOTE: If the FNS unit provides verification of the above expenses at a later date, evaluate the change to determine if the FNS unit's benefits will increase. If so, make the change effective the month after the verifications are received.
- H. Determine if the recertification is timely, untimely, or late and process accordingly. For late recertifications, evaluate for good cause and expedited benefits. If good cause is determined, do not prorate benefits.

450.21 PROCESSING A DSS-2435R/I RECERTIFICATION

NOTE: Refer to Figure 450-1 for Recertification Verification Requirements.

- A. Timely DSS-2435R/I's

Process the timely DSS-2435R/I's by the end of the certification period if all required verification is provided. Close the case on the last workday of the month if required verification is not received. **(Note the exception in 450.17)** If a recertification is closed for failure to provide necessary verification, it may be reopened if the necessary verification is provided within the allowable time frame.
 1. If the required verification is provided within 30 days from the date of application:
 - a. Reopen the case; **and**
 - b. Keep the original date of application; **and**
 - c. Do not prorate benefits.
 2. If the required verification is provided from the 31st to the 60th day from the date of application:
 - a. Reopen and process the case within five calendar days of receipt of the required information; **and**
 - b. Change the date of application to the date final verification is received; **and**
 - c. Prorate benefits.

**FOOD AND NUTRITION SERVICES CERTIFICATION
CASE ASSIGNMENT AND MAINTENANCE
Simplified Reporting Category**

B. Untimely DSS-2435R/I's

Process the DSS-2435R/I's within 30 days from the date the application is filed. Close the case on the 30th day from the date of application if required verification is not received. Do not deny an application for recertification before the 30th day for failure to provide information. If the 30th day falls on a weekend or a holiday, deny the application on the next work day. If a Simplified Reporting case is closed for failure to provide necessary verification, it may be reopened if the necessary verification is provided within the allowable time frame.

If the required verification is provided from the 31st to the 60th day from the date of application:

1. Reopen and process the case within five calendar days of receipt of the required information; **and**
2. Change the date of application to the date final verification is received; **and**
3. Prorate benefits.

C. Late DSS-2435R/I's

A late DSS-2435R/I's occurs when the FNS unit returns a recertification form in the month following the last month of the certification period. Evaluate for expedited service. Process the recertification within 30 days unless the FNS unit is eligible for expedited service. Prorate benefits from the date the DSS-2435R/I is received, if good cause is not established. Refer to Exceptions in 450.17.

1. Take the following action if the FNS unit returns a recertification form in the month following the last month of the certification period.
 - a. Use the DSS-8650 to request required verification.
 - b. Allow the FNS unit ten calendar days to return verification.
 - c. Offer the FNS unit assistance in obtaining the verification.
 - d. Resolve any discrepancies prior to certifying the case.
2. Prorate benefits from the date of application.

Example: Certification period ends in March. FNS unit comes in for recertification on April 15. Complete a DSS-2435R/I and evaluate for expedited FNS benefits. Worker determines that FNS unit is not eligible for expedited benefits. FNS unit returns all necessary verifications on May 8. Prorate FNS benefits from the date of application, April 15.
3. Assign the appropriate certification period, per section 450.15, if the FNS unit is eligible.
4. If the FNS unit fails to provide the required verification, deny the recertification 30 days from the date the application is filed.
5. If an application for recertification is denied for failure to provided necessary verification and required verification is provided after the 30th day, the FNS unit must reapply for benefits.