

Streamlining Determinations

Reducing Paperwork and
Increasing Timeliness

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Goals

- ❖ Case decisions made on financial/categorical eligibility, not procedural denials
- ❖ Minimize hardship on clients and caseworkers

What's in it for clients?

- ❖ Quicker access to benefits
- ❖ Less paperwork needed
- ❖ Get benefits with single application
- ❖ More clients successfully access the programs

What's in it for agencies?

- ❖ Increased timeliness
- ❖ Increased accuracy and program integrity
- ❖ Better customer service
- ❖ Fewer questions/complaints
- ❖ Less churn
- ❖ Less paperwork to process

Where are the Main Opportunities?

- Verifications
- SNAP Interviews
- Renewals

Over-Verification

Drivers

- Misunderstanding of federal policy and requirements
- Concerns about QC/audits
 - Learn the FNS Handbook 310!
- Push for “program integrity”
- Unclear policy
- Culture



Solutions

- Clarify policy on when verification is required
- Maximize use of electronic data sources
- Shift metrics to same day processing

Verification Policy - SNAP

<p>Mandatory Verifications</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Income <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Unearned – State On-Line Query (SOLQ), Unemployment ➤ Earned – Equifax/Work Number • Identity <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ SOLQ • Immigration status of non-citizen applicants <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Systematic Alien Verification for Entitlements (SAVE) • Social Security Number <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ SOLQ • Enrollment in a Disability Program <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ SOLQ • Residency <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Quarterly Wage Data, SOLQ, Unemployment, Work Number, Secretary of State 	<p>Verify If Applicable</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Utility expenses, if claiming more than standard • Hours worked, if subject to work requirement • Medical expenses, if claimed • Child support obligation and payment, if applicable
	<p>Verify if Questionable</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dependent care expenses • Household composition • Resources • Shelter expenses • Citizenship status
	<p>*State cannot require specific document *State has obligation to provide assistance</p>

➤ Available Electronic Data Sources

Verification Policy - SNAP



- What data sources does your state access to help with Mandatory Verifications?
 - Helpful additional resources may be: Work Number, Secretary of State/DMV, Child Support
- Does your state effectively use prospective budgeting?
- Does your state have reasonable policies in place for acceptable verification for items like Identity and Residency?
 - Identity – State can use SOLQ
 - Residency – State can use electronic database (SSA, DMV) or use document already provided (i.e. pay stub)
- When does the state require verification? When do they accept self-attestation?
 - Verification not required for: Shelter expenses, Resources, Dependent care expenses (unless questionable)
- Is there a definition in policy of “questionable” or is it left to caseworker discretion?
 - Clear guidance can minimize over-verification

Verification Policy - Medicaid

- State can accept self-attestation for most factors, use electronic verification for others
- Considerable flexibility – see state’s Eligibility Verification Plan

Eligibility Factors:

*Income	Household Composition
Residency	Pregnancy
Age (Date of Birth)	Caretaker Relative
*Social Security Number	Medicare
*Citizenship	Application for Other Benefits
*Immigration Status	

*Verification (beyond self-attestation) Required

Verification Policy - Medicaid

Electronic verifications available

- Citizenship/immigration status
 - Attempt to verify at application - DHS/WTPY/SAVE
 - Provide reasonable opportunity period (with temporary coverage) if unable to verify
- SSN – Social Security Databases
- Check electronic data sources for income (can be done post-eligibility)
 - IRS Data
 - Quarterly Wage Data
 - Work Number
 - SNAP!

Reasonable Compatibility

Comparison of client's attestation to available data sources

- If both below, at, or above eligibility threshold, no further verification is required
- Some states have reasonable compatibility threshold that applies at the eligibility cutoff (i.e. 5%)
 - If attestation below eligibility cutoff and data source shows income above, but within 5% of attestation, applicant is ELIGIBLE
 - Applies ONLY at eligibility cutoff
- Allows for use of variety of electronic data sources, such as quarterly wage data, IRS, and The Work Number
- Initial advocacy efforts should focus on clear-cut cases, then address more complicated cases such as:
 - Self-employment income
 - Application and data source show different employers
 - Applicant has no income



May be automated – look at design documents and logic

SNAP Interviews

- Only required for SNAP; at application and recertification
- **Goal: No denials for missed interviews**
- *Unscheduled* interviews:
 - Same-day interview if walk-in application
 - Make cold call after application is received
 - Utilize a call-in model (with or without On Demand waiver)
 - Allow client to apply and complete interview over phone
- *Scheduled* interviews:
 - Allow clients to select an interview time that works for them
 - Send a text reminder before a scheduled interview
 - For recertification, call at scheduled time even if recertification form hasn't been received

Renewals

- **Goal: minimize churn**
- Certification period lengths:
 - SNAP – 6/12 months for most, but also consider special populations like elderly/disabled and ABAWDs
 - Medicaid – MAGI cases must be 12 months, non-MAGI may be up to 12 months
- SNAP – Interim Report
 - Make questions as simple as possible and limit to required factors:
 - Change of more than \$50 in unearned income
 - Change in wage rate/salary or change between part-time/full-time status; OR change of more than \$100 in income
 - Change in household composition
 - Change in residence and shelter costs
 - If ABAWD subject to time limit, change in work hours that brings participant below 20 hours per week
 - Automate processing if no changes reported

Renewals

- Medicaid
 - State must attempt *ex parte* before requesting information from participant
 - Data sources – Quarterly Wage Data, The Work Number, SNAP
 - If information is needed, state must send pre-populated renewal notice
 - Apply reasonable compatibility
 - More complex – what is the attestation?
 - Complicated scenarios - self-employment, no income, changes in employer
- Coordinate SNAP and Medicaid renewals to minimize Medicaid only renewals!
- Automate *ex parte*
- Review Data
 - Procedural Denials
 - Churn
 - Success Rate of *ex parte*

Advocacy Strategies

- Set regular meetings with state/county agency
- Get updates on outcomes of business process goals
- Determine agency's priorities, and align asks with them
- Bring examples from field if policies are being misapplied
- Share best practices from other states



Questions?

Thank you for joining us today!

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