

WISCONSIN DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH SERVICES
Division of Medicaid Services
1 W. Wilson St.
Madison WI 53703

To: Foodshare Handbook Users

From: Autumn Arnold, Bureau Director
Bureau of Eligibility and Enrollment Policy

Re: **Foodshare Handbook Release 25-02**

Release Date: 08/13/2025

Effective Date: 08/13/2025

EFFECTIVE DATE	The following policy additions or changes are effective 08/13/2025 unless otherwise noted. Underlined text denotes new text. Text with a strike through it denotes deleted text.
POLICY UPDATES	
1.2.1 Verification Introduction	Clarified that applicants and members have at least 20 days to provide verification when requested by the agency.
1.2.1.1 General Verification Rules	Updated general verification rules.
1.2.1.2 Request for Verification	Updated request for verification terms.
1.2.1.3 Responsibility for Verification	Removed obsolete information and added information regarding questionable reported exemptions.
1.2.2 Sources for Verification	Removed obsolete information.
1.2.2.1 Documentary Evidence	Updated verbiage.
1.2.2.2 Collateral Contacts	Removed obsolete information and updated verbiage.
1.2.2.2.1 Third-Party Cooperation	Updated verbiage.
1.2.2.3 Home Visits	Removed obsolete information.
1.2.2.4 Discrepancies in Verification	Updated instructions for when unclear information is received and added information regarding third-party payroll sources.
1.2.2.5 Request for Contact	Removed obsolete information.
1.2.2.6 Case Documentation	Clarified sources of verification detail required.
1.2.4 Financial Verification	New section.
1.2.4.1 Gross Countable Income Verification.	Removed obsolete information and added information on how to proceed if unable to obtain the specific requested verification.
1.2.4.2 Earned Income Verification	Removed obsolete information and clarified information regarding employment and verification.
1.2.4.3 Self-Employment Income Verification	Clarified that verification is required for self-employment income.
1.2.4.4 Asset Verification	Updated to reflect that assets are not considered in the FoodShare eligibility determination.
1.2.4.5 Expense Verification	Added information stating that workers must verify all expenses required to be verified at application, SMRF or renewal.

1.2.4.6	Dependent Care Expense Verification	Removed obsolete information and updated verbiage.
1.2.4.8	Medical Expense Verification	Removed obsolete information and updated example.
1.2.4.9	Child Support Payments Verification	Clarified to reflect that IM workers can obtain verification of Child Support Payments from State information sources.
1.2.5	Questionable Items	Section renamed and rewritten.
1.2.6	Suggested Verification Sources	Added guidance when seeking to verify unclear information during the certification period.
1.2.6.1	Required Verification to Determine Eligibility	Added information regarding Drug Test Results and Prescriptions that Caused a Positive Drug Test.
1.2.6.2	Verify Only If Questionable	Updated verbiage. Effective date 07/01/2025.
1.2.7	Unclear Information	New section.
1.3	Applicant and Member Access Rights	New section.
1.3.1	Introduction	New section.
1.3.2	Fair Hearings	New section.
1.3.3	Access by Someone Else	New section.
1.4	Disclosure of Information	New section.
1.4.1	Disclosure Without Consent	New section.
1.4.2	Disclosure with Consent	New section.
1.4.3	Special Circumstances	New section.
1.4.3.1	Legislative Committees	New section.
1.4.3.2	Crime Victim's Compensation Program	New section.
1.4.3.3	Subpoenas and Records Request	New section.
1.4.4	Prohibited Disclosure	New section.
1.4.5	Data Exchanges	New section.
1.4.5.1	Data Exchanges Introduction	New section.
1.4.5.2	Use of Data	New section.
1.4.5.3	Query Access	New section.
1.4.5.4	Release of Data	New section.
1.4.6	Documents	New section.
1.4.6.1	Date Stamping Documents	New section.
1.4.6.2	Photocopying Vital Records	New section.
2.1.3.1	Scheduling the Interview	Updated On-Demand Interviews information.
2.1.3.2.1	Required Interview Topics	Added 'Acting and Holding Information' to criteria for applicable change and simplified reporting requirements.
2.1.4.2	Verification Requirements for Expedited Services	Section rewritten.

2.1.4.4	Postponing the Interview for Expedited Issuance	Section deleted.
2.2.1	Certification Period (Renewals)	Section renamed and added information around ending certification periods early.
2.2.1.4	Completing a Renewal	Removed obsolete information.
2.2.1.5	Renewal Processing Time Frame	Updated verbiage and removed obsolete information.
2.3.1	Break in Service	Added clarifying language.
3.10.1.3	Eligibility on the Day before a Strike	Added household context and instructions on how to proceed when a strike is reported on an application.
3.10.1.4	Pre-Strike Income	Added information on how to treat a strike when part of a reported change.
3.16.1.4.1	Basic Work Rules Interview Requirements	Clarified required interview questions.
3.17.1.3	Determining Exemptions From the FoodShare Work Requirement	Updated to align with FRA Final Rule.
3.17.1.4	Verification of Work Hours and Exemptions From FoodShare Work Requirement	Updated to align with FRA Final Rule.
3.17.1.6	Three Countable Months of Time-Limited FoodShare Benefits (TLBs)	Added additional criteria for when an ABAWD will not accrue a TLB month. Effective date 07/01/2025.
3.17.1.8	Regaining Eligibility After Exhausting Benefits Three Months of Time-Limited Benefits	Updated to align with FRA of 2023.
3.20.1.2	Administration of a Drug Test	Added disclaimer regarding passing drug tests from the last 30 days.
3.20.1.4	Scheduling	Section rewritten.
3.20.1.5	Applications and Renewals	Updated example.
4.3.4.3	Disregarded Unearned Income	Added information about verification when a reported loan appears to be countable income.
4.6.1	Deductions and Expenses	Updated list of deductions.
6.1.1.1	Substantial Lottery or Gambling Winning	Updated verification information.
6.1.2	Six Month Reporting Requirement	Updated information regarding SMRF submission.
6.1.3	Timely Action on Reported Changes During the Certification Period	Updated verbiage.
6.1.3.1	Processing Reported Changes	Updated examples and removed obsolete information.
6.1.3.3	Changes That Cause an Increase in Benefits, Including	Removed obsolete information, added instruction for reported unclear information and updated examples.

	Person Adds and Loss of Income	
6.1.3.4	Sanction Request	Removed obsolete information.
6.1.3.6	Changes That Cause a Decrease in Benefits	Updated verbiage.
6.1.3.7	Changes Impact Matrix	Added reference to section 1.2.7.
6.1.3.8	Processing ABAWD Changes.	Added instructions that IM workers must act on reported exemptions as soon as possible. Effective 07/01/2025.
6.1.3.9	Oral Explanation of Applicable Work Benefits	Updated verbiage. Effective date 07/01/2025.
6.5	Provider Determinations	New section. Effective date 07/01/2025.
6.5.1	Provider Determinations	New section. Effective date 07/01/2025.
6.5.2	Required Notice of the Provider Determination	New section. Effective date 07/01/2025.
6.5.3	Required Action on the Provider Determination	New section. Effective date 07/01/2025.
7.3.1.4.3	Verification and Calculating the Claim	Added information regarding investigating an overpayment.

Contents

1.2.1 Verification Introduction.....	8
1.2.1.1 General Verification Rules.....	8
1.2.1.2 Request for Verification.....	9
1.2.1.3 Responsibility for Verification.....	10
1.2.2 Sources for Verification.....	12
1.2.2.1 Documentary Evidence.....	12
1.2.2.2 Collateral Contacts.....	13
1.2.2.2.1 Third-Party Cooperation.....	14
1.2.2.3 Home Visits.....	14
1.2.2.4 Discrepancies in Verification.....	14
1.2.2.5 Request for Contact.....	15
1.2.2.6 Case Documentation.....	15
1.2.4 Financial Verification.....	16
1.2.4.1 Gross Countable Income Verification.....	16
1.2.4.2 Earned Income Verification.....	17
1.2.4.3 Self-Employment Income Verification.....	18
1.2.4.4 Asset Verification.....	19
1.2.4.5 Expense Verification.....	19
1.2.4.6 Dependent Care Expense Verification.....	19
1.2.4.8 Medical Expense Verification.....	20
1.2.4.9 Child Support Payments Verification.....	22
1.2.5 Questionable Information.....	23
1.2.6 Suggested Verification Sources.....	25
1.2.6.1 Required Verification to Determine Eligibility.....	25
1.2.6.2 Verify Only If Questionable.....	29
1.2.7 Unclear Information.....	33
1.3.1 Introduction.....	34
1.3.2 Fair Hearings.....	35
1.3.3 Access by Someone Else.....	36
1.4.1 Disclosure.....	37
1.4.2 Disclosure with Consent.....	39
1.4.3 Special Circumstances.....	41
1.4.3.1 Legislative Committees.....	41

1.4.3.2 Crime Victim's Compensation Program	41
1.4.3.3 Subpoenas and Records Requests	41
1.4.4 Prohibited Disclosure	42
1.4.5 Data Exchanges	43
1.4.5.1 Data Exchanges Introduction	43
1.4.5.2 Use of Data	43
1.4.5.3 Query Access	43
1.4.5.4 Release of Data	43
1.4.6 Documents	44
1.4.6.1 Date Stamping Documents	44
1.4.6.2 Photocopying Vital Records	44
2.1.3 Interviews	45
2.1.3.1 Scheduling the Interview	45
2.1.3.2 Completing the Interview	48
2.1.3.2.1 Required Interview Topics	49
2.1.4 Expedited Service at Application	52
2.1.4.2 Verification Requirements for Expedited Services	52
2.1.4.3 Eligibility for Migrant Workers	53
2.2.1 Certification	56
2.2.1.3 Shortening a Certification Period	57
2.2.1.4 Completing a Renewal	57
2.2.1.5 Renewal Processing Time Frame	58
2.3.1 Break in Service	61
3.10.1 Strikers	63
3.10.1.3 Eligibility on the Day before a Strike	63
3.10.1.4 Pre-Strike Income	63
3.16.1 FoodShare Basic Work Rules	66
3.16.1.4 Registering for Work	66
3.16.1.4.1 Basic Work Rules Interview Requirements	66
3.17.1 FoodShare Work Requirements for ABAWDs	67
3.17.1.2 FoodShare Work Requirement	67
3.17.1.3 Determining Exemptions From the FoodShare Work Requirement	67
3.17.1.4 Verification of Work Hours and Exemptions From FoodShare Work Requirement	70
3.17.1.6 Three Countable Months of Time-Limited FoodShare Benefits (TLBs)	72

3.17.1.8 Regaining Eligibility After Exhausting Three Months of Time-Limited Benefits	73
3.20.1 Drug Related Felonies.....	75
3.20.1.2 Administration of Drug Test	75
3.20.1.4 Scheduling.....	75
3.20.1.5 Applications and Renewals.....	76
4.3.4 Unearned Income.....	78
4.3.4.3 Disregarded Unearned Income.....	78
4.6.1 Deductions and Expenses.....	88
6.1.1 Change Reporting for All Food Units (Simplified).....	89
6.1.1.1 Substantial Lottery or Gambling Winning.....	90
6.1.2 Six Month Reporting Requirement	93
6.1.3 Timely Action on Reported Changes During the Certification Period	97
6.1.3.1 Processing Reported Changes.....	97
6.1.3.3 Changes That Cause an Increase in Benefits, Including Person Adds and Loss of Income	98
6.1.3.4 Sanction Request	99
6.1.3.6 Changes That Cause a Decrease in Benefits.....	100
6.1.3.7 Change Impact Matrix.....	100
6.1.3.8 Processing ABAWD Changes.....	102
6.1.3.9 Oral Explanation of Applicable Work Requirements	102
6.5.1 Provider Determinations.....	104
6.5.2 Required Notice of the Provider Determination	104
6.5.3 Required Action on the Provider Determination	105
7.3.1 Calculating Overpayment Claim Amounts.....	106
7.3.1.4 Calculating the Overpayment Claim	106
7.3.1.4.3 Verification and Calculating the Claim.....	106

1.2.1 Verification Introduction

7 CFR 273.2(f)

Verification is the use of documentary evidence or a collateral contact with a third party to confirm the accuracy of statements or information. With limited exceptions, the ~~local~~ agency must allow FoodShare applicants and members at least 20 days to provide required verification when requested by the agency.

The verification receipt date is the day verification is ~~delivered to~~ received by the ~~appropriate agency~~ or the next business day if verification is ~~delivered~~ received after the agency's regularly scheduled business hours. Agencies must stamp the receipt date on each piece of verification provided.

1.2.1.1 General Verification Rules

7 CFR 271.2

The general verification rules are as follows:

- Follow 1.2.7 UNCLEAR INFORMATION when verifying unclear information obtained during the certification period.
- Only verify those items required to determine eligibility and benefits for the programs for which you are testing eligibility. Don't verify items that are not required to be verified.
- ~~1. Don't verify an item that is not required to be verified and is not documented in case comments as questionable.~~
- Avoid over-verification (such as requiring excessive pieces of evidence for any one item or requesting verification that is not needed to determine eligibility).
- Don't require additional verification once the accuracy of a written or verbal statement has been established.
- Don't exclusively require one particular type of verification when various types are adequate and available.
- Verification may be submitted by mail, fax, electronically or in person.
- Verification does not need to be submitted by the primary person.
- Verification must not be requested based on an applicant or member's race, religion, ethnic background, or national origin.
- Verification requests cannot target groups or specific populations for more intensive verification.
- Historical verification requested to determine whether benefits were previously overpaid should not pend or affect the ongoing eligibility determination.
- Don't verify information that is already verified unless you believe the information is fraudulent or differs considerably from more recent information.

- If ~~you suspect~~ fraud ~~exists~~ is suspected, determine if ~~you should make~~ a referral for fraud or for front-end verification (see Process Help, [Section 31.3.4 FEV/Fraud Referral vs. Claim Referral](#)).
- ~~2. Don't exclusively require one particular type of verification when various types are adequate and available.~~
- ~~3. Verification need not be presented in person. Verification may be submitted by mail, fax, electronically or in person.~~
- ~~4. Verification need not be submitted by the primary person.~~
- ~~5. IM worker must not ask for verification based on race, religion, ethnic background, or national origin. Verification requests cannot target groups such as migrant farm workers or American Indians for more intensive verification.~~

~~When~~ If requested verification is ~~requested and~~ not returned by the due date, each item that the applicant or member failed to verify must be updated to indicate it was not verified. This will ensure the notice of decision lists each ~~item that was not~~ non-verified. ~~This item.~~ Listing each verification item is required ~~for the notice~~ to meet the federal definition of an adequate notice and to reestablish eligibility or gain eligibility without requiring a new application.

1.2.1.2 Request for Verification

7 CFR 273.2(c)(5); 7 CFR 273.2(h)(2)(i)(A)
OM 14-48

Requests for verification must be made in writing. Verbal requests are not acceptable and ~~will not stand up~~ cannot be used in a fair hearing. ~~IM workers are required to give the applicant or member a~~ The verification notice ~~that identifies~~ must identify the required verification, the date the verification is due to the agency, and the consequences of not verifying timely.

~~Do not deny the FoodShare application when the required verification is not provided until the latest of the following dates:~~

If verification is not received, the FoodShare application must not be denied due to lack of verification until whichever date is later:

- The 20th day after requesting the verification, or
- 30 days from the filing date

Example 1	Ed submits an application with a filing date of January 2. However, the interview was not completed until January 26 and verification of income was requested the same day. Ed has until February 15 to provide verification. Do not deny the application until February 15.
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If the 20th or 30th day falls on a weekend or postal holiday:

- For negative actions or denials, the action should be taken the next business day.

- For positive actions or approvals, the approval must be processed no later than the due date. Waiting until the next business day or later to process verification for an eligible food unit is untimely and, therefore, not allowable.

Note

~~After the denial of an~~ An application denied for failing to provide verification or complete the interview within 30 days, ~~if~~ must provide verifications and have completed the ~~food unit provides all requested verification to the local agency during the period on or after the 31st day but~~ interview no later than the 60th day from the filing date, ~~allow~~ for FoodShare to open without requiring a new application or interview (see Section 2.1.2.1 Application Processing 30-Day Time Frame).

After a renewal termination for failing to provide verification, ~~the food unit may provide~~ verification can be provided in the month following closure without needing to submit a new application (see SECTION 2.2.1.4 RENEWAL PROCESSING TIME FRAME).

Allow FoodShare to reopen at Six Month Report Form (SMRF) or renewal when closed for lack of verification (or other reasons) if the reason for case closure is fully resolved during the calendar month following case closure. The SMRF must be returned no later than close of business on the last business day of the ~~seventh~~ month ~~of~~ after the ~~certification period~~ SMRF was due and the renewal interview completed no later than the last day of the renewal month.

Allow FoodShare to reopen when closed for lack of verification after a required change is reported ~~or discovered,~~ and if the requested verification is provided in the calendar month following case closure.

In the above situations, FoodShare benefits are prorated ~~for the FoodShare assistance group~~ from the day ~~the food unit completes~~ all the required actions ~~needed~~ were completed.

For unclear information, follow SECTION 1.2.7 UNCLEAR INFORMATION to determine ~~eligibility~~ the correct verification action.

1.2.1.3 Responsibility for Verification

7 CFR 273.2(f)(5)

The applicant or member has primary responsibility for providing required verification, ~~unless specified, and for resolving~~ or information needed to resolve any discrepancies or questionable information, ~~unless specified.~~ The ~~local agency~~ worker must assist the applicant or member in obtaining this verification, provided that the applicant or member hasn't refused to cooperate ~~with the application process.~~

~~IM workers have responsibility for verifying information.~~

Some information obtained through CWW data exchanges or outside sources must be verified, such as:

- Out-of-state SNAP participation
- Fleeing felon or probation and parole violator status

- Out-of-state intentional program violations (IPVs)
- Social Security Income and Medicare
- Immigration status
- WHEAP (State database verified upon receipt)
- Out-of-state time-limited benefit months (TLBs)

~~If all~~ Use best available information if attempts to verify the information have been unsuccessful ~~because~~ (for example, if the person or organization providing the information ~~has failed to cooperate with the applicant or member and agency (for example, by~~ is charging a fee or refusing to complete a verification form, or is unable to produce requested documentation), and all other ~~sources of~~ verification ~~are~~ is unavailable, ~~determine an amount to be used for certification purposes based on the best available information.~~ Clearly document ~~attempts to obtain verification and the reasoning for the~~ estimate best available information that is used.

Best available information may include an oral or written statement. In the instance of out-of-state TLBs, best available information may include a lack of response by the other state within the standard processing timeframe.

1.2.2 Sources for Verification

7 CFR 273.2(f)(4)

~~Local agencies must use~~ Use documentary evidence as the primary source of verification ~~for all information except, with some exceptions, including~~ Wisconsin residence and household composition (see Section 1.2.3.5 Wisconsin Residency Verification and Section 1.2.3.7 Household Composition Verification).

Although documentary evidence must be the primary source of verification, acceptable verification must not be limited to any single type of document and may be obtained from the applicant, member, or other source. Whenever documentary evidence cannot be obtained or is insufficient to make a firm determination of eligibility or benefit level, the IM worker may require collateral contacts or ~~home visits.~~ a home visit. Some documentary evidence may verify multiple things.

For example, someone reports they are a resident of Wisconsin and employed. Paystubs provided show the person's address in Wisconsin. The paystubs verify both employment and residency.

See SECTION 1.2.6 SUGGESTED VERIFICATION SOURCES for the Suggested Verification Sources Chart for more details.

1.2.2.1 Documentary Evidence

7 CFR 273.2(f)(4)(i)

Documentary evidence consists of written confirmation of a household's circumstances. ~~Examples of documentary evidence include wage stubs, rent receipts, and utility bills.~~

~~Applicants may provide documentary evidence to verify information in person, through the mail, by fax or another electronic device, or through an authorized representative. Applicants must not be required to present verification in person at the local agency. The local agency must accept any reasonable documentary evidence provided and must be primarily concerned with how adequately the verification proves the statements in the application~~ Examples of documentary evidence include paystubs, rent receipts, and utility bills.

Documentary evidence is to be used to verify information. Submission of documentation for verification can happen in person, by mail, by fax or another electronic device. Verification is not required to be presented in person. The local agency must accept any reasonable documentary evidence, provided it adequately verifies the information that was in question.

1.2.2.2 Collateral Contacts

7 CFR 273.2(f)(4)(ii)

Collateral contacts ~~consist of~~are oral confirmations of circumstances by persons ~~other than food unit members. A collateral contact may be~~who are not part of the FoodShare case. Collateral contacts are made either in person or over the telephone. Authorized representatives completing an application or renewal cannot serve as collateral contacts.

Note ~~Authorized representatives completing an application or renewal cannot serve as collateral contacts.~~

~~Generally, the local agency must rely on the~~The applicant or member ~~to~~should provide the name of any collateral contact. The applicant or member may request assistance in designating a collateral contact. ~~The local agency~~The worker is responsible for obtaining verification from designated collateral contacts.

The worker is not required to use a provided collateral contact when the collateral contact ~~designated by the applicant or member if the collateral contact cannot be expected~~is not able to provide accurate or reliable third-party verification.

When the designated collateral contact ~~designated by the applicant or member~~ is unacceptable, the ~~local agency~~worker must:

- designate ~~another~~an alternate collateral contact, or
- ask the applicant or member to designate another collateral contact, or
- provide an alternative form of verification, or
- substitute a home visit. ~~The local agency is responsible for obtaining verification from designated collateral contacts.~~

When ~~talking~~speaking with collateral contacts, ~~local agency staff should~~ disclose only the information that is absolutely necessary to get the ~~sought-after information. IM workers should~~verification. Workers must avoid:

- Disclosing that an individual has applied for or is receiving FoodShare.
- Disclosing any information supplied by the applicant or member.
- Suggesting that the applicant or member is suspected of any wrongdoing.

Clearly document the collateral contact information. Include the following details:

- Name of collateral contact
- Title of Individual
- Organization the individual is affiliated with (if applicable)
- Address
- Phone number

- Significance to household
- Date(s) of contact(s) and when pertinent information was obtained
- The information obtained and used for verification

1.2.2.2.1 Third-Party Cooperation

Wisconsin Stats. §49.~~22(2m~~78(11)) authorizes DHS, DCF, county, and tribal agencies to request third-party cooperation from any person in Wisconsin ~~in~~for the purpose of obtaining verification of ~~data~~information. Cooperation from the third party is required within seven days of the request. No compensation to the third party is required, and the lack of compensation is not a valid reason for the third party to refuse to cooperate.

1.2.2.3 Home Visits

7 CFR 273.2(f)(4)(iii)

Home visits may be used as verification only when documentary evidence cannot be obtained or is insufficient ~~to make a firm determination of eligibility or benefit level.~~ Home visits must be scheduled in advance with the applicant or member. Home visits are to be used on a case-by-case basis where documentation is insufficient. An error-prone profile does not constitute a lack of verification warranting a home visit.

1.2.2.4 Discrepancies in Verification

7 CFR 273.2(f)(4)(iv)

When ~~unverified~~unclear information ~~is received by the local agency from an external source~~becomes known during application, SMRF or renewal, the applicant ~~or member~~ must be given a reasonable opportunity to resolve the discrepancy prior to ~~at~~the determination of eligibility ~~or~~and certification of benefits.

When unclear information is received during a household's certification period, follow the instructions for unclear information SECTION 1.2.7 UNCLEAR INFORMATION.

If the ~~unverified~~unclear information is received through an Income Eligibility Verification System (IEVS) data exchange regarding unreported sources of income or assets, the local agency may contact the source directly for verification.

If an employer uses a third-party payroll source as its legal agent to provide payroll services (or respond to inquiries about employee records) this information is treated as verified from a primary source and is verified upon receipt.

When verification is received or if the applicant or member fails to provide requested verification, the ~~local agency~~worker must issue a notice notifying the applicant or member of the action that has been taken and provide the ~~applicant or member with an~~ opportunity to request a fair hearing prior to an adverse action.

~~Document clearly in case comments the reason for verification requests due to questionable information or discrepancies.~~

Note For system-generated discrepancies, the worker must take action to resolve the discrepancy ~~(see Process Help,)~~.

1.2.2.5 Request for Contact

7 CFR 273.12(c)(3)

~~The agency may receive unclear information about changes in an applicant's or food unit member's circumstances from which the agency cannot readily determine the effect of the change on the food unit's FoodShare case. If there is not enough information reported to request specific verification, issue a request for contact (Loss of Contact) notice to the applicant or member.~~

~~When FoodShare Quality Control is attempting to complete the~~When FoodShare Quality Control is completing a federally required case review and has been unable to contact the household, the worker may be asked to send a request for contact. ~~This request is to be sent as an attempt to get the member to comply with the Quality Control review.~~

~~The agency may also receive information from CWW that the case meets an automated Error Prone Profile (EPP) that the IM worker needs to resolve. In this case, a request for contact notice may also be appropriate~~This request is sent for Quality Control review compliance.

When the automated Error Prone Profile (EPP) identifies a potential error, a request for contact notice may also be appropriate to resolve the issue.

Note IM workers ~~should~~must add a case comment stating the reason for ~~loss of the~~ contact.

1.2.2.6 Case Documentation

7 CFR 273.2(f)(6)

Case files must include documentation to support the sources of verification for eligibility, ineligibility, and benefit level determinations.~~Documentation, overpayment claim establishment, or a finding of intentional program violation.~~ Verification documentation must be ~~in sufficient detail to permit a reviewer~~detailed enough to determine the reasonableness and accuracy of the ~~determination~~action.

Document clearly in case comments the reason for verification requests due to questionable and unclear information or discrepancies.

1.2.4 Financial Verification

~~1.2.4.1 Gross Countable Income Verification~~

~~7 CFR 273.2(f)(1)(i)~~

~~Gross countable income, regardless of the amount, must be verified for all food unit members prior to certification. Verify income for all food unit members through documentary evidence or collateral contact.~~

~~-~~
~~Documentary evidence is written confirmation of a food unit member's circumstances; examples include wage statements or check stubs, rent receipts, utility bills, and employment verification forms.~~

Although documentary evidence should be the primary source of verification, acceptable verification cannot be limited to only this type of source and may be obtained through the member or other sources. Other sources may include collateral contacts (see SECTION 1.2.2.2 COLLATERAL CONTACTS) which are oral confirmations of a member's circumstances by a person outside of the ~~food unit~~.

~~-~~
FoodShare case.

If all attempts to verify ~~the income~~ have been unsuccessful because the person or organization providing the income verification has failed to cooperate with the applicant or member and agency (for example, by charging a fee or refusing to complete a verification form), and all other sources of verification are unavailable, determine an amount to be used for certification purposes based on the best available information. ~~Clearly document the attempts to obtain verification and the reasoning for the estimate that is used.~~

Clearly document the attempts to obtain verification and the reasoning for the estimate that is used. Best available information may include but is not limited to:

1. A mix of paycheck stubs, from the same employer, from different time periods.
2. W2 or tax records can be used with income annualized.
3. An oral or written statement from the applicant or member.

1.2.4.1 Gross Countable Income Verification

7 CFR 273.2(f)(1)(i)

Verification of gross monthly countable income, regardless of the amount, is required through documentary evidence or collateral contact. If unable to obtain the requested verification, use best available information (see SECTION 1.2.2 SOURCES FOR VERIFICATION).

1.2.4.2 Earned Income Verification

Verification is required for all earned income. Pay stubs showing income received during the last 30 days should be used as an indicator of the income that is and will be available ~~to the food unit~~ during the certification period, unless that income does not accurately reflect changes that have occurred or are anticipated to occur.

~~IM workers can may use statements~~

Statements from employers may be used to verify prospective income.

~~IM workers may also use the~~

Employment Verification of Earnings (EVF-E) form ([F-10146](#)) can be used to verify prospective income. However, this form is not mandatory for FoodShare. An EVF-E is considered a valid source of earned income verification only if the form is returned as complete and contains the employer's signature.

If income widely fluctuates over time and ~~a 30-day period alone~~ cannot provide an accurate indication of anticipated prospective income, ~~the agency and the applicant or member may use~~ a longer period of past time ~~may be used~~. To average this type of income, use the ~~anticipated~~ income and include the ~~anticipated~~ fluctuations. Make every attempt to accurately verify prospective income and clearly document the reasoning for the prospective income estimate.

Example 1	Joan's IM worker receives <u>provides</u> an employment verification form completed by the employer that includes all necessary information to make a reasonable estimate of prospective income and the information is not questionable. The IM worker <u>Joan</u> must not require Joan <u>be required</u> to submit check stubs or any other additional verification.
Example 2	Joan submits all check stubs received in the most recent 30 days. The check stubs include enough information to make a reasonable estimate of prospective income, and the information is not questionable. The IM worker must not require Joan to submit an employment verification form completed by the employer or any other additional verification.

~~If all attempts to verify the income have been unsuccessful because the person or organization providing the income has failed to cooperate with the applicant or member and agency (for example, by charging a fee or refusing to complete a verification form), and all other sources of verification are unavailable, workers should use best available information to determine an estimated income amount for certification purposes. Clearly document the attempts to obtain verification and the reasoning for the estimate that is used. Best available information may include but is not limited to:~~

- ~~1. A mix of paycheck stubs, from the same employer, from different time periods.~~
- ~~2. W2 or tax records can be used with income annualized.~~
- ~~3. An oral or written statement from the applicant or member.~~

Workers should instruct the applicant or member to keep all wage statements and check stubs for future verification purposes.

Operations Memo 08-09

Verifying Employment or Income Changes

~~If~~When a member reports new employment ~~gained~~ during their certification period, ~~verify their income to determine eligibility and benefit amount (see~~follow the unclear information policy. (See SECTION 1.2.4.1 GROSS COUNTABLE INCOME VERIFICATION, SECTION 1.2.4.2 EARNED INCOME VERIFICATION, and SECTION 1.2.4.3 SELF-EMPLOYMENT INCOME VERIFICATION).-

If a member reports that they ended employment at application, renewal, or during their certification period, only require verification when necessary ~~to determine eligibility and benefits. If employment or income ended in a month before the month of eligibility determination, do not require verification unless the information provided is questionable (that is, other information indicates the applicant is currently employed).~~ Follow unclear information policy for any unclear and questionable information.

Verification is not needed if employment or income ended in a month before the month of the eligibility determination.

Example 3	Natalie applies for FoodShare in February and reports that they are not currently working. Their previous case information shows that they were working at Kathy's Yarn Shop in July. During the FoodShare interview, Natalie reports that their last employment ended in October and their last check was in November. Unless there is a reason to deem their statement questionable, do not require verification that employment ended.
Example 4	Josh applied for FoodShare in December and reports that he is currently working. In March, Josh informs his IM worker that <u>reports</u> he ended his employment, and his last check will be received in March. The IM worker finds no reason to question the member's statement. This is not questionable. Verification is not required, <u>and the information is clear.</u> The employment is end dated and eligibility is redetermined for the next possible benefit month.
Example 5	Camden submits her application on February 12. She reports her employment ended on January 30, but she will not receive her last paycheck until February 15. Her last paycheck is needed to determine eligibility and benefits for the application month of February. Verification is required for employment ending and the amount of income received in February.

1.2.4.3 Self-Employment Income Verification

SelfVerification is required for self-employment income. This type of income is earned directly from one's own business, ~~not as an employee with specified~~through salary or wages. Self-employment income is verified with Use Self-Employment Income Reporting Forms (SEIRFs) (F-00107 and F-00219, for farm businesses), IRS tax forms, or ~~both~~ bookkeeping records to verify self-employment income.

1.2.4.4 Asset Verification

7 CFR 273.2(f)(2) and 7 CFR 273.2(f)(3)

~~There is no asset test for~~ FoodShare applicants and members tested under broad-based categorical eligibility or categorical eligibility rules. do not have an asset test. Their assets are not counted ~~in the eligibility determination~~ since they are authorized to receive Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)-funded services. FoodShare applicants and members tested under these rules must not be asked to provide information about or to verify their assets.

EXCEPTION: A substantial lottery or gambling winning (see SECTION 6.1.1.1 SUBSTANTIAL LOTTERY OR GAMBLING WINNING) is considered an asset. Any member who reports a questionable substantial lottery or gambling winning must provide verification.

Applicants must report the amount of available liquid assets at the point of initial application to determine eligibility for priority service and expedited issuance. The reported assets are not required to be verified (SEE SECTION 2.1.4 EXPEDITED SERVICE AT APPLICATION).

Under regular SNAP rules FoodShare applicants and members are tested for assets. Elderly, Blind, or Disabled (EBD) food units with gross monthly income that exceeds 200% of the Federal Poverty Limit (FPL) are subject to the asset limit. Non-EBD food units may be tested under regular SNAP rules if certain criteria are met (see section 4.2.2 Regular SNAP Rules). These food units are subject to the non-EBD asset limit. Food units tested under regular SNAP rules must verify their assets (see section 4.4.1 Assets).

1.2.4.5 Expense Verification

7 CFR 273.2(f)(3)

~~Workers must verify~~ Medical costs and legally obligated child support expenses ~~that are required to be verified,~~ expenses that are deemed questionable ~~at application, or when a change in expenses is~~ and renewal. Follow unclear information policy for unclear expense information ~~reported. At application, reported change, or renewal, workers must ensure that there is up-to-date documentation in~~ during the case record to support current CWW entries ~~certification period.~~

1.2.4.6 Dependent Care Expense Verification

7 CFR 273.9(d)(4)

Dependent care expenses required for ~~food unit~~ members to keep or obtain employment, receive training or education preparatory for employment, or comply with employment and training requirements should be deducted from income. Convert

expenses to monthly amounts.

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Dependent care expenses do not require verification ~~for use in the FoodShare benefit calculation~~, unless the applicant or member's statement is deemed questionable.

Examples of applicant or member statements that may be considered questionable include:

- Claimed dependent care expenses that exceed monthly income.
- A reported amount that seems unreasonably high compared to market rates.
- An applicant or member, receiving a child care subsidy, reports the full amount rather than their share of the cost.

Example 6	Vinny is a 10-year-old child who attends Prestigious Prep Childcare four days a week during the summer while his parents are working. His parents indicate that this care costs \$1,000 per week. The cost of care seems unreasonably high compared to the cost of other care in the area. The IM worker should request verification of this dependent care expense.
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Reminder: Only deduct dependent care expenses that the ~~food unit~~ household is responsible to pay ~~for~~. When a member receives benefits through Wisconsin Shares, the child care subsidy program, the subsidy amount paid by the State ~~is~~ not an allowable dependent care expense.

1.2.4.8 Medical Expense Verification

7 CFR 273.2(f)(1)(iv)

Verification at Application

Medical expenses totaling over \$35 out-of-pocket that are claimed by an EBD person must be verified at application for the expense to be used in the FoodShare benefit calculation.

7 CFR 273.2(f)(8)(ii) and 273.12(c)

Verification during the Certification Period

~~Verify changes in~~ Verification is needed for medical expenses reported by the ~~food unit~~ household during the certification period only if ~~they are from a new source~~, the total amount of previously verified medical expenses has changed by more than \$25, ~~or~~.

If the information reported medical expense change is questionable, or unverified, follow policies for unclear information.

~~Do not act on changes reported by a source other than the food unit, which require contacting the food unit for verification. Act on changes that do not require any additional verification or contact with the food unit.~~

<p>Example 7</p>	<p>Edith, a disabled FoodShare member, provided proof of her \$200 monthly prescription costs from her pharmacy at application. In the third month of her 36-month FoodShare certification period, she reports that she was hospitalized last month and now has a \$1,300 obligation for a hospital bill. Because it is the best benefit to Edith, the and her IM worker agree that this bill will be averaged over 9the remaining months, the remainder of the first 12 months of her in Edith's FoodShare certification. ToEdith's IM worker explains that to receive the deduction for this new medical expense, verification is required. If verification is not provided, only the \$200 deduction is allowed.</p>
<p>Example 8</p>	<p>Mario, an elderlyViolet, a disabled FoodShare member, reportedis eligible for home and provided proof of his \$90 monthly prescription costs at his most recent FoodShare renewal in December. In March, hecommunity-based waivers as a Group B participant. At application, Violet reports that his prescription costs have increased to \$114 per month. The additional amount is budgeted and does not require verification of the increasedprovides proof of a recurring monthly medical expense becausefor FoodShare.</p> <p>In the fifth month of her certification period, Violet's IM worker receives notice from the totalAging and Disability Resource Center (ADRC) of a medicalexpenses did notremedial cost for her Group B Waiver cost share calculation. For FoodShare purposes, this information is not considered verified upon receipt and is unclear.</p> <p>If the care manager had provided verification of the medical/remedial expense, the information could be used as a FoodShare expense at the time the change by more than \$25was reported. When clear and verified, the new expense amount is allowed as a medical expense and is used in the benefit calculation.</p>
<p>Example 9</p>	<p>Violet, a disabled FoodShare member, is eligible for home and community-based waivers as a Group B participant. At application, Violet reports and provides proof of a recurring monthly medical expense for FoodShare. In the fifth month of her certification period, the Aging and Disability Resource Center (ADRC) submits a medical/remedial cost for her Group B Waiver cost share calculation to the IM agency.</p> <p>For FoodShare purposes, this change is not considered verified upon receipt and verification is requested before action is taken.</p> <p>If the care manager had provided verification of the medical/remedial expense, the verification could be used as a FoodShare expense at the time the change was reported. The new FoodShare expense amount is allowed as a medical expense and is used in the benefit calculation.</p> <p>If Violet reported the medical/remedial expense, the expense would be added to the case and a request verification sent.</p>

7 CFR 273.2(f)(8)(i)(A)

Verification at Renewal

Previously unreported medical expenses, changes in total recurring medical expenses by more than \$25, and questionable information must be verified at renewal.

Example 10	<p>Sally reports and provides proof of a \$150 recurring monthly prescription medical expense at her FoodShare application. At her renewal, she states that this monthly expense continues but that it has increased by \$10. Her case is updated with the expense and does not require verification.</p> <p>If Sally had reported at renewal that she also had a new recurring medical expense of \$90 for monthly chiropractic visits, verification of this new expense would be required.</p>
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Examples of applicant or member statements that may be considered questionable include:

- An applicant or member who has private health insurance or is covered by Medicaid or BadgerCare Plus and is claiming unusually high out-of-pocket expenses for a time period when they had coverage.
- Claimed monthly medical expenses that exceed monthly income.

If questionable, verification must be requested, which may include date of service, billing date, amount owed, and date amount is due.

Medical expenses are budgeted prospectively, so do not require eligible EBD food unit members to verify recurring medical expenses monthly. Rely on estimates of recurring medical expenses during the certification period. Include changes that can be anticipated based on available information. Consider the food unit member's medical condition, public or private medical insurance coverage, and the current verified medical expenses incurred by the food unit member.

When converting medical expenses to monthly amounts, use the same calculation methods used for budgeting prospective income.

1.2.4.9 Child Support Payments Verification

7 CFR 273.2(f)(1)(xii)

The Verification is required for legal obligation and actual payments made by a ~~food unit~~ member claiming to pay child support to a non-~~food unit members must~~household member. Verification can be ~~verified~~obtained from court documents and State Child Support Enforcement agencies.

1.2.5 Questionable ~~Items~~ Information

7 CFR 273.2(f)(2) and
USDA SNAP Policy Guidance, November 13, 2008

~~Income Maintenance (IM) agencies may request verification of other factors if information provided at application, renewal, or reported change~~ Information is deemed questionable, unclear when:

1. There are inconsistencies in oral or written statements.
2. There are inconsistencies between the claims and collateral contacts, documents, or incomplete, and prior records.
3. The member or their representative is unsure of the accuracy of their own statements.

At application, SMRF, and renewal, workers must request verification of questionable information if it would have an effect impact on FoodShare eligibility or benefit level.

~~Some examples of~~

At application, SMRF and renewal, some circumstances that may and information provided may be incomplete, and require further additional verification are, such as:

- Household composition
- ~~• Claim of separate food unit~~
- ~~• School enrollment~~
- Claims of eating and purchasing more than 50% of their weekly meals separately
- Household expenses ~~that exceed~~ exceeding income
- ~~• Substantial Lottery or Gambling Winning~~
- Pay stub name ~~that differs~~ differing from employed applicant or member's name
- Proof the medical expense is ~~for an allowable service or purchase~~
- Resolving any identified EPPs (see [Process Help, Section 70.1 Error Prone profile \(EPP\)](#) ~~Process Help,~~).

See SECTION 3.17.1.4 ~~If an IM agency receives conflicting information, verification must be requested to clarify the circumstances. For example, if food unit expenses exceed income, obtain a written statement from the applicant or member on how they are paying expenses, or verify with the landlord how rent is being paid.~~

~~There may be instances where the applicant or member has reported earnings as required by program rules and produced a pay stub to verify those earnings. for policy~~ responding to reported exemptions deemed questionable.

Note There may be instances where the applicant or member has reported earnings as required by program rules and produced a pay stub to verify those earnings that has a different name.

Although the name on the pay stub differs from the applicant or member's name, the purpose of the documentation is not to verify identity. The applicant or member can attest to the accuracy of those earnings and provide a reasonable explanation for the discrepancy with the name contained on the pay stub. IM workers should document this explanation in case comments. The ~~local~~ agency could reasonably consider such documentary evidence to verify the reported income ~~(see. (See~~ SECTION 1.2.1.3 RESPONSIBILITY FOR VERIFICATION).

During the certification period, follow policy for responding to unclear information. See SECTION 3.17.1.4 for policy for responding to reported exemptions deemed questionable.

1.2.6 Suggested Verification Sources

Below is a list of suggested verification sources; however, this list does not include every possible verification option. Accept any documents that reasonably meet the verification requirement. Do not require a specific source of verification.

Follow existing policy when seeking to verify unclear information during the certification period.

1.2.6.1 Required Verification to Determine Eligibility

7 CRF 273.2(f)

Verification Item	Suggested Verification Sources
Immigration Status	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SAVE • INS or USCIS Alien Registration Card (Permanent Residence Card, Green Card, Form I-551) • Naturalization certificate • SSA query to verify work quarters • Military services papers • Military Affidavit (F-02431) • Other Immigration letters and certification of status documents (trafficking victims, battered immigrant)
Wisconsin Residency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Current rent receipt that must show address • Current mortgage receipt • Current lease agreement • Landlord inquiry • Current utility bill with address and responsible person's name • Check stub with current address • Driver's license • Home visit • Subsidized housing authority approval • Post office statement or collateral contact • Library card • Voter registration • Piece of mail received at claimed residence • Real estate tax statement or receipt • Weatherization program approval or denial • Renter or homeowner's insurance documents • School registration record

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Letter from employer offering job • Telephone book • Motor vehicle registration • List of residents from a treatment center official, group home, etc. • Written statement • Legal or government issued document with name and address • Bank Statement with name and address • Mobile phone bill with name and address • DMV Data Exchange • Data Exchange for individuals receiving State SSI benefits • Verified through another program • Collateral contact
<p>Gross Monthly Income</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Earned Income: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dated check stubs from the previous 30 days with the employee's name or ID number • Earnings report or statement from employer • IEVS report or computer match from another state - to be used only if no other form of verification exists. IEVS matches are not verification of the income an employee has earned. IEVS is an indicator that income was earned from that employer sometime during the three months of the work quarter identified. For change reporting requirements, see <u>SECTION 6.1.1 CHANGE REPORTING FOR ALL FOOD UNITS (SIMPLIFIED REPORTING)</u>. • Unearned Income: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Department of Workforce Development unemployment query • Pension statement • SSA's WTPY report • Current award letter • Current SSA or SSI check • Collateral contact with the employer, SSA, insurance company • IEVS report or computer match from another state - to be used only if no other form of verification exists. IEVS matches are not verification of the unearned income. IEVS is an indicator that unearned income

	<p>was received sometime during the three months of the quarter identified.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For self-employment or farm income and expenses: • Income tax return from the previous tax year • Self-Employment Income Report Form(s) (SEIRF) • Bookkeeping records
<p>Primary Person's ID*</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Birth record query • Birth certificate • IEVS match • SSA (SOLQ/SOLQ-I matches) • Baptismal certificate • Military service papers • Immigration or naturalization papers • Consular ID - Consular identification (CID) cards are issued by some governments to their citizens who are living in foreign countries. A consular ID is an allowable identity verification type valid for FoodShare and should be coded as PH – Photo ID • Hospital birth record • Adoption record • Passport or US citizen ID card • Family bible • Paycheck • Wage stubs • Driver's license or Government ID • Completed SS-5 • Confirmation or church membership papers • Voter registration card • Family records (birthday books, genealogy, newspaper birth announcement, marriage license, support or divorce papers) • Employee ID card • Life insurance policy • School records (ID, report cards, diploma) • State/federal or Indian census records • Medical records (vaccination certificate, doctor's or clinic's records, bills) • Other social service program ID (when another program of assistance has already verified ID, ID for FoodShare requirements is complete) • Labor union or fraternal organization records

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Court order of name change, marriage certificate, or divorce certificate • If verified for another program of assistance, no additional verification required
Disability/Blindness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Statement or collateral contact from VA disability benefits • Statement, check, or collateral contact from Social Security Administration • Statement or collateral contact that proves a person receives a Railroad Retirement disability annuity and also qualifies for Medicaid • Statement or collateral contact • Statement that a person receives Interim Assistance benefits pending the receipt of SSI and SSDI • Statement or collateral contact that proves that an individual receives general assistance and meets the SSA guidelines for a disability • Data exchange with SSA/SSI
ABAWD Hours Worked	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employer form/paystub/tax document/EVF-E (F-10146) • Written statement from the employer, work program, or volunteer site • Employer, work program, or volunteer site collateral contact • Signed statement outlining in-kind work agreement
ABAWD Countable Months in Another State	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Any form of communication from the agency administering SNAP in the other state (for example, phone call, email, written form)
Huber Status	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agency Form • Court Order • City or County Records • Lawyer Statement or Record • Other Acceptable Written or Verbal Statement from jail staff
<u>Drug Test Results</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Drug test results report</u> • <u>Parole officer statement</u> • <u>Licensed doctor or qualified health professional statement</u>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Any document that shows a drug test result with the test date</u>
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*Information may only be verified once; additional request for verification is prohibited.

Asset Verification for Regular SNAP Rules

Verification Item	Suggested Verification Sources
Checking or Saving Account	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bank statements • Letter from the bank on official letterhead showing account balance
Stocks or Bonds	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brokerage or financial statements showing the value of holdings • Stock or bond certificate
Savings Certificate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Statement from the financial institution that hold the savings certificate • Copy of a physical certificate
Lump Sum Payments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bank statement with the deposit amount • Copy of document showing the amount and type of deposit

1.2.6.2 Verify Only If Questionable

Verification Item	Suggested Verification Sources
<u>Dependent Care*</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Written statement from provider • Cancelled check • Collateral contact with provider • Paid receipt or bill • Collateral contact with child care worker (Wisconsin Shares) • Receipts or bills for costs associated with care such as additional fees, field trips, camps, supplies, transportation
<u>Shelter / Utility Expense*</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mortgage payment records • Rent receipt • Statement from landlord • Lease • HUD subsidized housing approval • Property tax statement • Real estate agreement

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Canceled check for rent or utility payment • Statement from person(s) with whom the food unit shares shelter costs • Utility bill • Utility budget amounts • Statement from utility company • Landlord inquiry • Deferred payment agreement • Firewood receipt • Telephone bill • Documented collateral contact with landlord or utility company • Statement or receipt from landlord for utilities paid by landlord • Homeowner's insurance policy or billing statement • Statements from collateral contact • WHEAP/LIHEAP or other energy assistance
<p>SSN**</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social Security Card • Form 1610 (I-D) • Form SS-5 – Application for a Social Security Card • Form 2583 • Tax documentation (W-2, tax return form, refund check) • SSA documents such as award/denial letter or SSA/SSI benefit check • SOLQ-I search
<p>ABAWD/FoodShare Work Requirement Exemptions</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agency form, such as the Medical Exemption from Work Requirement for ABAWDs form (E-01598) • Statement from health care provider, social worker, homeless shelter, or AODA service provider • Data exchanges • Department of Veteran Affairs service department correspondence or contact including documents relating to release, discharge, or transfer; identification card indicating service veteran status • Information made known to the agency including in-person agency verification of a visibly<u>an</u> obvious ABAWD status or exemption,

	<p>such as pregnancy or inability to work due to a temporary or permanent health condition</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • IM worker determination that a person is unfit for employment (without requiring a statement or additional verification) • Information known to the agency • Collateral contact • Other acceptable written statement
Age	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Birth certificate • IEVS match • Baptismal certificate • Military service papers • Immigration or naturalization papers • Hospital birth record • Adoption record • Passport or U.S. citizen ID card • Driver's license • Family records (birthday books, genealogy, newspaper birth announcement, marriage license, support or divorce papers) • Life insurance policy • School records (ID, report cards, diploma) • State/federal or Indian census records • Wisconsin birth query
Relationship	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Birth record query • Birth certificate • Baptismal certificate • Military service papers • Immigration or naturalization papers • Hospital birth record • Adoption record • Family Bible • Confirmation or church membership papers • Family records (birthday books, genealogy, newspaper birth announcement, marriage license, support, or divorce papers) • Life insurance policy
Household Composition	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Written or oral statement from a third party • FoodShare Buy and Make Food Separately (E-02491) signed by applicant indicating food is

	purchased and prepared separately from other household members
School Enrollment Status	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Report card • Collateral contact with school authorities • Current school schedule • Enrollment letters • Financial aid papers • Literature from the school (brochure or online program information) • Collateral contact with Job Center of Wisconsin, FSET, or an employment agency
Substantial Lottery or Gambling Winning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Member statement • Wisconsin Lottery Winner Claim Form • W-2G Certain Gambling Winnings Form • Letter from lottery commission or gaming entity • Another State's Lottery Claim Form • Any documentation that identifies the source of the payment, winner(s) name, address, date of the winning, and gross amount before taxes

* Lack of verification will not affect eligibility, but the deduction will not be allowed.

**Information may only be verified once; additional request for verification is prohibited.

Household Misfortune Replacement Benefits

Lost or destroyed food	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Power outage map • Statement from utility company • Statement from insurance company • Report from fire department • Disconnection notice • Receipt from purchase of replacement freezer or refrigerator • Landlord statement • Non-household member collateral statement • Statement from community organization
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1.2.7 Unclear Information

Unclear information may be partially verified (verified but requires additional information to act on the change appropriately), unverified, or questionable.

Additional verification is requested when unclear information is something the household is required to report and is current, which is defined as occurring within the last two calendar months.

Additional verification is requested when the unclear information is deemed to be significantly conflicting. Unclear information may be significantly conflicting when it was required at application or renewal but was omitted by the applicant, member, or by worker error. Significantly conflicting unclear information includes information that was mis-reported or misrepresented.

- Agencies must continue to follow the existing policy and process for acting on information from the Nationwide Prisoner Match and Date of Death Matches.

A courtesy letter may be sent when held unclear information would increase the member's FoodShare benefits. The letter encourages the household to provide information to resolve and verify the held unclear information.

- Adverse action is not taken if the household does not respond, or if the response is unclear. When this happens, the information continues to be held and the unclear change is addressed at the next application, SMRF, or renewal.

Example 1	<p><u>A FoodShare household reports a decrease in child support income but does not specify by how much or when the change happened. This information is considered unclear and is held. The unclear information could increase benefits.</u></p> <p><u>A courtesy letter is sent to the household. The letter states that they can voluntarily provide additional information to verify that change, and if clear, this information may increase their FoodShare benefit.</u></p> <p><u>- The household responds to the courtesy letter with the clear, current information to verify the decrease in child support income. The information received from the member is applied to the case and used for eligibility and certification.</u></p> <p><u>- If the household responds, but the information supplied is still unclear or incomplete, the unclear child support information continues to be held, and it is not used for eligibility. It is resolved and verified, as needed, at the next application, SMRF or renewal.</u></p>
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1.3.1 Introduction

An applicant or member has the right to see their entire case record to verify that its content is accurate with respect to their statements and that documentation of facts about them from other sources is correct.

When an applicant or member requests access to the record for reasons not related to preparation for a fair hearing, the agency does not have to show them the entire record. The agency can show the applicant or member only the parts of the record relevant to the request.

[View History](#)

1.3.2 Fair Hearings

Agencies cannot withhold any part of the record from the applicant or member when they are preparing for a fair hearing.

1.3.3 Access by Someone Else

An applicant or member may authorize the income maintenance (IM) agency to grant access to their case record to another person or organization. This authorized entity has the same right of access to the case record as that of the applicant or member or to the extent that the applicant or member indicates on the release of information form, if applicable.

This authorized entity can be an attorney but does not need to be an attorney. The applicant or member does not need to complete a release of information form to authorize their attorney to access their case record. The agency can request proof of the attorney's licensure if the person's statement that they are an attorney is questionable. If the entity is not an attorney, the applicant or member must complete a release of information form, such as [F-02340](#).

A person or entity who is already known on the FoodShare case as a designated representative can access the case record. They do not need additional authorization to access the case record (see SECTION 3.22.1 DESIGNATED REPRESENTATIVES).

1.4.1 Disclosure

7 CFR 272.1(c)

The Department of Health Services (DHS) and its contractors may disclose an applicant or member's information with other programs routinely for a purpose compatible with the data's collection.

Information may be shared between DHS or its contractors and the following agencies:

- Child Support Enforcement agencies
- County departments of social or human services
 - DHS-contracted county, tribal, and private Wisconsin Works (W-2) agencies
- Weatherization agencies under contract with the Wisconsin Department of Administration (DOA) providing weatherization services to low-income persons
- Tribal agencies administering DHS programs
- Tribal commodities programs
- General relief/assistance agencies
- State of Wisconsin Department of Children and Families (DCF) staff for administering Wisconsin Shares Child Care and Wisconsin Works (W-2)
- FSET agencies administering the FoodShare Employment and Training program
- Any fiscal agent of the state administering benefit payments under the FoodShare program
- The Social Security Administration
- Local public housing authorities
- Department of Workforce Development (DWD)
- Division of Unemployment Insurance (DUI)
- Job Training Partnership Act (JTPA) - agencies to the extent that the information is necessary to determine JTPA program eligibility
- Any other federally assisted program providing cash or in-kind assistance or services directly to persons on the basis of need
- Federally-assisted school food service programs such as free or reduced meals
- US Comptroller General's Office
- Any official conducting an investigation, prosecution, or civil proceeding in connection with the administration of an Income Maintenance program. They must submit to the agency a written request to obtain information. The request must include the identity of the person requesting the information, their authority to request, the violation being investigated, and identify the person being investigated. Do not apply this restriction to the agency's District Attorney or fraud investigator.
- Any Local, State, or Federal law enforcement official, upon a written request, for purpose of investigation of a felony crime or a probation or parole violation.

Allowable information to provide is limited to the address and social security number of:

- a member who is fleeing to avoid prosecution, custody, or confinement for a felony crime or a violation of parole or probation; or
- a member who has information about another member who is under investigation for a felony crime or probation or parole violation.

People directly connected with the administration or enforcement of the programs that are required to participate in the state income and eligibility verification system (IEVS), to the extent that the information is used to establish or verify eligibility or benefit amounts under those programs.

People using the Systematic Alien Verification for Entitlements (SAVE) to verify non-citizens eligibility.

Staff of any public or private agency for the administration of the:

- Federal Title IV-E Foster Care program
- Adoption Assistance program

1.4.2 Disclosure with Consent

Applicants and members may authorize the disclosure of information of record about themselves to a third party in writing. Forms such as [F-02340](#) or [F-82009](#)

may be used for this purpose. The authorization must specify the information to be disclosed, to whom it is to be disclosed, and for what period of time.

1.4.3 Special Circumstances

1.4.3.1 Legislative Committees

Agencies cannot disclose information for the broad investigatory purposes of legislative committees. Federal legislation prohibits disclosure to any committee or committee's legislative body (federal, state, or local) of any information that identifies by address or name any applicant or recipient.

1.4.3.2 Crime Victim's Compensation Program

The Crime Victim's Compensation (CVC) Program is administered by the Wisconsin Department of Justice (DOJ), Crime Victims Services. Its intent is to provide financial support to victims of crime within Wisconsin.

DOJ is required to determine a person's W-2, CTS, FoodShare, BadgerCare Plus, and Medicaid eligibility status and benefit amount before it may dispose of someone's application for CVC. As part of the application process for CVC, the applicant must sign an authorization of release of confidential information.

Agencies can release information to CVC program staff about CVC applicants and recipients only when the CVC applicants and recipients have signed a release of confidential information for the CVC program. Information that can be released is about eligibility and the amount of benefits in the W-2, CTS, FoodShare, BadgerCare Plus, and Medicaid programs.

1.4.3.3 Subpoenas and Records Requests

If a court issues a subpoena for a case record or for any agency representative to testify concerning an applicant or member, the IM Agency may consult with their Office of Legal Counsel for guidance on informing the court of the applicable statutory provisions, policies, and regulations restricting disclosure of information.

1.4.4 Prohibited Disclosure

Examples in which disclosure is prohibited are:

- Requests from an official not connected with the agency for privileged information.
- Requests from private persons for case information frequently related to business or personal matters, such as the collection of bills from the recipient.
- IM agencies are not authorized to provide information about the receipt of benefits or the dollar amount of those benefits unless that information will assist the state of Wisconsin in collecting outstanding debts. Even if the request is for documentation of the amount of benefits received, this information is not to be released.

1.4.5 Data Exchanges

1.4.5.1 Data Exchanges Introduction

CWW Data Exchanges provide query access to databases that store Wisconsin citizen's birth and death information, intentional program violations, immigration status, national new hire, state wage query, Wisconsin new hire, low income energy assistance program, child support, prisoner data, address, employment information, unemployment income, and Social Security and SSI income (including social security number, citizenship/identification, disability, date of death and Medicare verification).

The rules of confidentiality apply to all data obtained from the query. In addition, because of the sensitive nature of the data available, rules have been established for accessing the data as well as release of data obtained from the query.

1.4.5.2 Use of Data

Data exchanges can only be accessed for official program purposes. No one is permitted to browse the records in any query, even if there are no intentions to share the data.

1.4.5.3 Query Access

Agencies must take all precautions necessary to ensure that only authorized agency staff have access to the online queries.

1.4.5.4 Release of Data

Only release data received from a query to:

- The person who is the subject of the data.
- The person's attorney or other designated representative who needs the data in connection with that person's fair hearing.
- Another county, state, or federal agency administering the FoodShare, child support, SSI, BadgerCare Plus, or Medicaid programs.
- A criminal or civil authority that agrees in writing to protect the confidentiality of the data provided.

1.4.6 Documents

1.4.6.1 Date Stamping Documents

All paper documents received by an agency must have the received date on the face or first page of each document. If you do not have a date stamp, write out the date the document was received on the front of the document prior to scanning.

1.4.6.2 Photocopying Vital Records

Wis. Stats. §69.30 permits DHS, county, W-2, and tribal social and human service agencies to photocopy vital records for administrative use. Vital records include:

- Birth certificates
- Death certificates
- Marriage documents
- Divorce and annulment certificates

Data related to any of the above documents

This statute exempts agencies from its restrictions if there is an administrative need for the copy and it's marked "For Administrative Use." Penalties for improperly photocopying vital records include fines and imprisonment.

2.1.3 Interviews

2.1.3.1 Scheduling the Interview

7 CFR 273.2(e)(3)

~~Agencies must make every attempt to schedule interviews to~~ **On-Demand Interviews**
FoodShare applicants and renewing members may call their IM agency to complete the required FoodShare interview during the agency-designated FoodShare on-demand hours.

A consortium must apply this model across all agencies within the consortium. An on-demand interview must be offered at both application and renewal. Scheduled face-to-face or telephone interviews must be provided upon request by an applicant or member.

All FoodShare applications must be screened for priority service and expedited issuance.

Priority service applications: At least two attempts must be made to contact an applicant to complete the interview on the same business day the application is received or by the end of the next business day. IM workers must continue to meet all priority service processing standards.

Standard 30-day applications: At least two attempts must be made to contact an applicant to complete the interview on the same business day the application is received or by the end of the second business day following the day it was received.

Renewals: On-demand interviews must be offered for all renewals when received. At least two attempts must be made to contact a member to complete the interview on the same business day the renewal is received or by the end of the fifth business day following the day it was received.

Two contact attempts must be made, at least 15 minutes apart, to complete the interview. If the worker is unable to connect with the applicant or member during these attempts, pend for interview.

If the applicant or member is reached during the first contact attempt but they are not able to complete the interview, the applicant or member may choose to schedule an interview or call back to complete the interview. No second contact attempt is necessary in this scenario.

If scheduling an interview, ensure that an initial FoodShare eligibility determination can be completed within the 30-day processing time frame. Priority Service interviews must be completed **by day 7** (see SECTION 2.1.4 EXPEDITED SERVICE AT APPLICATION).

FoodShare applicants and members have the right to complete a face-to-face or phone interview (see- SECTION 2.1.3.5 TELEPHONE INTERVIEWS). If an applicant or member requests a face-to-face interview, the interview is typically held at the local office but may be held at a mutually acceptable location such as the applicant's residence.

If a home-based certification interview is scheduled with the applicant or member, a hardship must exist (including but not limited to) and must be case commented:

- Illness
- Transportation difficulties
- Care of a household member
- Hardships due to residency in a rural area
- Prolonged severe weather
- Work or training hours that prevents the household from participating in an in-office interview

~~Agencies are required to schedule and provide written notice of~~ When an interview ~~for an initial FoodShare application. Notice of~~ is scheduled the notice of the interview must be in writing and mailed to the applicant household unless ~~the notice~~ it cannot be received ~~by the applicant~~ prior to the date of the interview. Verbal notification of the interview is only allowable if an interview letter cannot be received prior to the interview and only if the agency provides this information directly to a responsible adult household member. If verbal notice is provided the agency must document in case comments that a verbal notice was provided, the name of the person who received the verbal notice, the date and time of the interview, and whether the interview will be conducted by telephone or face-to-face.

If the applicant is physically present when the appointment is scheduled, the agency must provide the applicant a printout of the written notice.

~~The IM worker must make two~~ Two attempts must be made to contact the applicant or an adult member ~~of the food unit~~ at the time of the scheduled interview. If the first attempt to contact the ~~food unit~~ applicant or member is unsuccessful, make a second attempt 15 minutes after the first call. If the second attempt is unsuccessful, the IM worker must document in case comments that they were unable to contact the ~~food unit~~ household at the appointment time, that the follow-up call was made, and the length of time between calls. Send the Notice of Missed Interview (NOMI), directing the ~~food unit~~ household to contact the agency to reschedule.

NOMI requirements must be met if the applicant or member misses the interview.

The agency must notify each applicant or member ~~who misses the application or renewal interview that~~ when they missed the scheduled interview and that the applicant or member is responsible for rescheduling a missed interview. ~~The use of Client Scheduling in CWW will ensure that the NOMI is generated by CWW and sent to the applicant or member.~~ (see Process Help, [Section 1.8.9.7 Automated NOMI for FoodShare](#)). ~~If Client Scheduling is not used, a NOMI must be manually issued by the local agency. A copy of the agency notice must be scanned to the electronic case~~

~~file.~~ Agencies may not deny an application prior to the 30th day after the application filing date if the applicant fails to appear for the first interview.

For applicants who miss a scheduled ~~appointment~~interview and contact the agency to reschedule within the 30-day application processing period (see ~~Section~~SECTION 2.1.2 Application Processing Time FrameAPPLICATION PROCESSING TIME FRAME), the agency must schedule another interview.

An application must not be denied prior to the 30th day, unless the interview has been completed, even if other information has been reported on the application that would make the ~~FoodShare assistance group~~household ineligible.

On-Demand Interviews

~~Wisconsin received federal approval for a waiver that allows IM consortia to implement an on-demand, or unscheduled, interview model. Under the on-demand interview model, FoodShare applicants and renewing members may call their IM agency to complete a FoodShare interview during the agency-designated FoodShare on-demand hours.~~

~~A consortium must apply this model across all agencies within the consortium. An on-demand interview must be offered at both application and renewal. A consortium implementing the on-demand interview model must continue to offer and provide scheduled face-to-face or telephone interviews upon request.~~

~~All FoodShare applications must be screened for priority service and expedited issuance. A consortium must meet the following application and renewal processing standards:~~

- ~~• Priority service applications: IM workers must make at least two attempts to contact an applicant to complete the interview on the same business day the application is received or by the end of the next business day. IM workers must continue to meet all priority service processing standards.~~
- ~~• Standard 30-day applications: IM workers must make at least two attempts to contact an applicant to complete the interview on the same business day the application is received or by the end of the second business day following the day it was received.~~
- ~~• Renewals: On-demand interviews must be offered for all renewals when received. IM workers must make at least two attempts to contact a member to complete the interview on the same business day the renewal is received or by the end of the fifth business day following the day it was received.~~

~~A worker should make two contact attempts, at least 15 minutes apart, to complete the interview. If the worker is unable to connect with the applicant or member during these attempts, pend for interview.~~

Exception

~~Sometimes two contact attempts are not possible such as when there is a disconnected phone, or if the applicant is unavailable and specifically tells the worker not to call them back if they connect on the first attempt. See below for alternative processing.~~

~~When an applicant or member is contacted during the first attempt:~~

- ~~• If the first contact is made and the worker connects with the applicant and the applicant cannot complete the interview at that time, schedule the interview at an agreed upon date and time and send the scheduled interview notice. No other contact attempt is required as this contact meets the On-Demand requirement.~~
- ~~• If the first contact is made and the worker connects with the applicant, but the applicant cannot complete the interview at that time, and an interview cannot be scheduled at an agreed upon date and time (because they do not want to schedule an appointment at that time or because they state they will call back at another time), the worker should pend for an interview. This meets the On-Demand requirement, and no additional contact attempt is needed.~~

Notice of Interview for On-Demand Interviews

If an IM worker is unable to complete the interview at the time they attempt to contact a household ~~as described above~~, the IM worker must send a Notice of Interview. ~~For on-demand interviews, the Notice of Interview language will be generated on the verification checklist (VCL). The household has nine calendar days from the VCL mailing date to call and complete the FoodShare interview. The Notice of Interview provides instructions to complete the interview. If the last day of the on-demand interview time frame falls on a weekend or CARES holiday, the due date will be the next business day. The on-demand interview timeframe of "10 days to call to complete" will not be adjustable in CWW. Verification due dates for other types pended after the interview will continue to be based on policy requirements and IM worker action-completing the interview.~~

2.1.3.2 Completing the Interview

7 CFR 273.2(e)(1); 7 CFR 273.2 (b)(4)(iv)

The interview needs to be completed by a responsible adult applicant, member of the food unit, or an authorized representative. If the applicant is an individual under age 18, the youth must be the primary person, emancipated or homeless and not under the care and control of another adult in order to complete the interview.

During an interview, the agency must not simply review the information that appears on the application but must explore and resolve with the applicant all unclear information. The interviewer must also advise applicants of their rights and responsibilities during the interview.

Although CWW provides a means for an individual to apply for several programs of assistance, FoodShare eligibility must be based solely on the requirements and regulations governing the FoodShare program. Applications for FoodShare may not be

denied solely on the basis that an application to participate in another program has been denied. Similarly, ongoing FoodShare benefits may not be terminated solely because benefits from another program have been terminated. During an interview, the interviewer must advise applicants for joint W-2/FoodShare that W-2 requirements do not apply to FoodShare and households that lose or decline W-2 benefits may still qualify for FoodShare.

The agency must ask the applicant, member, or authorized representative to identify all household members and their relationship to each other, and if they share food.

Providing Social Security numbers (SSNs) (see Section 3.13.1 Social Security Number (SSN) Requirements) for each household member is voluntary. However, failure to provide an SSN will result in the denial of FoodShare benefits to each applicant or member failing to provide an SSN. Although SSN and immigrant status information is not required for household members not applying for benefits, the agency must determine if the non-applicant household member has income or assets that affect the applying applicants' eligibility. If so, that information must be provided and verified in order to determine FoodShare eligibility for the applicant(s).

The agency must ask applicants and members to provide ethnicity and race information for all food unit members. Applicants and members are not required to provide a response for ethnicity or race in order to complete an application or receive a decision about their program eligibility or benefits; individuals may provide information on ethnicity, race, both, or neither.

Agencies must inform individuals that responses may be used to help improve the State of Wisconsin's public assistance programs and ensure the program will not discriminate based on ethnicity or race. This may include reporting ethnicity and race data to federal agencies or sharing ethnicity and race information with managed care organizations to support monitoring of health disparities.

2.1.3.2.1 Required Interview Topics

All FoodShare interviews must include a discussion of the following items in addition to standard financial and non-financial eligibility criteria:

- Use of SSNs (see Section 3.13.1 Social Security Number (SSN) Requirements)
 - A SSN is required for each individual requesting benefits unless they meet a religious exemption.
 - SSNs are used for data matching. Data matches are used to check that you can get and keep getting benefits.
- FoodShare rights and responsibilities (see Your Rights and Responsibilities for FoodShare ([F-10150B](#))).
- Appropriate application processing standard time frames for non-expedited (see Section 2.1.2 Application Processing Time frame) and expedited benefits (see [SECTION 2.1.4 EXPEDITED SERVICE AT APPLICATION](#)).

- Applicable change and simplified reporting requirements (see [SECTION 6.1.1 CHANGE REPORTING FOR ALL FOOD UNITS \(SIMPLIFIED\)](#)) at the time of the interview.
 - How changes can be reported.
 - What changes must be reported.
 - When changes must be reported.
- Six-month reporting (see [SECTION 6.1.2 SIX MONTH REPORTING REQUIREMENT](#)) or renewal (see [SECTION 2.2.1 CERTIFICATION PERIODS \(RENEWALS\)](#)).
 - How to obtain assistance in completing the Six-Month Report Form (SMRF).
 - When the Six-Month Report Form (SMRF) will be sent.
 - When the report form is due.
 - Consequence for failing to file a report.
 - Changes that must be reported on the Six-Month Report Form (SMRF):
 - Address, and shelter and utility costs associated with a new residential address
 - Household composition
 - Income
 - Substantial Lottery or Gambling Winnings
 - Court-ordered child support payments for a non-household member
 - [New substantial lottery or gambling winnings \(see SECTION 6.1.1.1 LOTTERY OR GAMBLING\)](#).
- QUEST card information
- Explanation of FoodShare Basic Work Rules (see [SECTION 3.16.1 FOODSHARE BASIC WORK RULES](#)) and FoodShare Work Requirements (see [SECTION 3.17.1 FOODSHARE WORK REQUIREMENTS FOR ABAWDS](#)), if the food unit includes an applicant or member subject to a work requirement.
 - IM workers must identify which applicant(s) or member(s) are subject to FoodShare basic work rules and FoodShare work requirements and provide the following information:
 - An explanation of each work rule and applicable work requirement.
 - Information on exemptions from each applicable work rule and work requirement.
 - An explanation of the process to request an exemption, including contact information to request an exemption.
 - FoodShare rights and responsibilities.
 - What is required to maintain eligibility under each work rule and applicable work requirement.
 - Consequences for failure to comply with each work rule and applicable work requirement.
 - An explanation of the process for requesting good cause, including examples of good cause circumstances and contact information to initiate a good cause request.
 - Information on the FoodShare Employment and Training Program (FSET) and benefits of FSET participation if the food unit includes an individual subject to the FoodShare Work Requirements.

- Information on the status of the time limit of the FoodShare Work Requirement if the household lives in an area or on tribal lands where the time limit of the FoodShare Work Requirement is suspended.
 - The appropriate sections of the "[FoodShare Basic Work Rules and FoodShare Work Requirements Script for IM Workers](#)" must be read to meet the above requirements.
- Discuss the FSET program and offer voluntary referrals to FSET to eligible FoodShare members.
- At the end of the call, the "[Reporting Requirements Call Script](#)" must be read.

2.1.4 Expedited Service at Application

7 CFR 273.2(i)

Priority services are designed to ensure that expedited benefits are issued to eligible FoodShare assistance groups by the seventh day after the date of the application. The applicant must be allowed to complete the interview quickly and benefits must be issued timely. The two phases of expedited services are described below.

- **Priority Service:** Screens all applications for potential eligibility for expedited issuance and faster service from the agency (see SECTION 2.1.4.1 ELIGIBILITY FOR EXPEDITED SERVICE AT APPLICATION).
- **Expedited Issuance:** Benefits must be issued by the seventh day after the application is filed. Benefits will be available on the member's QUEST card the same day the application is confirmed in CWW.
- Members approved for expedited benefits must be offered the opportunity to come into an agency to receive a Temporary QUEST Card if they do not have an active QUEST card on file and available to them. This offer must be made by the worker on the same day the member is approved for expedited issuance, or on the next business day after the member is approved for expedited issuance (see section 7.2.1.2 Temporary Quest Card).

All food units that apply after the 15th of the month and who are eligible for expedited issuance must receive the prorated initial allotment and next month's allotment by the seventh day after the application filing date.

Agencies must provide expedited benefits to applicants who qualify for them after they are screened through the priority service process.

When contact is made by phone, every effort should be made to complete the FoodShare interview on the same day whenever possible. If an interview cannot be completed that day, an interview appointment must be offered to be scheduled within the seven-day time frame. If an applicant cannot make the scheduled appointment, the applicant will lose their right to expedited benefits.

2.1.4.2 Verification Requirements for Expedited Services

7 CFR 273.2(i)(4)

~~A food unit eligible for expedited benefit issuance is~~ Identity is the only required to provide verification of identity of the primary applicant and the ~~required prior to the issuance of expedited benefits. All other verifications must be postponed when they cannot be submitted within the expedited timeframe. When an authorized representative if applicable, before the expedited benefits can be issued,~~ applies on behalf of the food unit, the identity of both the authorized representative and the applicant need to be verified. Any documents, that reasonably establish the applicant's ~~applicant and~~

authorized representative's identity, must be accepted, and no requirement for a specific type of document, such as a birth certificate or photo ID, may be imposed. Collateral contact is also acceptable. If any other required verification is readily available, it must be used in the initial eligibility determination. Other outstanding required verification items must be requested, however do not delay the issuance of expedited benefits pending the receipt of other requested verification.

~~CARES will deny ongoing months with a failure code reason related~~ A request for verification must be sent to expedited verification requirements. If requested verification is not received, the FoodShare assistance group will remain closed due to failure to provide requested expedited household for the postponed verifications (codes 152, 153, or 154). In many instances a verification checklist is not sent, resulting in negative QC errors. To avoid possible errors, confirm all FoodShare benefit months, including the second or third month "fail". Run eligibility a second time to place the case in pending status and to send a system generated verification request. Change. Ensure the verification due date on the checklist ~~to~~ is the 30th day of the application, or next business day if the 30th day falls on a weekend or holiday. Suppress any incorrect notices. Ongoing benefits will be denied if the postponed verifications are not received by day 30 of the application.

There is no limit to the number of times a FoodShare ~~assistance group~~ household can be certified under expedited procedures ~~as long as the FoodShare assistance group:~~

~~1. Submitted all the required verifications within.~~ If an expedited service application had postponed verification requirements that were not satisfied and there is any pending information relevant to the last 30-day application processing period following an expedited issuance household's current situation, or Was the household was not certified under normal processing standards since in the last past 12 months, the household is not eligible for expedited certification services.

Once postponed verifications are provided or no longer relevant, the household may meet criteria for an expedited issuance of benefits.

Example 1	<p><u>Sam applied for FoodShare on January 10th, 2025, and was determined eligible for expedited issuance of January benefits. The expedited FoodShare was issued and verification was requested for the ongoing eligibility benefit determination with a verification due date of February 10th. Sam did not provide the verification by the verification due date and ongoing eligibility was denied.</u></p> <p><u>In July 2025, Sam reapplied for FoodShare. The requested verification from the previous January 10th application is still relevant to the current eligibility determination and verification was requested. Sam is not eligible for expedited issuance and must provide verification before eligibility can be confirmed. If Sam provides the verification, eligibility will be determined, and Sam may qualify for an expedited issuance at that point.</u></p> <p><u>If Sam did not reapply until February 2026, he could qualify for an expedited issuance of benefits even if the requested verification from the January 10th, 2025, application is still relevant.</u></p>
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2.1.4.3 Eligibility for Migrant Workers

According to Wis. Stat. § 103.90(5)(a), "A 'migrant worker' is any person who temporarily leaves a principal place of residence outside of this state and comes to this state for not more than 10 months in a year to accept seasonal employment in the planting, cultivating, raising, harvesting, handling, drying, packing, packaging, processing, freezing, grading, or storing of any agricultural or horticultural commodity in its unmanufactured state."

Migrants are eligible for priority service if:

- ~~1.~~ Gross income is less than \$150, and
- ~~Available~~ available assets are \$100 or less, or
- They meet the definition of "destitute" by meeting all three of the following criteria:
 - Assets are \$100 or less, and
 - The only income received by the food unit prior to the application filing date was from a terminated source, and
 - The food unit does not expect to receive more than \$25 from a new source within 10 calendar days from the date of application.

Treatment of Income for Destitute Migrants:

1. Budget income from a terminated source which was received by the food unit between the first of the month of application and the application date, as income available for the food unit's needs in the month of application.
2. Disregard any income from a new source expected during the month of application. This income may not be more than \$25 or must be received at least 10 days after the date of application.
3. After the application month, budget income from a new source for the months it will be received.

The home of a migrant worker in their state of residency is an exempt asset.

~~2.1.4.4 Postponing the Interview for Expedited Issuance~~

~~Effective June 1, 2020, the FoodShare interview may no longer be postponed. The interview must be completed prior to initial benefit issuance for all applications.~~

2.2.1 Certification ~~Periods (Renewals)~~

7 CFR 273.14(a); 7 CFR 273.10(f)

Certification Periods

The time in-between application and renewal is called the certification period ~~for~~. The FoodShare ~~eligibility for most food units is 12~~ certification period can be 6 - 36 months. ~~Food units~~ FoodShare households where all members are homeless and food units that include a migrant or seasonal farm worker have a six-month certification period. ~~Food units where all adult members are EBD and have no earned income may have a 36-month certification period.~~

~~The food unit must answer questions about their current household information in the last month of the certification period to be recertified and continue receiving FoodShare benefits. This is called a renewal. The food unit may need to verify some of the current household information they provide. At renewal, most food units must complete an interview (see).~~

A certification period may be shortened only in the circumstances described below:

- There is a new request for health care or child care (Wisconsin Shares), or
- A health care or child care renewal is due prior to the FoodShare renewal, and
- The food unit has stated they want to complete a FoodShare renewal at the same time they are applying for or recertifying health care or child care.

Note ~~When a food unit moves into a Transitional FoodShare (TFS) certification period, their regular certification period will end early. The TFS certification period will begin the following month and will end five months later (see Section 5.1.1 Transitional FoodShare Benefits (TFS)). The food unit must complete a renewal in the last month of the certification period to continue to receive regular FoodShare benefits.~~ Households with 36-month certification periods may not shorten their certification period and ACCESS will not allow early submission since these households will never have a new certification period that would sync up with the other eligibility programs open on their case.

Certification Points

Members may be required to complete an interview (see SECTION 2.1.3 INTERVIEWS ~~FoodShare assistance groups~~) and must verify current household information and any held information in the last month of the certification period in order to be recertified and continue receiving FoodShare benefits. This certification point is called a renewal.

Note ~~When a Foodshare household moves into a Transitional FoodShare (TFS) certification period, their regular certification period will end early. The TFS certification period will begin the following month and will end five months later (see Section 5.1.1 Transitional FoodShare Benefits (TFS)). The FoodShare household must complete a renewal to re-certify eligibility in the last month of the certification period the same as other FoodShare households.~~

FoodShare household with zero FoodShare benefits in their initial benefit month (pro-rated benefits) and a FoodShare allotment greater than zero in the second month, ~~will be~~ are certified for six, 12, or 36 months (depending on their household composition) beginning with the application month. If FoodShare eligibility is denied in the month of application for any other reason, and eligibility begins the following month, the ~~six~~ 6, 12, or 36-month certification period begins in the month following the application month. If the benefit calculation is zero for the first two months, the case will be denied.

Example 1	Barry applied for FoodShare in August after he lost his job. In the FoodShare benefit determination for August and September, Barry received zero for August due to pro-rated benefits and \$98 in September. His certification period starts in August.
Example 2	Barry's VQT sanction ends August 8. He reapplies and re-requests FoodShare on August 25. He is ineligible in August and eligible for \$141 in September. Barry's 12-month certification period begins September 1.
Example 3	Barry applied for FoodShare November 29 after his unemployment compensation ended. Barry reports during the application that he is homeless. Barry received his full unemployment benefit in his final month, so he is not eligible for FoodShare in November because his income was over the gross income limit, but he is eligible in December. Barry's six-month certification period begins December 1.

2.2.1.3 Shortening a Certification Period

7 CFR 273.10(f)(4) Waiver approval

Agencies may not end a certification period earlier than the assigned termination date, unless the agency receives information that the food unit has become ineligible, or the food unit does not cooperate in clarifying its circumstances. Loss of W-2 or a change in employment is not sufficient in and of itself to meet the criteria necessary for shortening certification periods.

A certification period may be shortened only in the circumstances described below:

- There is a new request for health care or child care (Wisconsin Shares), or
- A health care or child care renewal is due prior to the FoodShare renewal, and
- The food unit has stated they want to complete a FoodShare renewal at the same time they are applying for or recertifying health care or child care.

2.2.1.4 Completing a Renewal

7 CFR 273.14(b)

~~There are several steps to completing~~ To complete a renewal ~~for~~ to re-certify FoodShare cases:

1. ~~Notification must be sent to~~ Notify the ~~food unit informing them~~ member that the certification period is ending and an interview (see [SECTION 2.1.3 INTERVIEWS](#)) ~~must be conducted for most cases if benefits are~~ may be required to continue benefits.

1. ~~If~~ Conduct an interview ~~must be conducted, if required and notify the food unit will receive a letter.~~
2. ~~The food unit must be notified~~ member of required verifications ~~they need to provide to determine for continued eligibility for the program. Certain.~~
3. Collect a new electronic, telephonic, or written signature.
- 2.4. Verify certain information gathered at the interview ~~must be verified.~~ (see SECTION 1.2.1 VERIFICATION INTRODUCTION).
5. Resolve any held unclear information.
2. ~~Resolve any identified EPPs (see Process Help, Section 70.1 Error Prone profile (EPP))~~ A new electronic, telephonic, or written signature must be collected.
6. Benefit.
- 3.7. Confirm benefit eligibility ~~must be confirmed~~ in CWW (see SECTION 2.1.7 Confirming the FoodShare Eligibility Determination in CONFIRMING THE FOODSHARE ELIGIBILITY DETERMINATION IN CARES) ~~in order for to complete the review or renewal to be considered complete.~~

2.2.1.5 Renewal Processing Time Frame

The 30-day processing time frame for a renewal is not the same as it is for applications. The 30-day renewal processing time frame refers to the renewal month. In other words, a renewal must be processed and confirmed by the last day of the renewal month, with two exceptions:

- The ~~IM~~ agency worker is unable to complete a required interview by the last day of the renewal month and delays the interview once.
- There is an agency-caused delay (for example, allowing 20 days for verification).

When there is an agency-caused delay, ~~it~~ the worker ~~must be documented in CWW document~~ the reason for the late renewal and set the FoodShare program request date for the first of the month so that benefits are not prorated.

The FoodShare case will close effective the last day of the renewal month at adverse action of the renewal month if renewal is not completed, including confirmation. The agency worker and the FoodShare ~~food unit~~ member have until the end of the renewal month to complete ~~the~~ renewal.

FoodShare that closes at renewal may reopen without requiring a new application under specific conditions. Allow FoodShare to reopen at renewal if the action needed to resolve ineligibility is completed in the month following the end of the current certification period, as long as the interview was timely.

~~An interview~~ Required interviews must be completed within the renewal month of the current certification period to be considered timely. If ~~the food unit fails to complete a timely~~ an interview is not completed timely, FoodShare will close effective the last day of the renewal month at adverse action and a new FoodShare application is required.

- If FoodShare closes for lack of verification after a timely renewal and the ~~food unit~~ household takes the required action within the calendar month following the

certification period, the agency shall reopen FoodShare and prorate benefits from the date the ~~food unit took the~~ required action was taken. The new certification period will begin the month after the month the renewal was due.

- The ~~food unit~~ FoodShare household must be allowed 20 days to provide verifications. If the verification due date is in the month following the renewal month, ~~IM~~ workers should identify whether the closed FoodShare case may be reopened or a new application is needed (see Process Help, [Section 3.13.4 Break in Service at Renewal](#)).
- If FoodShare closes for lack of signature after a timely renewal and the signature is returned within the calendar month following the certification period, the agency shall reopen FoodShare and prorate benefits from the date the household returns the signature page ~~is received~~. The new certification period will begin the month after the month the renewal was due.
- If FoodShare closes due to agency delay in completing ~~a required~~ the interview or the ~~food unit~~ household contacts the agency within the renewal month and is not available to complete the interview until after the renewal month, benefits shall be restored back to the first of the month to ensure ongoing benefits, as long as verification is ~~returned by the due date~~ timely.

<p>Example 4</p>	<p>Holly completes a timely FoodShare renewal, including the interview, on July 9 but does not have verification of her wages from Marigold's. Verification of her earned income is requested. Holly fails to provide verification, and her case closes effective July 31.</p> <p>On August 5, Holly provides verification of her wages. She regains eligibility <u>under a FoodShare break in service</u> as of August 5 and is issued prorated benefits from August 5 through August 31. Holly's FoodShare new certification period remains unchanged.</p> <p>If Holly had responded timely to the request for verification and submitted her verification in July, but the verifications were not processed until August, benefits would have been issued back to August 1 due to agency delay.</p>
<p>Example 5</p>	<p>Tom's FoodShare renewal is due by June 30. He completes his required interview on June 27 and has verification due July 17. Tom provides the requested verification on July 15. Although Tom's case closed effective June 30 due to lack of completed renew/verification, his FoodShare case is reopened with a certification period beginning July 1 because he completed the interview in the renewal month and provided the requested verification by the due date. Benefits are not prorated, and he is not required to submit a new application.</p>
<p>Example 6</p>	<p>Ruby calls her IM worker on August 21 to schedule an in-person FoodShare renewal due by August 31, but the only appointment available is not until September 4. Ruby completes her renewal on September 4 but does not have verification of her wages from Sunny's Craft House. Verification of earned income is requested with a verification due date of September 24. Ruby submits the necessary verification on September 20. Because Ruby submitted her verification timely (within 20 days) and because the agency was unable to complete the interview in August, Kim issues benefits to Ruby back to September 1.</p> <p>Had Ruby submitted the necessary verification after September 24, but before September 30, <u>Kim would not issue</u> benefits would be prorated back to the <u>first but only to the</u> date verification was submitted.</p>

Example 7	Tricia's FoodShare assistance group has a FoodShare certification period ending June 30. Tricia completed a telephone interview on June 17 and the case pends for a signature. The signature page is not returned and FoodShare close <u>closes</u> June 30. Tricia returns the signature page on July 14. FoodShare reopens without requiring a new FoodShare application. Benefits are prorated from July 14, with a new certification period from July 14 to June 30.
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2.3.1 Break in Service

A break in service means that the FoodShare ~~food unit~~ has closed for at least one day. Failure to provide timely verification, when appropriately requested, is a common cause for FoodShare closure.

The FoodShare ~~food unit~~ closes effective the last day of the month following adverse action if a requested action is not taken. To reinstate eligibility without a new application, the reason for closure must be fully resolved during the calendar month following the closure. The date the closure is fully resolved is the date used to re-establish eligibility and issue prorated benefits.

Example 1	Verification of income was due November 26. FoodShare closed for lack of verification on December 31. Verification is submitted on January 7. FoodShare benefits are prorated from January 7, the date all required verifications were received. A new application is not needed.
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If the reason for closure is not fully resolved the month following the month of closure, a new application must be completed.

Example 2	Verification of income was due November 26. FoodShare closed for lack of verification on December 31. Verification is submitted on February 7. A new application is required.
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Allow FoodShare to reopen at renewal if the requested action is completed in the month following the end of the current certification period, as long as the interview was completed before the end of the renewal month.

A required interview must be completed within the renewal month of the current certification period to be considered timely. If the food unit fails to complete a timely required interview, FoodShare will close effective the last day of the renewal month, and a notice of closure will be sent at adverse action of the renewal month. A new FoodShare application is required in the month following the renewal due month.

- If FoodShare closes for lack of verification or other reasons after a timely required renewal interview and the food unit takes the required action within the calendar month following the certification period, the agency shall reopen FoodShare and prorate benefits from the date the food unit took the required action. The certification period will begin with the month after the renewal was due.
- If FoodShare closes due to agency delay in scheduling the interview or the food unit is not available to complete the interview offered by the agency until the month following the renewal month, benefits shall be restored and a supplemental benefit will need to be issued back to the first of the month to ensure ongoing benefits, as long as verification is timely.
- If the food unit contains a member who is a migrant and received FoodShare in the previous calendar month, benefits will not be prorated from the day the food unit provides necessary information but will be restored back to the beginning of the month (see Section 7.1.1.2 Initial allotment for Migrant and Seasonal Farm Workers). Benefits should not be issued as expedited when applying a break in service.

Example 3	Sam requests an appointment to renew his FoodShare benefits on September 25. His benefits end on September 30. The first available appointment is October 3. Sam completes the interview on October 3. The information related to the reason for the late certification, and other supporting information, is documented in the case comments. Benefits begin the first of the month.
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3.10.1 Strikers

[7 CFR 273.1\(e\)](#)

A striker is anyone involved in either of the following, whether or not they are in a collective bargaining unit:

1. A strike or concerted stoppage of work by employees against their employer, including a stoppage because a collective bargaining agreement expired, or a concerted slowdown or interruption of operations by employees against their employer.
2. A person is a striker whether or not they personally voted for the strike. Strikers are not exempt from FoodShare basic work rules.

3.10.1.3 Eligibility on the Day before a Strike

To be eligible, a food unit with a striker must have been eligible on the day before the strike began:

(a household in the break-in-service window is eligible so long as the reason for the break in service is resolved, a striker would be eligible on the day before the strike began if they are otherwise eligible).

If the case was open for FoodShare on that date, it remains eligible if it continues to meet all criteria: (including if the FoodShare was closed due to a break in service).

If the case was not open on that date, determine if the food unit could have been eligible on the day before the strike. Assume the application date is the day before the strike began and the strike never occurred. Use the Striker Evaluation Form ([F-16023](#)). Deny an application if a member of the food unit would have been ineligible the day before the strike. (follow this process when a strike is reported with an application, this would not be applicable during the break-in-service window).

3.10.1.4 Pre-Strike Income

Determine the food unit's eligibility and allotment when a striker is part of the household applying for FoodShare. Add the greatest of the two following incomes to the income of the other food unit members:

1. The striker's income on the day before the strike (pre-strike income), or
2. The striker's income on the date of the current determination (current income).

Determine the striker's pre-strike income by adding:

1. All unearned income they would normally expect to have received that month, and

2. All earned income they would have received in a month using the wage rate they were earning on that date. Allow the 20% earned income deduction.

Determine the striker's current income as you would any other person's regular income.

If a strike is part of a reported change, it should be acted on in the same manner as other changes. There is no determination for pre-strike eligibility or pre-strike income since a break-in-service is not a new application.

3.16.1 FoodShare Basic Work Rules

3.16.1.4 Registering for Work

As a condition of FoodShare eligibility, each food unit member not exempt from the FoodShare basic work rules in SECTION 3.16.1.2 FOODSHARE BASIC WORK RULES must register for work at the time of application and renewal. An applicant or member must provide the IM agency with sufficient information regarding employment status or availability for work.

Registering for work is completed when the agency receives one of the following:

- A signed Request for Assistance (RFA) after the Client Registration is completed in CARES Worker Web (CWW).
- A completed and signed FoodShare Wisconsin Application (F-16019).
- An ACCESS FoodShare application containing an electronic signature.
- A signed signature page from the CWW case summary.
- A completed telephonic signature (see Section 2.1.1.4 Setting the Filing Date).

An applicant or member who signs the FoodShare application or renewal registers all food unit members subject to the basic work rules for work.

3.16.1.4.1 Basic Work Rules Interview Requirements

During each FoodShare interview, IM workers must do the following:

- Ask relevant questions and gather necessary information to identify the correct basic work rules status and ABAWD determination in CWW.
- Ask relevant questions to assist in discovering potential exemptions.
- Provide applicants or members with information on exemptions so that they may recognize any current or future exemptions for themselves or a household member.
- Review prior and potential sanctions documented on the Loss of Employment pages for accuracy and possible good cause.

For details on required interview topics related to the FoodShare Basic Work Rules and FoodShare work Requirements, see [SECTION 2.1.3.2.1 REQUIRED INTERVIEW TOPICS](#).

IM workers should provide applicants and members with information about the FSET program. IM workers need to inform individuals subject to the basic work rules that although registration for work is mandatory, participation in FSET is voluntary and non-participation will not result in being sanctioned.

3.17.1 FoodShare Work Requirements for ABAWDs

3.17.1.2 FoodShare Work Requirement

In addition to FoodShare basic work rules (see [SECTION 3.16.1 FOODSHARE BASIC WORK RULES](#)), ABAWDs are required to meet an additional FoodShare work requirement as a condition of FoodShare eligibility.

An ABAWD is meeting the FoodShare work requirement if one of the following applies:

1. Working a minimum of 80 hours per month (use converted work hours if paid weekly or biweekly)
2. Participating and complying with an allowable work program at least 80 hours per month*
3. Both working and participating in an allowable work program for a combined total of at least 80 hours per month
4. Participating and complying with the requirements of a workfare program

*Allowable work programs include FSET, Refugee Employment and Training, W-2, Trial Employment Match Program (TEMP), Children First, WIOA programs, Refugee Cash Assistance programs, and programs under section 236 of the Trade Act.

3.17.1.3 Determining Exemptions From the FoodShare Work Requirement

Identification and correct determination of ABAWD exemptions impacts whether members are subject to TLBs and maintain eligibility for benefits. Members may cycle on and off FoodShare benefits and may gain or lose exemptions for a variety of reasons.

The effective date of an exemption is the first of the month the exemption situation exists. As long as an exemption exists for part of a month, the member is exempt for the entire month.

A FoodShare applicant or member is determined exempt from the FoodShare work requirement if they meet any one of the following exemption criteria, as determined by the IM agency:

- Under age 18* or age **5455**** and older
 - *Under Age 18: ABAWD status applies the month following the month the FoodShare member or applicant turns age 18.
 - **Age **5455** and older: ABAWD status no longer applies the first day of the month an ABAWD turns age 55.
- Residing in a food unit with a child under age 18***

- ***Individuals who reside with and are included in the same food unit as a child under age 18 are non-ABAWDs, even if that child is ineligible for FoodShare (see Section 3.3.1.1 HUG (Households, Units, Groups) for food unit requirements).
- Pregnant
- Determined unfit for employment, which includes someone considered any of the following:
 - Receiving temporary or permanent disability benefits from the government or a private source.
 - Mentally or physically unable to work as determined by the IM agency.
 - Displaying mental instability, combativeness, or other mental health issues. (Per direction from FNS, the IM worker should consider the member unfit for work and document an exemption without requiring verification from a health care professional.)
 - Verified as unable to work by a statement from a health care professional or a social worker (may use the Medical Exemption from Work Requirement for Able-Bodied Adults Without Dependents form ([F-01598](#)) to verify).
 - Experiencing chronic homelessness. (A person is chronically homeless if they currently lack a fixed, regular nighttime residence and do not expect to have a regular nighttime residence in the next 30 days. This includes people who are in a temporary housing situation, such as transitional living arrangements)

Note The definition of homelessness for the FoodShare work requirement exemption is the same as the definition of homelessness used for residency (see

[Section 3.2.1.3 Homelessness](#) for the complete definition).

- Veteran, including any person who regardless of discharge or release condition, has served in any branch of the United States Armed Forces (including the Army, Marine Corps, Navy, Air Force, Space Force, Coast Guard, National Guard, and Armed Forces Reserve) ~~regardless of discharge or release condition.~~
- Former Foster Care Youth including any person who is 18 to 24 years old who was previously in a foster care program at the time when they turned 18 years old. Foster care programs include foster care, court ordered kinship care, subsidized guardianship, and adoption assistance.

Note Foster care placements may include a foster home, a treatment foster home, respite care, supervised independent living, a group home or residential center, relative care, and trial reunification.

- Exempt from the FoodShare basic work rules (see SECTION 3.16.1.3 EXEMPTIONS FROM THE FOODSHARE BASIC WORK RULES for more details and full list of basic work rules exemptions).
- Primary caretaker of a dependent child under age six or a person who can't care for themselves (may be part of the food unit or in a separate household).

Note For situations where more than one person shares caregiving responsibilities for a child under age six or a person who can't care for themselves, the agency

should work with the applicant or member to determine which person has primary responsibility for care of the child or person who can't care for themselves. The other person's care giving responsibilities can be seen as work and the hours can count towards meeting the FoodShare work requirement, (see [SECTION 3.17.1.2.1 DEFINITION OF WORKING FOR FOODSHARE WORK REQUIREMENT FOR ABAWDS](#)).

-In most situations, only one person may claim exemption under this provision for the care of an person who can't care for themselves. However, there may be an exception with medical documentation which specifies that more than one person is needed to provide the required care.

- ~~• Exempt from the FoodShare basic work rules (see for more details and full list of basic work rules exemptions).~~
- Receives Unemployment Compensation (UC), or has applied for UC, and is complying with UC work requirements.
- Regularly participates in an alcohol or other drug abuse (AODA) treatment or rehabilitation program.
- A student aged 18 years or older who is enrolled at least half-time in high a recognized school, training program, or institute of higher education. Enrollment in a GED or HSED program does not qualify for the exemption (though it might be an assigned activity that counts towards required hours for an ABAWD choosing to meet the work requirement through FSET participation).
 - ~~• A student of higher education who is otherwise eligible for FoodShare (see Section 3.15.1 Student Eligibility).~~
- Is not a work registrant due to working 30 or more hours per week or earning wages equivalent to 30 or more hours per week at the federal minimum wage
- Complying with Wisconsin Works (W-2) program requirements.

Workers must document all exemptions in case comments.

Note If an a person's child is coded as out of the home, including children placed in foster care and children coded as out of home tax dependents, the applicant or member would be considered an ABAWD unless otherwise exempt.

Persons who reside in an area where the time limit of the FoodShare work requirement is suspended or are a tribal member living on tribal land where the time limit of the FoodShare work requirement is suspended are not considered exempt. Rather, if no other exemptions are met they would be an ABAWD who is not subject to the time limit and they would not accrue TLBs.

Example 3	An IM worker conducts a FoodShare renewal interview over the telephone with Jolene. Jolene explains that she is homeless and currently sleeping at a temporary shelter at night and does not know when she will find permanent housing. The worker determines Jolene is exempt from the FoodShare work requirement due to being homeless.
Example 4	An IM worker conducts a renewal FoodShare interview over the telephone with Ronald. Ronald explains that he is living at his friend's house, but he is not on the lease and cannot use it as a mailing address. Ronald plans to continue living with his friend. The worker determines that Ronald is not homeless.

3.17.1.4 Verification of Work Hours and Exemptions From FoodShare Work Requirement

Verification of exemptions from the FoodShare work requirement is not required unless otherwise noted as a part of eligibility requirements or deemed questionable.

Any determination that information provided by an applicant or member on an exemption is questionable must be made on a case-by-case basis, including when the information is provided via self-attestation. In most instances, self-attestation is sufficient to confirm an individual meets an exemption. If an IM worker deems an exemption questionable, an exemption or status change cannot be applied until the exemption is verified. An ABAWD with an exemption deemed questionable will receive TLBs until the verification is received.

- If a reported exemption is determined to be questionable, examples of verification sources include the following:
 - Agency form
 - Statement from health care, social worker, or AODA professional
 - Data exchanges
 - Department of Veteran Affairs service department correspondence or contact including documents relating to release, discharge, or transfer; identification card indicating service veteran status
 - Using information known to the IM agency
 - Collateral contact
 - Other acceptable written statement

Another option to verify if a member is physically or mentally unable to work is the Medical Exemption from Work Requirement for ABAWD form ([F-01598](#)). The form is not required, and IM workers must accept other forms of verification for this exemption, if questionable.

ABAWD ~~Hours Worked~~ hours worked must be verified. Some types of acceptable verification include:

- Employer form/paystub/tax document/EVF-E.
- Written statement from the employer, work program, or volunteer site.
- Employer, work program, or volunteer site contact.

The FoodShare Clock Page may need to be adjusted once verification of an exemption that was found questionable or verification of ABAWD hours worked is provided (see SECTION 3.17.1.13 ADJUSTING FOODSHARE CLOCK PAGE). ~~As long as an exemption exists for part of a month, the member is exempt for the entire month. If the ABAWD meets the 80-hour FoodShare work requirement, the ABAWD cannot accrue a TLB for that month.~~ When applying an exemption or verified work hours, workers must determine when the individual initially became exempt or began meeting the work requirement and remove TLBs that were incurred while the individual was exempt or meeting the FoodShare work requirement. ~~If an IM worker deems an exemption questionable, an~~

~~exemption or status change will not be applied until it is verified. An ABAWD with an exemption deemed questionable will receive TLBs until the verification is received.~~ The ABAWD cannot accrue a TLB for any month in which they meet the 80-hour FoodShare work requirement or receive an exemption.

IM agency staff may use the FSET provider as a collateral contact or to provide an acceptable written statement to assist in the determination of ABAWD exemptions or verification of work hours. Information received from the FSET agency is considered verified upon receipt. The IM worker makes the final determination whether to apply an exemption or status change to the member’s case.

~~The effective date of an exemption is the first of the month the exemption situation exists as long as verification is provided. The FoodShare Clock Page may need to be adjusted once verification of an exemption is provided (see -).~~

<p>Example 5</p>	<p>Angela is an ABAWD who is not meeting the FoodShare work requirement and does not claim an exemption during her application interview on July 7. A referral is sent to FSET. Angela receives the FSET referral letter, which lists the ABAWD exemptions. On August 25, Angela reports to her IM worker that she started regularly participating in an ACODA treatment program on August 10. The IM worker did not determine the reported exemption to be questionable. Angela will be treated as a non-ABAWD as of August 1 due to having an exemption. <u>Mike applied for FoodShare for the first time and attended his initial interview in-person. Mike responds “yes” when asked if he is a veteran as part of the FoodShare interview. He also reported he does not have any documentation of his veteran status to provide at this time. The information is not questionable even if there was no history of this previously on file, or if Mike is brand-new to FoodShare and does not have documentation. Mike’s self-attestation is sufficient. The IM worker documents the exemption, explains documentation for the exemption is not required, and proceeds with the interview. Mike is exempt from the work requirement.</u></p>
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<p>Example 6</p>	<p>Olive applies and is determined eligible for FoodShare beginning April 19. During the application interview Olive reports that she is pregnant. The IM worker determines that Olive’s pregnancy meets the exemption and that it is not questionable. Olive will be a non-ABAWD effective April 1. <u>Ethan applied for FoodShare for the first time and attended his initial interview over the phone. Ethan reported that he recently had a concussion and although his symptoms such as headaches and difficulty concentrating are improving, he is supposed to return to work gradually. As a result, he reduced his hours as a customer service representative to three, four-hour shifts per week. Ethan’s IM worker determines that he is physically unfit for work. Even though Ethan can work some hours each week, he is physically unable to meet the 80-hour FoodShare work requirement. The IM worker documents the exemption and proceeds with the interview.</u></p>
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<p>Example 7</p>	<p>Chip <u>Angela is an ABAWD who needs to meet is not meeting the FoodShare work requirement. He did and does not work or have claim an exemption and earned TLBs in June, during her application interview on July, and August. He started working 25 hours per week and met 7. A referral is sent to FSET. Angela receives the FoodShare work requirement in September.</u></p>
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	<p>On December 1 of that same year, Chip FSET referral letter, which lists the ABAWD exemptions. On August 25, Angela reports that his 14-year-old daughter had moved into his apartment in July. The to her IM worker adds Chip's daughter to his food unit and adjusts the status of the FoodShare Clock to "EX-Exempt" for the months of July and that she started regularly participating in an AODA treatment program on August 10. The IM worker notes the removal of the July and did not determine the reported exemption to be questionable. Angela is a non-ABAWD as of August TLBs in case comments1 due to having an exemption.</p>
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Example 8	<p>Sophia is an ABAWD with a non-TLB referral and meeting the FoodShare work requirement through work at a local coffee shop. Sophia completed her renewal interview via telephone and reported that she is pregnant. Sophia's self-attestation is not questionable. The IM worker enters the pregnancy information, documents the exemption, and proceeds with the interview.</p>
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Example 9	<p>Coral is an ABAWD with a TLB referral and started missing her FSET activities due to frequent panic attacks. Coral reports her recent struggles with anxiety to her FSET case manager. Coral's FSET worker notifies the IM agency of the exemption via email. Because Coral is mentally unfit for work, the IM agency updates Coral's case to reflect the exemption and documents that they received the report from the FSET agency in Coral's case file, including scanning the email from the FSET agency.</p>
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Example 10	<p>Chip is an ABAWD who needs to meet the FoodShare work requirement. He did not work or have an exemption and earned TLBs in June, July, and August. He started working 25 hours per week and met the FoodShare work requirement in September. On December 1 of that same year, Chip reports that his 14-year-old daughter had moved into his apartment in July. The worker adds Chip's daughter to his food unit and adjusts the status of the FoodShare Clock to "EX-Exempt" for the months of July and August. The worker notes the removal of the July and August TLBs in case comments.</p>
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3.17.1.6 Three Countable Months of Time-Limited FoodShare Benefits (TLBs)

ABAWD eligibility for FoodShare is limited to three months of TLBs in the current three-year clock period if an ABAWD is not meeting the FoodShare work requirement and does not have a qualifying exemption. The three TLB months do not have to be consecutive.

An ABAWD will accrue a TLB month any month in which the ABAWD received a full month of FoodShare benefits and the member:

- Is not meeting the FoodShare work requirement; and
- Does not meet an exemption from the FoodShare work requirement; or
- Does not verify an exemption from the FoodShare work requirement.

An ABAWD will not accrue a TLB month any month in which the ABAWD does one of the following:

- Received pro-rated FoodShare benefits

- Is covered by a suspension of the time limit
- Is notified of a provider determination by the IM agency

Example 10	Linda, an ABAWD who is not meeting the FoodShare work requirement, applied for FoodShare and was found eligible with a 12-month certification period of July 2 through June 30. Linda's first TLB month is August because July benefits were prorated.
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Example 11	Libby is an ABAWD who earned two TLBs in November and December. On January 5, Libby reports and verifies that her roommate's child moved into her home on December 21. Libby, her roommate, and her roommate's child are in the same food unit. Libby's status changes to non-ABAWD effective December 1, the month the exemption began.
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3.17.1.8 Regaining Eligibility After Exhausting Three Months of Time-Limited Benefits

There is no limit on how many times an ABAWD may regain eligibility after exhausting three months of TLBs. A new application is required if the ABAWD re-requests FoodShare as a food unit of one unless the case has been closed less than 30 days and can reopen under break in service (see [SECTION 2.3.1 BREAK IN SERVICE](#)). If an ABAWD is requesting FoodShare on an on-going case, follow the person add policy to re-establish FoodShare eligibility (see [SECTION 6.1.3.3 CHANGES THAT CAUSE AN INCREASE IN BENEFITS, INCLUDING PERSON ADDS AND LOSS OF INCOME](#)).

ABAWDs who have exhausted three months of TLBs during the current three-year period may regain eligibility by completing one of the following:

- Providing verification that the FoodShare work requirement was met for any 30 consecutive day period following the loss of FoodShare eligibility
- Verifying that the FoodShare work requirement will be met within 30 days of the new filing date. The FoodShare work requirement can be met by completing one of the following:
 - Working a minimum of 80 hours in the 30-day period (see [SECTION 3.17.1.2.1 DEFINITION OF WORKING FOR FOODSHARE WORK REQUIREMENT FOR ABAWDS](#))
 - Participating in and complying with requirements of an allowable work program (see [SECTION 3.17.1.2.1 DEFINITION OF WORKING FOR FOODSHARE WORK REQUIREMENT FOR ABAWDS](#)) for at least 80 hours in the 30-day period (see [SECTION 3.17.1.2.1 DEFINITION OF WORKING FOR FOODSHARE WORK REQUIREMENT FOR ABAWDS](#))
 - FoodShare eligibility is a required prerequisite to FSET enrollment, so an ABAWD can't regain eligibility through FSET participation after FoodShare closes.
 - If an ABAWD is FoodShare eligible at the time of the FSET referral and enrollment, the ABAWD can participate in FSET and be expected to meet the FoodShare work requirement.
 - A combination of work and participation in an allowable work program for a minimum of 80 hours in the 30-day period

- ~~Providing verification of~~ Meeting criteria for a current_ exemption from the FoodShare work requirement, as determined by the IM agency, at the time of the application
- ~~Providing verification of an exemption~~ Meeting criteria for an exemption or good cause for a past month, as determined by the IM agency, that removes one or more TLBs
- The three-year clock expires

An ABAWD who is meeting one of the above requirements does not have to be meeting the work requirement at the time of re-application. An ABAWD who has exhausted three months of TLBs and is not meeting one of the above requirements at the time of re-application is ineligible for FoodShare. If the ineligible ABAWD is a member of an open food unit, the ABAWD will be counted as a pro-rated deemer (see Section 4.7.5 Prorated Deeming). If the ineligible ABAWD's food unit remains open through the three-year clock restart, the previously ineligible ABAWD will become eligible the month the subsequent clock begins and may begin accruing TLBs if not meeting the work requirement or exempt.

Note If an individual has exhausted their three TLBs, is reapplying or re-requesting FoodShare, and has a pending exemption or non-ABAWD status, the manual CARES Worker Web (CWW) letter, FSET PROOF OF EXMPT – NFST, must be sent to request verification. To send this letter in Spanish, use the manual NFSS letter.

Example 15	Stella's FoodShare closed on October 31 after three TLBs were issued for August, September, and October. Stella reapplies for FoodShare on January 2 during the same three-year clock cycle. Stella is not meeting the work requirement at reapplication, but during the FoodShare interview Stella reports that she gained seasonal employment of 20 hours per week from November 8 through December 28. Verification of the employment is requested by the IM worker. Stella is determined eligible following verification of her complete work hours because she worked 30 consecutive days prior to application. Stella's FoodShare eligibility will be effective from her filing date as long as she meets all other eligibility criteria.
Example 16	Gracie received three TLBs for November, December, and January. Her FoodShare closed January 31. Gracie claims an exemption for all three months due to a hip surgery and recovery period when she re-applies for FoodShare on February 10 and provides verification from her medical provider. The status of the FoodShare Clock is adjusted to apply the exemption for the months of November, December, and January. The removal of the TLBs is documented in the case comments. Gracie's eligibility will be effective from her break-in-service date of February 10.
Example 17	Toby is open for FoodShare on a case with his girlfriend and cousin. Toby received three TLBs for January, February, and March. FoodShare remains open for Toby's girlfriend and cousin. Toby becomes a pro-rated deemer effective April 1. On May 12 of the same year, Toby requests to be added back into the food unit. He has been working at Target since May 5. He works 10 hours a week and provides paystubs for verification. When eligibility is run, Toby is found ineligible for FoodShare because he is not fully meeting the FoodShare work requirement. He will continue to be a pro-rated deemer until the three-year clock restarts and resets his TLB count to zero unless he meets the work requirement or meets an exemption.

3.20.1 Drug Related Felonies

§49.79(5)(a)

3.20.1.2 Administration of Drug Test

Drug tests must only be administered by trained professionals outside of the Income Maintenance (IM) and Tribal Income Maintenance staff. IM agency staff, regardless of position or title, cannot administer the drug tests.

Applicants and members cannot self-administer the drug tests.

Results can be received from the following types of entities which include but are not limited to:

- Doctors and nurses
- Public and Tribal health centers and departments (even if co-located within the IM agency)
- Certified laboratories
- Justice centers
- Drug courts
- Hospitals
- Medical centers
- Probation and Parole
- Employers
- Drug and alcohol treatment centers
- Other Credentialed/trained drug testing individuals/agencies (non-Consortia/Tribal IM staff)

If a person has received a passing drug test result in the last 30 days by another entity such as their probation agent, a drug counselor, or an employer, they can use those results and not take another test. Passing drug tests from the last 30 days do not need to meet the drug test requirements in SECTION 3.20.1.3.

A professional administering a drug test should collect documentation of any prescriptions and address any resulting positive test. However, if a person convicted of a drug-related felony reports to the IM worker they have a valid prescription and can provide documentation that they were prescribed a medication that resulted in a positive drug test, excluding medical marijuana, the sanction can be lifted, and the drug test is to be considered to have been passed.

3.20.1.4 Scheduling

~~Applicants and~~ Workers must give members ~~who need to take a drug test must be provided with all~~ the information ~~needed~~ necessary to schedule ~~their~~ and take the drug test. This includes but is not limited to any referral paperwork, the vendor's name, address, special instructions, or phone number, ~~etc. If the applicant or member requests~~

~~help in scheduling. Members must provide verification of the test, the worker must assist them. The worker must document the method in which they provided the information to the member such as by phone or mail date and what information they provided to the member. They also need to document if any additional assistance in scheduling was provided. Ensure the applicant or member has adequate time to schedule, take the drug test, and have the results returned. Note this. Without verification, the member will lose eligibility in the next possible benefit month and become a gross deemer. Workers may require a need to extend the verification due date extension to give members adequate time to schedule, conduct, and return drug test results.~~ Clearly document all actions taken in case comments.

3.20.1.5 Applications and Renewals

Applicants must self-attest if they have been convicted of a drug felony within the past five years. Members completing a renewal must self-attest to any previously unreported convictions within the past five years.

During the application or renewal interview, it must be explained that people convicted of a drug-related felony in the past five years, must take and pass a drug test to be eligible for FoodShare. A drug test that was taken and passed at the time of application, will not require another drug test at renewal. A drug test is required at renewal if there is a new person convicted of a drug related felony or a previously unreported drug felony.

Upon agreement to take the test, the person is eligible, and benefits must be issued if they meet all other eligibility criteria. If they pass the test (negative test result), they remain eligible for ongoing benefits.

If they refuse to take a drug test, they are ineligible (gross deemer without a sanction) for FoodShare, effective the next possible benefit month. Members who don't take a test can reapply at any time. If they reapply, they must agree to take a drug test, unless the conviction is more than five years old.

If they fail the drug test (positive result), they must be sanctioned for 12 months (gross deemer with a sanction) effective the next possible benefit month. During this time, they cannot regain FoodShare eligibility. They must serve the full sanction. If the member failed the drug test but had a prescription for the drug(s), the sanction must be lifted and eligibility restored.

An individual subject to the drug testing policy, must verify the drug test date and the result of the test. If verification of the test date and result is not provided, the individual will lose eligibility the next possible benefit month and become a gross deemer.

See Section 4.7.6 Gross Deeming

If the drug test is inconclusive, the person must retake the test until they receive a passing or failing result. If the member does not retake the test, they must be determined ineligible for not agreeing to take a drug test. The person must be given an

adequate amount of time to reschedule, retake, and receive the results of any additional drug tests. This may require a verification due date extension.

Benefits issued while a drug test result is pending are not recoverable if the drug test is failed.

Example 2	On June 19, Jane applies for FoodShare for herself and her two children. Jane reports having a drug felony conviction from three years ago and agrees to take a drug test. The drug test was scheduled for June 25. The application is processed, and Jane is found eligible for June and July FoodShare benefits. Verification for Jane's drug test results are requested for ongoing eligibility. The drug test results are received on July 2. Jane failed the drug test. Jane is sanctioned effective August 1 for 12 months. Jane's two children remain eligible for FoodShare.
Example 3	Jeremy applies and completes his interview on January 10, at which time he agrees to take the drug test. Jeremy's application is processed, and he is found eligible for benefits. Jeremy's ongoing case is then pended and a request for drug test results is sent. Jeremy has 20 days to provide a passing drug test result. If a passing <u>positive</u> test result is received by the due date , he will be sanctioned and his benefits will be terminated.

4.3.4 Unearned Income

4.3.4.3 Disregarded Unearned Income

Disregard means do not count. When you are calculating the total amount of unearned income a person has received, you must exempt or exclude any of the following kinds of unearned income:

Housing and related income

1. Disregard rent paid by the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and Farmer's Home Administration (FMHA) directly to a landlord as income. Do not include these payments as a deduction. Only include as a rent expense what the food unit owes to the landlord after the HUD or FMHA payments.
2. Disregard rent paid by HUD to residents in the experimental housing program in Green Bay.
3. Disregard HUD or FMHA utility reimbursement payments made directly to a food unit or utility provider as income.
4. Disregard HUD utility reimbursement payments diverted by a Native American housing authority directly to the utility provider without permission, consent, or agreement of the food unit.
5. Under the Family Investment Centers program, HUD provides grant money to public housing agencies and Indian housing authorities. In turn, they provide access to education and job opportunities to public housing residents. Disregard as income services provided to these residents. Services include:
 - a. Child care
 - b. Employment and training counseling
 - c. Literacy training
 - d. Computer skills training
 - e. Assistance in attaining certificates of high school equivalency
 - f. Other similar services
6. Disregard free rent, no income is counted, and no rent deduction is allowed.
7. A tenant may be billed utility expenses for common electrical devices, for the benefit of any number of tenants, but wired through their meter. A notice from the landlord identifies that cost and the tenant's reimbursement. Disregard the reimbursement.
8. Income received as a result of participation in the Fresh Start Program.

Employment Training and Education

1. Educational aid for students is not counted as income.
2. Disregard educational expense reimbursements.
3. Disregard income produced by an educational trust.

4. Disregard W-2 TSP (stipends for non-custodial parents) received for W-2 education and training activities.

Loans

Disregard as income any loan to the food unit. This includes loans from private individuals and commercial institutions.

Verification is required when a reported loan appears to be countable income. A legally executed document is not required to verify that income is a loan. A statement signed by both parties is enough to verify the income is a loan, if it contains: the amount of the loan, that the payment is a loan, and that repayment is required.

Medical and Dependent Care

1. Disregard reimbursements for medical or dependent care. Some examples of medical or dependent care reimbursements that must be disregarded are:
 - a. Reimbursements from the Medical Assistance (MA), also known as Medicaid or Title 19 Community Integration Program (CIP).
 - b. Reimbursements from Medicare Advantage supplement benefits.
 - c. Reimbursements from the Alzheimer's Family Caregiver Support Program (AFCSP), the National Family Caregiver Support Program (NFCSP), and the Program of Comprehensive Assistance for Family Caregivers (PCAFC).
2. Disregard dependent care payments as income for a food unit member's care when a county agency:
 - a. Pays a dependent care provider directly,
 - b. Reimburses the food unit after the food unit has incurred or paid a dependent care expense.
3. Disregard payments from the Wisconsin Family Support Program, which assists families by covering medical, dependent and other allowable expenses for in-home support for children with severe disabilities. Payments may be issued in several ways, including by voucher or direct payment to the vendor, or direct payment to the family as a reimbursement for allowable expenses. Do not confuse this program with "family support", a court-ordered obligation that combines child support and maintenance.

SSA programs

1. Disregard reimbursements for services provided by the [Social Services Block Grant Program](#).
2. Disregard retroactive SSI payments which are paid in installments.
 - a. Retroactive SSI benefits which total 12 months or more of the Federal Benefit Rate (monthly SSI amount) will be paid in three or fewer installments at six-month intervals. Each installment payment must be counted as an asset. Retroactive SSI benefits which equal or exceed 12

months of benefits, but which are owed to the following categories of recipients, will continue to be received in one lump sum:

- i. A person who has a medical impairment which is expected to cause death within 12 months.
 - ii. A person who is ineligible for benefits and is likely to remain ineligible for the next 12 months.
3. Disregard income of an SSI recipient necessary to fulfill a Plan to Achieve Self-Support (PASS) regardless of the source. This income may be spent in accordance with an approved PASS or deposited into a PASS account. The SSA must approve the individual's PASS in writing, identifying the amount of income that must be set aside each month to fulfill the PASS. It is the member's responsibility to report and verify that such income is necessary to fulfill its PASS in order for the income to be disregarded.
 4. A qualified organization may collect a fee for acting as the representative payee for an SSI or OASDI recipient. Disregard the amount withheld from the SSI or OASDI payment as income to the recipient. Reduce the SSI or OASDI amount by the amount withheld instead.

SSI-E

Disregard SSI-E income for FoodShare. It is not necessary to determine if an SSI-E payment is being used for its intended purpose in order to disregard the income.

Energy Assistance Program

Disregard all payments provided by the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) or Wisconsin Home Energy Assistance Program (WHEAP).

Community Options Program

Disregard Community Options Program (COP) reimbursement for long-term care services. If a food unit member is receiving COP payments for providing services, count the money as earned income.

Tribal / Native American Payments

Disregard any Tribal General Welfare Assistance (GWA) and Tribal General Welfare Exclusion (GWE) payments (26 USC § 139E).

Disregard payments to individual tribal members of the following tribes or from the following federal settlements:

1. Seminole Indians of Florida (PL 84-736).
2. Pueblos of Zia and Jemez of New Mexico (PL 84-926).
3. Red Lake Band of Chippewa Indians (PL 85-794).
4. Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act (PL 92-203).
5. Stockbridge Munsee Indian Community of Wisconsin (PL 92-480).

6. Burns Indian Community of Oregon (PL 92-488).
7. Pueblo of Santa Ana (PL 95-498).
8. Pueblo of Zia of New Mexico (PL 95-499).
9. Bois Forte Band of the Chippewa Tribe or the Grand Portage Band of Lake Superior Chippewa Indians under 25 USC 1407 (PL 93-134, 97-458, 106-568, 113-290).
10. Navajo and Hopi Tribe relocation payments (PL 93-531).
11. Cherokee Nation of Oklahoma (PL 94-114).
12. Cheyenne River Sioux, Crow Creek Sioux, Lower Brule Sioux, Oglala Sioux, and Rosebud Sioux Tribes of South Dakota (PL 94-114).
13. Devils Lake Sioux and Standing Rock Sioux Tribes of North Dakota (PL 94-114).
14. Shoshone-Bannock Tribes of Idaho (PL 94-114).
15. Sac and Fox Indian claims agreement (PL 94-189).
16. Grand River Band of Ottawa Indians (PL 94-540).
17. Confederated Tribes and Bands of the Yakima Indian Nation or the Apache Tribe of the Mescalero Reservation (PL 95-433).
18. Indian Child Welfare Act of 1978 (PL 95-608).
19. Delaware Tribe of Indians and the Delaware Tribe of Western Oklahoma (PL 96-318).
20. Passamaquoddy Tribe, Penobscot Nation, and Houlton Band of Maliseet Indians under the Maine Indian Claims Settlement Act of 1980 (PL 96-420).
21. Wyandot Tribe of Indians of Oklahoma (97-371).
22. Absentee Shawnee Tribe of Oklahoma, Eastern Shawnee Tribe of Oklahoma, and Cherokee Band of Shawnee descendants (PL 97-372).
23. Miami Tribe of Oklahoma and Miami Indians of Indiana (PL 97-376).
24. Clallam Tribe of Indians, including Port Gamble Indian Community, Lower Elwha Tribal Community, and Jamestown Band of Clallam Indians, of Washington (PL 97-402).
25. Turtle Mountain Band of Chippewas of Arizona (PL 97-403).
26. Blackfeet, Gros Ventre Tribes, and Assiniboine Tribes of Montana (PL 97-408).
27. Papago Tribe of Arizona (PL 97-408).
28. Red Lake Band of Chippewas (PL 98-123).
29. Assiniboine Tribes of Fort Belknap Indian Community and Fort Peck Indian Reservation of Montana (PL 98-124).
30. Chippewas of Lake Superior including the Bad River Band, Lac du Flambeau Reservation, Lac Courte Oreilles Band, Sokaogon Chippewa Community, Red Cliff Reservation, and St. Croix Reservation of Wisconsin; disregard any per capita payment issued under this judgement in its entirety (PL 99-146).
31. Keweenaw Bay Indian Community of Michigan (PL 99-146).
32. Fond du Lac, Grand Portage, Nett Lake, and White Earth Reservations of Minnesota (PL 99-146).
33. White Earth Band of Chippewas in Minnesota (PL 99-264).
34. Saginaw Chippewa Indian Tribe of Michigan (PL 99-346).
35. Chippewas of the Mississippi including Mille Lac, White Earth, and Leech Lake of Minnesota (PL 99-377).

36. Band of Potawatomi, including Hannahville Indian Community and Forest County Potawatomi, of Wisconsin; if issued as a per capita payment, disregard the first \$2,000 of each payment made from this judgement (PL 100-581).
37. Puyallup Tribes under the Puyallup Tribe of Indians Settlement Act of 1989 (PL 101-41).
38. Seneca Nation of New York under the Seneca Nation Settlement Act of 1990 (PL 101-503).
39. Catawba Indian Tribe of South Carolina (PL 103-116).
40. Confederated Tribes of the Colville Reservation (PL 103-436).

Exclude as income any lump sum or periodic payments received under the Cobell v. Salazar Class Action Trust Case during the one-year period beginning on the date of receipt (PL 111-291).

Disregard up to \$2,000 per calendar year held by an individual Native American which is derived from restricted land or land held in trust by the Department of Interior, Bureau of Indian Affairs (PL 103-66, 92-203, and 100-241).

Disregard the first \$2,000 of individual shares for the following:

1. Confederated Tribes of the Warm Springs Reservation (PL 97-436).
2. Old Age Assistance Claims Settlement Act (PL 98-500).
3. Seminole Nation of Oklahoma (PL 101-277).
4. Seminole Tribe, Miccosukee Tribe of Indians, and the independent Seminole Indians of Florida (PL 101-277).
5. Rincon Band of Mission Indians (Docket 80-A).
6. Walker Paiute Tribe (Docket 87-A).
7. Ak-Chin, Salt River Pima-Maricopa, and Gila River Pima-Maricopa Indian Communities (Docket 228).
8. Maricopa Ak-Chin Indian Community (Docket 235).
9. Peoria Tribe of Oklahoma (Dockets 313, 314-A, and 314-B).
10. Yankton Sioux Tribe (Dockets 342-70 and 343-70).
11. Wichita and Affiliated Tribe (Keechi, Waco & Tawakonie) of Oklahoma (Dockets 371 and 372).

Child Nutrition Act of 1966 and the National School Lunch Act

Disregard the value of assistance received from programs under the Child Nutrition Act of 1966 and the National School Lunch Act. These are the:

1. Special Milk Program.
2. School Breakfast Program.
3. Special Supplemental Food Program for Women, Infants and Children (WIC).
4. School Lunch Program.
5. Summer Food Service Program for Children.
6. Commodity Supplemental Food Program.
7. Child and Adult Care Food Program.

Disaster and Emergency Assistance Payments

1. Disregard major disaster and emergency assistance payments made by federal, state, county, and local agencies, and other disaster assistance organizations, including National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP).
2. Disregard Emergency Assistance or emergency General Assistance when either is given to a migrant or seasonal farm worker food unit if:
 - a. The payment is provided to a third party (vendor) on behalf of the migrant or seasonal farm worker; and,
 - b. The food unit was in the job stream when (for example, working) it was provided.
3. Disregard disaster unemployment benefits to any individual who is unemployed as a result of a major disaster. Individuals cannot be eligible for any other unemployment compensation and also receive disaster unemployment benefits. Payments are limited to 26 weeks.

COVID-19 Pandemic Assistance: Refer to [Process Help COVID-19 Unwinding](#) for specific policies and process related to COVID-19 pandemic income.

Veterans Benefits

Exclude VA aid and attendance and homebound allowances if the payment is:

1. For a past or future expense.
2. Not in excess of the actual expense.
3. Not for a normal household living expense.
4. Used for the intended purpose.

Disregard aid and attendance and housebound allowances received by veterans, spouses of disabled veterans, and surviving spouses.

GI Bill

All military personnel fund the GI Bill through mandatory payroll deductions in their first year of service. Disregard these deductions when counting income.

Example 2	During Joe's first year of military service, his gross pay is \$1,000 per month. One hundred dollars is deducted from his paycheck each month for the GI Bill. The IM worker disregards the \$100 deduction and budgets his pay as \$900 per month.
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Combat Pay

IM workers are required to determine if a military allotment made available to a food unit by an absent member deployed to a combat zone should be excluded when determining eligibility. Disregard any amount of combat zone pay that goes to the food unit that is in excess of the military person's pre-deployment pay. The exclusion lasts while the military person is deployed to the combat area.

If the amount of military pay from the deployed absent family member is equal to or less than the amount the food unit was receiving prior to deployment, all of the allotment

would be counted as income to the food unit. Any portion of the military pay that exceeds the amount the food unit was receiving prior to deployment to a designated combat zone must be excluded when determining the food unit's income for FoodShare purposes.

Follow these steps in determining how to budget combat zone pay:

1. Ask if the service member is deployed to a combat zone.
 - a. If the answer is no, verify military pay using a bank record or Leave and Earnings Statements (LES) and clearly document in case comments how income to the food unit was determined and verified.
 - b. If the answer is yes, verify the service member's pay before deployment to a combat zone and the amount they receive due to being assigned to a combat zone. Leave and Earnings Statements (LES) or bank records can be used to verify this amount.
2. Any portion that is more than the amount the food unit was receiving immediately before deployment to a combat zone is exempt as combat pay.
3. Clearly document in case comments the combat pay source of verification and method used to determine amount to be disregarded and budgeted.

Deployment to a combat zone can be established through a variety of methods including:

1. The deployed person's military pay record, the Leave and Earnings statement (LES).
2. Orders issued to the military person in which the place of deployment is public record.
3. Contacting the Call Center which has a listing of designated combat zones, as well as a listing of pay items which may or may not be the result of deployment to a designated combat zone

Example 3	<p>John, his wife Bonnie, and their daughter have an open FoodShare case. John is in the military stationed overseas; his monthly income is \$1,000. John sends his wife \$1,000 every month.</p> <p>When John is deployed to a combat zone his pay is increased to \$1,300 a month, which is deposited into a joint account. Because the \$300 is combat pay, it is exempt income and not counted in the determination. The pre-combat pay of \$1,000 is budgeted as unearned income for FoodShare.</p>
Example 4	<p>Dori is in the military and receives \$1,000 per month in wages. Dori's husband Louie and their son Joe have an open FoodShare case. Dori has her military pay directly deposited into a bank account in her name only; Louie has no access to the funds or to the account. Do not count any of Dori's income in the eligibility determination for Louie and Joe.</p>
Example 5	<p>Ben is in the military. His paycheck is \$1,000 a month. He has \$500 directly deposited into his account and \$500 directly deposited into a joint account with his wife, Andrea. The \$500 directly deposited into the joint account is budgeted as unearned income in Andrea's FoodShare determination. Since Andrea does not have access to Ben's account, only the amount deposited in their joint account is counted.</p>

Example 6	Tim is in the military making \$1,200 a month. An allotment check of \$1,000 is paid directly to his wife Karla and \$200 to himself. The \$1,000 is budgeted as Karla's unearned income for her FoodShare determination.
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Dottie Moore

Disregard as income any penalty payment paid as a result of the Dottie Moore lawsuit by DHS (formerly DHSS) to any Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC) applicant or member. These \$50 to \$200 penalty payments have been ordered by the U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Wisconsin in Civil Action No. 80-C-118.

Income Tax Refunds, Credits, and Rebates

Disregard income tax refunds, credits, and rebates as income.

Victims of Nazi Persecution

Disregard as income payments under PL 103-286 to victims of Nazi persecution.

Payments to Crime Victims

Disregard any payments received from a state established fund to aid victims of a crime.

Agent Orange Settlement Fund

Disregard payments received from the Agent Orange Settlement Fund, or any other fund established in settling "In Re Agent Orange Product Liability Settlement Fund litigation M.D.L. No. 381 (E.D.N.Y.)." Continue to disregard the payments for as long as they are identified separately. Apply this disregard retroactively to January 1, 1989.

Wartime Relocation of Civilians

Disregard payments under PL 100-383 to U.S. citizens of Japanese ancestry and permanent resident Japanese immigrants or their survivors and Aleut residents of the Pribilof Islands and the Aleutian Islands West of Unimak Island.

Radiation Exposure Act

Disregard payments from any program under the Radiation Exposure Compensation Act (PL 101-426) paid to compensate injury or death resulting from exposure to radiation from nuclear testing (\$50,000) and uranium mining (\$100,000). Apply this disregard retroactively to October 15, 1990. When the affected person is deceased, payments are made to the surviving spouse, children, parents, or grandparents of the deceased. The federal DOJ makes the payments. Continue to disregard the payments for as long as they are identified separately. Apply this disregard retroactively to October 15, 1990.

Children of Vietnam Veterans Who Are Born with Spina Bifida

Disregard payments received under the provision of the Benefits for Children of Vietnam Veterans Who Are Born with Spina Bifida (PL 104-204). These payments are made to any child of a Vietnam veteran for any disability they experience resulting from the spina bifida. Apply this disregard retroactively to September 26, 1996. Continue this disregard as long as payments are identified separately.

Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Policy Act of 1970

Disregard reimbursements from the Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Policy Act of 1970 (PL 91-646, Section 216).

Capital Gains

Disregard capital gains from the sale of a personal asset as income. Profits gained from the sale of an asset continue to be counted as an asset (see Section 4.3.3.3 Capital and Ordinary Gains for policy related to self-employment).

Reverse Mortgage

Disregard reverse mortgage payments made to homeowners. Reverse mortgage payments are loans against the borrower's home and are considered an asset these payments are not considered income.

Payments to Filipino World War II Veterans

Disregard payments from the Filipino Veterans Equity Compensation Fund. The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) of 2009 created the fund for certain veterans and the spouses of veterans who served in the military of the Government of the Commonwealth of the Philippines during World War II. The compensation fund offers one-time payments that may be up to \$15,000 to eligible persons.

Living Independently through Financial Empowerment (LIFE)

The LIFE program provides short-term, monthly cash payments to families, including tribal members, experiencing crises resulting from a domestic violence situation. LIFE payments are designed to meet urgent financial needs such as but not limited to housing, utility payments, and groceries. The LIFE program is only available for a limited time until August 31, 2022. Approved applicants receive \$3,500 over three consecutive months: \$1,500 in month one, \$1,000 in month two, and \$1,000 in month three.

Universal Basic Income (UBI)

Universal Basic Income (UBI) and guaranteed income program payments are disregarded for FoodShare purposes if:

1. Excluded by TANF or Medicaid.

2. The payments are sourced solely from private funds or a mix of private and public funds.

Examples

1. Madison Forward Fund Universal Basic Income (UBI) Program Payments
2. The Bridge Project Guaranteed Income for pregnant individuals.

Priority Health Medicare Over-the-counter (OTC) Allowance

Dual Eligible Special Needs Plans (D-SNP); Over-the-counter (OTC) program; healthy foods/utility credits income are all disregarded for FoodShare.

Mobility management vouchers

Mobility management vouchers are disregarded as income.

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4.6.1 Deductions and Expenses

[7 CFR 273.9\(d\)](#)

A food unit may be eligible for six deductions from gross income in the monthly budget that determines their benefit allotment. These deductions are:

- Standard
- Earned income
- Medical expenses
- ~~Child support~~[Support](#) payment
- Dependent care expenses
- Shelter and utility expenses

Some food units are not allowed a deduction for some expenses and some expenses are not always deducted in full.

The amount of the monthly expenses used to determine these deductions is determined prospectively using the best verified information available.

Do not allow a deduction from any disregarded income. Make deductions only from countable income.

If the food unit fails to report or verify an expense, the deduction is not allowed.

6.1.1 Change Reporting for All Food Units (Simplified)

7 CFR 273.12(a)(5)(v)

All food units are subject to simplified reporting rules. Simplified reporting rules mean food units are only required to report three things during their certification period outside of their SMRF and renewal:.

1. When their assistance group's gross monthly income received goes above 130% FPL
2. When an ABAWD's work hours drop below 80 hours per month
3. When a person in the food unit has received a substantial lottery or gambling winning (see SECTION 6.1.1.1 SUBSTANTIAL LOTTERY OR GAMBLING WINNING)

130% FPL Reporting

The food unit must report by the 10th of the following month when the assistance group's (see Section 3.3.1 Food Unit/FoodShare Assistance Group/Relationships) gross monthly income received exceeds 130% FPL (see Section 8.1.1 Income Limits).

The gross monthly income limit is based on the assistance group size that existed at the time of its most recent certification action, regardless of any subsequent changes in the size of the assistance group.

Example 1	<u>Mike is a FoodShare member that was certified with income under 130% FPL. Mike's hours and rate of pay increase in the middle of January. Mike's total gross monthly income on the paychecks he received in January did not put the assistance group over 130% FPL.</u> <u>Mike's pay dates for February are February 13 and February 27. When Mike receives his paycheck on February 27, the assistance group's total gross monthly income received is now over 130% FPL. The change in income must be reported by March 10.</u>
Example 2	<u>Ted is receiving FoodShare and is certified under 130% FPL. Ted starts a new job on December 30. He receives his first paycheck on January 17. His gross income received from his first paycheck puts his assistance group over 130% FPL. Ted must report the change in income by February 10.</u>
Example 3	<u>Kate, Trina, and Randy are a food unit of three. Kate is an ineligible student (gross deemer). Trina and Randy are both eligible for and receiving FoodShare (assistance group of two). If the food unit's gross monthly income exceeds 130% of the FPL for an assistance group of two people, the food unit must report the change by the 10th of the following month.</u>

Anticipated receipt of income or work hours is not required to be reported, even if the anticipated income is expected to put the assistance group over the gross monthly income 130% FPL. A reported change in income can only be used in the budget after it is received.

Example 4	Reggie reports during the interview that he expects to start a new job next month. Because the job has not started and a paycheck has not been received, no income is to be budgeted. Reggie is required to report when the income they receive from the job puts the assistance group's income above 130% FPL.
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Once an assistance group has been certified eligible with a gross monthly income above 130% FPL, they have no further income reporting requirements until the next SMRF or renewal.

Example 5	Marlo is receiving FoodShare and is certified at 131% FPL. Two months later Marlo changes jobs and her gross monthly income is now at 240% FPL. Since Marlo was certified over 130%, Marlo does not need to report her income change until her next Six-Month Report Form (SMRF) or renewal.
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ABAWDs

ABAWDs must report by the 10th of the following month when their work hours fall below 80 hours per month (see SECTION 3.17.1.2.1 DEFINITION OF WORKING FOR FOODSHARE WORK REQUIREMENT FOR ABAWDs).

Substantial Lottery or Gambling Winning

Any food unit member that receives a substantial lottery or gambling winning must report by the 10th of the following month (see SECTION 6.1.1.1 SUBSTANTIAL LOTTERY OR GAMBLING WINNING).

However, if any change is reported or becomes known to the agency, it must be acted upon. When the information is not verified upon receipt, it may be appropriate to request clarification of the change.

See Section 5.1.1 Transitional FoodShare Benefits (TFS) for reporting requirements for Transitional FoodShare (TFS) members.

Note Failing to report a change may result in an overpayment (see SECTION 7.3.1.1 OVERPAYMENT CLAIMS AGAINST FOOD UNITS).

6.1.1.1 Substantial Lottery or Gambling Winning

7 CFR 273.11(r)

Effective November 1, 2023, FoodShare members must report a substantial lottery or gambling winning. Any food unit that reports receiving a substantial winning on or after this date, while receiving FoodShare, will lose their eligibility.

A substantial lottery or gambling winning is a cash prize, won in a single game (ticket, hand, similar bet), before taxes or other amounts are withheld. The substantial winning is equal to or greater than the asset limit for elderly or disabled households (see Section 8.1.1.3 Asset Limits for the current substantial winning limit).

A substantial winning received before an initial application or before the effective policy date does not affect eligibility. Only count a substantial winning received during the certification period.

Members must report the substantial winning by the 10th day of the month following the month they received the winning. The member must report the winning at SMRF or renewal if either is before the 10th of the following month. The household may reapply at any time after losing eligibility due to a lottery and gambling closure.

However, at reapplication, the household must be tested and recertified using regular SNAP rules, not broad-based categorical eligibility (BBCE) or categorical eligibility (CE). Test each application using regular SNAP rules until the household is found eligible.

Example 6	Jürgen wins \$10,000 playing a slot machine. He loses FoodShare eligibility for receiving a substantial winning. Jürgen reapplies for FoodShare and is found ineligible under regular SNAP rules. Two months later, Jürgen lost his job and spent the winning on living expenses. He reapplies for FoodShare. His application must be tested using regular SNAP rules. He is found eligible. At Jürgen's six-month report and renewal, his case will be tested under BBCE.
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Members are required to report a substantial winning received out-of-state.

Household Changes

A substantial winning only applies to the food unit where the winning was originally received. The winning never follows the winning member to another household. When a newly formed food unit or a food unit where the household composition has changed since the closure reapplies, the regular SNAP rules are not applicable. The food unit will be able to apply and be tested under BBCE or CE rules.

A substantial winning received before November 1, 2023, and before an initial application does not affect eligibility.

Example 7	Carlos, Lisa, and Paige are all in the same household receiving FoodShare. Paige buys a lottery ticket and wins \$10,000. She reports the winning and the case is closed. The household immediately reapplies for FoodShare. The case is tested and fails under regular SNAP rules. Two months later, Paige leaves the household to live on her own. After moving, Paige reapplies for FoodShare, she is tested under BBCE and is found eligible. Lisa and Carlos also reapply, are tested under BBCE, and are found eligible.
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Example 8	Ron received a substantial winning six months ago. He has not been found eligible under regular SNAP rules. Seven months after receiving the winning, his sister Birdy moves in. This is a change in household composition. If Birdy and Ron reapply for FoodShare, their case does not need to be tested under regular SNAP rules.
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Relevant food unit changes include but are not limited to:

- A member is added to the food unit.
- A member leaves the food unit.

Joint Purchase and Shared Winning

Multiple members in the same food unit may split the cost of a ticket and the winning. If the amount each member received is over the substantial winning amount, the food unit will lose eligibility. If the amount each winning member received is under the substantial winning amount, they will retain their eligibility.

A member may share the cost of the ticket and the winning with someone outside of the food unit. The member should only report the amount of the winning they received, not the total amount of the winning. If the amount received is over the substantial winning amount, the food unit will lose eligibility.

Example 9	Toua is receiving FoodShare and is the only person in his household. Toua evenly splits the cost of a lottery ticket with his friend, Yeng. They win \$5,000 and split the winning. Toua receives \$2,500. He does not need to report this winning because \$2,500 is under the substantial winning threshold.
Example 10	Amina has been receiving FoodShare for two years. She is in a food unit with five other people. An agency discovers that Amina received a lottery winning of \$7,000 five months ago. Amina has never reported the winning. Her case should close. Amina's household will be subject to overpayments from when the change would have been effective had they reported timely to the date the case was closed.

Verification

~~Members only need to verify a reported~~ if during the certification period, the substantial winning ~~if it~~ is found to be questionable, incomplete, or unclear, follow established policy and process for unclear information.

A Verification can be a member's verbal or written statement, lottery or gambling claim form, collateral contact with a gaming entity, or other document ~~that clarifies the questionable information is all that is needed for verification.~~

If verification was requested and not received, and the food unit's case is closed for failing to verify, the food unit will still need to be retested under regular SNAP rules at the next reapplication. _

6.1.2 Six Month Reporting Requirement

7 CFR 273.12(a)(iii)

Food units certified for 12 months and subject to simplified change reporting requirements are required to submit a six-month report form (SMRF) in the sixth month of the certification period. The form and any ~~supporting documentation~~ ~~required to verify reported changes on the form~~ verification must be submitted by the end of the sixth month (month the SMRF is due) to avoid a break in service.

Elderly, Blind, or Disabled (EBD) food units without earned income with 12-month certification periods are exempt from the six-month ~~report~~ reporting requirement.

Food units with 36-month certification periods may be required to complete SMRFs every six months (see SECTION 2.2.1.2 36-MONTH CERTIFICATION PERIOD).

The following changes in income must be reported on the SMRF for FoodShare members:

- A change of \$125 or more in unearned income based on the most recently verified amount.
- Changes in earned income (from the most recently verified information) that must be reported include:
 - Rate of pay.
 - Number of hours worked.
 - Loss of job.
 - Change from full to part-time.
 - New employment, but only if the first paycheck has been received by the time the SMRF is completed.
 - New or significantly changed self-employment.
 - Income verification at SMRF is only required for employment that meets the criteria listed above. An IM worker should not request verification of previously verified earned income that has not changed.

Self-employment income that has already been averaged is not to be re-verified unless a significant change is reported.

Other changes that must be reported on the SMRF are:

- Household composition (persons that have moved in or out, including newborns)
- New address and resulting changes in shelter expenses
- Change in legal obligation to pay child support (see Section 4.6.5 Support Payment Deductions)
- New substantial lottery or gambling winnings (see SECTION 6.1.1.1 LOTTERY OR GAMBLING)

~~A signature is required on the SMRF.~~ The SMRF ~~can~~must be signed by the primary person or by any adult food unit member or, if applicable, an authorized representative or legal guardian.

~~Any SMRF~~Food units can ~~be completed~~complete and ~~submitted~~submit the SMRF using the paper form, ACCESS, and by phone. A “no-changes” SMRF (all information on the mailed form is current and correct) can also be signed and submitted through MyACCESS.

Note The paper SMRF and the online form are available to members on ACCESS Renew My Benefits (RMB) and will have the employment, self-employment, unearned income, and child support expense fields pre-populated to reflect the most recently verified information in CWW. This is the income and expenses that are being used in the current FoodShare benefit calculation (the prepopulated information may not reflect all the income and expenses that factor into the budget).

Completed SMRFs must be submitted with all required verification by the end of the month the SMRF is due to avoid a break in service. When a SMRF is submitted in the month it is due with changes requiring verification, a verification checklist will be sent giving 20 days to provide the requested verification. When the due date for verification goes into the month ~~following~~after the SMRF was due ~~month~~ ~~(months~~ 7, 13, 19, 25, 31), FoodShare will reopen ~~without~~with a break in service ~~so long as the required documentation is supplied on or before the~~ unless verification due is submitted by the end of the SMRF due month. If the food unit submits verification in the month after the SMRF was due, their benefits will be prorated from the date they submitted the required verification.

Example 1	Emma is certified for FoodShare from January to December. Emma's SMRF is due in June. Emma returns the SMRF June 27 and reports new employment. Emma did not provide verification of the new income with the completed SMRF. Verification of the income must be requested. Although Emma returned the SMRF at the end of the month it was due, the due date for verification extends into July because 20 days must be allowed to provide verification. Emma provides the requested verification on July 12, prior to the due date of July 17. Emma's certification period for FoodShare remains the same, January to December. Benefits go back to July 1 and are not prorated from July 12.
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If FoodShare closes for lack of SMRF, verification, or other reasons and the food unit takes the required action ~~within~~in the month ~~following~~after the ~~month the form is~~SMRF was due (7,13,19,25,31), ~~the agency shall reopen FoodShare under the break in service policy and issue prorated benefits from the date the food unit took the last required action. The benefit shall be~~ if the food unit submits a completed SMRF in the month after it was due and submits required verification later in the same month, benefits are prorated from the date the SMRF is returned if the action was taken prior to or by the verification due date set, or if the reason for closure is because of agency delay verification was submitted.

~~If FoodShare closes due to agency delay in processing a SMRF, benefits shall be restored back to the first of the month.~~

Example 2	Jon is required to submit <u>had</u> a SMRF in <u>due</u> by the end of March. Jon submits the SMRF <u>on</u> April 7. Jon. He reported a change in hours worked at <u>his</u> existing employment. Verification is requested and is due April 29. Jon submits the verification <u>on</u> April 27.
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	Jon's benefits are prorated from April 7 forward because the verification was submitted by the due date, but the SMRF itself was submitted late ²⁷ .
Example 3	Lillie was required to submit a SMRF by the end of August. Lillie submits the completed SMRF on August 29. On the SMRF, Lillie reported new pension income. Verification of pension income is requested with a due date of September 22. Lillie provides the required verification on September 30. Lillie's benefits are prorated from September 30 forward because her verification was submitted after the due date.

If FoodShare closes due to agency delay in processing a SMRF that was submitted in the month it is due with no outstanding verifications, or if FoodShare closes due to an agency delay in processing required verification that was submitted in the month the SMRF was due, benefits are issued from the first of the month with no break in service.

If the SMRF process is not complete (a completed form and all verifications submitted) by 4:30pm on the first last business day two months the month after the SMRF was due (month 8/14/20/26/32), a new application must be submitted unless the cause for delay into that month is agency delay. In instances, when a complete, When a completed SMRF is submitted in the month following the month the form is due (7, 13, 19, 25, 31) after it was due and verification is required, verification must be provided submitted before the end of that month, which may result in the member having less than 20 days to provide the verification. The worker will need to manually adjust the due date to coincide with the end of month seven.

Example 4	Gwen is required to submit a SMRF in February. Gwen submits the SMRF in month seven on March 26. Gwen must submit verification of her employment change by March 31. If verification is not provided, Gwen will need to reapply in March because the required verification was not submitted by the end of month seven.
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Example 5	<p>Joe has an open FoodShare case with a certification period of April through March with a SMRF due in September. Joe fails to return a timely SMRF in September and FoodShare closes effective September 30.</p> <p>Joe had a SMRF due in September.</p> <p>Joe returns the SMRF with required verification on October 25, but the SMRF is incomplete and is missing a signature. The SMRF is returned to Joe and indicating a signed SMRF must be submitted by October 31 to avoid needing a new FoodShare application, or he must reapply.</p> <p>Joe returned the signed SMRF on November 2. Since the completed SMRF was not submitted by the end of month seven, Joe will need to reapply for FoodShare.</p>
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Complete Paper SMRF

To be considered complete, all of the boxes must be checked, and a signature must be provided on the SMRF. If a box is checked indicating a change but the details verification of the change have has not been provided, it is still a complete SMRF. Missing details related to changes must be requested or the worker must contact the member for clarification verification.

If the SMRF does not have all of the boxes checked or is missing a signature, it is an incomplete SMRF (see Process Help, [Section 3.4 Six Month Report Forms \(SMRFs\)](#) for processing instructions).

When an incomplete SMRF is received, the household is notified that it must provide the missing ~~portions~~sections that were not completed. The household is only required to return or provide the worker with the information needed for the sections that were not completed. The agency ~~will~~ already ~~have~~has the completed ~~portions~~sections of the form.

Example 6	Midge has a SMRF due in June. Midge returns her SMRF on June July 10 and completes . She completed the household information section and signs signed the form; the rest is incomplete. Midge is sent a <u>new SMRF with a</u> notice that her form original SMRF was incomplete and a new SMRF. Midge completes all the sections of the form submitting it to the agency on June. On July 25 but leaves, Midge submits an unsigned SMRF. Every <u>section, except</u> the household information section blank and does not sign the form. , <u>is completed.</u> Since those sections were that section was already complete completed and submitted on June and the SMRF was signed on July 10, the form is considered complete <u> since all the</u> . All sections on the form have been completed and submitted, <u>and the SMRF was signed.</u> Midge's benefits are prorated from July 25.
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6.1.3 Timely Action on Reported Changes During the Certification Period

Changes can be reported timely or untimely. Agency workers must act promptly on all reported ~~changes~~information. If verification is requested, a minimum of 20 days must be allowed for the member to provide the verification.

6.1.3.1 Processing Reported Changes

7 CFR 273.12(c)(1) waiver

Following the report of a change, ~~request verification from~~determine if the ~~member as soon as possible (see -~~information is clear or unclear.

To prevent “failure to act” agency QC errors, agency ~~workers~~workers must act on reported ~~changes~~information within 10 days. As a best practice a worker should process the ~~change~~information as soon as possible and not wait until the 10th day.

Example 1	<p>On June 19, Barry reported having a new job that started on June 9. The<u>The information about new job was unclear, due to not providing verification when reporting the change. The new job will bring his income above 130% FPL and the information is current (less than two calendar months old).</u></p> <p><u>Under unclear rule policy, the</u> IM worker must request verification and allow Barry 20 days to provide it. If verification is requested on June 19, it will be due July 9. The<u>IM</u> worker will have time to process the verification and issue proper notice to Barry by adverse action in July. If the IM worker fails to act on the change by not requesting verification until June 30, Barry would have until July 20 to provide the verification, which is after adverse action. In this case, it is possible that August benefits would be in error due to IM worker failure to act promptly on the reported change.</p>
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~~Lack of verification is a common cause of case closure. A new application for FoodShare is not always required under specific circumstances when~~When FoodShare closes due to lack of verification during the certification period, a new application is not always required. Allow FoodShare to reopen without a new application ~~when closing for lack of verification after a change is reported or discovered during the certification period,~~ as long as the requested verification is submitted in the calendar month following case closure. Benefits are prorated from the date the required action was taken.

Example 2	<p>Julie is certified for FoodShare from March through February. Julie calls and reports a new job<u>A reported change submitted on April 5. Julie's IM agency requests verification of SMRF is unclear and is required to be verified. Verification is requested for Julie's employment, due April 25. Julie fails to provide verification. Verification is not returned by the due date and FoodShare closes effective May 30. Julie provides the required verification on June 8. Julie's FoodShare case reopens prorated from June 8 forward without requiring a new FoodShare application and prorates benefits from June 8 forward. Julie's certification period remains the same March through February.</u></p>
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~~FoodShare may also close for reasons other than lack of verification.~~ Allow FoodShare to reopen when a clear change in circumstances causes the FoodShare assistance group to regain eligibility during the month following the month of case closure, as long as the food unit takes the required action.

FoodShare members may choose to reapply for benefits in the month following closure even when not required. Completing a new application establishes a new filing date, allowing the member up to 30 days to provide needed verification. IM workers should explain the difference between completing a new application and providing needed information ~~to members when possible.~~

Example 3	Pam's FoodShare closes effective September 30 due to a <u>verified</u> pay increase at her job. Pam contacts the IM agency on October 8 to reapply for FoodShare. Pam reports a decrease in income due to a reduction in work hours. The IM agency informs Pam of the option to reapply for FoodShare or to provide verification reflective of the current circumstances to reopen FoodShare effective the date the verification <u>and clear information</u> is provided, as long as Pam meets program criteria. Pam chooses to provide verification and submits it on October 12. Pam's FoodShare reopens with prorated benefits from October 12 forward.
Example 4	Joan's FoodShare closes effective October 31 as a result of a newly added roommate's earned income. Joan contacts the IM agency on November 19 because the roommate moved out and Joan wants to reapply for FoodShare. The IM agency provides Joan the option of reapplying for FoodShare or reopening her FoodShare effective November 19. Joan chooses to reopen FoodShare without a new application. <u>Joan also reports she now is responsible for her roommate's share of the rent again.</u> The IM agency removes the roommate from the case, <u>updates the rent information</u> and re-determines a prospective estimate of Joan's income and expenses. <u>eligibility.</u> FoodShare benefits are issued from November 19 forward.

6.1.3.3 Changes That Cause an Increase in Benefits, Including Person Adds and Loss of Income

7 CFR 273.12(c)(1)

FNS Memo 12/18/14

All reported changes that cause an increase in the FoodShare benefit including person additions, increases in expenses, etc., will be effective the first of the month following the report month if required verifications are received ~~within 20 days of the request for verification.~~

If needed verifications are not received ~~within 20 days,~~ and the FoodShare case is not closed for at least one day, make the change effective the first of the month following the month verifications are received.

Issue the appropriate supplement by the 10th day of the month the increase in benefits is effective.

The worker must follow policy and procedures for reported unclear information.

Note A person can be a member of more than one food unit but only one assistance group in the same month except residents of shelters for victims of domestic violence (see Section 3.4.1 Dual Membership and Duplicate Benefits). Prior to adding a person from one FoodShare case to another, remove the person from the previous FoodShare case.

Example 5	<p>If Mike (a baby) is born June 25, and the change is reported June 27, FoodShare benefits increase effective July 1. Since the case was reported after adverse action, a FoodShare supplement is issued for July.</p> <p>If Mike (a baby) is born June 25, and the change is reported July 1, FoodShare benefits will increase effective August 1. No FoodShare supplement is issued.</p>
Example 6	<p>Jule has an open FoodShare case with a certification period of February through January. Jule reports on March 25 that Eve, Jule's sister, moved in on March 15 and they purchase and prepare together. Jule's IM worker requests verification of Eve's eligibility information by April 14. Verification is not provided by April 4 and the FoodShare case closes effective April 30. Eve provides verification to the local agency on May 15. FoodShare reopened without a new application. Eve is added to the assistance group and benefits are redetermined and prorated for the month of May. In June, Jule and Eve will receive a full month of benefits. Jule's FoodShare certification period remains the same, February through January. Lisa reports on March 5 that her husband left the home on February 27. Lisa's husband was working, and this change results in Lisa being eligible for more FoodShare benefits. The IM worker re-determines the prospective estimate of Lisa's income for the next benefit month, April, and confirms benefits. Since the change was processed March 5, before adverse action, no supplement is needed.</p>
Example 7	<p>Lisa reports on March 5 that her husband left the home on February 27. Lisa's husband was working, and this change results in Lisa being eligible for more FoodShare benefits. The IM worker re-determines the prospective estimate of Lisa's income for the next benefit month, April, and confirms benefits. Since the change was processed March 5, before adverse action, no supplement is needed.</p>
Example 87	<p>Carol reports on March 25 that rent is increasing by \$500 for April. The IM worker finds the expense questionable, as Carol's current rent expense is \$300 and the rent increase more than doubles the total rent expense. The case is pended on March 25 and verification is due April 15. Carol provided the verification on April 3. On April 5, the IM worker makes the change to increase Carol's FoodShare benefit effective April 1 and issues a supplement for April. If Carol had reported the rent increase on April 2, or provided the verification after April 15, the FoodShare benefit increase would have been effective May 1. The worker will follow policy and procedures for reported unclear information.</p>

6.1.3.4 Sanction Request

An IM worker ~~should act on a sanction request immediately but has~~ 10 days to process the sanction request. However, the IM worker should try to enter the sanction before the next adverse action (see Section 6.3.1 Negative Notices) in CARES.

Example 9	<p>The IM worker receives a sanction request for Jayne on June 12. The IM worker officially has 10 days to process the sanction. Adverse action is on June 18, the worker makes sure to act on the sanction before the 18th. However, if they do not, the case would not be in error unless the worker did not act on the sanction until after adverse action in July.</p>
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6.1.3.6 Changes That Cause a Decrease in Benefits

7 CFR 273.12(c)(2)(i)

For reported changesclear information that result in a decrease in benefits, process the change to allow for adequate negative notice to be issued to the member. If verifications are not received within 20 days, and the FoodShare case is not closed for at least one day, make the change effective the first of the month following the month verifications are received.

Example 11	<p>Lisa reports on June 3 that her husband moved back into the home on May 29.</p> <p>On June 3, Lisa's IM worker adds Roy to the FoodShare case and requests verification of his income due June 23. Roy's income will cause a decrease in FoodShare benefits. Lisa provides Roy's verification on June 10. Notice of a decrease in benefits is issued at adverse action in June and benefits are decreased for July.</p> <p>If verification was not provided by the due date, the IM agency would take action to close the FoodShare case for lack of verification. Since the due date and agency action to close the case occurs after adverse action in June. FoodShare benefits would close July 31 for failure to verify income.</p>
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6.1.3.7 Change Impact Matrix

Use the Change Impact Matrix to determine how to respond to changes reported by food units.

Follow 1.2.7 UNCLEAR INFORMATION for unclear information reported during the certification period.

Food Unit Type	Initial Certification Period	Initial SMRF Requirement	Change Reported	Date Change Acted On	Impact on Certification Period	SMRF Requirement after Change
Regular	12 months	Yes	Homelessness or Migrant in household	At any time during the certification period	No effect on the original certification period of 12 months	Yes
Homeless or Migrant	6 months	No	Reports securing housing or	Prior to adverse action in	Certification period remains six months	No

			no longer migrant	the fourth month		
				After adverse action in the fourth month	Certification period remains six months	No
EBD household with earnings	12 months	Yes	Source of earnings ends	At any time	No effect	No
EBD without earnings	12 months	No	New source of earnings	Prior to adverse action in the fourth month	No effect	Yes
				After adverse action in the fourth month		No
EBD without earned income	36 months	No	Non-EBD adult member in the food unit, adult member loses their disability determination, adult member receives counted earned income, or a migrant worker	At any time	No effect	Yes

			enters the household			
TFS	5 months	No	Change in income, household comp, or other types of change	At any time	No effect	No
			Death of PP or when PP moves out of Wisconsin		TFS closes and member must re-apply	N/A

6.1.3.8 Processing ABAWD Changes

An IM worker must act on reported exemptions as soon as possible, and no later than the 10th day.

When an exemption is reported (and verified, if determined to be clear but deemed questionable), workers must act promptly to apply the exemption on the first of the month in which the exemption began, regardless of when the exemption is reported.

The FoodShare Clock Page may need to be adjusted once an exemption is applied to the case (see SECTION 3.17.1.13 ADJUSTING FOODSHARE CLOCK PAGE).

6.1.3.9 Oral Explanation of Applicable Work Requirements

7 CFR § 273.7(c)(1)(ii) and (iii)

An oral explanation of work requirements must be provided when a FoodShare member(s) is newly determined subject to the FoodShare basic work rules (see SECTION 3.16.1 FOODSHARE BASIC WORK RULES and the FoodShare work requirement (see SECTION 3.17.1 FOODSHARE WORK REQUIREMENTS FOR ABAWDS) during the certification period. This can occur when a current and previously exempt FoodShare member(s) has a clear change in circumstances and is no longer exempt, or when a new household member is added and is subject to the basic work rules and work requirement.

If the change is acted upon while the member is on the phone or in person at the agency, the oral explanation must be provided at that time. If the member is not immediately available, at least one contact attempt must be made to provide the oral

explanation. The attempt to contact the member must be documented in case comments.

The following information must be provided to member(s) who are subject to the FoodShare basic work rules and FoodShare work requirement:

- An explanation of each work rule and applicable work requirement.
- Information on exemptions from each applicable work rule and work requirement.
- An explanation of the process to report an exemption, including contact information to request an exemption.
- What is required to maintain eligibility under each work rule and applicable work requirement.
- Consequences for failure to comply with each work rule and applicable work requirement.
- An explanation of the process for requesting good cause, including examples of good cause circumstances and contact information to initiate a good cause request.
- Information on the FoodShare Employment and Training Program (FSET) and benefits of FSET participation if the food unit includes an individual subject to the FoodShare work requirement.
- Information on the status of the time limit of the FoodShare work requirement if the household lives in an area or on tribal lands where the time limit of the FoodShare work requirement is suspended

The appropriate sections of the "FoodShare Basic Work Rules and FoodShare Work Requirements Script for IM Workers" must be read to meet the above requirements.

Example 12	Vanessa is a 40-year-old receiving FoodShare benefits. At application, Vanessa was receiving unemployment compensation and determined exempt from the FoodShare basic work rules and FoodShare work requirement. A few months later, Vanessa called the local IM agency and reported no longer receiving unemployment compensation. Vanessa had no other changes and no longer has a qualifying exemption from either work requirement. The appropriate sections of the oral explanation of work requirements for the FoodShare Basic Work Rules and FoodShare Work Requirements Script must be read to Vanessa while she is on the phone.
Example 13	Zac is 35 years old. Zac applied and was determined eligible for FoodShare benefits for himself and his 12-year-old son, Corbin. Zac is determined subject to FoodShare basic work rules. He is not subject to the FoodShare work requirement due to residing with a minor child. A few months later Zac reports Corbin is no longer living in his household via an online change report. Zac is now also subject to the FoodShare work requirement. An attempt to contact Zac by phone is made to provide the oral explanation of work requirements due to Zac becoming subject to a new work requirement. Zac does not answer the call. The attempt must be documented in the case record.

6.5.1 Provider Determinations

When an FSET agency denies a participant access to FSET services due to their behavior, the decision is called a provider determination (See [FSET Handbook Section 6.8 Decision to Deny Participant Access and/or Services](#)).

Note The FSET agency must provide the participant with notification of the provider determination, including the reason for the provider determination and information on next steps the IM agency will take on their case.

Within 10 calendar days of making a provider determination decision, the FSET agency manager must follow a previously established process to notify the IM agency manager of the provider determination, including the reason for the provider determination.

6.5.2 Required Notice of the Provider Determination

Within 10 calendar days of being informed of the provider determination requiring further action the IM worker must provide the individual with written notification of the provider determination and next steps.

If the individual receiving a provider determination is an ABAWD, the ABAWD cannot accrue a countable month in the month they receive notification from the IM agency of a provider determination.

The required written notice from the IM worker must explain the following:

- What a provider determination is;
- Next steps the IM agency will take as a result of the provider determination;
- Contact information for the IM worker; and
- If the member is an ABAWD, that the ABAWD will accrue countable months toward their three-month participation time limit the next full benefit month after the IM agency notifies the ABAWD of the provider determination, unless the ABAWD fulfills the work requirement, or the ABAWD has good cause, lives in a waived area, or is otherwise exempt.

6.5.3 Required Action on the Provider Determination

The IM agency also must take action on the provider determination during the notification month by either:

1. Reassessing the individual to determine if they are fit for employment (See Section 3.17.1.3 to review criteria for who may be considered unfit for employment) ; or
2. Collaborating, to the best of their ability, with an alternate federal, state, and local work or assistance programs to identify a service or opportunities or that may be a better fit for the individual.

Note Alternate opportunities may include a WIOA employment or training program through the local job center, Wisconsin Works (W-2), or TANF programs for non-custodial parents, local reentry programming, or local volunteer programs.

If the IM agency determines that the member is fit for employment and is not otherwise exempt from the FoodShare work requirements, the then IM agency must consider if the second option is appropriate.

In the month the member is notified of the provider determination, the IM agency must make two attempts to contact the member and take the most suitable action of the two options for actions listed above.

If the IM agency is unable to reach the member to take action during the notification month, the IM agency must document that they were unable to contact the member during the month of notification and take the most suitable action no later than the date of the member's next renewal. If prior to the next renewal, an individual with a provider determination requests that the IM agency take action sooner, the IM agency must take the most suitable action as soon as possible. The IM worker must document their action on the provider determination and reasoning for their selected action in case comments.

The IM worker may need to adjust the member's FoodShare clock to ensure the member does not accrue a TLB in the month of IM agency notification of the provider determination.

7.3.1 Calculating Overpayment Claim Amounts

7.3.1.4 Calculating the Overpayment Claim

[7 CFR 273.18\(c\)](#)

Calculating an overpayment claim involves determining the correct amount of benefits for each month in which a food unit received more FoodShare benefits than they were entitled to receive. The correct amount of benefits is the amount the food unit would have received had the information used in the eligibility determination been accurate at the time of the determination.

7.3.1.4.3 Verification and Calculating the Claim

Eligibility verification requirements apply to determining overpayments (see [SECTION 1.2 VERIFICATION](#)). The food unit has the primary responsibility for providing documentary evidence to support statements in the case record and to resolve any questionable information. The worker must assist the household in obtaining this verification provided the food unit is cooperating with the agency.

The agency may contact the employer directly for verification. It is not necessary to contact the food unit before contacting the employer; both contacts can be completed at the same time.

When investigating whether an overpayment has occurred, only request verification of historical case information. Do not request verification related to the ongoing eligibility of FoodShare. If new information related to ongoing FoodShare eligibility becomes known to the agency during the overpayment investigation, the new information is subject to unclear information verification rules.

The food unit must be given a reasonable opportunity to submit verification.

Members must be given 30 days to provide required verification unless it is determined that additional time is necessary in order to collect and submit the verification requested. If more than 30 days are allowed for verification by the member, document the number of days allowed and the reason. Employers should be given 20 days to verify.

For Earned Income, verification may include:

- Dated check stubs
- Earnings reports, a statement from the employer, or EVF forms, signed by the employer

- Tax filings, Self-Employment Income Report Forms, or other business records for self-employment businesses.
- Tax filing records from the IRS or Wisconsin Department of Revenue (DOR) for self-employment businesses.

Note Income Eligibility Verification System (IEVS) may indicate that income was earned from an employer sometime during three months of the work quarter. Do not use IEVS in calculations and overpayments unless no other information is received verifying the earned income and best information available must be used.
