Operations Memo 2011-38
August 3, 2011

To:	**Department of Transitional Assistance Staff**
From:	**Stephanie Brown, Assistant Commissioner for Policy, Program and External Relations**
Re:	**SNAP - Application Processing: Interview Requirement and 30-Day Processing Time Frame**

Overview

This Operations Memo briefly reviews two SNAP requirements that are error prone:

- the interview requirement; and

- the requirement to process a SNAP application within 30 days.

It also provides a brief clarification on SNAP denials before day 30.

Interview Requirement

Case managers are reminded that an interview must be scheduled for all SNAP applicants. With the exception of walk-in applications if an interview has taken place right away, all SNAP applications require that the case manager contact the applicant within two business days of receipt of the application to schedule an interview. Interviews must be conducted by telephone unless the applicant specifically requests or is mandated to participate in an in-person interview.   For more detailed information, see:

- Field Operations Memo 2006-30, *FS (NPA or PA) Application Processing Guidelines;* and

- Field Operations Memo-2009-63A, *SNAP: Modifications to the Waiver of the Face-to-Face Interview*.

Interview Requirement (continued)

An interview must be conducted even if it appears that the application is complete and only verifications are required. Conducting the interview ensures that:

- the information provided on the application is complete and accurate;
- the applicant has understood all the questions; and
- all information that may affect eligibility is entered in BEACON.

The interview is also an opportunity to address any questions or concerns the applicant may have, and may reduce future telephone calls to the case manager.

Note: At recertification, which is essentially an application, the only exception to the interview requirement is for elderly or disabled households with no earned income. See Operations Memo 2011-29, *Reinstatement of the Elderly/Disabled No Interview Waiver.*

Requirement to Process SNAP Applications within 30 Days

Case managers are reminded that all SNAP applications must be approved or denied by day 30. If day 30 falls on a weekend or holiday, the application must be approved or denied on the day immediately following the weekend or holiday.

Remember also that PA/SNAP households must be approved or denied by day 30, regardless of the status of the TAFDC or EAEDC application, even if the applicant has been granted an extension (INT-2) to provide verifications for cash program benefits.

Clarification on SNAP Denials before Day 30

Case managers are reminded, however, that no SNAP application can be denied *before* day 30 if the denial reason is failure to complete the application process or failure to provide verifications.

Denials allowed before day 30 are limited to:

- finding the applicant ineligible due to a nonfinancial reason, such as student or noncitizen status; or

- finding the applicant ineligible due to a financial reason. The case manager must enter the financial information into BEACON as received and process the application. BEACON will deny the application on or before day 30 for the appropriate financial reason (e.g. excess income or assets) if the case manager processes it.

Clarification on SNAP Denials before Day 30 (continued)

While TAFDC and EAEDC regulations allow applications to be denied prior to day 30 if two application interview appointments have been missed, SNAP regulations do not allow this. Case managers must hold the SNAP application until day 30 before denying for failure to complete the application process. Remember also to send the applicant a Notice of Missed Interview (NOMI) within two days of the first missed interview.

Questions

If you have any questions, please have your Hotline designee call the Policy Hotline.