



CDSS

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STATE OF CALIFORNIA—HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES AGENCY
DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES

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EDMUND G. BROWN JR.
GOVERNOR

May 7, 2012

ALL COUNTY INFORMATION NOTICE NO. I-23-12

TO: ALL COUNTY WELFARE DIRECTORS
ALL CALFRESH PROGRAM COORDINATORS
ALL COUNTY QUALITY CONTROL SPECIALISTS

SUBJECT: APPLICATION PROCESSING TIMELINESS (APT) CORRECTIVE ACTION PLAN (CAP)

REFERENCE: 7 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) sections 273.2(i)(3)(i), 273.2(3) 275.16, 275.17 and 275.18; Welfare & Institutions Code sections 18913 and 18914; Manual Policies and Procedures (MPP) sections 63-301.1 and 63-301.531(a); All County Information Notice (ACIN) I-14-11.

The purpose of this ACIN is to remind counties of the importance of meeting the timely processing requirements for CalFresh applications and to inform counties of the CAP that will be required by California Department of Social Services (CDSS) for counties whose APT rates are below the performance standard of 90 percent for two consecutive quarters. Timely processing requirements include rates for Expedited Service (ES) and/or 30-day normal application processing.

Background

The United States Department of Agriculture, Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) requires states to maintain a certain performance measure for APT in administering the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), known as CalFresh in California. FNS evaluates APT as part of the Quality Control (QC) process and measures APT according to federal processing standards. The APT measures both the seven-day and 30-day processing.

REASON FOR THIS TRANSMITTAL

- State Law Change
- Federal Law or Regulation Change
- Court Order
- Clarification Requested by One or More Counties
- Initiated by CDSS

Please note: Federal regulations require that all households entitled to ES be issued CalFresh benefits within seven days after the initial application date; California law requires ES benefits be issued within three days. (7 CFR § 273.2(i); Welf. & Inst. Code § 18914.) Households not entitled to ES, but eligible for CalFresh benefits, must be issued benefits within 30 days after the date of initial application. (7 CFR § 273.2(g).)

CAP Information

FNS requires a 100 percent APT rate and a CAP when a state's rate is below 90 percent. Final data for FFY 2011 indicates a timeliness rate of 81.82 percent for the entire state, which is an improvement of 2.98 percentage points in comparison to FFY 2010: However, due to California's low performance, California had to submit a CAP to FNS, detailing the state's plan to meet the 90 percent performance goal. (See 7 CFR § 275.17.) One of the corrective action initiatives in the CAP is to require counties that are below 90 percent for two consecutive quarters, in the area of timeliness for 3-day ES processing and/or 30-day normal processing of approved cases, to submit a CAP to the state. The CalFresh Monthly Caseload Movement Statistical Report (DFA 296) and the CalFresh Program Expedited Service Statistical Report (DFA 296X) will be used to monitor and identify counties that are not meeting the 90 percent performance goal. Counties are encouraged to proactively monitor the statistical reports to ensure the APT goals are continually met. In addition, low performing counties are encouraged to consider using the FNS Program Access Toolkit at <http://www.fns.usda.gov/snap/government/pdf/2010-toolkit.pdf>. The toolkit offers various tools in managing and improving application processing.

Starting with the first two quarters of 2012 (January through March and April through June 2012), any county below 90 percent for two consecutive quarters will be formally notified by CDSS to submit a plan of action. (7 CFR § 275.18.) Once notified, the county must develop, submit, and implement a CAP that includes the steps that will be taken to meet the performance standard (see attachment for template of the CAP). Once a county maintains timeliness standards for two consecutive quarters, they will no longer be subject to the CAP requirements.

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If you have any questions regarding this notice, please contact Marlene Fleming, Field Operations Bureau Chief, at (213) 833-2252, or by email at marlene.fleming@dss.ca.gov.

Sincerely,

Original Document Signed By:

LINDA PATTERSON, Chief
CalFresh Branch

Attachment

Corrective Action Plan

California Department of Social Services evaluates Application Processing Timeliness (APT) in an effort to ensure CalFresh applications are processed timely.

If you are receiving this email, your county has not met the required threshold of 90 percent for two consecutive quarters beginning _____, 2012.

The county's APT is as follows:

- Expedited Service for Three-Day:
- Expedited Service for Seven-Day:
- Normal Thirty-Day Processing:

As a corrective action, please respond to the questions listed below and return within 15 business days of receipt of this email.

QUESTIONS

1. When a Quality Control review discovers an application to have been approved/denied untimely, what process(es) does the county have in place to review the action and consider ways to improve outcomes?
 - Is it discussed at an error review panel meeting?
 - How is staff notified of the error and outcome?
2. Please list contributing factors which have lead to the county falling below the APT standard for the timeframe listed above?
3. If a cause listed in item #2 relates to staffing shortages, please provide your strategy to address the issue.
4. What corrective actions are you planning to take to improve your performance? Please provide dates of implementation.
5. How do you ensure that staff is aware of performance goals and processing requirements?
6. What monitoring tools are in place for eligibility workers and supervisors to ensure timely processing?
7. Are there any restrictions that might be contributing to the county's timeliness issues?

Please submit the Corrective Action Plan via email to marlene.fleming@dss.ca.gov or mail it to:

California Department of Social Services
Field Operations Bureau
811 Wilshire Boulevard
Suite 1142, MS 28-03B
Los Angeles, CA 90017-2606

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact _____ at _____.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.