

TFS AND COMPUTER SYSTEMS

DATE: May 1, 2005

ITEM NUMBER: 530-01

RELATED REFERENCE: FNS Handbook 310 Section 727

SUPERSEDES: None

SITUATION:

The case is in its last month of benefits for both Food Stamps (FS) and CalWORKs. The household fails to complete the redetermination/recertification process before main payroll cut-off, which is around the 20th of the month. Since the household has not completed the process, the computer system generated a Notice of Action (NOA) advising the household that its CalWORKs will be terminated effective the end of that month. This notice in turn generated a second NOA for the FS portion of the case advising the household that, since it would no longer be receiving CalWORKs, the household would have its FS benefits increased because of the switch to Transitional Food Stamps (TFS).

The household comes in on the 29th of the month and completes the recertification/redetermination process. Since the process is completed so close to the end of the month, the county can issue the CalWORKs benefits in the following month but cannot take the negative action of reducing the FS allotment (computed based on "backing out" the CalWORKs) because of the ten-day noticing requirements and this would be a midquarter change which would reduce benefits (which cannot happen because of QR.)

NOTE: In this scenario, since the CalWORKS was reinstated, there was no need for a Fair Hearing. Situations can arise wherein the CalWORKs must be continued based on a Fair Hearing request (Aid Paid Pending). In these instances, the household is ineligible to receive TFS because it is still receiving CalWORKs.

QUESTION 1. Is the case reviewed as a TFS case or a "regular" case?

RESPONSE 1. Per FNS 04/20/05, the case must be treated as an ineligible TFS case and, therefore, reviewed according to "regular" review procedures. (FNS Handbook 310 Section 727.1.) Therefore, there would be an error if this is the only variance factor.

QUESTION 2. Would QC use the higher TFS amount in the variance determination process?

RESPONSE 2. See Response 1 above. The authorized (TFS) amount would be in the variance determination process.

NOTES

1. This would be the case if the scenario was based on a late QR-7 subsequently received by the county that restored CalWORKS.
2. Since eligibility workers, reviewers, managers, and administrators are aware of the problem, the expectation is that a manual over-ride of the computer system would be done by the eligibility worker to correct the case.

RESPONSE(S) ARE BASED ON POLICIES, PROCEDURES, REGULATIONS AND INSTRUCTIONS IN EFFECT AS OF THE ISSUANCE DATE.