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GAVIN NEWSOM  
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May 9, 2019

ALL COUNTY LETTER (ACL) NO. 19-44

TO: ALL COUNTY WELFARE DIRECTORS  
ALL CALFRESH PROGRAM SPECIALISTS  
ALL CalWORKs PROGRAM SPECIALISTS  
ALL CONSORTIA PROJECT MANAGERS  
ALL QUALITY CONTROL PROGRAM COORDINATORS

SUBJECT: CALFRESH APPLICATION "JOINT PROCESSING" BY SOCIAL SECURITY ADMINISTRATION AND COUNTY WELFARE DEPARTMENTS

REFERENCE: MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING AND REIMBURSABLE AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE AND THE SOCIAL SECURITY ADMINISTRATION (RA USDA 180001); [ASSEMBLY BILL \(AB\) 1811 \(CHAPTER 35, STATUTES OF 2018\)](#); [CA WELFARE AND INSTITUTIONS CODE \(WIC\) SECTIONS 18900.5-900.7](#); [CODE OF FEDERAL REGULATIONS \(C.F.R.\) TITLE 7 SECTION 273.2\(k\)](#); [7 CFR § 273.2\(k\)\(i\)\(1\)\(A\)](#); [7 § CFR 273.2\(k\)\(1\)\(i\)\(O\)](#); [7 CFR § 273.2\(k\)\(1\)\(i\)\(I\)](#); [7 CFR § 273.2\(k\)\(1\)\(i\)\(F\)](#); [7 CFR § 273.2\(j\)\(2\)\(i\)\(E\)](#); [7 CFR § 273.2\(f\)\(1\)\(x\)](#); [7 CFR § 273.2\(j\)\(2\)\(v\)](#); [7 CFR § 273.10\(e\)\(2\)\(ii\)\(C\)](#); [7 CFR § 273.2\(k\)\(1\)\(i\)\(G\)](#); [7 CFR § 273.2\(f\)](#); [7 CFR § 273.2\(k\)\(1\)\(iii\)\(A\)](#); [7 CFR § 273.2\(k\)\(1\)\(i\)\(K\)](#); [ACL NO. 18-90](#); [ACL NO. 17-34](#); AND [MANUAL OF POLICIES AND PROCEDURES \(MPP\) § 63-300.5\(g\)](#)

The purpose of this letter is to provide County Welfare Departments (CWDs) with policy guidance regarding the "joint processing" of CalFresh applications by the Social Security Administration (SSA) and CWDs for applicants or recipients of Supplemental Security Income (SSI).

## **Background**

Effective June 1, 2019, individuals receiving Supplemental Security Income and/or California State Supplementary Payment (SSI/SSP) benefits are eligible for CalFresh, provided all other eligibility criteria are satisfied. The CWDs will implement this policy change for newly eligible households beginning on June 1, 2019. For more information on this policy change, reference [ACL No. 18-90](#) dated July 31, 2018.

Under federal Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) regulations at [7 Code of Federal Regulations \(CFR\) § 273.2\(k\)](#), households that include only SSI applicant or recipient members may apply and be certified for CalFresh under SSA joint processing procedures. Joint processing procedures apply to households consisting only of SSI applicant or recipient members. Households that include both SSI and non-SSI applicant or recipient members will be referred by SSA to the online application or their CWD to apply for CalFresh benefits. The procedures for each type of household are outlined in this letter.

As a result of the federal regulatory requirement that SSA accept SNAP applications from households consisting only of SSI applicant and recipient members, SSA and the United States Department of Agriculture, Food and Nutrition Service (FNS), have established a national Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) that applies in all States and explains the SNAP-related services that SSA will provide in SSA offices, including SSA operations for taking applications. A copy of the national MOU has been provided as an attachment to this letter.

This letter outlines how California will implement the national MOU and specific federal permissions received from FNS to operationalize SSA joint processing using an online application assistance tool. This letter also provides CWDs with additional information on SSA operations and policy guidance regarding CWD processing of CalFresh applications received from SSA.

## **SSA Informing**

Per [7 CFR § 273.2\(k\)\(1\)\(i\)\(A\)](#), whenever a member of a household consisting only of SSI applicants or recipients conducts business with SSA, the SSA technician will inform the household of:

1. Their right to apply for SNAP benefits at the SSA office without going to a CWD office; and
2. Their right to apply with the CWD office if they choose to do so.

Note that SSA technicians may initially reference the program as SNAP because SSA technicians in call centers are stationed across the country and may not be familiar with each state's unique program name. The online application assistance tool and paper application will prompt the SSA technician to refer to the program as CalFresh.

## **SSA Screening**

The SSA technician will screen all households for SNAP eligibility or SNAP application status. The SSA technician will fulfill this responsibility by asking the four questions outlined below and that appear in the SSA eligibility system and on the paper [SSA 800 Application for SSI](#) (page 19, under part V, question 58):

1. Are you currently receiving SNAP benefits?
2. Have you received a recertification notice in the last 30 days?
3. Have you applied for SNAP benefits in the last 60 days?
4. Have you received an unfavorable SNAP decision?

If the SSA determines that the household is either (1) not receiving SNAP, (2) receiving SNAP, but needs to complete their recertification, or (3) recently applied for SNAP but was determined ineligible, and SSA determines that the individual is a member of a household that includes only SSI recipient or applicant members, SSA must give the household the opportunity to apply for SNAP benefits. The SSA technician will do this by asking the household, "Can I take your SNAP application today?"

## **Joint Processing of SNAP Applications: Households with Only SSI Applicant or Recipient Members**

### **1. SSA Application Assistance**

#### *a. CalFresh Online Applications*

If a household with only SSI applicant or recipient members agrees, the SSA technician will assist the household in completing and submitting a CalFresh application. These households may also complete the CalFresh application for recertification at the SSA office. The SSA will handle the CalFresh application for recertification in the same manner as the CalFresh initial application.

To streamline this process, California has opted to leverage existing online application assistance tools. The California Department of Social Services (CDSS) and SSA, with federal FNS approval, have agreed to use the **GetCalFresh.org** online application assistance tool for SSA submission of CalFresh applications. Beginning June 1, 2019, all CWDs will receive CalFresh applications submitted by SSA using GetCalFresh.org. Use of GetCalFresh.org will be the SSA default method to assist households with submitting a CalFresh application. Only if the household requests to submit a paper application will the SSA technician divert to the paper application procedures outlined later in this letter.

CWDs will be able to identify that the CalFresh application was submitted by SSA using GetCalFresh.org.

If the household's CalFresh application is submitted by SSA using GetCalFresh.org, the CWD must not require an additional signature from the household. In assisting the client with submission of the CalFresh application through GetCalFresh.org, the SSA technician is signing the application on behalf of the household. The CDSS and SSA have agreed, with federal FNS approval, that SSA technician attestation that the client has designated the SSA technician to sign the application on their behalf through GetCalFresh.org is sufficient.

After the CalFresh application has been submitted through GetCalFresh.org, the SSA technician will provide the household the *Information for Households Applying for CalFresh with the Social Security Administration* (CF SSA 1). Per [7 CFR § 273.2\(k\)\(1\)\(i\)\(O\)](#), the CF SSA 1 will inform the household of the following:

1. Contact information for the household's CWD;
2. The remaining actions to be taken by the household to complete the CalFresh application process;
3. A statement that the household should be notified of their CalFresh eligibility determination within 30 days and can contact the CWD if it receives no notification within 30 days, or has other questions or problems;
4. The household's rights and responsibilities (including fair hearings, authorized representatives, out-of-office interviews, reporting changes, and timely reapplication); and
5. Information on how and where to obtain an Electronic Benefit Transfer (EBT) card and Personal Identification Number (PIN) and how to use an EBT card and PIN, including the products the household may purchase with CalFresh benefits.

The CDSS will issue the new *Information for Households Applying for CalFresh with the Social Security Administration* (CF SSA 1) under separate cover.

#### *b. CalFresh Paper Applications*

As mentioned, SSA technicians will use GetCalFresh.org as the default method to assist households with submitting a CalFresh application. That said, if a household requests to submit a paper CalFresh application, SSA will assist the household to complete the paper application and will submit the signed paper application to the appropriate CWD within one business day of receipt of the signed application. The SSA technician will reference a county-by-county point of contact list developed and maintained by CDSS, which includes a fax number and email address for each CWD.

When submitting a paper application, the SSA technician will send the complete and signed *Application for CalFresh Benefits* (CF 285) with a *Social Security Administration Transmittal for Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Applications* (SSA 4233) cover sheet. As with CalFresh applications submitted through GetCalFresh.org, when the SSA technician submits the signed paper application to the CWD, the SSA technician will provide the household with a copy of the previously described

*Information for Households Applying for CalFresh with the Social Security Administration (CF SSA 1).*

[Per 7 CFR § 273.2\(k\)\(1\)\(i\)\(F\)](#), if the household chooses to submit a paper application at the SSA office, the beginning date of aid is the date SSA receives the signed paper application. The date of SSA receipt will be indicated on the paper application itself. The CWDs must make an eligibility determination and issue benefits to eligible households within 30 days following the date the signed application is received by SSA.

The Expedited Service (ES) processing time standard will begin the date the signed application is received by the CWD.

[Per 7 CFR §273.2\(k\)\(1\)\(i\)\(I\)](#), before submission of the signed paper application to the CWD, the SSA technician will prescreen the application for entitlement to ES, on the day the signed paper application is received at the SSA office. If the household appears to be entitled to ES, the SSA technician will write “Expedited Processing” on the first page of the application.

The CWDs are reminded that they must screen all CalFresh applications for entitlement to ES, whether the CalFresh application received under SSA joint processing is or is not marked by SSA as “Expedited Processing”.

The SSA technician will inform a household that appears to meet the criteria for entitlement to ES that benefits may be issued a few days sooner if the household applies directly with their CWD instead of with SSA. If the household chooses to apply with their CWD, the household will be informed of the option to submit an application online or take the paper application from SSA to the CWD office. The CWD will then complete the ES screening, an interview, and processing of the application. In this scenario, as is always the case, the beginning date of aid is the date the CWD receives the signed application. The ES processing time standard also begins the date the CWD receives the signed application.

## **2. Categorical Eligibility**

Per [7 CFR § 273.2\(i\)\(2\)\(i\)\(E\)](#), households in which all members receive or are authorized to receive SSI benefits are categorically eligible for CalFresh, unless the entire household is institutionalized or disqualified from receiving CalFresh for any reason. For this purpose, “authorized to receive” means that an individual has been determined eligible for SSI benefits and has been notified of this determination, even if the SSI benefits have been authorized but not received, authorized but not accessed, suspended or recouped, or not paid because they are less than a minimum amount. Households applying simultaneously for SSI benefits and CalFresh benefits will be subject to all CalFresh eligibility criteria until the household is considered categorically eligible.

In determining whether a household is categorically eligible, the CWD must verify that each member of the CalFresh applicant household receives or is authorized to receive SSI and that no member is otherwise an ineligible household member, for example under student rules, or has been disqualified from the program. The CWD must also verify household composition if it is questionable per [7 CFR § 273.2\(f\)\(1\)\(x\)](#).

Because joint processing procedures apply to households consisting only of SSI applicant or recipient members, the CWD must not assume that a household applying for CalFresh under SSA joint processing procedures is categorically eligible. The CWD must confirm that all members receive or are authorized to receive SSI benefits before applying categorical eligibility. A household that includes at least one SSI applicant member is not categorically eligible.

Per [7 CFR § 273.2\(j\)\(2\)\(v\)](#), the eligibility factors that are deemed for CalFresh eligibility because of SSI status without additional verification are resources, gross and net income, social security number, sponsored immigrant information, and residency. While identity must be verified, CWDs are reminded that if identity has been verified via the Medi-Cal Eligibility Data System (MEDS) then the requirement to verify identity has been met. CWDs must check MEDS before requesting identity verification from the household.

Once preliminary eligibility has been determined, the CWD must determine the household's benefit level. To do this, the CWD may need to verify remaining eligibility factors, such as, but not limited to, earned and unearned income.

CWDs are reminded that, per [7 CFR § 273.10\(e\)\(2\)\(ii\)\(C\)](#), all eligible households of one and two persons must be provided the minimum benefit. There is no minimum CalFresh benefit allotment for eligible households with three or more members.

For more information on categorical eligibility for households in which all members receive or are authorized to receive SSI benefits, reference [ACL No. 18-90](#) dated July 31, 2018.

### 3. No Interview Requirement

Per [7 CFR § 273.2\(k\)\(1\)\(i\)\(G\)](#), households whose CalFresh applications are processed under SSA joint processing procedures **will not be required to go in to a CWD office, or otherwise be subject to a CWD interview**. This rule applies whether the household is entitled to ES or not and whether the household is categorically eligible or not. The application will be processed by the CWD and the CWD will not contact the household to obtain information to complete the eligibility determination unless:

1. The application is improperly completed;
2. Mandatory verification is missing; or
3. The CWD determines that certain information on the application is questionable.



Note that CWDs may proactively contact the household to determine whether the household incurs expenses, such as medical costs, that may increase benefits if verified. If applicable, the CWD must provide the household at least 10 days to provide the verification per [7 CFR § 273.2\(f\)](#). If a deduction is not mandatory and the household does not fulfill the request for verification, the CWD will determine eligibility without the deduction.

For CWDs that have opted to accept client statement for shelter expense, verification of shelter expenses should only be requested if questionable.

As a reminder, households can claim a deduction any time: at application, periodic report, recertification, or during the certification period. Households do not have to wait until a periodic report or recertification to claim a deduction.

Contact made for the purposes described above will not constitute a CWD interview. In no event will the applicant be required to go in to a CWD office to finalize the eligibility determination.

#### **4. Verification**

Even though the CWD will not conduct an interview for households whose applications are processed under SSA joint processing procedures, the CWD must ensure that mandatory information is verified prior to determining initial eligibility. Households entitled to ES must be processed in accordance with existing ES verification rules that allow the verification requirement to be postponed.

Per [7 CFR § 273.2\(k\)\(1\)\(iii\)\(A\)](#), the CWD has the option to verify SSI benefit payments through the State Data Exchange (SDX), Beneficiary Data Exchange (BENDEX), and/or through verification provided by the household.

Verification of SSI and SSP benefit payments through the SDX and BENDEX is the preferred method of verification. Information verified using SDX or BENDEX is considered verified upon receipt because it has been provided by the primary source (i.e. SSA), it is complete, not questionable, and requires no further verification. Information verified through the SDX and BENDEX must not be re-verified, but households must also be given the opportunity to provide verification from another source if all necessary information is not available through the SDX or BENDEX or if the SDX or BENDEX information is contradictory to information provided by the household or is otherwise questionable per [MPP § 63-300.5\(q\)](#).

The SDX and BENDEX data is available in MEDS via the “Title XVI -SSI/SSP Information” screen, also known as the INQX screen. The CWD must use the SSI and SSP benefit amount paid to the individual which is shown in the “SSI – PAID – AMT” and “SSP – PAID – AMT” data elements.

CalFresh rules regarding the verification of SSI and SSP benefit payment amounts through the SDX or BENDEX apply regardless of household composition or the method of application. In other words, regardless of whether a household is composed only of SSI applicant or recipient members or whether the household includes a combination of both SSI and non-SSI applicant or recipient members and whether an application is processed under SSA joint processing procedures or an SSI recipient applies with the CWD, verification of SSI benefit payments through SDX or BENDEX is the preferred method of verification.

## **5. Certification Periods**

CWDs must certify households processed under SSA joint processing procedures for a 24 or 36-month certification period depending on the household type. Households in which all members are elderly and/or disabled and have earned income will be assigned a 24-month certification period. Households in which all members are elderly and/or disabled and the household has no earned income will be assigned a 36-month certification period under California's Elderly Simplified Application Project (ESAP) approved by FNS.

The only exception is households that apply between June 1, 2019 and November 30, 2019. CWDs are reminded that per [ACL No. 18-90](#), newly eligible households that include only SSI recipients and apply between June 1, 2019 and November 30, 2019 will be assigned a shortened certification period depending on the household type to stagger periodic report and recertification workload.

For more information on California's ESAP waiver, reference [ACL No. 17-34](#) dated April 25, 2017.

Households in which all members receive SSI are eligible for ESAP even though these households are considered Public Assistance CalFresh (PACF) cases in the federal SNAP regulations. At the time of ESAP implementation, only households in which all members receive California Work Opportunity and Responsibility to Kids (CalWORKs) were considered PACF cases in California. Therefore, [ACL No. 17-34](#) specifies that PACF cases are not eligible to ESAP. That instruction is superseded by the instruction in this letter. The CDSS will be working with CWDs and other stakeholders to issue revised instructions regarding the definition of PACF in the coming months.

## **6. Processing Timelines**

As previously mentioned, the CWD will make the eligibility determination and issue CalFresh benefits to eligible households within 30 days following the date the signed application is received by SSA.



For CalFresh applications submitted by SSA through GetCalFresh.org, the signed application is considered “received by SSA” when the household designates the SSA technician to sign the application on the household’s behalf and the SSA technician submits the application through GetCalFresh.org. For paper applications submitted by fax or email, the application is considered received by SSA when the household returns the signed application to SSA. This applies even if there is a delay between when the household returns the signed application to SSA and when the SSA technician submits the signed application to the CWD.

The ES processing time standards must begin the date the CWD receives the signed application from SSA. This applies whether the CalFresh application is submitted through GetCalFresh.org or a paper application is submitted by fax or email. The CWD must screen all CalFresh applications received from SSA for entitlement to ES when received by the CWD.

## **7. Denials**

Per [7 CFR § 273.2\(k\)](#), households denied CalFresh benefits that have an SSI application pending (i.e. they are not receiving or are not authorized to receive SSI) must be informed on the notice of denial of the future possibility of categorical eligibility if and when they become SSI recipients. The CDSS is in the process of updating the CalFresh *Notice of Denial or Pending Status* (DFA 377.1A) to comply with this requirement. The revised notice will be released under separate cover as soon as administratively feasible.

## **8. Avoiding Duplicate Participation**

Per [7 CFR § 273.2\(k\)\(1\)\(i\)\(K\)](#), the CWD must implement a method to determine if any member of a household whose CalFresh application is submitted by SSA is already participating in CalFresh before completing the eligibility determination. The CWDs will fulfill this responsibility by completing the existing file clearance process.

### **Joint Processing of SNAP Applications: Households with both SSI and Non-SSI Applicant or Recipient Members**

The SSA will not assist households with both SSI and non-SSI applicant or recipient members with completing and submitting a CalFresh application.

The SSA technician must refer households with both SSI and non-SSI applicant or recipient members to [www.getcalfresh.org](http://www.getcalfresh.org) or [www.benefitscal.org](http://www.benefitscal.org) or the appropriate CWD, if the household prefers to apply in person or, in some CWDs, on the telephone.

To effectively provide a referral to those households who prefer to apply in person or on the telephone, CDSS and SSA have agreed that SSA technicians will use CDSS’s “[Find an Office](#)” online tool to accurately identify the contact information, including phone number, of the CWD office closest to the household’s residence.

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If you have any questions regarding this ACL, please contact the CalFresh Policy Bureau at (916) 651-8047.

Sincerely,

***Original Document Signed By:***

KIM JOHNSON  
Deputy Director  
Family Engagement and Empowerment Division

Attachment

MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING AND REIMBURSABLE AGREEMENT  
BETWEEN  
THE UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE  
AND  
THE SOCIAL SECURITY ADMINISTRATION  
  
FOR SERVICES RELATED TO THE  
SUPPLEMENTAL NUTRITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

RAUSDA180001

**I. Purpose**

This memorandum of understanding and reimbursable agreement (Agreement) between the Social Security Administration (SSA) and the Department of Agriculture (USDA) explains the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)-related services that SSA will provide for USDA in SSA offices and the terms of the reimbursement that USDA will provide to SSA for these services. Section IV of this Agreement contains a list of these services, which include SSA's operations for taking SNAP applications and other services provided concerning Combined Application Projects (CAPs).

**II. Authority**

This Agreement is authorized under the Economy Act, 31 U.S.C. § 1535. Other authorities are § 11(i) and (j) of the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 (7 U.S.C. § 2020(i), (j)), and USDA regulations at 7 C.F.R. § 273.2.

**III. Background**

- A. SNAP Application Assistance for Applicants for or Recipients of Social Security Benefits under Title II or Supplemental Security Income (SSI) under Title XVI of the Social Security Act

The responsibilities set out in this Agreement generally follow from current statutory processing requirements at § 11(i) and (j) of the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 (7 U.S.C. § 2020(i), (j)) and SNAP regulations promulgated by USDA in conjunction with SSA at 7 C.F.R. § 273.2(k). For example, SSA is required to inform every applicant for or recipient of social security benefits or SSI (including federally administered supplementary payments, whether mandatory or optional, see 7 C.F.R. § 273.2(k)) about the availability of SNAP benefits. SSA is also required, except in a cash-out State, to offer to take SNAP applications from SSI applicants or recipients who live in households consisting only of SSI applicants or recipients (i.e., pure SSI households), and to timely forward the applications to the appropriate State agency that handles SNAP to determine the applicant's

eligibility for SNAP benefits. SSA's responsibilities are set out in more detail in section IV below.

#### B CAP Agreements

In addition to SSA's obligation to process SNAP applications for members of pure SSI households, SSA also participates in CAPs with certain States and the Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) of USDA. CAPs are designed to eliminate or reduce the need for SSI applicants and recipients to have face-to-face interviews with State SNAP staff, and to increase SNAP participation by simplifying the SNAP application process. Under a CAP agreement, a participating State, USDA/FNS, and SSA use streamlined procedures for providing SNAP benefits to aged, blind, or disabled individuals. SNAP benefits are processed for SSI applicants and recipients using:

- increased automation, i.e., sharing of SSA's records via the State data exchange (SDX) among States, SSA, and USDA, and
- simplified calculations of SNAP allotments.

Two types of CAPs are currently in operation:

- Standard model - includes simplified joint application processing by SSA as individuals apply for or are re-determined for SSI.
- Modified model - does not require any active coordination between the State and SSA. The State agencies perform outreach to prospective SNAP beneficiaries to supplement data from the SDX.

Generally, eligibility for a CAP is limited to single individuals living alone or single individuals living with others but paying a fair share of food and shelter costs. However, married couples in certain States may also be eligible to participate in a CAP depending on the State CAP provisions.

### IV. SSA's Responsibilities

#### A Application Assistance

**NOTE:** The responsibilities associated with SSA's possibly taking, helping to complete, and/or forwarding SNAP applications — particularly the relevant responsibilities described in paragraphs 1 through 8, and in paragraphs 14 and 17 below — do not apply in a cash-out state.

1. SSA will inform all SSI applicants and recipients residing in households consisting only of SSI applicants and recipients (i.e., pure SSI households) of

- e their right to apply for SNAP benefits at the SSA office without going to the SNAP office; and
  - e their right to apply at a SNAP office if they choose to do so
- 2 SSA will screen all SSI applications for SNAP eligibility or SNAP-application status.
  - 3 SSA will assist in completing and accept SNAP applications from members of pure SSI households. Within one working day after receipt of a signed application, SSA will forward the applications to the appropriate State agency administering SNAP. Unless a CAP applies to the State, SSA will use the State's SNAP application form until a national SNAP application is available
  - 4 SSA will prescreen all SNAP applications for entitlement to expedited service on the day the application is received at the SSA office. If the applicant appears to be entitled to expedited service, will write "Expedited Processing" on the first page of the SNAP application. SSA will inform SNAP applicants who appear to meet the criteria for expedited service that benefits may be issued a few days sooner if they apply directly at the SNAP office. Alternatively, an applicant may get an application from SSA and take it to the SNAP office for screening, an interview.
  - 5.e If SSA takes an SSI application or conducts an SSI redetermination on the telephone from a member of a pure SSI household, SSA will complete a SNAP application during the telephone interview. In these cases, SSA will mail the SNAP application to the claimant for signature for return to the SSA office or to the State agency. SSA will then forward any SNAP applications it receives to the State agency.
  - 6.e If an applicant completes a limited SSI application online, SSA may defer its responsibilities under this Agreement – such as those associated with possibly taking, helping to complete, and/or forwarding SNAP applications – until it has live contact, in person or by telephone, with the applicant.
  - 7.e SSA will inform SSI recipients redetermined for SSI by mail of their right to file a SNAP application at the SSA office (if they are members of a pure SSI household) or at their local SNAP office and of their right to an out-of-office SNAP interview to be performed by the State agency if they are unable to appoint an authorized representative.
  - 8 SSA will inform applicants for and recipients of social security benefits residing in households where not all members are applying for or receiving SSI of the availability of benefits under SNAP, the availability of a SNAP

application at the SSA office, and the ability to file a SNAP application at their local SNAP office.

9. SSA will provide an information sheet or brochure supplied by State agencies to households screened and processed by SSA.
10. In accordance with SSA's legal authority, SSA will provide State agencies SSA Privacy Act-protected information to administer SNAP under the terms and conditions set forth in a Computer Matching and Privacy Protection Act (CMPPA) Agreement and Information Exchange Agreement (IEA).
11. For each Fiscal Year (FY) that this Agreement is in effect, SSA will provide to USDA an Agreement Covering Reimbursable Services (Form-SSA-1235), which contains the annual FY estimate of costs and the estimated amounts due for the period covered by the Form SSA-1235 as well as any other terms and conditions. Both parties must sign the Form SSA-1235 before the commencement of any service provided by the SSA office for that FY.
12. SSA will consult with USDA prior to any change in the estimated costs for SNAP work. If at any time SSA determines that actual costs will exceed the estimated cost as stated on the Form SSA-1235, the SSA Project Coordinator must initiate an amended Form SSA-1235 reflecting the increase and obtain USDA agreement for the new estimated cost or terminate the project to prevent SSA from having to absorb the cost over-runs.
13. SSA will provide to USDA quarterly reports of actual costs incurred in each fiscal year, including appropriate supporting documentation (e.g., volume of SSI cases screened and applications and recertifications completed), and make available such other reports as are mutually agreed upon.
14. SSA will conduct a special work measurement study every 5 (five) years and provide USDA with updated standard time values for SSI screening and CAP cases. The study will be conducted by SSA consistent with practices that provide a statistically significant result. The report will include the process and methodology on where and how data were obtained. Studies may be conducted at other times should substantive policy or procedural changes be made, either by USDA or SSA.
15. If the parties to this Agreement mutually agree, SSA will conduct special studies as requested by USDA.



16.e SSA will ensure that processing of SNAP applications is provided as a part of new SSA employee training and will conduct regular refresher training for SSA regional and field office supervisors and staff, as appropriate.e

17.e With the approval of SSA, USDA and State agencies on a regular or as-needed basis will perform scheduled regional office and field office site reviews to assess the SSI application process and to ensure that this Agreement is being implemented properly and that appropriate work is being performed on behalf of USDA.e

## B. CAP Agreements

Currently, there are seven (7) states with "standard" CAP agreements in place between FNS, SSA offices, and State SNAP offices: Florida, Massachusetts, Mississippi, New York, Pennsylvania, South Carolina, and Washington. In States with a "modified" CAP agreement (Kentucky, Michigan, Louisiana, Texas, South Dakota, New Jersey, Maryland, North Carolina, Virginia, and Arizona), the SNAP application processing procedures remain as outlined in section IV.A and IV.B above, and the following does not apply.

1.e SSA will implement or continue a CAP only in States where SSA's workload and staffing considerations can accommodate the CAP workload.e

2.e SSA will determine whether an SSI applicant or recipient is potentially eligible for SNAP benefits under the CAP agreement.e

3.e SSA will ask additional questions on the SSI applications/redeterminations of individuals who are potentially eligible for SNAP benefits.e

4.e SSA will submit the paper or online application on behalf of the individual to the appropriate local SNAP office for processing.e

5.e SSA and the State agency will maintain a CMPPA Agreement and IEA to cover the terms and conditions under which the State agency may receive information from SSA in an electronic format.e

6.e SSA will collect information to determine costs incurred by SSA to implement and operate "standard" CAP agreements and will share such information with USDA.e

7.e SSA will work with USDA to evaluate the effectiveness and costs of CAPs.e

V. USDA's Responsibilities

- A. USDA will provide payment for the cost of all agreed-upon services performed by SSA under this Agreement.
- B. USDA will execute an Agreement Covering Reimbursable Services (Form SSA-1235) for each FY, at least 30 (thirty) days prior to the FY for which reimbursement is required, and reimburse SSA under the terms of this Agreement. USDA will promptly reimburse SSA for services provided as described in this Agreement to the extent that the requested reimbursements are covered in section VII.
- C. USDA will include in its annual FY appropriations request detailed, estimated costs for carrying out this Agreement. USDA will consult with SSA prior to any change in USDA's budget estimates for the cost of SNAP work by SSA for that FY.
- D. USDA will encourage State agencies to provide an information sheet or brochure for SSA to distribute to all households screened or processed by SSA. This material will inform the household of the address and telephone number of the household's correct SNAP office and the remaining actions to be taken in the application process. The material will include a statement that a household should be notified of a SNAP determination within 30 (thirty) days and can contact the SNAP office if it receives no notification within 30 (thirty) days or has other questions or problems. It will also include information on rights and responsibilities (including fair hearings, authorized representatives, out-of-office interviews, reporting changes, and timely reapplication), how and where to obtain an Electronic Benefit Transfer (EBT) card, how to use an EBT card, and which commodities clients may purchase with an EBT card.
- E.e USDA will provide guidance to State agencies that they must:
  - e make timely eligibility determinations on applications sent to them by SSA; and
  - e issue the approved SNAP benefits to the eligible household within 30 days from the date that the SSA office received the signed SNAP application.
- F.e USDA will partner with SSA in providing new employee training and regular refresher training for the SSA regional and field office supervisors and staff as appropriate. USDA will reimburse SSA in an amount equal to all costs incurred by SSA to implement SNAP training.

- G. USDA will share with SSA information collected by State agencies regarding the effectiveness of CAP projects.e
- H. USDA will work with SSA to evaluate the effectiveness and costs of CAPs
- I. USDA will develop a national SNAP application form that could be used by SSA

**VI. Limitation of Liability**

SSA will bear no liability for any financial loss incurred by State agencies or by USDA, whether directly or indirectly, through the use by the State agencies or by USDA of any data furnished or action taken by SSA pursuant to this Agreement. SSA will bear no liability for actions taken, or information provided, by SSA employees providing services under this Agreement.

**VII. Reimbursable Agreement and Methodology for Determining Actual Costs of Services Performed by SSA**

A.e Costs covered by this Agreement will be actual costs as determined by SSAe

B.e Cost Analysis System will include:e

- 1.e staff time and other costs incurred in negotiating SSA's role in the SNAPe application process.e
- 2. preparing and printing forms, Program Operations Manual System instructions, training materials, cost and reimbursement agreements, annual SSA-1235 reimbursement estimates, and quarterly reports of actual expenses incurred.
- 3.e training staffe
- 4.e modifying computer and other work measurement systems operations relatinge to SNAP activities by SSA personnel; ande
- 5. operational costs as provided in subsections (B) and (C) of this section.e

C Operational Costs are those costs incurred by SSA:

- 1. to compensate SSA employees for all SNAP work actually performed:
- 2. to take SNAP applications and recertifications from SSI applicants and recipients, living in households consisting only of SSI applicants and/or recipients.

3. to handle inquiries from the public related to SNAP matters;
4. to screen SSI applicants and recipients to determine eligibility for SSI SNAP joint processing or a CAP;
5. to inform applicants for or recipients of social security benefits or SSI who transact business at a Social Security office about the availability of benefits under SNAP and the availability of an application; and
6. to assist members of pure SSI households to complete the SNAP application, and send the application to the State agency; and
7. for SSA employee overtime, to the extent that employees are required to work overtime because SNAP work displaces regular work;
8. for costs associated with SNAP workers stationed in SSA field offices. Before including out-stationing costs as part of the total reimbursement costs, SSA will conduct a study to identify all the costs associated with accommodating out-stationed workers, and
9. for carrying out a CAP.

#### D Method of Calculation of Expenses

Operational costs charged for SNAP-related work will be determined by the SSA Cost Analysis System using standard cost allocation procedures as follows:

1. 100 (one hundred) percent of costs of employee time spent on SNAP work will be charged to USDA; and
2. costs for field indirect time, regional office, central office support staff and expenditures for other objects will be prorated to USDA generally based on the ratio of direct time identified to SNAP work to total direct time.

#### E Transfer of Funds, Timing of Agreement, Estimates, and Payments

USDA will transfer funds to SSA in periodic payments to support SSA's activities under this Agreement. Transfers of funds will be through the Intra-Governmental Payment and Collection (IPAC) system.

No later than 30 (thirty) days after an accountable event, or before the close of the quarterly reporting period, whichever occurs first, SSA will provide USDA with a performance report (e.g., a billing statement) that details all work performed to date. Additionally, at least quarterly, the parties will reconcile balances related to revenue and expenses for work performed under this Agreement.

This Agreement does not authorize SSA to incur obligations through performance of the services described herein. Performance of such services is authorized only by execution of Form SSA-1235 prior to the applicable FY. Payments by USDA will be provided only for services covered by an executed Form SSA-1235 for the applicable FY. Attached and incorporated by reference is an executed SSA-1235 that provides the authorization for SSA to perform services under this Agreement in FY 2018.

**VIII. Duration of the Agreement**

This Agreement will be effective from October 1, 2017 to September 30, 2018. The parties may renew this Agreement for four (4) successive one (1) year periods (option years) that coincide with the federal FY. If the parties agree to renew this Agreement for the option years, they will execute a Form SSA-1235, or other appropriate form, manifesting said agreement on or before the start of each option year. The terms and conditions set forth in this Agreement will remain in effect during the option years unless the parties modify those terms and conditions in the Form SSA-1235, or the parties sign another written modification.

**IX. Modification and Termination**

Modifications to this Agreement must be in writing and agreed to by the parties. This Agreement may not be terminated except upon mutual agreement of the parties, upon the enactment of legislation that terminates or prohibits substantial performance by either or both of the parties, or upon the inability of USDA to reimburse SSA for costs to carry out the functions specified in this Agreement and the regulations promulgated at 7 C.F.R. § 273.2. In the event of termination of this Agreement, USDA will reimburse SSA for actual costs incurred prior to the date of termination plus any termination costs.

**X. Contacts**

USDA Project Officer – Lizbeth Silbermann  
Food and Nutrition Service  
3101 Park Center Dr., Room 814  
Alexandria, VA 22302  
(703) 305-2494

USDA Accounting/Finance Contact – LaTonya Williams  
Food and Nutrition Service  
3101 Park Center Dr., Room 720  
Alexandria, VA 22302  
(703) 305-2830

SSA Project Officer -- Sean Balser  
ORDP OISP Office of Applications and Electronic Services Support Policy  
6401 Security Boulevard Baltimore, MD 21235n  
(410) 966-8918n

SSA Accounting Finance Contact -- Michelle Murrill  
Office of Finance  
P.O. Box 17042  
Baltimore, MD 21235  
(410) 965-0011n

**XI. Integration Clause**

This Agreement and the accompanying Form SSA-1235 constitute the entire agreement of the parties with respect to its subject matter. There have been no representations, warranties or promises made outside of this Agreement. Except for SSA Form-1235, this Agreement will take precedence over any other documents that may be in conflict with it.

**XII. Disclaimer**

The performance by SSA of the described services and the timeliness of the delivery are authorized only to the extent that the services are consistent with § 11(i) and (j) of the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 (7 U.S.C. § 2020(i), (j)) and FNS regulations at 7 C.F.R. § 273.2.

**XIII. Dispute Resolution Clause**

Disputes related to this agreement will be resolved in accordance with instructions provided in the Treasury Financial Manual (TFM) Volume I, Part 2, Chapter 4700, Appendix 10 *Intragovernmental Transaction Guide* (May 2013).



**XIV. Authorized Signatures**

The signatories below warrant and represent that they have competent authority to enter into the obligations set forth in this Agreement on behalf of their respective agencies

**For the United States Department of Agriculture:**

Handwritten signature of David Burr in black ink, with the word "(for)" written in parentheses to the right of the signature.

David Burr  
Chief Financial Officer  
Food and Nutrition Service  
United States Department of Agriculture

10-5-17

Date

**For the Social Security Administration:**

Handwritten signature of Michelle King in black ink, written over a horizontal line.

Michelle King  
Deputy Commissioner for Budget, Finance, Quality, and Management  
Social Security Administration

8/22/17

Date