

PERFORMANCE MEASUREMENT COUNTIES
Advisory Meeting
May 14, 2003
CDSS Training Center
815 S Street Delta Room
Sacramento California

1. Welcome – Joeana Carpenter greeted everyone.
2. Agenda Review – Joeana went over the agenda items and asked for any additional items.
3. Summary Review – Joeana asked if there were any additions or changes to the summary. The error rate was changed from 17.2% to 7.2%.
4. CalWorks – Warren Ghens indicated that Transmittal drafts on time limits coding, WTW sanctioned were sent and should be released when the next version of Q5i is released in early summer. Coding WTW sanctioned as 1 in T30 to capture data in T48 Work Participation will be changed, so that T30 will be coded 2 (Not in AU). Will no longer use codes 12 and/or 13 in item T48. There is a meeting next week to develop more information on this. There will probably be a conference call to go over instructions, modification, etc. Counties asked for two-week notice of the conference call.

Joeana Carpenter discussed how some of the Q5i data such as head of household, and address/phone number of household is being used for additional research. This research branch requested this information and in the Q5i data base the majority of the cases this information was incorrect and had not been verified. Reviewers were asked to verify address and phone information. Updated information for both the food stamp and TANF programs back to January 2003 is being requested. A template showing how this information is to be provided was handed out, along with county specific list of cases. Supervisors are to inform Joeana by May 19th by e-mail if they cannot provide this information. The address and phone number should be the most current on file, not the one as of the review date. Let Joeana know how much this extra workload impacts on you and the staff. In response to a question Joeana stated the information does not need to be verified; use the most current in the database. This can be done by giving a clerk the list and template. The final template will be out next week. For now, use the payee as head of household. Also comment if the phone is message, cell, pager, etc. Joeana will ask the research branch to provide a sample describing the research project for which this data is needed. LA has already provided this information through an electronic match; you can do the same to IT. Let Joeana know if you will use an electronic match.

5. Food Stamps, Richard Trujillo distributed the Rolling Error Rate Reports along with AN 03-10 which contains bonus funding information. It is important for the state to keep improving its error rate as it could receive bonus funds for most improved state. This information was shared with CWDA at a meeting attended by Dennis Stewart, Bruce Wagstaff, and Lois VanBeers. At this same meeting which was held last week county directors were encouraged to improve coordination and communication between QC and policy staff to help reduce county error rates. QC staff should be included in corrective action and eligibility discussions. QC supervisors may have issues that QA and eligibility staffs need to be aware. At the same meeting CWDA directors requested counties take back the negative caseload, as this would help them develop a more complete picture of error trends. Joeana provided a list of the number of negative cases per county so each county could see how many additional cases each county would receive. This list, based on FY2002, shows the number of sample cases, the number of completed cases, and percentage of completed cases. These numbers are preliminary unreconciled numbers. Counties will only get these cases if they want them to conduct negative case reviews. Joeana stated that we are responding to a CWDA request, which was made by the directors to Lois. She clarified that the negative error rate is a separate error rate. Hector Hernandez added that letters on negative error findings are sent to the counties so they should have this information. Joeana stated the anticipated unregressed statewide negative error rate should be reduced to about 10% after regression, which is much improved from last year's 17.84%. Alameda requested information on workload impact if the county assumed this function. Joeana stated she could not answer this question as this was brought up by the directors and we merely are fulfilling their request. Chapter 13 of the FNS-310 Handbook contains the negative case review instructions so reviewing this chapter may give you some idea of the per case workload.

The CWDA directors expressed concern that the Q5i asks more questions than is required by FNS for completing an active case review. Directors asked for paring down and simplifying the work sheet so that only those items required by the FNS-380 are included; therefore, Lois asked Joeana through Richard to look at the list of federally required data items to see what could be eliminated. A new profile showing the elimination of items of non-required items was distributed. This paring down must be done by the end of June because there probably will not be a state budget by July 1. The new profile will require much more narration and will no longer be any definitions and state edits. Joeana emphasized that the narration will be critical, so the supervisor as well as the FNS rereviewer can follow case reviewer's logic. She said that feedback to the directors from counties' QC staff indicated that the current Q5i is burdensome, inflexible, and takes too long to complete, hence the change to more closely mirror the process per FNS-310. Most of the supervisors said that they had not been consulted. Joeana responded by advising them to internally communicate their concerns to their respective directors. In response to a question, Joeana

said the new version would allow you to stop the review when ineligibility is determined. Richard will have a work group to review this project and refine the draft. A survey is being conducted that may add twelve items to collect data needed by other parts of CDSS. This survey is separate and was not part of the overall changes. Daphne asked for consideration of having state re-reviewers as in the past. There were no other comments.

6. State/Federal Difference Cases – Hector Hernandez said that FOB released electronically the cumulative list of State Federal Difference Cases. Let Joeana know if you are not on the list to receive these. The FFY2002 list of difference cases was distributed, along with related attachments. There were twenty-nine cases, fourteen of which involved SUA pro ration (three in our favor); six based on later/better information.
7. Automated Deadline Case Notice - Richard Trujillo distributed an example of a proposed automated deadline reminder notice with specific case information which will be sent five and two days before the case submission due date. We are proposing the same cycle but with the list of cases that have already been received by DTVU and those cases still outstanding. Each list will be county specific. Richard indicated that this notice is a useful case management tool and is expected to be out by early June.
8. Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) – Lisa Kim, Dave Bailey, Kip Houge. Secondary Sample Cases - Jim Andersen distributed a flow chart for determining case reviewability for secondary cases. Jim discussed the definitions and went through the flow chart. He asked for some examples of cases the counties were working on and used the flow chart to determine the reviewability of each case. He indicated that a transmittal would be prepared and distributed with the flow chart. Counties asked that examples of types of cases be included in the transmittal, and two counties said that they would provide Jim with some case scenarios.

Dave Bailey said that the Under Secretary for USDA whose area of responsibility includes FS (former FS Commissioner of Texas) has made payment accuracy his highest priority. He is concerned that California's error rate keeps going up while the national error rate is declining. In FFY 2000 California was 13.99% while the national rate was 8.91%. A sanction of \$11.8 million dollars was assessed but a reinvestment agreement allowed 1.4 million of that to be used by California for corrective action. Approximately 10.4 million dollars was held in abeyance until 2003; if we are under or at the national average that amount is waived. In FFY 2001 the numbers were 17.37% for California and 8.66% for the nation for the sanction amount of \$114 million. This is under appeal, as there is no reinvestment agreement. For FFY 2002 the projections are 15% and 8% respectively, with a sanction of \$88 million. Total sanctions 2000-2002 are \$200 million; however, FNS has seen excellent progress in several major large counties over the last few months. For FFY 2003 (Oct. thru Dec.) the error rate is about 10%. CWDA directors have been told that, from FNS' prior experience, once the error rate starts declining it gathers its own

momentum; the hardest part is getting started. Because of Farm Bill changes, there will be no sanctions for FFY 2003, and the state could receive a bonus if one of the most improved nationally. (These states will receive a bonus.) The error rate must be reduced by about 5 percent from last year, which is where we are as of the end of December 2002. The bonus amount is about \$7-10 million. Some of the keys to success have been: Change Reporting Centers instituted in Alameda and Los Angeles counties; case review systems three-tier case review system with FS Early Information System. Another key to successful error reduction is to establish an effective ongoing routine QA effort to see what workers are doing on a regular basis, establish accountability, and make sure that information gets to all levels of the CWD. Additionally, when automating, counties should prepare for the stress of implementation. Generally, the error rate spikes when automation first starts, but this can be controlled. QC must be part of the process to ensure case conversion is done correctly and thus limit the number of errors that can occur and to prevent transferring pre-existing errors. The transition to Quarterly Reporting must be done carefully. FNS is preparing policy and QC training. There must be QC/Corrective Action/Policy teamwork for best results.

Lisa Kim discussed the QC culture/process. The role of QC is not just to find errors but also eliminate errors—by bringing about training, policy, and procedural changes. The QC focus should be towards finding out if what the worker did with the information he/she had was used prudently. Often QC must take on the burden of building the relationship with QA and policy. FNS staff answered several questions: information can be presented to other parts of the county department about the QC process by presenting a “Road Show. The household cannot be required to come to the office for the face-to-face interview, the reviewer should go to the residence, or other site if that is the household’s preference.

Next, there was discussion as to how FNS can help QC and corrective action work together more effectively. Among the ideas discussed was – 310 hands-on reviewer training with the consensus being there should be a phased-in approach, with the first session focusing on the new QC culture, review of the –310 Handbook, how to apply quarterly reporting rules, and prospective budgeting. A letter from FNS to county directors about this training and the need for staff to attend would greatly help loosening up county funds for this.

CDSS and FNS are jointly sending a letter reiterating points from the CWDA meeting and seminar last week to county directors, QC supervisors, policy staff, etc.

In response to another question, FNS stated that SASA's had been completed in Fresno, Riverside, and San Bernardino and is under way in San Diego. FNS has no concerns concerning the integrity of the reviews. State sample cases were also reviewed, and there were no glaring errors. There was some error cases in which FNS was able to eliminate or reduce the error. Counties had good QC/Policy relationships. The SASA reviews

will probably have to be scaled back to just interviews only. The next SASA will be in Contra Costa.

9. Corrective Action - Rich Terwilliger distributed a revised ME schedule: Merced is next week, Santa Cruz and Ventura is in June. Next year: Los Angeles, San Bernardino, Sacramento, Fresno, San Diego, and maybe Orange, Alameda, San Francisco, Stanislaus, Butte, Santa Barbara, Shasta and 15 small counties. Large counties are reviewed starting at the beginning of the Federal Fiscal Year. If the county has: more than 25,000 cases, it must be reviewed every year; 4-25,000 every other year. County Report, Gerry: Counties would like Corrective Action to attend the regional meetings on a regular basis.

10. Other: There was some discussion of the travel problem for southern counties. It was decided there would be a PMC meeting in June to go over the workgroup's Q5i final product. Fresno will double check to see if their travel is still restricted, which was in part why all meetings were moved to Sacramento. Merced and San Bernardino asked about the FNS re-reviewer requiring birth certificates for household members be in the QC case file. Lisa stated she thought this had been corrected and was no longer an issue, and said this should not have been required. FNS QC training will be in the next 2 months, corrective action and policy staff will be invited. County staff will probably have roles in the training. Approximately eleven counties indicated they have three people for all three functions. The meeting schedule for the rest of the year was agreed upon: June 10-11, July 8-9, August 12-13, Sept 9-10, and Oct 14-15. There could be sessions later this year for quarterly reporting.

Action items: Template/list next week; county response on negative reviews by May 19; workgroup for simplified Q5i profile. (Fresno and Orange volunteered at and after the meeting.)