

DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES

744 P Street, Sacramento, CA 95814



February 4, 1998

ALL COUNTY INFORMATION NOTICE NO. I-08-98

TO: ALL COUNTY WELFARE DIRECTORS

REASON FOR TRANSMITTAL

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

SUBJECT: REVISED FOOD STAMP FORMS -- DFA 285-A3, "IMPORTANT FACTS FOR THE FOOD STAMP APPLICANTS", AND FS 9, "FOOD STAMPS IMPORTANT INFORMATION"

REFERENCE: ALL COUNTY LETTER # 97-41
 ALL COUNTY INFORMATION NOTICE # I-21-96
 ALL COUNTY INFORMATION NOTICE # I-05-97

This letter transmits copies of the newly revised DFA 285-A3 (11/97), "Important Information for Food Stamp Applicants" (see Attachment I) and the FS 9 (11/97), "Food Stamps Important Information" (see Attachment II). These forms have been revised to reflect changes due to the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act (PRWORA) of 1996, Phase II, effective September 1, 1997. The DFA 285-A3 was last revised in 12/96 and the FS 9 was last revised in 3/96. The specific changes to the forms are listed in Attachment III.

CAMERA-READY COPIES AND TRANSLATIONS

Counties should call the Forms Management Bureau at (916)657-1907 or CALNET 437-1907 for camera-ready copies of either form in any language. However, counties that have provided Language Services Bureau with a county contact and the specific languages needed in their county (choices of Spanish, Chinese, Cambodian, Vietnamese and Russian) will automatically be sent those languages as soon as the forms have been translated and are ready for distribution. The Spanish and other language versions are expected to be available in about four to six weeks after the English version.

NOTE: The Food Stamp Program Bureau provided Language Services with a listing of County Food Stamp Coordinators in June of 1997. If any changes have occurred in a county since that time, or if a county wishes to advise Language Services of their specific needs, call Language Services at (916) 657-3429 or CALNET 437-3429.

STOCK

The forms may be ordered from the California Department of Social Services warehouse according to the forms ordering procedures in the County Forms Catalog, upon receipt of the Notice of Change Form (GEN 127), which is issued when stock is available. Counties need to begin using the new stock as soon as it is available and cease using any prior versions. The warehouse will no longer stock the 12/96 version of the DFA 285-A3, and there is very limited stock of the 3/96 version of the FS 9 in the warehouse and it is expected to be exhausted by the time the revised form is printed.

CONTACTS

If you have any questions or need further information, please contact the following staff regard the specific programs areas:

- Implementation ACL: Policy Implementation Unit, Food Stamp Program Bureau, at (916) 654-1896.
- Food Stamp Forms: Donna Morgan at (916) 654-5709 or CALNET 464-5709.
- Spanish/Asian/Russian translations: Shirley LuKung at (916) 654-1277 or CALNET at 464-1277.


CURTIS HOWARD
Acting Chief
Employment and Eligibility Branch

Attachments

DESCRIPTION OF CHANGES TO THE DFA 285-A3 and FS 9

DFA 285-A3

Page 1, First Column:

- The name of the Department was corrected to include the word "California".
- The spelling of the street address for the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Food and Consumer Service has been corrected.
- Under the YOUR RIGHTS section, the capitalization of the words county and state has been standardized.

Page 2, Second Column:

- The heading for "Systematic Alien Verification for Entitlements (SAVE)" section has been changed to "Citizenship/Immigration Status" and the wording regarding non-citizens has been changed to read, "If you are a non-citizen, you will be expected to provide acceptable verification of your status."
- Under the "Social Security Number" section, the wording was changed. The first sentence now reads, "You must give us the Social Security Number (SSN) for each *household member* for food stamps."

Page 2, Under Monthly Reporting:

- The following was added: "Any member of your household is convicted of a drug related felony for possession, use or distribution of illegal drugs that took place since August 22, 1996."

Page 2, Under Nonmonthly Reporting:

- The following was added: "Any member of your household is convicted of a drug related felony for possession, use or distribution of illegal drugs that took place since August 22, 1996."

Page 3, Under Disqualification Penalties:

- The second sentence was reworded. It now reads: "The penalties for an IPV are **disqualification** as listed below **AND** can be **fines up to \$250,000 and/or jail/prison for up to 20 years.**" The last sentence before bullets now reads, "When you are disqualified, the penalties stop your benefits for: . . ."

Page 1, (front)

- The word "state" has been added to the third sentence of the first paragraph as a source of laws for the program.
- The wording has been changed in paragraph four of the left column in regard to Expedited Services to amplify the information.
- The last sentence in the fifth paragraph has been changed to read, "... until you do all you can to get *the facts or proof*."
- In the right column the sections on "Citizenship" and "Register for Work" have largely been rewritten to reflect changes and to simplify the information given.

Page 2, (back)

- A sentence has been added to the paragraph on "Monthly Report" that says, "The county will tell you how to report."
- The section on "Property Limit" has been rewritten concerning vehicles to update the vehicle value limit and to make the information more accurate, as well as easier to understand.
- The section on "College or Junior College Students" has been amended to add that disabled students may get food stamps.

IMPORTANT FACTS FOR FOOD STAMP APPLICANTS

These pages give you important information, including your rights and responsibilities. If you need more information or have questions, ask your worker. The County needs facts about you and your household to see if you are eligible for Food Stamp benefits and to figure how much you will get if you are eligible.

IF YOU HAVE A DISABILITY AND NEED HELP APPLYING FOR OR CONTINUING TO RECEIVE CASH AID, FOOD STAMP BENEFITS, AND SERVICES, TELL THE COUNTY.

The law says that all applicants/recipients for aid, benefits, or services are to be treated fairly without regard to race, color, national origin, political affiliation, religion, marital status, sex, age or disability.

If you think you have been discriminated against, you may file a complaint by:

1. contacting your county's civil rights coordinator; or
2. writing to:
 - California Department of Social Services
Civil Rights Bureau
744 P Street MS 15-70,
P.O. Box 944243, Sacramento, CA 94244-2430
 - or for Food Stamps only to:
U.S. Department of Agriculture,
Food and Consumer Service, Civil Rights Office,
550 Kearny Street, San Francisco, CA 94102

You may also file by calling (916) 654-2107 or for the hearing impaired toll free 1-800-952-8349 (TDD).

YOUR RIGHTS

- To ask for help to complete your application or any other food stamp form.
- To ask for forms and notices to be translated if you don't read English.
- To be treated with courtesy, consideration and respect.
- To be interviewed promptly by the county when you apply and to have your eligibility determined within 30 days.
- To discuss your case with the county and to review your case yourself when you request to do so.
- To be told the rules for getting food stamps right away. If we think you might be eligible, you will get an interview immediately and stamps within three days.
- To ask to have your Food Stamp I.D., authorization document, or issuance card, or food stamps replaced if lost in the mail, damaged, stolen or destroyed. The county will tell you if you are eligible.
- To be given a written notice when your application is approved, denied, or when your benefits change or stop.

- To have your records kept confidential by the county and state, unless there is an outstanding felony arrest warrant issued for you, or as otherwise provided by law.
- To file a complaint or to ask for a state hearing within 90 days of any action if you think the action was wrong. You can write to your County Welfare Department or call toll free 1-800-952-5253 or for the hearing impaired (TDD) 1-800-952-8349.
- To be represented at a state hearing by yourself or by a household member, friend, attorney, or other person of your choice. NOTE: You may get free legal help at your local legal aid office or welfare rights group.

YOUR RESPONSIBILITIES

Citizenship/Immigration Status

You must sign under penalty of perjury that each member applying for food stamps is a U.S. citizen or U.S. national. If you are a non-citizen, you will be expected to provide acceptable verification of your status. Information you give us on immigration status will be checked with the U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS). Information we get from INS may affect your eligibility for food stamps.

Social Security Number

You must give us the Social Security Number (SSN) for each household member for food stamps. Anyone who refuses to give either a SSN or proof of application for a SSN will be disqualified from getting benefits. (Providing a SSN is required for all applicants by Section 1137 of the Social Security Act: 7 U.S. Code Section 2025e).

The SSNs will be used in a computer match to check income and resources with records from tax, welfare, employment, the Social Security Administration and other agencies. Differences may be checked out with employers, banks or others. Making false statements or failing to report all facts or situations which affect eligibility for food stamps may result in discontinuance and/or repayment of benefits and/or criminal or civil action.

Verification(s)

You must give proof or more facts when we ask. If you can't get proof, give the name of some other person or agency we may contact to get it. When you can't get the proof you need, we will help you get it.

Cooperation

You must cooperate with County, State and Federal staff. You may not get benefits or your benefits may be stopped if you don't cooperate.

YOUR REPORTING RESPONSIBILITIES

You must report all changes to the County. If you're not sure how to report changes, what changes to report, or what proof we need, ask your worker. Your worker will tell you if you are a monthly or nonmonthly reporting household.

MONTHLY REPORTING

How You Must Report

You must turn in a complete Monthly Eligibility Report by the 5th of each month.

Monthly Reporting Requirements

YOU MUST REPORT IF:

- Anyone gets money from work, relatives, Social Security, Veteran's benefits, tax refunds, or any other source.
- Anyone gets free rent or utilities.
- Anyone's job or training program changes.
- Anyone's income or source of income changes, starts or stops.
- Any child or any adult starts or stops school, college or training.
- You move in with someone else or anyone moves into or out of your home, including newborns, other children, spouses, absent parents, other relatives and non-relatives.
- Anyone moves to another address, plans to move, or gets a new mailing address. If you move to another county and you want to keep getting benefits, you must tell the county giving you aid and/or benefits AND ask for food stamps again in the new county.
- Anyone gets payments or allowances for job, training or school expenses, such as educational grants and loans, transportation to and from job or training, etc.
- Anyone is self-employed.
- Anyone has job, training or school costs, such as dependent care, transportation, tuition, books, etc.
- Anyone has expenses that are paid for in total or in part by someone else, such as housing, utilities, medical, dependent care, etc.
- Any change in the order for court ordered child support paid by a household member for a child not living in the home.
- Anyone gets, sells gives away or transfers real property, such as a house, buildings or land; or personal property, such as money, a bank account, a motor vehicle, a boat, a trust fund, etc.
- Anyone's citizenship/immigration status or documentation changes, or they get a letter, form, or new card from INS.
- Anyone reaches 60 years of age.
- Any member of your household is hiding or running from the law for a felony, attempted felony, or a parole or probation violation.
- Any member of your household is convicted of a drug related felony for possession, use, or distribution of illegal drugs that took place since August 22, 1996.

YOU MAY REPORT IF:

- Any household member, who is disabled or age 60 or over, has changes in medical expenses or any new medical expenses.
- Any household member begins to pay court ordered child support for a child not living in the home.

NONMONTHLY REPORTING

How You Must Report

You must report all changes within 10 days:

- by mail, telephone or in person at the County Food Stamp office OR
- on a DFA 377.5, Food Stamp Household Change Report OR
- on a Monthly Eligibility Report if you get AFDC.

Nonmonthly Reporting Requirements

YOU MUST REPORT IF:

- Your total monthly income starts, stops, or changes by more than \$25.
- Anyone's source of income changes.
- You move in with someone else or anyone moves into or out of your home, including newborns, other children, spouses, other relatives or non-relatives.
- Anyone moves to another address, plans to move, or gets a new mailing address.
- The total of your household's stocks, bonds, or other money is more than \$2000 (or \$3000 if you have a household member who is age 60 or over).
- If there is a change in the order of any court ordered child support paid by a member of the household for a child not living in the home.
- Any member of your household is hiding or running from the law for a felony, attempted felony, or a parole or probation violation.
- Any member of your household is convicted of a drug related felony for possession, use, or distribution of illegal drugs that took place since August 22, 1996.

YOU MAY REPORT IF:

- A household member is age 60 or older.
- Any household member, who is disabled or age 60 or over, has changes in medical expenses or any new medical expenses.
- Anyone in the household starts or stops a physical or mental illness.
- You have changes in your dependent care costs.
- Anyone's citizenship/immigration status or documentation changes, or they get a letter, form, or new card from INS.
- Any household member begins to pay court ordered child support for a child not living in the home.

Budgeting Rules--Monthly Reporting

The amount of food stamps you can get depends on your income and allowable expenses. What you report on the Monthly Eligibility Report will be used to figure the amount of food stamps you can get two months later. For example, your income and allowable expenses from January are used to figure the food stamp benefits you would get in March. This method is called retrospective budgeting.