

DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES
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July 15, 1983

ALL-COUNTY LETTER NO. 83-64

TO: ALL COUNTY WELFARE DIRECTORS

SUBJECT: ACTION TO REDUCE NEGATIVE ACTION ERRORS

REFERENCE:

This letter is being sent to emphasize the need for counties to take action to reduce negative action errors and to address the statewide negative action error trends.

While it is true that only overissued and ineligible case errors are the basis for error rate sanctions in the Food Stamp (FS) Program, the Negative Action Error Rate is a factor in determining a State's entitlement to enhanced funding. California's Negative Action Error Rate has been consistently over 9 percent with 9.6 percent for the latest period (4/1/82 - 9/30/82) as compared to the national figures of 4.0, 3.9, and 3.5 for the three most recent periods. This means that close to 10 percent of all terminations and denials are wrongful - almost two and a half times the national average.

The problem is especially prevalent in Public Assistance (PA) cases which had 67 percent of the total errors while representing only 38 percent of the completed cases in the sample.

Our analysis of the recent error letters citing invalid PA terminations indicates the following:

1. Counties are terminating FS companion cases along with the Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC) cases for invalid food stamp reasons. This indicates counties are following AFDC eligibility rules, not food stamp eligibility rules in terminating food stamp cases.

2. Counties are not recomputing the budget and continuing the case as an NAFS case when the information contained in the case is sufficient to do so. Section 63-504.354 clearly states that the county shall take action on information according to 63-504.321 (increase in benefits) and 63-504.322 (decrease in benefits).

Additionally, it has come to our attention that there is some confusion regarding when a Notice of Expiration of Certification (NEC) is required to be sent. This could lead to incorrect terminations and a negative error case citation. Per FSQUADS Question #167, FS benefits are to continue for two months when PA is discontinued effective the first day of the month (Manual Section 63-504.355).

In March 1983, counties were sent their negative action cases with their active cases via the QCMIS data. Correction of individual cases and Corrective Action Plans (CAP), where appropriate, were due to the Food Stamp Program Operations Bureau (FSPOB) by May 30, 1983. Special attention will be given to corrective action planned for the negative action errors in an effort to reduce the statewide error rate.

Your Food Stamp Program Consultant can provide you additional clarification and assistance at (916) 322-5475.


KYLE S. MCKINSEY
Deputy Director

cc: CWDA