



Food and Nutrition
Service

1320 Braddock Place
Alexandria, VA
22314

April 23, 2020

Alexis Fernández
Chief
CalFresh and Nutrition Branch
California Department of Social Services
744 P Street
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: SNAP – California Request to Suspend the Use of Income and Eligibility
Verification System (IEVS) Requirements Due to COVID-19 – Approval

Dear Ms. Fernández:

This letter transmits approval of the California Department of Social Services (DSS) adjustment request (COV-077) to suspend the use of the Income and Eligibility Verification System (IEVS) for ongoing Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) households statewide. FNS is approving this request under authorization of section 2302 of the Families First Coronavirus Response Act (P.L. 116-127).

The Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) approves the State agency's request to adjust SNAP regulations at 7 CFR 273.2(f)(9). The State agency may suspend use of IEVS for ongoing SNAP households at recertification and periodic report from the receipt of this approval through May 31, 2020. The State will continue to verify income through other data sources and databases and act on all other mandatory matches, including prisoner and death matches. Therefore, ongoing SNAP households will not have their benefits reduced or terminated based on IEVS data. This adjustment approval does not adjust the State agency's requirement to use IEVS data matches in determining eligibility at initial certification.

This adjustment does not include any changes to the Quality Control (QC) review process. QC will continue to cite errors as required in the FNS Handbook 310 and certification policy. This adjustment does not adjust reporting requirements for households and, therefore, QC will continue to cite information that should have been reported, including information that may have been contained in an IEVS match.

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If you have questions or need additional information regarding this adjustment, please contact your respective Regional office representative.

Sincerely,

Sasha Gersten-Paal
Program Development Division
Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program

Enclosure

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SUSPEND THE USE OF INCOME AND ELIGIBILITY VERIFICATION SYSTEM (IEVS) REQUIREMENTS ADJUSTMENT RESPONSE

- 1. Adjustment serial number:** COV-077
- 2. Type of request:** Initial
- 3. Regulatory citation:** 7 CFR 273.2(f)(9)
- 4. State:** California
- 5. Region:** WRO
- 6. Regulatory requirements:** Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) regulations at 7 CFR 273.2(f)(9) require the State agency to obtain information through an Income and Eligibility Verification System (IEVS) and use it to verify the eligibility and benefit levels of applicants and participating households.
- 7. Description of alternative procedures:** The State agency will suspend use of IEVS data and will not act on any changes received through IEVS. The State will continue to verify income through other data sources and databases and act on all other mandatory matches, including prisoner and death matches. Therefore, ongoing SNAP households will not have their benefits reduced or terminated based on IEVS data. The State will still be required to use IEVS data matches in determining eligibility at initial certification.
- 8. Action and reason for approval or denial:** The Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) recognizes the need for adjustments due to the COVID-19 Public Health Emergency. As authorized by section 2302 of the Families First Coronavirus Response Act (P.L. 116-127), FNS' approval of this adjustment is based on the determination that the adjustment is consistent with what is practicable under actual conditions in areas affected by the COVID-19 Public Health Emergency. FNS is approving the adjustment for all applications and recertifications through May 31, 2020.

- 9. Conditions and reasons:** Approval is contingent upon the following conditions:
- The State agency will submit a request to FNS for approval if it wishes to extend this adjustment beyond the initial period;
 - The State will continue to verify income through other data sources and databases;
 - The State will comply with all other mandatory verification requirements;
 - The State must continue to comply with the notice requirements at 7 CFR 273.10(f)(5); and
 - The State will establish overpayment claims on any cases where the data should have been reported and the household failed to report.
- 10. Evaluation Data Requirements:** The State agency must provide to FNS the data and analysis listed below required for evaluation of this adjustment 45 days after expiration (July 15, 2020).
- Estimated number of households affected by this adjustment;
 - A narrative on the effect of program access and client satisfaction, including an analysis of any client or advocate complaints received related to the adjustment procedure; and
 - A narrative on the effect of providing timely and accurate benefits.
- 11. Expiration date:** May 31, 2020.
- 12. Quality control procedures:** No special Quality Control (QC) procedures are required for cases subject to the provisions of this adjustment. Cases should be reviewed using standard review procedures contained in the FNS Handbook 310.
- 13. Anticipated implementation date (*notify FNS if actual date differs*):**
Upon receipt of approval