



September 24, 2021

Food Assistance Change Transmittal No. 87

TO: All Food Assistance Manual Holders

FROM: Matt Damschroder, Director
Ohio Department of Job and Family Services

SUBJECT: **Interview and Interim Reporting Requirements**

Background:

On June 18, 2021, Director Damschroder issued a declaration of a continuing emergency due to COVID-19 and ordered the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services to continue taking all necessary actions to address the COVID-19 pandemic through the state of Ohio.

Additionally, On October 1, 2020 the Continuing Appropriations Act, 2021, and Other Extensions Act became law and provided States with the option to, adjust interview requirements and stop interim report requirements without requiring waiver approval from the United States Department of Agriculture.

Please find corresponding updates below:

Updated Procedures:

Initial Application Interviews

Effective October 1 - December 31, 2021, as long as the federal public health emergency is in effect, a county agency can opt to not conduct an interview at initial application prior to approving SNAP benefits, provided the following are met:

- The applicant's identity has been verified; and
- All other mandatory verifications in paragraphs (D) and (E) of rule 5101:4-2-09 of the Ohio Administrative Code (OAC) have been completed.
 - A county agency shall obtain documentary verifications (including electronic sources); if documentation is not able to be obtained, the county agency may use a collateral contact. If neither documentation nor collateral contact can be obtained, client statement may be used. Case notes must clearly document the verification used to make an eligibility determination.

- A county agency is required to contact the applicant if any information on the application is questionable.
- When a county agency is unable to contact the applicant, it shall schedule a telephone interview and send notice of the appointment to the applicant. The scheduled interview establishes a means of contact with the applicant to gather missing information not included in the application. If there is no contact with the applicant at the scheduled appointment time, the county agency must send a notice of missed interview (NOMI). If the applicant does not request to reschedule, the application shall be denied.

Applications processed under expedited procedures, which only require identity and social security number to be verified, still require a telephone interview to be completed in order to authorize benefits for a one or two-month certification period.

A county will need to inform Program Policy Services if it will implement this option, and for which months, by sending an email to TANF-FSTA@jfs.ohio.gov.

Face-to-Face Interview Method

Effective October 1 - December 31, 2021, as long as the federal public health emergency is in effect, when a county agency is conducting an interview, it is not required to conduct a face-to-face interview when an applicant requests this method. If a face-to-face interview is requested, the county agency can schedule it to be conducted by telephone. The client will be serviced through other available options during the pandemic.

A county will need to inform Program Policy Services if it will implement this option, and for which months, by sending an email to TANF-FSTA@jfs.ohio.gov.

Interim Reports

Interim reports are not required for assistance groups October 1- December 31, 2021, as long as the federal public health emergency is in effect. Interim reports will not be sent in these months. Assistance groups remain subject to all other reporting requirements until their recertification.

If the federal public health emergency ends prior to December 31, 2021, the above waivers are only effective until the end of the month subsequent to the month in which the Secretary of Health and Human Services lifts the emergency declaration.

If you have questions regarding any of the information, please reach out to Program Policy Services by sending an email to TANF-FSTA@jfs.ohio.gov.

