



B. J. Walker, Commissioner

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**OFFICE OF FAMILY INDEPENDENCE MANUAL TRANSMITTAL 2009-26
Volume 3 Food Stamp Program
Manual Transmittal 26**

TO: County Directors of Family and Children Services
State Directors
OFI Regional Managers
OFI State Operations Staff
OFI FS Program Specialists

FROM: Kathy Herren, Deputy Director
Division of Family and Children Services

RE: Updates to the Food Stamp Program Manual

PURPOSE

The purpose of this transmittal is to implement changes to add elderly/disabled households to simplified reporting requirements (SRR). All food stamp households in Georgia are now subject to SRR. The policy for completing changes to SRR AUs has also changed. The agency will act on ABAWD reports and certain SUCCESS alerts when received by the AU. This transmittal also clarifies and updates policies for verification, expanded categorical eligibility (TANF Community Outreach Services-TCOS), citizenship, and residency. The concept of *Financial Management* has been removed from the manual as management of household expenses is not a point of eligibility in the Food Stamp Program. Policy for addressing questionable or unclear information regarding household circumstances has been added to Section 3035, *Verification*, in the manual.

DISCUSSION

This transmittal includes clarifications on policy contained in the following sections:

Section 3035 – Verification – A subsection entitled, “*Verification of Questionable Information*” has been added to address management and other questionable household circumstances. The AU’s statement is accepted for changes reported in dependent care and shelter costs.

Section 3115 – Special Considerations for Applications – adds wording that a determination of eligibility for expedited processing is determined after contact with the applicant. This wording conforms to policy on determination of eligibility for expedited processing included in Section 3110, Expedited Application Processing.

Section 3210 – Categorically Eligible Assistance Units – removes all criteria for ineligible members that restrict categorical eligibility except for AUs over 130% of the FPL and over 200% of the FPL for elderly or disabled AUs. Criteria for Expanded Categorical Eligibility added to this section. TCOS applies to AUs in which all members are elderly or disabled when gross income is at or below 200% instead of where one member is elderly or disabled. If all members are not elderly or disabled, then TCOS gross income limits are 130% of the FPL.

Section 3211 – Expanded Categorical Eligibility – policies included in this section incorporated into Section 3210. This section deleted.

Section 3320 – Citizenship/Alien Status - LPR definition expanded to specifically include that this category “may include Sponsored Aliens “. Distinction between primary and secondary sources of citizenship verification is removed.

Section 3340, Residency – Verification requirements changed to conform to Section 3035 on Verifications to indicate that residency will be verified at initial applications.

Section 3350, Work Registration – Chart 3350.1, Work Registration Exemptions, has been changed. The verification requirement is changed to verify school attendance and the wages of a child under 18 if the child will turn 18 during the POE.

Section 3618 – Financial Management – This section will be removed from the manual.

Section 3710 – Reviews – Form 524, TANF Community Outreach Services brochure removed as a form required to be given at Food Stamp Reviews. FS Review Form 286 has been revised. It can be used for telephone or face-to-face interviews, and if completed at review eliminates the need for Forms 297A, 354, and, 339.

Section 3715 – Interim Changes – SRR policy is broadened to include elderly/disabled households. All households in Georgia have SRR requirements. Under SRR, the only change elderly/disabled households are required to report is when their total gross monthly income exceeds 130% of the FPL for their household size. This change must be reported at initial application and review. The policy for completing changes to SRR households has also changed. The agency will act on ABAWD Reports and the related SUCCESS alerts and SUCCESS alerts that a child has turned 18 when the report or alert is received. The verification requirements for increase in benefits have been changed as the AU’s statement is now accepted for any; change reported in dependent care and shelter costs.

Section 3720 – Reporting Requirements – This section assigns elderly/disabled households to SRR requirements. The only change these households are required to report is when their total gross monthly income exceeds 130% of the FPL for their household size.

Section 3810 – Issuance – All wording referencing \$10 as the minimum benefit changed to just say “the minimum benefit”. Minimum benefit is now \$14 and will be adjusted yearly.

Appendix F- Forms Table of Contents (TOC) - Add the following forms to Appendix F:

Form 286 – Food Stamp Review Form (Rev. 01/09) Form 286 has been renamed as the Food Stamp Review Form, which was previously named the Food Stamp Interview Guide.

Form 297A – Rights and Responsibilities (Rev. 01/09)

Form 507 – Food Stamp ABAWD Calendar (Rev. 12/08)

Form 846 – Change Report Form (Rev. 01/09)

INSTRUCTIONS FOR MANUAL MAINTENANCE

Remove Section 3035, Verification, and replace with attached Section 3035.

Remove Section 3115, Special Considerations for Applications, and replace with attached Section 3115.

Remove Section 3210, Categorically Eligible Assistance Units, and replace with attached Section 3210.

Remove Section 3211, Expanded Categorical Eligibility, from the Food Stamp Program Manual.

Remove Section 3320, Citizenship/Alien Status, and replace with attached Section 3320.

Remove Section 3340, Residency, and replace with attached Section 3340.

Remove Section 3350, Work Registration, and replace with attached Section 3350.

Remove Section 3618, Financial Management, from the Food Stamp Program Manual.

Remove Section 3710, Reviews, and replace with attached Section 3710.

Remove, Section 3715, Interim Changes, and replace with attached Section 3715.

Remove Section 3720, Reporting Requirements, and replace with attached Section 3720.

Remove Section 3810, Issuance, and replace with attached Section 3810.

Remove Appendix F-Table of Contents (Rev. 10/08) and replace with Appendix F-Table of Contents (Rev. 03/09.):

- remove Form 286-Food Stamp Interview Guide and replace with Form 286-Food Stamp Review Form (Rev. 01/09)
- Remove Form 297A-Rights and Responsibilities and replace with Form 297A (Rev. 01/09)
- add Form 507-Food Stamp ABAWD Calendar to the Food Stamp Program manual.
- remove Form 846 (Rev. 03/05) and replace with Form 846 (Rev. 01/09)

Place Manual Transmittal 2009-26 Cover Letter following Manual Transmittal 2008-25 Cover Letter in Appendix C.

ON-LINE MANUAL (ODIS) UPDATE

The material in this manual transmittal will be updated in the ODIS system effective **3/1/09**.

