
FOOD AND NUTRITION SERVICES CERTIFICATION

APPLICATIONS

FNS 440 APPLICATION DISPOSITION

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Change #02-2022

March 01, 2022

440.01 CASE DISPOSITION (APPROVE, DENY, OR PEND AN APPLICATION)

There are three different ways to dispose of a Food and Nutrition Services (FNS) application. Disposition occurs when an application is processed. The three methods are approval of the application, denial of the application, or pending the application.

440.02 APPROVING AN APPLICATION

When approving an FNS application it is recommended to dispose of the FNS application at the earliest opportunity based on the processing standards referenced below to allow the FNS unit an opportunity to purchase food by the appropriate processing due date.

- Normal application processing standards refer to FNS 420 Normal Application Processing.
- Expedited services processing standards refer to FNS 425 Expedited Service Processing.

440.03 DENYING AN APPLICATION

A. Ineligibility Is Established:

1. Deny assistance at any time during the application process when ineligibility is established based on verification or client's statement of a required verifications (FNS 435.01 B.) or non-required verifications (FNS 435.01 C.) Including but not limited to ineligible ABAWD status, Ineligible Student of Higher Educations, Fleeing Felons, and Controlled Substance Felons.

Example: An FNS unit of one makes a statement that they are a student of higher education. The caseworker determines in the interview that the FNS unit does not meet any student exemptions and is an ineligible student. The caseworker may document and deny the application based on the FNS unit's statements.

2. Mandatory verification as outlined in FNS 435.01 A. must be obtained prior to denying an application even if the client's statement indicates the household is potentially ineligible.

Example: An FNS unit makes a statement of income that is over the gross income limit, because income is a mandatory verification the caseworker must obtain verification prior to denying the

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application for over gross income. Acceptable verifications include but are not limited to check stubs, wage forms, written or verbal verification from the employer, and The Work Number.

a. If the mandatory verification is not readily available, the caseworker must clearly explain the applicant's options. The caseworker must not advise or encourage the applicant's choice. The two options available to the applicant household are:

- i. The applicant may continue with the application process and provide the required verification. The caseworker requests the verification following policy in FNS 435.03 Requesting Information at Application Requirements. If verification is not provided the application will be denied for failure to provide verification per FNS 440.03 D.
- ii. The applicant can verbally request the application be withdrawn. The caseworker must follow policy in FNS 440.03 C.

3. Do not immediately deny an application if it is discovered that a household has given false information during the interview process. Request the verification necessary to process the application and allow ten days for the household to provide the verification.
4. If the household is eligible for benefits in the month following the month of application, screen for expedited service. See FNS 425 Expedited Service Processing for instructions.
5. If the household is not eligible for benefits in the month following the month of application, no further action is required. Document the denial on the application.

B. Failure To Keep Scheduled Interview Appointments

Deny the application on the processing due date if the FNS unit has failed to keep the scheduled interview appointment and has not contacted the agency to reschedule the interview. Refer to FNS 415 Interviewing for procedures for rescheduling interviews.

C. FNS unit Withdraws Its Application for FNS Benefits

1. Use the appropriate withdrawal reason to deny assistance on the same day the FNS unit requests to withdraw its application.
2. Document the reason for withdrawal in the North Carolina Families Accessing Services through Technology (NC FAST) case record.

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3. Document that contact was made with the household to confirm the withdrawal.
4. Advise the applicant that he may reapply at any time.

D. Failure to Provide Required Verification

1. Deny the FNS application on the processing due date if the FNS unit has failed to provide applicant-responsible verifications.
2. Deny the application unless the FNS unit has good cause for failure to provide the verifications. Refer to FNS 420 Normal Application Processing and FNS 425 Expedited Service Processing for an explanation of good cause and regulatory delay.
3. The agency must have requested the verification using the DSS-8650 Notice of Information Needed to Complete your Food and Nutrition Services (DSS-8650) and offered assistance in obtaining the requested information if needed.
4. Allow the FNS unit at least ten calendar days to provide the information.
5. Do not deny an application for failure to provide verification of deductions. Process the application and determine benefits without the deduction after requesting the non-required verifications and allowing the FNS unit the full 10 days to provide.
6. When the 30th calendar day falls on a non-workday, the NC FAST System automatically extends the processing due date to the next workday for denials. **Do not** key a denial prior to the extended due date.

If the applicant-responsible information is received on the extended processing due date, deny the application for the first 30 days. Reopen the application the following day.

Example: The 30th day falls on Saturday; the extended processing due date is the following Monday. The FNS unit provides the required information on the extended due date (Monday). Because the information is received after the 30th day. The worker must deny the application for failure to provide information on the extended due date (Monday). Evaluate for reopen on the next workday after the extended due date (Tuesday). Failure to follow this procedure will result in the application being counted as overdue.

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440.04 THIRD-PARTY FAILURE TO COOPERATE

Do not deny an application on the processing due date if you become aware that a third party fails or refuses to provide requested verification. Best available information, including client's statement, may be used when the FNS unit has both requested assistance in obtaining verifications **and** the third party has failed or refused to provide the requested verification. In these situations, take the following steps:

- A. Consult with the household to determine the best available information.
- B. If different from information provided on application, obtain a signed statement from the FNS unit member regarding the information needed. Otherwise, the signed application or recertification form are considered a signed statement.
- C. Attempt to obtain the statement no later than the application-processing due date but allow ten days for the household to provide the statement.
- D. Upon receipt of the signed statement, approve or deny assistance.

440.05 REOPENING A DENIED APPLICATION

Reopen an FNS application that was denied for failure to provide verification if the denial was caused by applicant delay, **and** the FNS unit provides all necessary applicant-responsible information within 60 calendar days from the original application date.

Take the following steps to reopen and process the application within five calendar days of receipt of the required information:

- A. Use the original FNS application. Do not require the FNS unit to sign a new application.
- B. Determine eligibility.
- C. If eligible and the verification is provided in the second 30 days, change the date of application to the date the information is received by the agency and authorize benefits.
- D. An expedited service application with postponed verifications is considered a terminated case upon closure. The terminated case cannot be reopened. This is not a denial; therefore, the household must reapply for benefits.
- E. Applications denied for other reasons such as but not limited to student status, disqualifications, over income, etc. cannot be reopened unless the application was denied due to agency error. The household must reapply for benefits.