
**FOOD AND NUTRITION SERVICES CERTIFICATION
APPLICATIONS
Case Disposition**

**FNS 350 Case Disposition
Change #2-2013
June 1, 2013**

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

There are three different ways to dispose of a 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.

350.02 APPROVING AN APPLICATION

When approving a FNS application, the FNS unit must be allowed an opportunity to purchase food by the processing due date. If the FNS unit:

- Has an EBT card – Processing deadline is one day prior to the 30th or 7th day.
- Needs EBT card – Processing deadline is four mailing days prior to the 30th or 7th day.

Assign the appropriate certification period, per section 400.02.

350.03 DENYING AN APPLICATION

A. Ineligibility Is Established

Deny assistance at any time during the application process when ineligibility is established, including situations in which the household's statement results in ineligibility. 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.

If the household is eligible for benefits in the month following the month of application, screen for expedited service. If eligible, authorize benefits within seven calendar days or the first day of the month following the month of application, whichever is later. See Section 320, Expedited Service, for instructions.

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 Section 310, Interviewing, for procedures for rescheduling interviews.

C. FNS unit Withdraws Its Application For FNS Benefits

Use the appropriate withdrawal code to deny assistance on the same day the FNS unit requests to withdraw its application. Document the reason for withdrawal in the case record. Document that contact was made with the household to confirm the withdrawal. Advise the applicant that he may reapply at any time.

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D. Failure To Provide Required Verification

Deny the FNS application on the processing due date if the FNS unit has failed to provide applicant-responsible verifications. Deny the application unless the FNS unit has good cause for failure to provide the verifications. Refer to 350.06 and 350.07 for an explanation of good cause and regulatory delay. The agency must have requested the verification using the DSS-8650, Notice of Information Needed, and offered assistance in obtaining the requested information if needed. Allow the FNS unit at least ten calendar days to provide the information. Do not deny an application for failure to provide verification of deductions. Process the application and determine benefits without the deduction. Refer to Section 310, Interviewing, for special procedures to follow when a missed interview has been rescheduled.

NOTE: 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.

350.04 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. Consult with the household to determine the best available information and obtain a signed statement from the FNS unit member regarding the information needed. Attempt to obtain the statement no later than the application-processing due date, but allow ten days for the household to provide the statement. Upon receipt of the signed statement, approve or deny assistance.

350.05 REOPENING A DENIED APPLICATION

Reopen a denied FNS application 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 form. 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.

350.06 PENDING AN APPLICATION BEYOND THE PROCESSING DUE DATE

For initial applications, NC FAST produces a Notice of Action Taken, DSS-8592, for applications pending on the processing due date. The DSS-8592 informs the applicant that the application is pending and instructs the applicant to contact the caseworker for the reason. The notice is mailed to the applicant on the first workday following the processing due date. If an application pends

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beyond 30 days, process the application within five calendar days of receipt of the required verifications. There are two situations in which a FNS application may be allowed to pend beyond the processing due date. These situations are as follows.

- A. If eligibility cannot be determined because the agency failed to act timely and the application cannot be processed by the 30th day, continue to pend the application until eligibility is determined. Determine eligibility within five calendar days from receipt of the required information. If determined eligible, approve benefits from the date of application. Process the application no later than the 60th calendar day from the date of application.
- B. If the FNS unit has good cause for not providing requested information by the processing due date, process the application no later than the 60th calendar day from the date of application. See good cause reasons listed in 350.07, Regulatory Delay. Determine eligibility within five calendar days from receipt of the required information. If eligible, authorize benefits from the date of application. If ineligible, deny benefits. If information is not received by the 60th calendar day, deny the application.

350.07 REGULATORY DELAY

If the delay is due to good cause by the applicant, enter appropriate reason in NC FAST and document. This entry prevents the case from being counted as overdue regardless of the actual processing time. Document the reason for the delay in the case record.

The following are circumstances in which good cause is applicable, and regulatory delay is allowable.

- A. The household reports a change or a change becomes known late in the application-processing period. The change requires verification and the household must be given ten calendar days to provide the needed verification. The ten-calendar day period extends beyond the 30th day.
- B. The household files an application but fails to appear for a first or second interview until after the 20th calendar day of the application-processing period. Allow ten calendar days to provide necessary verification requested at the interview. The ten-calendar day period extends beyond the 30th day.
- C. The household applies in one county but has an open FNS case in another county. The second county is notified and sends a DSS-8632, Confirmation of Voluntary Reduction or Termination of Benefits. The case is not closed in the second county until after the 30th day.
- D. A household jointly applies for WFFA/FNS or Supplemental Security Income (SSI)/FNS. The FNS portion of the application is denied prior to the processing of the WFFA or SSI application. The WFFA or SSI is later approved. At this point, the original FNS application must be evaluated for categorical eligibility and reopened if eligible. Upon determining eligibility, the application is reopened, and the effective date of the application is retroactive to the original date of application.
- E. Other situations for good cause may be evaluated on a case-by-case basis. These situations should be discussed with your Program Integrity Representative prior to making the determination.

NOTE: For an explanation of Good Cause and Regulatory Delay for expedited service cases, see Section 320.10, Regulatory Delay for Expedited Cases.

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350.08 SPECIAL PROCEDURES FOR INITIAL APPLICATIONS

- A. If the household is eligible for the month of application but ineligible for the next month, approve the application for the initial month only, giving a one-month certification period. The following day, close the case for the subsequent month so the household will receive a notice of closure.
- B. If the household is ineligible for the month of application but eligible for the next month, deny the application for the initial month, and use the same application to approve for the subsequent month. The certification period must start with the first eligible month and should not include a denied month.
- C. If the household is ineligible on the date of application but eligible by the date of the interview, and the interview is conducted in the month of application, approve the application effective with the date of application. If the interview is conducted in the month following the month of application, deny assistance for the first month and approve the application effective the first calendar day of the second month. The certification period must start with the first eligible month and should not include a denied month.
- D. If the household is eligible on the date of application but ineligible by the date of the interview, and the interview is conducted in the month of application, deny the application. If the interview is conducted in the month following the month of application, approve the application effective with the date of application in the first month and deny assistance for the second month.