

CCWRO Welfare News

Coalition of California Welfare Rights Organizations, Inc.
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July 6, 2011
Issue # 2011-11

Food Stamp Expedited Service Review for First Quarter of 2011

Ms. G.K. who is over 60 years old applied for food stamps and general assistance on June 16, 2011 at the Sacramento County E-100 bureau office. The county referred her Food Stamp case to the General Assistance office and scheduled an appointment for June 23, 2011.

Ms. G.K. had no money at all. She was clearly eligible for Food Stamp Expedited Services. The 16th was a Thursday. She should have received her food stamps on Monday, the 20th. Her appointment was set up for the 23rd, which was the next week, thursday. And this happened in one of the better counties, Sacramento County. One wonders what is happening in other counties.

We wanted to see if this is a statewide problem or an aberration. We reviewed the DFA 296X reports (<http://www.cdss.ca.gov/research/PG354.htm>).

The data reveals that statewide 45% of food stamp applicants are considered for expedited services. The counties with a low rate of considering expedited services are Merced at 18%, Riverside at 20% and Alameda at 29%.

On the other hand Orange County considers 73%, Solano 70% and Fresno 61% of food stamp applicants for expedited service.

There is no evidence that food stamp applicants in Alameda, Merced or Riverside have more resources than the applicants in Fresno, Orange and Solano.

Riverside and Merced counties were mentioned in the 2009 DSS Food Stamp Management Evaluation reports revealing that Merced is not complying with the FS-ES rules. Riverside County was cited for disobeying the FS-ES rules in 2008 and 2009.

Statewide 8% of the cases received expedited services after the third day from the date of application. The law requires FS-ES be issued no later than the third day from the date of application. DSS has set a 10% standard for compliance. This means that counties who issue expedited

services in less than 10% of the cases are not sanctioned by the state. Similar treatment has never been accorded to recipients when it comes to complying with county worker demands for verification. If 100% of the verification is not submitted, benefits are terminated and children may go hungry. Counties and the welfare industry have always demanded and received 100% compliance from applicants and recipients.

Table #1 reveals a list of counties who exceeded the 10% threshold. It should be noted that counties violating the 10% threshold are not required to submit a corrective action and they face zero consequence.

TABLE # 1- Percentage of ES-FS cases approved after three days

Statewide	8%
Sonoma	66%
Santa Cruz	48%
Santa Clara	41%
Santa Barbara	34%
Placer	29%
Contra Costa	23%
Shasta	20%
Riverside	20%
San Luis Ob.	19%
Alameda	18%
San Mateo	14%

The report also shows how many cases were carried over from the previous month. For example on March 30, 2011 statewide there were 38, 322 expedited service request cases that were not acted on.

We looked at how many cases each county processed every day and divided the average daily processed cases by the number of cases left at the end of the month. The result was how many days would it take to catch up.

Statewide it would take four days to process the carried over cases. Some of the more

egregious counties were San Mateo at 48 days, Contra Costa at 14 days, and San Diego at 13 days. See **Table #2**.

The most fascinating part of table #2 is that Tulare County would need 10 days to process the carried over cases, but is has only 3% of cases issuing FS-ES after the mandatory three day timelines. By contrast, Sonoma also only needs 10 days to process their carried over cases but has 66% of the cases FS-ES cases issuing benefits after the three-day timelines. Both of these counties retrieve reports from the CalWIN computer. Somebody is submitting reports that seem inaccurate. The same analysis applies to Sacramento at an alleged 2% of the FS-ES benefits being issued after three days.

TABLE # 2 - Counties ES left processing days for carried over cases FS-ES Received After 3 days

	Days Needed to Processing Carried Over ES Cases	% of ES Received After Three (3) Days
Statewide	4	8%
San Mateo	48	49%
Nevada	28	42%
Contra Costa	14	23%
San Diego	13	4%
Yolo	12	7%
Napa	12	4%
Sonoma	10	66%
Tulare	10	3%
Sacramento	9	2%

FOOD STAMP EXPEDITED SERVICES STATE REGULATIONS

"MPP § 63-301.51 Entitlement to Expedited Service

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The following households, if otherwise eligible, are entitled to expedited service:

.511 Households with less than \$150 in monthly gross income as defined in Section 63-502.1 provided their liquid resources as defined in Section 63-501.11 do not exceed \$100;

.512 Migrant or seasonal farmworker households who are destitute as defined in Section 63-503.43 provided their liquid resources as defined in Section 63-501.11 do not exceed \$100; or

.513 Households whose combined monthly gross income and liquid resources are less than the household's monthly rent or mortgage, and utilities.

.52 Identifying Households Needing Expedited Service

The CWD's application procedures shall be designed to identify households eligible for expedited service at the time the household files an application.

.521 A CWD employee or volunteer shall inform potential applicants orally of the right to expedited service for eligible households and how to initiate the process, the availability of assistance in filling out the application and shall be responsible for screening applications as they are filed. The CWD also shall advise individuals who inquire about the Food Stamp Program by telephone of the expedited service processing standards for eligible households. The CWD shall assist an applicant, upon request, in filling out forms and completing the application process.

.522 The screening shall consist of a review of the DFA 285-A1 or the SAWS I CA1/DFA 285-A1 if the applicant elected to complete the expedited service section. The CWD shall immediately forward the application for processing when it is determined that the applicant is entitled to expedited service.

.531 Expedited Service Households (a) For households entitled to expedited service at initial application, the CWD shall make the authorization document, access device or coupons available to the recipient either by mail or for pickup at the household's request, no later than the third calendar day following the date the application was filed. For purposes of this section, a weekend (Saturday and Sunday) shall be considered one calendar day. However, if the third calendar day is a nonworking day when coupons cannot be issued, the CWD shall make coupons available on or before the working day immediately preceding the nonworking day."

FEDERAL FOOD STAMP PROPOSED LEGISLATION

H.R.350 : Anti-hunger Empowerment Act of 2011
Sponsor: Rep **Serrano, Jose E.** (introduced 1/19/2011)
Cosponsors (8)

WHAT DOES THE BILL DO? H.R. 350 amends the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 (formerly known as the Food Stamp Act of 1977) to replace current Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP, formerly food stamps) administrative cost provisions with provisions authorizing 75% reimbursement for specified state activities to increase program access. States that fingerprinting shall not be required for program participation.

Committees: House Agriculture
Latest Major Action: 3/9/2011 Referred to House subcommittee. Status: Referred to the Subcommittee on Nutrition and Horticulture .

H.R.377 : Food Assistance to Improve Reintegration Act of 2011
Sponsor: Rep **Lee, Barbara** (introduced 1/20/2011)
Committees: House Agriculture

WHAT DOES THE BILL DO? H.R. 377 amends the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996 to repeal the denial of Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP, formerly food stamps) eligibility for a person convicted of a felony which has as an element the possession, use, or distribution of a controlled substance.

Latest Major Action: 3/3/2011 Referred to House subcommittee. Status: Referred to the Subcommittee on Nutrition and Horticulture

H.R.530 : Worker Eligibility Fairness Act of 2011
Sponsor: Rep **Baca, Joe** (introduced 2/8/2011)
Cosponsors (5)

WHAT DOES THE BILL DO? H.R. 530 amends the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 to eliminate the provision making a federal, state, or local government employee who is dismissed for participating in a strike against the federal government, the state, or a political subdivision of the state ineligible for the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP, formerly food stamps).

Committees: House Agriculture
Latest Major Action: 3/9/2011 Referred to House subcommittee. Status: Referred to the Subcommittee on Nutrition and Horticulture .

Sandra Trevino, who worked for Assemblywoman Nancy Skinner has been a great advocate for the poor of California. She has left the Assembly to further her education. Good luck and thanks for all you did for us and hopefully will do again.