

**U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
FOOD AND NUTRITION SERVICE**

***Enhancing Completion Rates for SNAP
(Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program) Quality Control Reviews***

*Request for Clearance
Supporting Statement and
Data Collection Instruments*

*Attachment A.1B:
State Study Information Sheet*

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Project Overview

Enhancing Completion Rates for SNAP Quality Control Reviews

Based on the scope and size of SNAP, it is critically important that SNAP benefits go to those who meet the eligibility criteria and that benefits are correctly calculated. The SNAP Quality Control (QC) process was developed to track and measure errors in both eligibility and benefit determination. Because of the importance of the QC process, it is vital that reviews are completed to the fullest extent possible. In order to learn more about the QC process at the State level, the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) funded a study to better understand the QC process and the challenges that QC reviewers face in completing active cases. This study will examine the QC process in each State, including the District of Columbia, Guam, and the Virgin Islands, as well as at the Regional level.

The study objectives are to:

- Gain an understanding of the QC review process, specifically the process that leads to designating a case review as incomplete.
- Examine characteristics of incomplete cases as compared to complete cases.
- Identify the problems that QC reviewers face when attempting to complete cases and the factors that consistently cause incomplete cases.
- Recommend ways to enhance the completion rates for SNAP QC reviews.

This study will examine the QC review process in three ways:

1. Reviewing State administrative data for incomplete cases and comparing to data on complete cases.
2. Conducting site visits to States to interview QC personnel and management to assess potential problems that QC reviewers face when trying to complete cases, and to identify possible solutions.
3. Re-reviewing a small number of incomplete cases, including in-person re-reviews with SNAP clients, if possible.

Below are some Frequently Asked Questions about the study and the interview process.

Frequently Asked Questions

What is the purpose of the study?

The study is intended to help FNS better understand the QC process and the challenges that QC reviewers face in completing active cases, in order to identify the factors that consistently cause incomplete cases and to recommend ways to enhance the completion rates for SNAP QC reviews.

Who is conducting the study?

FNS is directing this study with the assistance of its contractor, Insight Policy Research (Insight), an independent research organization.

Why am I being asked to participate?

All SNAP QC offices in each of the 50 States, plus the District of Columbia, Guam, and the U.S. Virgin Islands and Federal Regional Offices are being asked to participate. Your participation will ensure that FNS has complete and accurate information about the State-level QC review process.

What kind of information will be collected?

Insight will collect descriptive information through telephone surveys with Regional and State QC reviewers, supervisors and QC directors. These interviews will ask questions regarding QC tools and processes, training, and reviewer case loads. Additionally, a selected group of States will be visited by Insight to collect additional information through interview and site visits, which will complement what is gathered from the telephone surveys. These states and regions will be asked to provide SNAP administrative data on the characteristics of complete and incomplete cases. Last, in three participating States, Insight will conduct QC re-reviews with SNAP clients for a portion of incomplete cases. Insight will have specially trained staff conduct the re-reviews. Insight will provide you with the names of the staff members working in your State several weeks before the re-reviews begin. A brief description of the data collection plan is provided in the Data Collection Overview on the following page.

When will the information be collected?

The information will be collected in calendar years 2013 and 2014. Insight will collect State administrative data in the spring of 2013, and conduct re-reviews of incomplete cases in the fall of 2013. Site visits will take place in the summer of 2014 at State offices and in the fall of 2013 at Regional offices. Insight will notify you of the specific dates of the re-reviews before they begin and will schedule the site visits at a mutually agreeable time.

Will the information be private?

All data from interviews and re-reviews are private and will be reported only in aggregate form to FNS. Administrative data will be submitted through Insight's secure FTP system, a secure file transfer site that encrypts both commands and data, preventing passwords and sensitive information from being accessed during transmission. These data will be maintained on a secure server and available only to project personnel needed to tabulate the data. The analysis will be performed on secondary files from which any identifying data have been deleted, and no identifiers will be disclosed in reports.

What are the next steps?

Within the next few weeks, a representative from Insight will contact you to provide further details. If you have questions or concerns, please contact Stéphane Baldi, the Executive Project Director, at sbaldi@insightpolicyresearch.com or 703-504-9486.

Data Collection Overview

Data for this study will be collected in three phases from five sources, as shown below.

TASK	OVERVIEW	DESCRIPTION
PHASE 1: 2013		
Administrative data collected from six States	Insight will collect and analyze administrative data on the characteristics of both complete and incomplete cases.	Insight will work with States to identify and extract the characteristics of recent incomplete “active” cases from the SNAP administrative data files.
QC re-reviews of incomplete cases in three States	Insight will conduct a re-review of up to 25 of the most recent incomplete cases.	States may need to compile and provide additional data for incomplete cases to send to regional offices. States should notify local offices of the timing of the re-reviews, in the event that any clients call the State office to confirm that Insight employees are conducting reviews.
Site visits to two Regional Offices	Insight will conduct site visits to Regional Offices to learn about the QC review procedures and the processes for determining incomplete cases.	The following QC staff will be asked to participate in in-person interviews during the Regional Office site visits; -Regional QC director -Up to 6 Federal QC reviewers
PHASE 2: Spring-Fall 2014		
Site visits to six State Offices	Insight will conduct site visits to State offices to learn about the QC review procedures and the processes for determining incomplete cases.	The following QC staff will be asked to participate in in-person interviews during the State Office site visits: -State QC director -Up to 2 State QC Supervisors -Up to 5 QC reviewers
PHASE 3: Fall 2014		
Telephone surveys (all regions and States)		Telephone interviews will be conducted with regional and State QC directors, supervisors, and reviewers

According to the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, no persons are required to respond to a collection of information unless it displays a valid OMB number. The valid OMB control number for this information collection is 0584-XXXX. The time required to complete this information collection is estimated to average 3 minutes per response.