

Appendix 1.0 Background

Background

The Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) of the U.S. Department of Agriculture is the Federal agency responsible for the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP). Section 9(a) of the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008, as amended, (the Act) (7 U.S.C. 2011 et. Seq.) requires that FNS determine the eligibility of retail food stores and certain food service organizations to accept SNAP benefits and to monitor them for compliance and continued eligibility to ensure Program integrity.

FNS is also responsible for requiring updates to application information and reviewing retail food stores applications at least once every five years to ensure that each firm is under the same ownership and continues to meet eligibility requirements. The Act specifies that only those applicants whose participation will “effectuate the purposes of the program” should be authorized.

There are six forms associated with this approved Office of Management and Budget (OMB) information collection number 0584-0008 – the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Application for Stores, Forms FNS-252 (English and Spanish) and FNS-252-E (paper and online version respectively); the Corporate Supplemental Application, Form FNS-252-C used for individual (chain) stores under a corporation; Farmers’ Market Application, Form FNS-252-FE; Reauthorization Application, Form FNS-252-R; and the Meal Service Application, Form FNS-252-2. For new authorizations, the majority of applicants use form FNS-252 or FNS-252-E

(paper or online, respectively). For reauthorization, form FNS-252-R (paper or online) is used. In addition to these forms, during new authorization or reauthorization, FNS may conduct an on-site store visit of the firm. The store visit of the firm helps FNS confirm that the information provided on an application is correct. An FNS representative or store visit contractor obtains permission to complete the store visit checklist, photograph the store and asks the store owner or manager about the continued ownership of the store.

Applicants using form FNS252-E or FNS-252-FE must self-register for a Level 1 access account through the USDA eAuthentication system prior to starting an online application. USDA eAuthentication facilitates the electronic authentication of an individual.

The Agricultural Act of 2014 (2014 Farm Bill) amended the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 (the Act) and the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) revised all retailer application forms (paper and electronic) in January, 2018, as a result of regulatory changes required by the Act and amended by the 2014 Farm Bill.

In this submission to OMB, FNS seeks to renew the current information collection, and where appropriate, revise the information collection for all SNAP application forms (paper and electronic) to clarify questions, instructions and examples concerning stocking units of staple food varieties on a continuous basis and to add Individual Taxpayer Identification Number (ITIN) as an alternative form of documentation that respondents may submit to FNS in lieu of a Social Security Number (SSN). Such changes would include (1) replacing “each variety” with “at least three varieties”; (2) adding one additional inventory stock example in each staple food

category; (3) updating assistance materials such as General and Specific Instruction sections and on-line help screens; (4) inserting “ITIN” in the fifth bullet of the Privacy Act Statement; (5) inserting “ITIN” in the third, fourth, and seventh bullet of the Use and Disclosure – Routine Uses section; and (6) changing the text in the last bullet of the Certification and Signature Statement from “could” to “may” to clarify consequences of being listed in the General Service Administration’s (GSA) System for Award Management (SAM). FNS also intends to make minor grammatical changes for clarity along with design changes by adding spacing and horizontal lines separating Questions 21-26 and revise FNS’ address listed in the Privacy Act and Paperwork Reduction Notice section. Due to recent SNAP website updates, FNS is also updating three website links within the application instructions. The links are: How to Apply; Contacting the RSC; and Retailer Training. Additionally, where applicable, the changes listed above will also be made to the following application forms: FNS-252-C; FNS-252-E; FNS-252-R; FNS-252-2; and FNS-252-Spanish.