

A solid dark blue vertical bar on the left side of the slide.

FoodShare

Unclear Refresher

July 2025

Why?

Many times a change is reported and a case is questioned for all programs. If that verification is not received, FoodShare is shut down, even if that change was not a required reported change for FS.

FS Unclear Rule prevents participants from unnecessarily losing benefits and will in turn also save us time from participants having to reapply.

First Steps

When a change is reported

- If the participant is on the phone, ask if there are any other changes to report.
- Check to see if FS is open.
- If yes, before taking any action on the case check FS Budget Page for FS Type and FPL.
- Use one of the tools available to decide if information should be acted on by processing or pending or if it should be held.

FoodShare Budget

Look at the FoodShare budget screen for FPL and FS type. Save this information for answering question 5 on your Unclear Tool.

FoodShare Budget

Assistance Group Overview

Assistance Group:

FS - FOODSHARE

Sequence:

1

Benefit Begin Date:

09/01/2025

Benefit End Date:

Determination Date:

07/25/2025

Result

Assistance Group Status:

O - OPEN

Eligibility Status:

PASS

FoodShare Type:

HREG - Regular FS

FoodShare Categorically Eligible:

YES

FoodShare Gross Income Test:

PASS

FoodShare Net Income Test:

PASS

FoodShare Allotment Determination:

PASS

DEAR/SMRF Status:

N/A

Gross Income Test

Self-Employment Earnings:

\$

—

Excess Self Employment Expenses:

—

—

Employment Earned Income:

+

—

Gross Employment Earnings:

\$

—

Unearned Income:

+

1,050.78

+

Farm Loss:

—

—

Countable Gross Income:

\$

1,050.78

Actual FPL:

40.41%

Assistance Group Size:

4

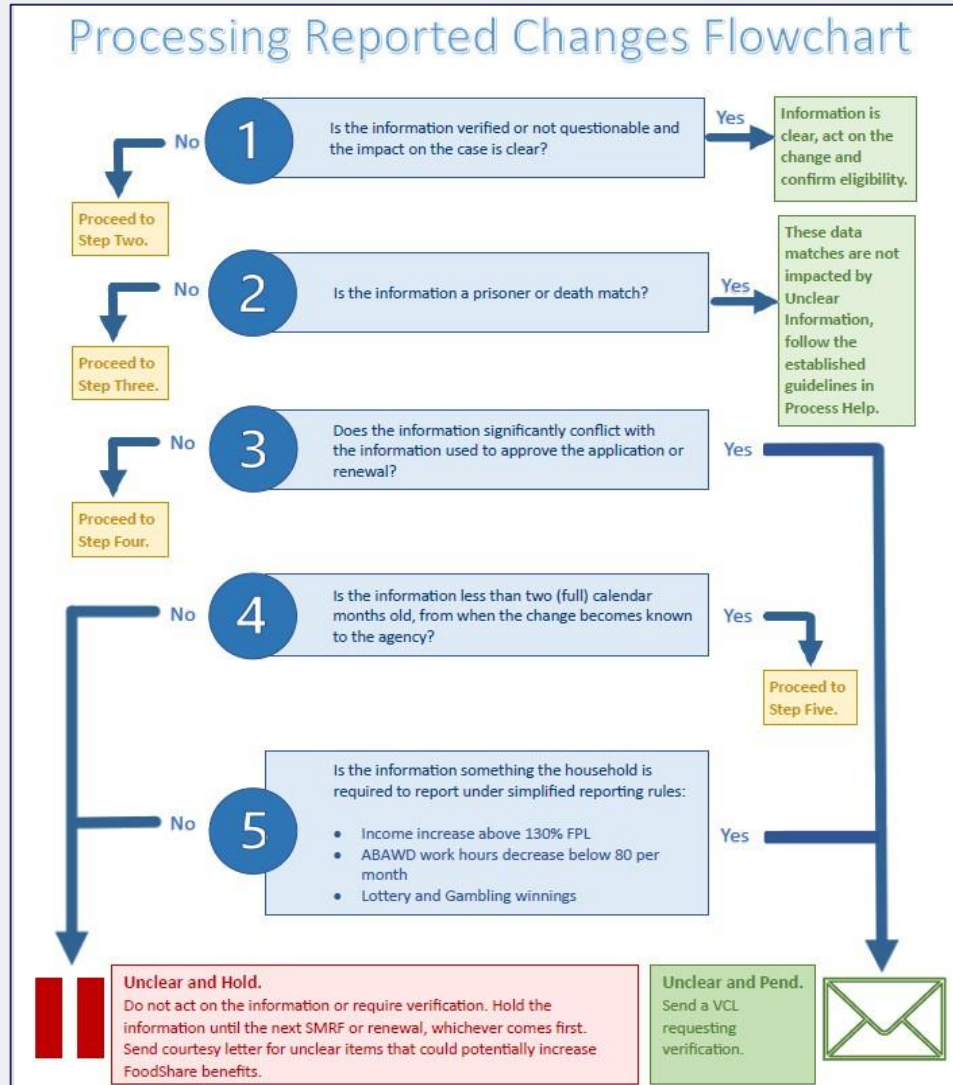
Gross Income Limit:

\$

5,200.00

Reporting Requirements for Households with Income <u>BELOW</u> 130% FPL at application or renewal				Substantial Lottery or Gambling Winnings	SMRF Required?
What is the FS AG Type?	HREG	HH gross income increases above 130% Yes- change reporting required.	ABAWD work hours decrease below 80 hours per month Yes- change reporting required.	Yes- change reporting required	Yes- change reporting required.
Reporting Requirements for Households with Income <u>ABOVE</u> 130% FPL at application or renewal				Substantial Lottery or Gambling Winnings	SMRF Required?
What is the FS AG Type?	HREG	HH gross income increases above 130% No	ABAWD work hours decrease below 80 hours per month Yes- change reporting required	Yes- change reporting required	Yes- change reporting required

Tools Available



	Is the information verified or not questionable and the impact on the case is clear?	
1		No
2	Is the information a prisoner or death match?	No
3	Does the information significantly conflict with the information used to approve the application or renewal?	No
4	Is the information less than two (full) calendar months old, from when the change becomes known to the agency?	Yes
5	Is the information something the household is required to report under simplified reporting rules?	Yes
FoodShare Assistance Group Type Key		HREG
		FEBD
		SHOM
		SMIG
		HCAT
Reporting Requirements for Households with Income BELOW 130% FPL at application or renewal		
	What is the FS AG Type?	HREG
Reporting Requirements for Households with Income ABOVE 130% FPL at application or renewal		
	What is the FS AG Type?	HCAT

Act and Hold

Act:

To use information on the case in the FoodShare eligibility determination.

- If the information is clear, acting means processing and confirming.
- If the information is unclear, acting means processing the change and requesting verification.

****All changes reported are processed in CWW whether they are acted on or held.****

Hold:

The information and associated page element are not used in the FoodShare eligibility determination. The information is addressed at the next SMRF or renewal.

- Hold the change. Verification will not be requested until the next SMRF or renewal.
- Send Courtesy Letter for unclear items that could potentially increase FoodShare benefits.

Unclear Tools

1. Is the information verified or not questionable and the impact on the case is clear?

		Work Flow
	Is the information verified or not questionable and the impact on the case is clear?	<div><div>No</div><div>Proceed to Step 2.</div></div>
	2 Is the information a prisoner or death match?	<div><div>Yes</div><div>No</div><div>Proceed to Step 3.</div></div>
	3 Does the information significantly conflict with the information used to approve the application or renewal?	<div><div>No</div><div>Proceed to Step 4.</div></div>
	4 Is the information less than two (full) calendar months old, from when the change becomes known to the agency?	<div><div>Yes</div><div>Proceed to Step 5</div></div>
	5 Is the information something the household is required to report under simplified reporting rules?	<div><div>Yes</div><div>Unclear and Pend</div></div>

Clear Changes

Clear information is verified or not questionable. If the change is something that does not need the participant to send in verification for, it is clear. When the information is **clear** and does not need any further evaluation, the worker can process and confirm the change on the case.

This is not a policy change. Workers have always acted when information is clear and no additional verification or information is needed.

Unclear Changes

Unclear information is partially verified, unverified, or questionable.

When the information is **unclear** use the flow chart or spreadsheet to determine the next steps for acting or holding the change until the next SMRF or renewal (certification point).

Unclear Tools

2. Is the information a prisoner or death match?

			Work Flow
1	Is the information verified or not questionable and the impact on the case is clear?	No	Proceed to Step 2.
2	Is the information a prisoner or death match?	No	Proceed to Step 3.
3	Does the information significantly conflict with the information used to approve the application or renewal?	Yes No	Proceed to Step 4.
4	Is the information less than two (full) calendar months old, from when the change becomes known to the agency?	Yes	Proceed to Step 5
5	Is the information something the household is required to report under simplified reporting rules?	Yes	Unclear and Pend

Unclear Tools

3. Does the information significantly conflict with the information used to approve the application or renewal?

			Work Flow
1	Is the information verified or not questionable and the impact on the case is clear?	No	Proceed to Step 2.
2	Is the information a prisoner or death match?	No	Proceed to Step 3.
3	Does the information significantly conflict with the information used to approve the application or renewal?	No	Proceed to Step 4.
4	Is the information less than two (full) calendar months old, from when the change becomes known to the agency?	Yes No	Proceed to Step 5
5	Is the information something the household is required to report under simplified reporting rules?	Yes	Unclear and Pend

Policy Clarification

What does *significantly conflicting* mean?

Unclear information may be significantly conflicting when it was required **at application or renewal** but was omitted by the applicant, member, or by worker error.

Significantly conflicting unclear information includes information that was misreported or misrepresented **at application or renewal (certification points)**.

Significantly conflicting unclear information does not mean significant change. Ex: new job, increased hours/pay

Unclear Tools

4. Is the information less than 2 (full) calendar months old, from when the change becomes known to the agency?

			Work Flow
1	Is the information verified or not questionable and the impact on the case is clear?	No	Proceed to Step 2.
2	Is the information a prisoner or death match?	No	Proceed to Step 3.
3	Does the information significantly conflict with the information used to approve the application or renewal?	No	Proceed to Step 4.
4	Is the information less than two (full) calendar months old, from when the change becomes known to the agency?	Yes	Proceed to Step 5
		Yes No	
5	Is the information something the household is required to report under simplified reporting rules?	Yes	Unclear and Pend

How is 60 days defined and applied?

60 days is defined as **2 calendar months**. Information meeting this definition may also be referred to as “new” information.

If the information was required to be reported, it should be held if it is now more than 2 calendar months old, even if the change is still current. Ex. New employment that began in February and is still current in May should be held as they did not report the change in a timely manner.

Change occurred	Change Reported	Considered "new"?
March 1	May 30	Yes
August 5	September 10	Yes
July 31	October 1	No

Unclear Tools

5. Is the information something the household is required to report under simplified reporting rules?

			Work Flow
1	Is the information verified or not questionable and the impact on the case is clear?	No	Proceed to Step 2.
2	Is the information a prisoner or death match?	No	Proceed to Step 3.
3	Does the information significantly conflict with the information used to approve the application or renewal?	No	Proceed to Step 4.
4	Is the information less than two (full) calendar months old, from when the change becomes known to the agency?	Yes	Proceed to Step 5
5	Is the information something the household is required to report under simplified reporting rules?	Yes	Unclear and Pend
		Yes	
		No	Regular FoodShare

You will need to research and understand their reporting requirement in order to answer question 5.

FoodShare Budget

This is where you will use the information previously found on the FS Budget Page.

FoodShare Budget

Assistance Group Overview

Assistance Group:

FS - FOODSHARE

Benefit Begin Date:

09/01/2025

Determination Date:

07/25/2025

Result

Assistance Group Status:

O - OPEN

FoodShare Type:

HREG - Regular FS

FoodShare Gross Income Test:

PASS

FoodShare Allotment Determination:

PASS

Gross Income Test

Self-Employment Earnings:

\$

—

Excess Self Employment Expenses:

—

—

Employment Earned Income:

+

—

Gross Employment Earnings:

\$

—

Unearned Income:

+

1,050.78

Farm Loss:

—

—

Countable Gross Income:

\$

1,050.78

Actual FPL:

40.41%

Assistance Group Size:

4

Gross Income Limit:

\$

5,200.00

Reporting Requirements for Households with Income <u>BELOW</u> 130% FPL at application or renewal					
What is the FS AG Type?	HREG	HH gross income increases above 130% Yes- change reporting required.	ABAWD work hours decrease below 80 hours per month Yes- change reporting required.	Substantial Lottery or Gambling Winnings Yes- change reporting required	SMRF Required? Yes- change reporting required.
Reporting Requirements for Households with Income <u>ABOVE</u> 130% FPL at application or renewal					
What is the FS AG Type?	HREG	HH gross income increases above 130% No	ABAWD work hours decrease below 80 hours per month Yes- change reporting required	Substantial Lottery or Gambling Winnings Yes- change reporting required	SMRF Required? Yes- change reporting required

Follow-up Correspondence

A VCL is sent if the information is unclear and acted on:

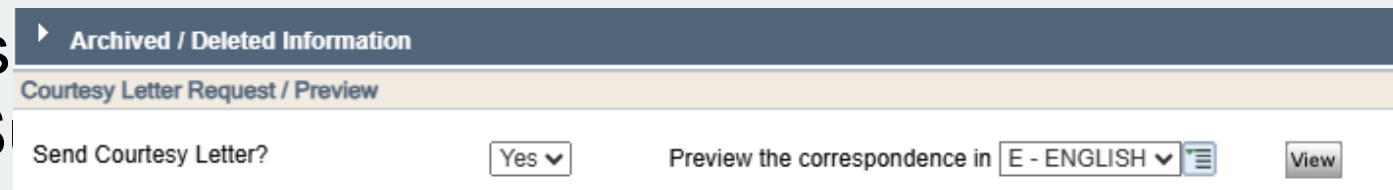
- Info is significantly conflicting **OR**
- The information is required to be reported AND is less than two calendar months old (new).

A courtesy letter is sent if the information is unclear and held:

- Please manually send Courtesy Letter **IF** there is a potential FoodShare increase.

Common Errors & Processing Tips

- Processing the change without considering if it should be held for FS.
- Making changes on CWW screen and navigating off the screen before holding or determining a plan of action.
- If more than one change is reported, clear information should be processed first.
- Always communicate with participant that if information is held, benefits may be impacted when the information becomes clear.
- Determine if a courtesy letter is needed for FoodShare Held Information S



The screenshot shows a web interface with a dark blue header bar containing the text 'Archived / Deleted Information'. Below this is a light orange bar with the text 'Courtesy Letter Request / Preview'. The main content area is white and contains the text 'Send Courtesy Letter?' followed by a 'Yes' button with a dropdown arrow. To the right of this is the text 'Preview the correspondence in' followed by a dropdown menu showing 'E - ENGLISH' and a 'View' button.

Troubleshooting:

If the FS Held Item panel does not appear on the page, update **ONLY** the Begin Month with the current month, click Next to navigate forward, then return to the same page. The page should now display the FS Held Item panel. Make the necessary updates and hold unclear information.

At application, SMRF, and renewal, all information is acted upon, and no information is held. The hold function is not available during the application, SMRF, or renewal.

The “AE976: Items in this page cannot be held. There is information with a ‘?’ or ‘Q?’ in the verification fields,” banner message displays when the worker updated the page with a ‘?’ or ‘Q?’ verification field, navigated away and then returns to the same page to attempt to hold the reported information.

In order for the item to be held correctly, the worker must **revert** the page to previously verified information, navigate away from the page and return to question and hold.

Troubleshooting: OPS Memo 25-10

If information is held and FoodShare eligibility pends or the FoodShare allotment is impacted incorrectly, the worker must:

- **Resolve** the held information
- Navigate back to the page the change was originally made and held and **revert** to information prior to the change.
- Run eligibility
- **Review** the FoodShare (FS) budget page to ensure reflects the same FS assistance group (AG) size, household income and expenses, and allotment as before the update.
- Once the budget page reflects the correct information, confirm FoodShare eligibility.
- Navigate back to the page.
- Click the arrow next to FS Held Items to expand that section and
- **Re-enter** the new information to the page.
- Select the appropriate checkboxes for unclear information (for example, unknown pay and hours), before leaving the page. This ensures the information is held and does not impact the eligibility incorrectly.
- Click Next and run eligibility.

OPS Memo 25-10 FoodShare Unclear Information

If a Verification Checklist was **incorrectly** sent for unclear information, **FoodShare eligibility cannot be impacted or terminated if verification is not received**. To hold the information after a verification checklist was incorrectly sent:

- Navigate back to the page where the change was originally made and held.
- **Revert** the page back to the same information prior to the reported change (for example, if on the Earned Income Page, the page must have the previous hours/wages/verification codes).
- Initiate eligibility
- **Review** the FoodShare (FS) budget page to ensure reflects the same FS assistance group (AG) size, household income and expenses, and allotment as before the update.
- Once the budget page reflects the correct information, confirm FoodShare eligibility.
- Navigate back to the page.
- Click the arrow next to FS Held Items to expand that section
- **Re-enter** the new information to the page. If there is not enough information to update the data (for example, unknown pay and hours).
- Select the appropriate checkboxes for unclear information before leaving the page. This ensures the information is held and does not impact the eligibility incorrectly.
- Click Next and run eligibility.

If the verification has been received and is complete, the info is clear and should be acted on.