
**DEPARTMENT
POLICY**

This item applies to **FAP only**. FAP groups consisting entirely of SSI applicants or recipients may choose to apply for Food Assistance benefits at the Social Security Administration (SSA) office. This includes clients who apply for SSI and Food Assistance benefits before being released from medical institutions. Whenever an SSI client contacts the SSA office for any business, SSA will advise the client of the right to apply for Food Assistance benefits at the SSA office. SSI clients retain the option of applying for Food Assistance benefits at the local DHS office.

Form DHS-1171, Assistance Application, is used for SSI clients choosing to apply for Food Assistance at the SSA office. SSA screens the DHS-1171 for potential entitlement to expedited service and informs the applicant that he may receive benefits sooner if he applies at the local DHS office.

SSI clients may also complete the redetermination process at the SSA office. All FAP redetermination policies in BAM 210 apply **except** the in-person interview must be waived if requested by an SSI group **and** the group is unable to appoint an authorized representative. SSA will handle the application in the same manner as an initial application but will indicate in red at the top of the DHS-1171 that it is a redetermination.

**Client Rights and
Responsibilities**

SSI groups are entitled to the same rights and have the same responsibilities as any other FAP group.

**SSA
Responsibilities**

When an SSI group chooses to apply for Food Assistance benefits through SSA, SSA will take the following actions:

- Assist the client in completing the FAP application.
- Prescreen each application for entitlement to expedited service and mark "Expedited Processing" on the first page of all applications which seem to require it.
- Interview the applicant.

- Attach a transmittal form to all applications regarding verification(s). (See Verification Provided by SSA in this item for more information.)
- Forward the applications to the designated local office within one working day after receipt.
- Give the applicant the local office pamphlet (or loose materials) which provides basic program information, issuance information, and instructions for obtaining Food Assistance benefits. SSA orders these materials through the local office.
- Give the applicant information on how and where to receive Electronic Benefit Transfer (EBT) training. Food Assistance benefits issued in the form of EBT are accessed using a plastic Bridge Card. Clients must be aware of what is required of them if they don't go into the local office.

Local offices should arrange with their local SSA office for the most convenient and timely method for transmitting applications.

Local Office Responsibilities

Upon receipt of a signed application from SSA, the local office must take the following actions:

- Register the application if the applicant has **not** already applied for or been approved for Food Assistance benefits. Use the date filed at SSA for the application date.
- Process applications according to the appropriate standard of promptness, based on the date they were filed at the SSA office. (See Exception below.)
- Bridges automatically screens **all** applications for expedited service. The expedited service timeliness standard begins on the date the application was received at the correct local office. (See Exception below.)

Exception: Clients may apply for SSI and Food Assistance benefits before being released from medical institutions. The application filing date for these applications is the date of release from the institution. (The expected release date is in section A. Address Information on page 2 of the DHS-1171, Assistance Application).

Example:	Application completed	10/10/08
	Date of Release	10/16/08
	SOP: (expedited FAP)	10/20/08
	(non-expedited)	11/12/08

Interviews

Since SSA conducts the interview, the local office is **not** required to reinterview the applicant. The DHS specialist must **not** contact the group unless:

- The application is improperly completed.
- Mandatory verification is missing.
- Certain information on the application is questionable.

If the specialist contacts the SSI/FAP group for one of the above reasons, the specialist **cannot** require the group to come to the local office or discuss items which are unrelated to the reason for the contact.

Verification Provided by SSA

All mandatory verifications must be obtained prior to approving eligibility. Verification may be provided by SSA via the SSA-4233, Social Security Administration Transmittal for Food Assistance Applications, or through the usual means of verification.

SSA will provide all verification available at application. The transmittal form will indicate one of three things regarding each item requiring mandatory verification.

- **Verified.** The verification or a photocopy will be attached.
- **In SSI File.** The item is verified, but the document was retained in the SSI file. This statement from SSA is acceptable verification for FAP purposes.
- **Not Verified.** Verification was **not** available to SSA and must be obtained by the DHS specialist.

In addition, the SSA worker will indicate areas which are questionable on the back of the transmittal form. The SSA worker will verify these areas if the verification is available at application.

If a group returns needed verification to SSA rather than the local DHS office, SSA will forward it using an SSA-4233 marked "Evidence Only."

Verification **not** provided through SSA must be provided by the group or obtained through automated systems matches. The match from SSA may be used to verify SSI status and benefit amount. If the match indicates earned income, it **cannot** be used to verify the amount of earned income. Also, the FAP group must be given the opportunity to provide verification from another source if the information from SSA contradicts other group information.

Do **not** delay processing the application while waiting for the HR-070 or BENDEX report.

Eligibility Factors

SSI/FAP groups must meet all FAP non-financial and financial eligibility factors listed in the BEM.

Benefit Periods

Assign a benefit period according to the guidelines in BAM 115.

CHANGES

SSI/FAP groups must report changes within 10 days. See BAM 105.

Complete any necessary budget changes in Bridges upon learning of the SSI determination. If the information is discovered and it appears that the FAP group did **not** report receipt of SSI benefits within 10 days of receipt of first payment as required, an overissuance may have occurred. Handle the overissuance according to policy in BAM 700 and 720.

LEGAL BASE

FAP

7 CFR 273.2(k)

7 CFR 273.12

7 CFR 274.2