
**DEPARTMENT
POLICY****FAP Only**

Traditional categorically eligible groups automatically meet the asset and income limits for the Food Assistance Program (FAP).

Applicants and recipients are eligible for enhanced authorization for Domestic Violence Prevention Services (DVPS). If their gross income is at or below 200 percent of the federal poverty level and they meet the asset test, they are also categorically eligible.

Categorical eligibility applies to groups, **not** individuals. Bridges determines group composition prior to determining categorical eligibility. Determination of categorical eligibility will be made at application, reported change and redetermination.

Note: Categorical eligibility does not mean applicants automatically receive FAP as clients must still meet all of the other program requirements.

ASSET TESTS**Traditional
Categorical
Groups**

FAP groups whose members are all FIP and/or SDA and/or SSI are categorically eligible and do **not** require an asset test. Their asset test requirements are met by the FIP/SDA/SSI program.

A recipient is a person who is one of the following:

- Receiving FIP and/or SDA and/or SSI.
- Authorized for such benefits but who has not yet received payments.
- Eligible for such benefits however, benefits are suspended or recouped.

DVPS Categorical Groups

FAP groups whose members are not all FIP and/or SDA and/or SSI are categorically eligible based on DVPS and **do** require an income and asset test.

DVPS Non-Categorical Groups

The following households are **not** categorically eligible but are authorized to receive DVPS. They must meet income, asset and all other program requirements to receive FAP benefits.

Senior/Disabled/Disabled Veteran (SDV)

Households which contain an SDV member and whose gross income is above 200 percent are **not** categorically eligible but they may still be eligible for benefits if their net income is below 100 percent of the poverty level and they meet the asset limit; see BEM 400 and BEM 550.

Disqualified Member

A group is **not** categorically eligible for FAP if **any** member of the group is FAP disqualified for:

- Intentional program violation (IPV).
- Employment-related activity **only** when the disqualified person is the head of household.
- Drug-related felony.

APPLICATION PROCESSING**Verification**

If questionable, verify that the group:

- Meets all of the group composition requirements; see BEM 212.
- Includes all persons who purchase and prepare food together in one FAP group, **and**

- Includes **no** persons who have been FAP **disqualified** for IPV, employment-related activity (only when the disqualified person is the head of household) and/or drug-related felony.

If categorically eligible, do **not** verify for FAP purposes:

- That the group's income is within gross and 100 percent net income limits.
- Social Security numbers.
- Sponsored alien information.
- Residency.

Note: Although the above eligibility factors are not verified for categorically eligible households, they must be verified if they are not verified by another program.

Postponing Denial

Postpone the denial of benefits for a potential categorically eligible group that does not require an asset test until the **30th day** if it is likely that the group will be categorically eligible.

Benefits for Previously Denied Group

If the group meets FAP categorical eligibility within 30 days of application, FAP eligibility is effective the date of application. Household applies for FIP and FAP or SDA and FAP on June 23. FAP is denied due to excess assets. FIP or SDA is approved on July 8. FAP eligibility begins on June 23.

If the group meets FAP categorical eligibility criteria after 30 days, the FAP eligibility is effective on the date FIP or SDA is approved.

Example: Same household applies on June 23 and is approved for FIP or SDA on August 3. FAP eligibility begins on August 3.

Update the original application from available information or through mail or phone contact with the group or authorized representative and document the case.

ISSUING BENEFITS

Bridges will compute net income for all categorically eligible groups.

One and two member categorical FAP groups that exceed the gross and/or 100 percent net income limit, but whose gross income is at or below 200 percent of the poverty level, and who meet the asset limit and all other FAP eligibility requirements are automatically eligible for a \$16 benefit amount.

Three or more member categorical FAP groups that exceed the gross and/or 100 percent net income limit, but whose gross income is at or below 200 percent of the poverty level and who meet the asset limit and all other FAP eligibility requirements may be eligible for benefits as low as \$2 as determined by the Food Assistance Issuance Tables; see RFT 260.

Exception: Benefits are prorated in the initial month of application and benefits will not be issued if the issuance is less than \$10.

A case with zero benefits **won't** be opened on Bridges. Therefore, three or more member categorical FAP groups **will** be denied or closed **if** net income results in a zero benefit amount based on the Food Assistance Issuance Tables.

TERMINATION OF CATEGORICAL ELIGIBILITY

When the group is **no** longer categorically eligible due to imposing a FAP disqualification for IPV, employment-related activity (**only** when the disqualified person is the head or household) and/or drug-related felony, **all** FAP eligibility requirements are reviewed to determine whether the group remains eligible. Bridges will send a DHS-1605 to inform the client of any change in eligibility or benefit level.

LEGAL BASE

FAP

7 CFR 273.2(j)

7 CFR 273.8

Food and Nutrition Act of 2008, as amended