



United States Department of Agriculture

Food and  
Nutrition  
Service

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DATE: February 19, 2021

SUBJECT: Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) – Quality Control (QC) Error Rate Announcements for Fiscal Year (FY) 2020 and FY 2021

TO: All SNAP State Agencies  
All Food and Nutrition Service Regional SNAP Directors

<b>Issuing Agency/Office:</b>	FNS/SNAP
<b>Title of Document:</b>	Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) – Quality Control (QC) Error Rate Announcements for Fiscal Year (FY) 2020 and FY 2021
<b>Document ID:</b>	
<b>Z-RIN:</b>	
<b>Date of Issuance:</b>	February 19, 2021
<b>Replaces:</b>	N/A
<b>Summary:</b>	Informs SNAP State Agencies that USDA will not issue payment error rates, national and State by State, for fiscal years 2020 and 2021 due to flexibilities provided to States by Section 4603(a)(2) of the <a href="#">Continuing Appropriations Act, 2021 and Other Extensions Act</a> .
<b>Disclaimer:</b>	<b>The contents of this guidance document do not have the force and effect of law and are not meant to bind the public or FNS in any way. This document is intended only to provide clarity to the public regarding existing requirements under the law or agency policies.</b>

The Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) would like to thank all of its State agency partners and stakeholders for their patience as the agency assessed its statutory requirements in light of the QC flexibilities provided to States by Section 4603(a)(2) of the [Continuing Appropriations Act, 2021 and Other Extensions Act](#). FNS has completed this review and has determined that the agency cannot establish National and State level payment error rates for Fiscal Year 2020 and 2021.

Section 16(c)(2) of the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008, as amended,<sup>1</sup> defines “overpayment error rate” and “underpayment error rate” in terms of the value of

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<sup>1</sup> 7 U.S.C. 2025(c)(2)

all allotments issued in a fiscal year. Flexibilities provided by appropriations legislation as well as the FNS-issued blanket approval dated [April 30, 2020](#), however, provided State agencies the option to suspend certain QC regulatory requirements from March 2020 until June 30, 2021<sup>2</sup> in response to the COVID-19 public health emergency. As a result of States opting to suspend the QC regulatory requirements, FNS has only five months of validated data for FY 2020, covering October 2019 through February 2020, and expects to have only three months of validated data for FY 2021, covering July 2021 through September 2021. Because of incomplete data sets that do not reflect the full fiscal year value of allotments issued by States, FNS cannot determine underpayment and overpayment error rates. FNS therefore has determined the agency cannot establish National and State level payment error rates for Fiscal Year 2020 and 2021, and as such, cannot assess liability amounts for those Federal Fiscal Years.

During the suspension of certain QC regulatory requirements, FNS has encouraged State agencies to continue conducting QC case reviews, as the data collected provides insight into the effectiveness of certification and recertification processes needed to ensure payment accuracy. FNS is aware State agencies may elect to continue conducting QC case reviews for payment accuracy and program improvement purposes despite opting to suspend the QC requirements. FNS applauds these efforts and remains available to coordinate Federal reviews of State agencies' case reviews during the suspension period in order to provide technical assistance for our mutual responsibility to preserve program integrity. Additionally, FNS continues to provide support for State agencies to enter case reviews conducted for payment accuracy purposes into the automated QC system for State agencies (SNAP-QCS) during the suspension. FNS and State agencies share a responsibility to ensure proper stewardship of taxpayer dollars, and the agency stands by to assist State agencies with their payment accuracy responsibilities.

FNS looks forward to working with our partners to resume normal operations in July 2021 when all regulatory requirements for QC case reviews will be in effect. If you have any questions or need additional information, please contact your FNS Regional Office.

Pursuant to the Congressional Review Act and Executive Order 13891, the Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs has designated this document as not major and not significant.

Jessica Shahin  
Associate Administrator  
Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program

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<sup>2</sup> While the Continuing Appropriations Act, 2021 and Other Extensions Act (P.L. 116-159) provided the option to suspend certain QC regulatory requirements through September 30, 2021, the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2021 (P.L. 116-260) reduced the suspension period to through June 30, 2021.