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# Food Stamp Program Access Study

## Final Report

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### Abstract

The Food Stamp Program Access Study was motivated by a desire to learn whether and how the administrative policies and practices of local food stamp offices influence the chances of eligible households participating in the program. This report examines the participation decisions of potentially eligible households, together with the local office policies and practices that may enhance or inhibit program access. The findings indicate that many households with no recent contact with the FSP would apply for benefits if they believed themselves to be eligible. In addition, outreach activities are effective in communicating eligibility to nonparticipating households. The processes of application and recertification-and to a lesser extent, complying with ongoing program requirements-are hurdles that a sizable number of apparently eligible households fail to surmount. When surveyed, applicants and program dropouts cited various procedural obstacles as factors in their decision not to participate. The econometric analysis also identifies a number of office practices that vary across offices and appear to be significant in participation decisions.

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Many persons at Abt Associates contributed to the study. In particular, Diane Stoner directed the data collection effort on the entire study. Michael Battaglia, as sampling statistician, developed the sampling frame and analytic weights. Ryan Kling provided programming support, Frederic Glantz served as technical reviewer, and Jan Nicholson produced the report.

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# Executive Summary

The Food Stamp Program Access Study was motivated by a desire to learn whether and how the administrative policies and practices carried out by local food stamp offices influence the chances that eligible households will participate in the program. This report examines the participation decisions of potentially eligible households together with the local office policies and practices that may enhance or inhibit access to the Program.

How best to ensure that eligible households have access to the Food Stamp Program (FSP) has long been a concern of program managers and policymakers. Interest was heightened by the dramatic decline in the FSP caseload in the late 1990s, a period characterized not only by an unusually strong economy, but also by major changes in the public assistance landscape following the welfare reform legislation of 1996. Studies have shown that the food stamp caseload declined not only because many households' circumstances improved enough to make them ineligible for benefits, but also because a smaller percentage of the potentially eligible households were participating in the program. This led policymakers and analysts to focus on the broad question of what factors influence FSP participation, including the possible role of local food stamp office policies and practices in encouraging or deterring households' participation decisions. Although the food stamp caseload increased after reaching a low point in July 2000, policy makers remain interested in implementing policies and procedures that ensure that the program is accessible to eligible households.

The Economic Research Service of the U.S. Department of Agriculture contracted with Abt Associates Inc. and Health Systems Research, Inc. to conduct a national study of Food Stamp Program accessibility at the local office level. The study collected information describing the policies and practices in local food stamp offices, the characteristics of participant and nonparticipant households, and the reasons why some eligible households do not participate in the FSP.

This report, one of three prepared for the study, addresses accessibility from three perspectives. It describes the nature and prevalence of local office practices that are hypothesized to influence participation. It describes households' stated reasons for not participating or ending their participation, along with the households' characteristics, attitudes, and experiences that may be associated with participation behavior. Finally, the report presents analyses of the association between local office practices and household participation behavior.

The findings presented here are based on data collected in a nationally representative sample of 109 local food stamp offices. Data collection efforts involved both local office level and household level activities for the reference month of June 2000. Telephone interviews with supervisors and caseworkers and observations in the sampled offices obtained information on the policies and administrative practices that might affect FSP accessibility. Samples of food stamp applicants and recipients were drawn from the local offices included in the study. Data were collected through case file record abstraction and telephone and in-person surveys and provided detailed information on household characteristics, participation decisions, and FSP administrative events. Finally, a random-digit-dial telephone survey of households that were apparently eligible for food stamp benefits, but were not participating in the FSP, was conducted in the geographic areas served by the sampled local food stamp offices.

## Household Participation Decisions

In order to participate in the Food Stamp Program, households must make certain decisions and take actions necessary to fulfill program requirements. An eligible nonparticipant household must know of the program's existence, believe it is eligible for benefits, and be interested in applying. Once a household has made the decision to apply, it must complete an application process that includes participating in an interview and obtaining necessary documents verifying household circumstances.

Food stamp recipient households also must take certain actions to continue participating in the program. Households need to comply with various participation requirements, such as periodic income reporting and employment-related requirements, in order to remain eligible for food stamp benefits. Additionally, all households need to complete periodic recertifications by which their continuing eligibility for the FSP is determined.

At any of these points, nonparticipant households may decide not to pursue their FSP application or participant households may decide to leave the program. In addition, households may be found to be ineligible and denied (further) benefits, and participating households may fail to comply with program rules and have their cases terminated. The characteristics, experiences, and attitudes of households that may be associated with participant behavior at these junctures and households' stated reasons for not participating or ending their participation are summarized below.

### Why Some Households Think They Are Ineligible

Over half of the approximately 6 million apparently eligible nonparticipant households in June 2000 either believed they were ineligible for food stamp benefits or were not sure whether they would be eligible. Nonparticipating households in relatively more favorable economic circumstances—i.e., closer to the eligibility cutoff—tended to be less certain of their eligibility for food stamps. Those who believed themselves ineligible, or who were unsure of their eligibility, were more likely to have above-poverty incomes and more likely to have bank accounts. They were also less likely to be food insecure or to have experienced hunger in the preceding year. Those who believed they were ineligible were less likely to have received food stamps in the past, suggesting they may have had less information about eligibility requirements. Demographic characteristics such as age, race, ethnicity, and household composition were not associated with whether households believed they were eligible for food stamp benefits.

Many of the reasons households provided for believing themselves ineligible for food stamps focused on central aspects of the eligibility rules: the amount of earned income (55 percent), the value of an owned vehicle (15 percent), and the value of financial assets (12 percent). Because these rules are quite complicated, it is not surprising that people do not know exactly how their circumstances compare to program eligibility limits, and it would be difficult to communicate sufficient information about the rules to the general nonparticipant community.

A substantial number of households seemed to have significant misperceptions of some program rules. These households said, for example, that their reason for ineligibility was being employed (40 percent), receiving other government assistance (19 percent), having reached the time limit on cash assistance (2 percent), or having received a TANF (Temporary Assistance for Needy Families) lump sum payment (2 percent). None of these factors necessarily make a household ineligible for food

stamp benefits, and from a policy point of view, it would be far easier to communicate that general fact than the details of income and asset limits.

### **Why Some Households Do Not Apply for Benefits**

Eligible households who applied for benefits had a profile that differed in several respects from the general population of nonparticipants. Consistent with the literature on food stamp participation, applicant households were younger, more likely to be single-parent households, and in worse financial condition. Nonparticipant households that reportedly would apply for benefits if they knew they were eligible were more likely to be food insecure than households that were not interested in applying.

While most nonparticipant households (69 percent) reportedly would apply for food stamps if they knew for certain they were eligible, 31 percent, or 1.9 million households, would not apply. Those households cited both personal reasons and reasons related to office policies and practices for their lack of desire to apply. Almost all respondents mentioned personal reasons for not applying. The most common set of reasons was related to a desire for personal independence (91 percent). In addition, nearly three-quarters reported at least one reason related to office policies, including perceived costs of applying (64 percent), a previous “bad experience” with the FSP or another government program (24 percent), costs of FSP participation (17 percent), and confusion about how to apply (12 percent).

Local office policies would probably not affect the behavior of households that cited only personal reasons for not applying to the FSP. Nonetheless, because a substantial majority of nonparticipant households mentioned aspects of the application process as deterrents to applying, practices that enhance accessibility might encourage participation for at least some of these households.

### **Why Some Households Do Not Complete the Application Process**

Most (83 percent) of the approximately 440,000 apparently eligible households who applied for benefits in June 2000 completed the food stamp application process and received benefits. Applicants who failed to complete the application process were in a somewhat better financial situation than those who completed the process and received benefits—they were more likely to have earnings and to have above-poverty income and less likely to be receiving cash assistance. Demographic characteristics were generally not associated with whether households completed the application process. However, households consisting of all elderly adults and households in which all adults had disabilities were significantly more likely to fulfill all application requirements and receive approval for food stamps.

About one quarter of applicants who did not complete the process indicated that their situation had changed and they no longer needed benefits, and about half discontinued their application because they believed their income or assets made them ineligible. Some of these households may have been correct in believing themselves ineligible. The brief questions that the study used to screen for “apparent eligibility” have been shown in previous research to be reasonable predictors of eligibility, but they do not provide enough detail to determine eligibility with certainty. Even if a sizable fraction of these households actually were truly ineligible, however, it seems clear that many households who would be eligible are unaware of that fact.

Just over one quarter of applicant dropouts, or about 21,000 households, reported that their reasons for abandoning the application included some aspect of the application process, including the need to acquire verification documents (10 percent), the length the length of time before benefits would be available (8 percent), long waits in the food stamp office (6 percent), missing work (5 percent), paying for someone to care for their child or elderly dependent (5 percent), and general confusion about the process (6 percent). For these households, local office policies that reduce the burden of the application process might increase participation by making it easier for households to comply with application requirements.

### **Why Some Households Leave the FSP**

About 5 percent of the food stamp caseload left the rolls during June 2000—2 percent of households experienced an interim closure and 3 percent were denied continuing benefits at recertification. Consistent with published participation studies, those who left were less likely to be made up entirely of elderly adults or adults with disabilities and less likely to be one-person households. Households who left also tended to be in better economic circumstances than those who stayed. They were more likely to have had earnings and above-poverty income at their most recent prior recertification.

Just over half of the households that left the FSP in June 2000 were due for a recertification in that month. Of those that closed at recertification, 35 percent were denied because they no longer met program eligibility criteria such as income and resource limits. Most of the remainder did not meet all of the requirements of the recertification process. Apart from the cases that were denied because of excess income or resources, program records did not indicate whether or not the households who left the program were circumstantially eligible. However, a survey of these households found a large proportion to be in the category of “apparently circumstantially eligible.” Just over 90 percent of the households reached by the survey were in this category, and while a low survey response rate means that this estimate is imprecise, it seems that many households who left without an official finding of ineligibility were in fact still eligible.

Asked why they did not complete the recertification, about a third said they believed they were ineligible – despite giving information in the survey that indicated apparent eligibility. Although it is somewhat surprising that so many people who had been receiving benefits would be unaware of their likely eligibility, recall that rate of perceived ineligibility was even higher for the apparently eligible households who dropped out of the initial application process.

Based on the limited available data on the eligibility of households leaving the FSP, the study estimated that about 123,000 apparently eligible households exited in their recertification month in June 2000. Most (63 percent) did not even begin the recertification process. Smaller proportions either did not complete their certification interview (13 percent) or did not complete their verification (14 percent).

Among survey respondents, 38 percent cited some difficulty with the recertification or some program participation requirement among their reasons. This includes difficulty with verification requirements (23 percent), confusion about the process (16 percent), frequency of recertifications (9 percent), and the need to miss work (7 percent). TANF issues were not a major factor causing closure at recertification according to households’ reports. It is somewhat surprising that households that had already successfully negotiated the food stamp application process reported these difficulties with the recertification process, which may indicate that other, unreported reasons were at work. Nonetheless,



policies that facilitate recertification might lead to continued participation by some households who would otherwise leave the program.

## **Local Office Policies and Practices that May Affect FSP Participation**

Local food stamp office policies and practices may affect household participation decisions at any point in the decision-making process. Policies may make it easier or harder to complete required activities, or they may also increase the costs or decrease the benefits of FSP participation. Policies of other public assistance programs, particularly TANF and Medicaid, may also affect FSP participation decisions. The local office surveys asked about policies and practices that were hypothesized to influence accessibility. The paragraphs below summarize the prevalence of selected practices, which are grouped into seven broad categories.

### **Outreach to Nonparticipants**

Outreach activities were quite prevalent, existing in the catchment areas of offices serving three-quarters of the national food stamp caseload.<sup>1</sup> Nine different modes of outreach were reported, with multiple modes in most areas where any outreach occurred. Practices used in at least half of the areas include community presentations; flyers, posters, and brochures; and toll-free numbers or hotlines. Outreach efforts were conducted by both the local office and other community organizations in most areas that had any outreach, and about a fifth of the areas reported that outreach was conducted only by community organizations. Nearly two-thirds of areas had outreach targeted to particular groups, most commonly the elderly. Food stamp outreach was coordinated with outreach for Medicaid or State Child Health Insurance Programs (SCHIP) in 59 percent of local areas.

### **Availability of Information about the FSP**

In nearly all offices studied, households who might wish to apply for food stamps could readily find application forms and general program information, particularly information concerning eligibility requirements. Some reception areas offered general program information only on posters, but others used material that might communicate better, such as take-away brochures (64 percent) or videotapes (21 percent). Some offices made information available for special groups or issues. Sixty-two percent presented information in at least one non-English language, and half had specific information for people who were not applying for or already receiving TANF. Among offices serving immigrants, about two-thirds provided specific information on eligibility rules for immigrant households. Two-thirds of offices made application forms available at other locations in the community besides the food stamp office.

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<sup>1</sup> In this report, we describe the distribution of office practices in terms of the weighted percent of offices engaging in the practice, where the weighting factor is the number of active cases in the office in June 2000. Thus, “*x* percent of the offices” is equivalent to “offices serving *x* percent of the national caseload,” and we use these terms interchangeably.

## Office Accessibility

Households interested in applying for benefits generally must visit the food stamp office at least once to complete the application process. Visits to the office are also required for periodic recertification. Five dimensions of office accessibility were therefore examined:

- **Hours of operation**—About two-fifths of offices conducted some eligibility interviews outside standard business hours. Most of these offices offered interviews before 8 am; relatively few offered interviews after 5 pm.
- **Transportation**—Three-quarters of offices were accessible by public transportation. Relatively few offices offered transportation assistance in the form of cash, vouchers, or van service.
- **Child-friendliness**—Local practices regarding child-friendliness varied considerably. Most offices had some play space, and a few offered child care services. A small percentage asked clients not to bring children to the office.
- **Physical accessibility and accessibility to non-English speakers**—Nearly all offices were physically accessible. Virtually all offices that routinely saw non-English speaking clients had translation services available.

## Subjective Office Features

The study examined three subjective dimensions that might affect applicants' sense of the program's accessibility: staff attitudes, the presence of waiting lines, and the adequacy of seating in the reception area. To assess attitudes, the supervisor survey asked whether supervisors agreed or disagreed with three judgmental statements. Supervisors in over 80 percent of offices expressed "pro-participation" positions on the attitudinal items. The vast majority of offices (almost 90 percent) always had enough seats for everyone in the reception area, though a small percentage had insufficient seats at some times. While about one-third of offices were observed to have no waiting lines at any time, half sometimes had lines and one-tenth always did.

## Certification Requirements

Although basic FSP eligibility criteria and requirements are uniform across locations, local offices exercise considerable discretion in structuring the applications process and the study documented quite substantial variation across offices.

- **Structure of application process**—The eligibility interview is the universally central element of the application process, but substantial variation existed in the process leading up to the interview. Interviews were scheduled in advance in offices serving 55 percent of the national caseload. Meetings prior to the certification interview were required for households applying for TANF in 26 percent of offices; 11 percent of offices had a similar requirement for households applying only for food stamps. About half of offices reported that food stamp applicants usually had to make more than a single visit to the office in order to complete the process.
- **TANF-diversion and other job search**—Most offices (80 percent) had some form of diversion in place for TANF applicants, including lump-sum payments (55 percent), job

search requirements (38 percent), and a requirement to seek alternative resources (9 percent). Some offices (14 percent) required some non-TANF applicants to engage in job search activities prior to benefit receipt.

- ***Verification and anti-fraud procedures***—Third party verification was fairly widespread, used to verify income for TANF applicants (66 percent of offices), household circumstances (53 percent), and shelter costs (43 percent). Third party income verification was somewhat less common for non-TANF applicants (57 percent). Fraud investigations involving unannounced home visits were routine practices in offices that served half the national caseload, with 13 percent reporting such investigations for at least a quarter of all applications. Fingerprinting or finger imaging was required for at least some food stamp applicants in about one-quarter of offices.

## **Recertification Requirements**

Recertification requirements are similar to initial certification requirements in that households must complete an application, participate in an interview, and provide verification of circumstances. The study focused on three practices specific to recertification that could affect accessibility.

- ***Certification period***—States and local offices have considerable discretion to set the length of certification periods, with longer periods generally assigned to types of cases whose circumstances are expected to be stable and shorter periods for more volatile cases. Reported certification policies varied considerably across local offices even for similar types of cases. For example, TANF/FSP cases without earnings were given 4-6 month certification periods in 58 percent of offices, but 11 percent used shorter periods and 31 percent used longer ones. Short certifications (1 to 3 months) for non-TANF cases with earnings were reported in about half of the offices, but nearly a third of the offices usually assigned certification periods of 7 months or more for this group. Elderly and disabled clients received longer certification periods – 7-12 months in 76 percent of offices, and 24 months in 17 percent of offices.
- ***Telephone or in-home interviews***—Most offices offered telephone or at-home recertification interviews to persons with disabilities and the elderly (caseload-weighted 70 percent and 54 percent, respectively). A relatively small percentage of offices offered this opportunity to other types of clients who experienced difficulties visiting the office.
- ***Missed appointments***—One third of offices automatically closed the food stamp cases of participants who missed interview appointments; most other offices either automatically rescheduled the appointment or notified the client to do so.

## **Interim Participation Requirements**

In the months between certifications, households in some offices must comply with reporting or employment-related requirements in order to continue receiving food stamp benefits.

- ***Periodic reporting***—About half of all offices reported having a mandatory monthly or quarterly reporting requirement, generally applicable to households with earnings. In over one-tenth of offices (12 percent), cases were automatically closed for failure to provide the required report.

- **Employment and training requirements**—Just over two-thirds of offices had work requirements in place for ABAWD (able-bodied adults without dependents) households and one third of offices required some non-TANF, non-ABAWD households to participate in E&T activities as a condition for continuing eligibility.
- **Sanctions**—When food stamp households fail to comply with FSP requirements, or when households receiving both food stamp and TANF benefits fail to meet certain TANF requirements, local offices may impose sanctions that reduce or terminate food stamp benefits. Supervisors in 18 percent of offices reported that non-TANF households could be sanctioned for noncompliance with child support requirements. Sanctions for TANF/food stamp households were reported in 58 percent of offices.
- **TANF leavers**—In about one-quarter of offices, households that lost their TANF benefits due to full-family sanctions and those that left voluntarily due to employment or other reasons were required to visit the office in order to continue receiving food stamps, and in 8 percent of offices, households that reached the TANF time limit faced this requirement.

## **Relationship between Local Office Policies and Household Participation Decisions**

Multivariate models were estimated to explore the relationship between apparently eligible households' participation behaviors and the policies and practices of the local offices in their area. These household-level models took into account the households' characteristics and selected characteristics of the local areas. The two models focused on:

- Whether eligible nonparticipating households believed they might be eligible for food stamps.
- Whether households that contacted the office completed the food stamp application process.

### **Awareness of Eligibility**

The first step in the process of becoming a food stamp participant is for the household to be aware of its potential eligibility, which we hypothesized to be influenced by local agency outreach.

In areas where a larger number of outreach modes were employed, nonparticipant households who were apparently eligible for food stamps were more likely to perceive themselves as eligible. We interpret the number of outreach modes as reflecting the intensity or breadth of the outreach efforts. With more outreach, it appears, more people were aware of their potential eligibility. Which organization conducted the outreach, and whether it was targeted to particular groups, had no statistically significant association with perceived eligibility.

Coordination of food stamp outreach with Medicaid or SCHIP was negatively related to perceived eligibility. This raises the possibility that linking food stamp outreach with that for other programs may dilute the food stamp message. A coordinated approach may still generate food stamp participation, however, if it brings people into the social services network and they are appropriately referred to the food stamp office.

## Completing the Application Process

The multivariate analysis included some 27 dimensions of local office practice, representing information availability, office accessibility, subjective dimensions, and certification requirements. Five practices were significantly associated with the likelihood that households who contacted the office to apply for benefits would successfully complete the application process:

- ***Restricted office hours***—Households with earnings were less likely to complete all application requirements in offices that were only open for interviews between the hours of 8 a.m. and 5 p.m. Monday through Friday.
- ***Positive supervisor attitudes***—“Pro-participation” attitudes expressed by supervisors were positively associated with the likelihood that applicants completed the process.
- ***Fingerprinting of applicants***—In offices where applicants were fingerprinted or finger imaged prior to benefit receipt, households were less likely to complete the process.
- ***Child-friendliness***—Households with young children were less likely to fulfill all application requirements in offices that requested that children not be brought into the office.
- ***Time limits for ABAWDs***—ABAWDs in offices with time limits were less likely to complete the application process.

While the findings from the multivariate analysis are reasonable, and consistent with some major actions that USDA has taken to improve program access, they are probably not the entire story. Local offices do not adopt particular policies in isolation, but do so as part of a procedure to optimize across different program goals. The applicant’s overall experience results from the combination of many separate office practices. The study sample of 109 offices, although large for studies of this type, was not sufficient to explore the effects of all observed combinations of practices. It is therefore quite possible that practices other than those identified in the present analysis could have significant effects on participation.

## Remaining in the Food Stamp Program

The study did not include a multivariate analysis of whether eligible participating households remain in the FSP because the available data did not indicate the eligibility status of all households exiting the program.

One policy whose importance can be seen without such an analysis is the length of the assigned recertification period. Based on the limited available data, it appears that eligible households are several times more likely to leave the FSP in a recertification month than in other months. This implies that less frequent recertifications would be associated with greater participation by eligible households.

It is likely that other local office practices also influence the likelihood that eligible households will leave the program. Households who failed to complete recertification requirements cited several factors potentially related to office practices, such as difficulty with documentation requirements, the need to miss work, and confusion about what they needed to do.

## Policy Implications for Reducing Nonparticipation

If policy makers wish to increase the level of participation by eligible households, the biggest target is households with no recent contact with the FSP who would apply for benefits if they believed themselves eligible. This group included more than 4 million households in June 2000—somewhat more than half as many as the number of active participant households in that month. Communicating with these nonparticipant households would be difficult because they are not easy to identify and they are not necessarily the same households from month to month. Nonetheless, increasing these households' understanding of their likely eligibility may be the only way to achieve a substantial reduction in the overall rate of nonparticipation. FNS has emphasized outreach in recent years, disseminating outreach guidance material and making grants available to States, and the analysis suggests that these steps are likely to be helpful in increasing participation.

Although most eligible nonparticipants are not in contact with the FSP at any given time, it is also important to avoid discouraging participation by households who have taken action to seek program benefits, including both nonparticipants who contact the office and households who are actively participating. The processes of application and recertification—and to a lesser extent, complying with program requirements in non-recertification months—are hurdles that a sizable number of apparently eligible households fail to surmount.

These “hurdles” are not capricious, however, but represent operations that the program must carry out in order to deliver benefits and ensure program integrity. Local office practices can adjust the operations somewhat, but cannot remove them. Thus while a substantial proportion of the applicant dropouts cited procedural obstacles, the statistical analysis found few variations in office practices to be significantly associated with the probability that households would complete the process. Moreover, this analytic approach can identify effects only when the policy variation across offices is sufficient to influence households' behaviors. For example, the need to provide documentation of income, which is often cited by households as a reason for abandoning the application process, may not have been significant in the multivariate analysis because the policy differences among offices may have been too small to make a real difference in the difficulty that households experienced. For these reasons, it is likely that local office practices influence households' participation behaviors in more ways than the models could reveal.

The 2002 Farm Bill and earlier regulatory initiatives included steps intended to lower barriers to food stamp participation, such as allowing States to use longer intervals between recertifications and establishing transitional benefits for participants who leave TANF. Such modifications are quite consistent with the general study findings, which indicate that many potentially eligible households are tripped up by administrative requirements. Lengthening certification periods seems particularly likely to reduce the frequency with which eligible participating households leave the program. It might also be useful to explore new policy options for verifying households' income and other circumstances. Survey respondents mentioned this as a problem at both application and recertification, though the existing range of allowable practices was too limited to affect participation.

Any effort to increase accessibility through local office practices could benefit from further research on the links between office practices and household behavior. More focused office-level and household-level research is needed to know how much reduction in non-participation can realistically be achieved, what practices and combinations of practices can have the greatest impact, and how

those practices affect goals such as program integrity and administrative costs. Such information would provide invaluable guidance for enhancing the Food Stamp Program's accessibility to eligible households.

# Chapter 1

## Introduction

The Food Stamp Program Access study was motivated by a desire to learn whether and how the administrative policies and practices carried out by local food stamp offices influence the likelihood that eligible households will participate in the program. This report addresses the issue from three perspectives. It describes the nature and prevalence of local office practices that are hypothesized to influence participation. It describes households' stated reasons for not participating or ending their participation, along with the households' characteristics, attitudes, and experiences that may be associated with participation behavior. Finally, the report presents exploratory analyses of the association between local office practices and household participation behaviors.

The Food Stamp Program (FSP), administered by the Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) of the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), is the largest Federal food assistance program and the cornerstone of the nation's safety net for low-income persons. Its primary objective is to help low-income households obtain a more nutritious diet by increasing their food purchasing power. The program provides eligible households with electronic benefit transfer cards that are redeemable at authorized food stores for a preset dollar amount. Unlike other Federal income maintenance programs, the FSP has few categorical eligibility criteria, such as the presence of a child, disabled person, pregnant woman, or elderly adult in the household. The majority of FSP recipients are children and approximately one-quarter are in households that receive cash assistance from the Temporary Assistance to Needy Families Program (TANF) (Cunyngham, 2001).

### Policy Setting

A central goal in administering the Food Stamp Program is to assure that all eligible households have access to the program. "Access" is generally interpreted to mean that households are aware of the program, can readily obtain information about it, and, if they wish to participate, can apply and receive benefits without undue difficulty. This program goal has resulted in a long-standing interest in establishing policies and procedures that would facilitate access, and events of the late 1990s intensified that interest.

The late 1990s were characterized by a complete transformation of welfare policy in the U.S. and by dramatic declines in the food stamp caseload. These changes led policymakers and analysts to focus on issues of access to the Food Stamp Program and the role of local office policies and practices as possible barriers to participation.

In 1996, Federal welfare reform legislation—the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996 (PRWORA)—was enacted. This law replaced Aid to Families with Dependent Children, a cash assistance entitlement program, with the block-granted, work-oriented Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) program. The FSP remained essentially a national entitlement program, though PRWORA made a number of important changes to the Food Stamp Program, including:



- Establishing work requirements for able-bodied adults without dependents. These participants were generally limited to three months of food stamp participation in a three-year period unless they were employed or participating in a qualified work program.
- Restricting FSP eligibility for immigrants. Most legal immigrants were made ineligible for food stamp benefits.<sup>1</sup>
- Providing States with several new food stamp sanction options, including sanctioning food stamp recipients for noncompliance with TANF requirements and for noncompliance with child support.
- Weakening the linkages between the FSP and cash assistance programs. For example, eligibility interviews for food stamps and TANF could be separate rather than a single combined interview, and the food stamp application form did not have to be combined with the cash assistance form.
- Reducing benefits for all participants by lowering the maximum benefit.

National food stamp rolls declined by almost 40 percent between 1994, when 27.5 million persons received food stamps in an average month, and July 2000, when 16.9 million people received benefits. Two recent USDA studies suggest that roughly half the observed decline in food stamp caseloads was due to the strong economic conditions of the late 1990s and the direct impact of welfare reform on FSP eligibility rules (FNS, 2001 and Wilde et al., 2000). However, over the period, nonparticipation in the Food Stamp Program also increased. The food stamp participation rate, calculated as the ratio of the number of program participants to the number of eligible individuals, declined by 16 percentage points, from 74.8 percent in September 1994 to 59.7 percent in September 2000, indicating that fewer eligible individuals participated in the FSP in the late 1990s than previously.

Two general hypotheses have been advanced to explain the decline in Food Stamp Program participation among eligible individuals. One argument is that the FSP has become less accessible to its intended beneficiaries because of policy and operational changes, particularly at the local office level, that have accompanied welfare reform. Few changes in Food Stamp Program administration were mandated by PRWORA, but many changes have occurred in local welfare offices, most in response to changing objectives regarding cash assistance. It is reasonable to suspect that some of the changes have affected FSP operations in ways that were not intended, and may not support program objectives. For example, anecdotal evidence suggests that some offices may have new procedures that have increased the burden on applicants. In addition, offices may not have revised their practices to ensure that households understand revised eligibility criteria. A second argument is that the behavior of low-income individuals has changed over time due to several different factors. The robust economy may have affected their perceptions of need, promoting a more optimistic outlook for the future. Welfare reform or evolving social mores may have affected their attitudes toward government assistance, increasing the stigma of receiving aid. In addition, confusion over the food stamp

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<sup>1</sup> In 1998, eligibility restrictions on immigrants were partly rescinded. Eligibility was restored for permanent residents who were either disabled or were under 18 or aged 65 and older and who were legal residents when the PRWORA legislation was enacted. The 2002 Farm Bill, enacted after data collection for this study was completed, made further restorations by reinstating food stamp eligibility for legal immigrants residing in the U.S. for at least five years, and for all legal immigrant children and disabled individuals.

eligibility rules may have led some to erroneously conclude that they were ineligible to receive food stamp benefits.

Food stamp participation and participation-related policies have changed in important ways since this study began. After reaching a low point of 16.9 million participants in July 2000, the food stamp caseload began growing and reached 23.4 million in January 2004. This growth stemmed partly from a weakening economy, but it also reflected policy changes that expanded eligibility for benefits. Regulatory initiatives in 1999 and 2000 relaxed vehicle ownership rules and expanded the definition of households receiving TANF who would also be eligible for food stamp benefits. The 2002 Farm Bill (P.L. 107-171) restored eligibility for several groups of legal immigrants, including those who have resided in the US for five years, all children of legal immigrants, and all legal immigrants with disabilities. The bill also added transitional benefits for food stamp households reaching the TANF time limit and increased the standard deduction used in the food stamp benefit calculation for some larger households. Other important changes included federal grants for States to perform outreach to nonparticipants, simplification of certain rules for eligibility and benefit determination, and allowing States to reduce household reporting burden by lengthening the interval between required reports.

## Research Objectives

As part of an effort to more fully understand the factors that affect Food Stamp Program participation rates, the Economic Research Service in the U.S. Department of Agriculture funded Abt Associates Inc. to examine systematically the ways in which local offices affect food stamp use. The key issue concerns the extent to which local policies and administrative practices in the FSP or in related programs, particularly TANF, can affect levels of participation among potentially eligible households. Specifically, the study examined the impact of various policies and practices on households' decisions to apply for program benefits and their decisions to continue participating once they have been approved for food stamp benefits. In order to address the central research objective, the study utilized two approaches:

- Examining the reasons that presumably eligible nonparticipant households give for not participating in the FSP. These include households that have not applied for program benefits as well as households that applied, but did not complete the application process.
- Examining differences in participation behaviors—entry into the FSP and exit from the FSP—in offices with differing local policies and practices.

The study also addressed two secondary objectives:

- Describing the local office policies and practices that may affect Food Stamp Program accessibility.
- Describing the eligible nonparticipant population, including how nonparticipants differ from FSP participants.

In order to provide a systematic and comprehensive examination of the ways that program policies and procedures may influence the accessibility of the Food Stamp Program, the study selected a nationally representative sample of 109 local food stamp offices and the relevant populations within

their catchment areas.<sup>2</sup> Numerous separate data collection and analysis efforts were required, involving populations with quite distinct relationships with the FSP—nonparticipants, applicants, current recipients, and former recipients. In addition, extensive data collection was required within the sampled local offices to obtain detailed information on local office policies and practices that might potentially affect accessibility. This report integrates data collected in all aspects of the research study, examining the relationship between local office policies and practices and the participation decisions of eligible households.

The study has produced two previous reports, which address the secondary objectives. The first report, *Food Stamp Program Access Study: Local Office Policies and Practices*, produced by our subcontractor Health Systems Research, Inc., presents a detailed descriptive analysis of local office policies and practices that might affect FSP participation (Gabor et al., 2003). These policies and practices cover a variety of operational aspects of the FSP, including those driven by changes made under PRWORA. The analysis, the first such detailed investigation at the local level, examines office policies that reflect State policy choices in FSP and in TANF as well as those policies and practices that are based on local programs' operational decisions. The characterization of local office policies and practices in this report is derived from this analysis.

The second report, *Food Stamp Program Access Study: FSP Eligible Nonparticipants*, provides an in-depth examination of the population of eligible households that do not participate in the Food Stamp Program (Bartlett and Burstein, 2004). This descriptive report examines the characteristics, experiences, perceptions, and circumstances of households that appear eligible to receive food stamp benefits, but have not applied for them. While a number of previous research studies have examined this issue, this is the first national study conducted since full implementation of welfare reform. Results from the current study are compared with findings from a nationally representative survey of eligible nonparticipants conducted around the time PRWORA was passed (Ponza et al., July 1999).

## **Previous Research on the Impact of Policies on FSP Participation**

During the latter half of the 1990s, a number of research studies used econometric modeling techniques and national household survey or administrative data from the 1980s and 1990s to examine the impact of the economy and of policies associated with welfare reform on the food stamp caseload. As mentioned above, all recent studies found that the booming economy of the late 1990s was responsible for a substantial portion of the food stamp caseload decline in that period. Most studies found that specific policy changes associated with welfare reform were responsible for only a small fraction of the FSP caseload declines, though a few studies found somewhat larger impacts.

Using annual FSP caseload data, researchers examined how changes over time were affected by variables such as the implementation of AFDC waivers/TANF implementation and ABAWD (able-bodied adults without dependents) waivers. The included variables explained less than 10 percent of the FSP caseload declines (Wallace and Blank, 1999; Wilde et al., 2000; Ziliak et al., 2001). Two studies that included additional State-level policy variables, such as TANF time limits, sanctions, and earnings disregards, were able to explain 15–20 percent of the FSP caseload decline of the late 1990s (Kornfeld, 2002; Jacobson et al., 2000).

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<sup>2</sup> Catchment area is the geographic area served by the local office. It was operationally defined using the telephone prefix or zip code of FSP applicants and participants in the office.

Several studies examined the impact of specific FSP policies on the caseload declines. Kornfeld (2002) and Kabbani and Wilde (2003) examined the impact of frequent recertifications, which increase participation costs for recipients, on FSP caseloads. They estimated that shorter certification periods explained between 7 and 10 percent of the FSP caseload declines during the latter half of the 1990s. Using household-level data, Currie and Grogger (2001) found that shorter certification periods were associated with decreases in food stamp receipt, at least among single-parent households. McKernan and Ratcliffe (2003) also found that households with shorter certification periods (four to six months) were less likely to participate in the FSP than households with longer periods between recertifications.

Kabbani and Wilde (2003) also included a measure of Federal food stamp outreach expenditures in their models. This variable increased participation rates for working households, but had no impact on nonworking households. This suggests that outreach may be successful at informing some households about the FSP.

Studies that included a variable measuring EBT implementation found little or no impact on FSP caseloads (Ziliak et al., 2001; Wilde et al., 2000; Currie and Grogger, 2001; Kornfeld, 2002; McKernan and Ratcliffe, 2003).

Gleason et al. (2001) also included a single indicator in their model for the post-PRWORA period. This variable, which measured the timing of the welfare reform legislation and was constant across States, accounted for 26 percent of the FSP caseload declines between 1994 and 1999. The general indicator variable could be measuring a number of different concepts—unmeasured policies (including changes in food stamp eligibility rules under PRWORA), changes in attitudes towards public assistance, and implementation of policies by local welfare workers.

Two studies, conducted during 2000–2001, used case study methodology to examine strategies that might promote participation in the FSP (and Medicaid) among working families, many of whom were former welfare recipients. Pavetti et al. (2002) conducted case studies in 15 sites located in 12 States and collected data from welfare office staff, clients, and client advocacy groups. Quint and Widom (2001) conducted surveys and interviews with staff, interviewed clients, and observed worker-client meetings in welfare offices in four large urban areas. Two strategies—increasing program awareness through outreach activities and simplifying the application and recertification processes to make them easier and less burdensome—were cited by both studies as likely to increase FSP participation in the post welfare reform era. Pavetti et al. also suggested that, because of the changes in TANF, Medicaid, and food stamp eligibility and the increased complexity of determining which programs households are eligible, having well-trained office staff, explicit case processing procedures, and sophisticated automated systems will help insure that benefits are accurately determined.

As the discussion above suggests, food stamp participation and participation-related policies have been examined in national studies using State-level data and in studies of a small number of selected local offices. The present study has attempted to fill some of the space between these approaches. To examine the effects of policies that vary within States, the study collected both policy and participation data at the local office level. To support generalization to the nation as a whole, the study used a nationally representative sample of 109 local offices in 39 States and the District of Columbia.

## Organization of the Report

This report brings together data from all aspects of the research study to examine the relationship between local office policies and practices and the participation decisions of eligible households. Chapter Two describes the study design, including sampling and data collection activities. Chapters Three through Six examine different subgroups of the food stamp eligible population—nonparticipants, households that applied for FSP benefits, TANF diverted households, and households that left the Food Stamp Program. The analyses examine the characteristics of these groups and the types of households that were more likely to apply and continue participating in the program. Households' experiences and perceptions of the FSP were also examined along with the stated reasons households gave for choosing not to receive FSP benefits. Chapter Seven uses data collected in local food stamp offices to describe policies and practices that might be hypothesized to affect FSP participation. Chapter Eight then presents a set of multivariate models that examine the food stamp participation decisions of eligible households. The models relate households' decisions at various stages of the food stamp participation process to local office policies and practices, household characteristics, and contextual variables. The final chapter uses findings from the descriptive and multivariate analyses to examine potential implications for public policy to improve accessibility of the Food Stamp Program.

## Chapter 2

# Study Design

Examining how local food stamp office policies and practices affect households' decisions to participate in the FSP required a study design that provided information from local food stamp offices and from households with differing connections to the Food Stamp Program. The study was designed to provide a comprehensive examination of the population of households eligible for food stamp benefits, including those receiving FSP benefits as well as eligible nonparticipant households. This design required drawing a nationally representative sample of food stamp offices, obtaining information on policies and practices in those offices, and obtaining information on the FSP participants and nonparticipants served by those offices.

The first section of the chapter presents the conceptual framework that provided the basis for the study design. The model illustrates the populations of primary interest and the points where they are required to make decisions concerning program participation, and therefore the points where local office policies and practices may potentially affect program access. The second section of the chapter presents the research methodology, including sample selection, data collection efforts, and data analysis activities.

### Conceptual Model of FSP Participation Decisions

The population of households that are circumstantially eligible for food stamp benefits is comprised of current food stamp recipients and eligible nonparticipants.<sup>1</sup> Circumstantially eligible households are those whose income, household size, assets, and other characteristics would meet program eligibility requirements, and these households are the focus of the study.

At any given point in time, some nonparticipating households apply for food stamp benefits and other households currently receiving benefits leave the FSP. Figure 2.1 shows the populations that comprise the food stamp eligible population and the participation decisions they make at different stages. The model indicates the points at which they can enter the FSP and the points where they can leave.<sup>2</sup>

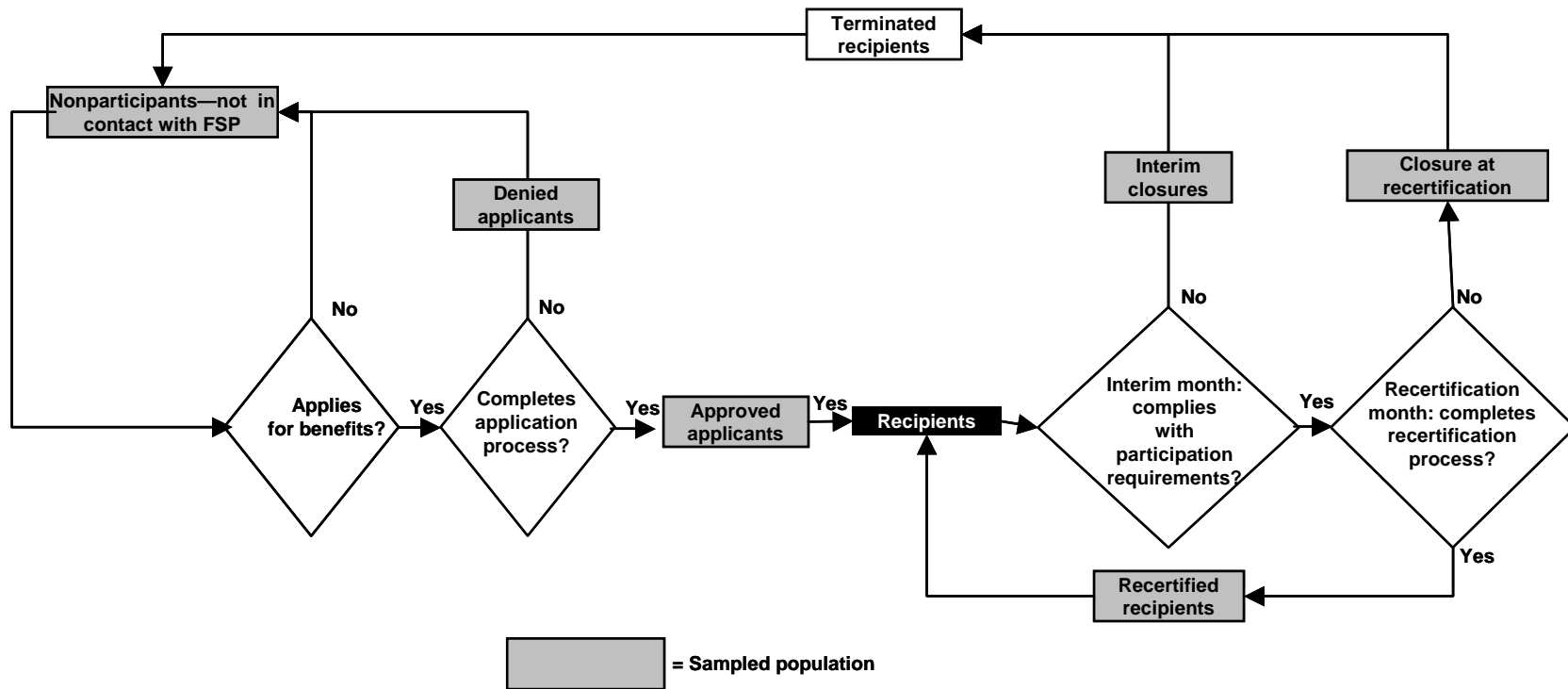
Starting with the population of eligible nonparticipants, households must first determine whether they are likely to be eligible for food stamp benefits. If they do not think they are eligible, they are unlikely to bother applying. Households then decide whether or not to contact the food stamp office. Not all who make an initial telephone or in-person visit to the office to inquire about assistance will decide to continue the process by officially filing a food stamp application. Once an eligible household has

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<sup>1</sup> Throughout this report, we define households as “apparently circumstantially eligible” based on survey responses regarding their household size, income, and assets, criteria which have been shown to be quite accurate in predicting FSP eligibility (McConnell, 1997). Without a full FSP certification interview, it is impossible to determine FSP eligibility with certainty.

<sup>2</sup> For simplicity, the illustration does not depict the dynamic nature of circumstantial eligibility. Households that are not circumstantially eligible may become eligible and enter the nonparticipant population. Likewise circumstantially eligible households, whether they are participants or nonparticipants, may become ineligible.

Figure 2.1—Food stamp-eligible households: Program participation decisions



This figure excludes circumstantially ineligible households. A circumstantially eligible household may become ineligible at any point shown in the diagram. Becoming circumstantially ineligible may cause a household to be denied at application, closed in an interim month, or closed at recertification. These processes are not represented by the figure.

filed a food stamp application, it must complete numerous steps, including participating in an interview and obtaining necessary documents verifying household circumstances, before being approved for food stamp benefits. Not all households complete all the necessary requirements, and some are denied at this point.

Food stamp recipient households also must take certain actions to continue participating in the program. Households need to comply with various participation requirements, such as periodic reporting or job search, in order to remain eligible for food stamp benefits. If they do not comply with the requirements that apply to their household type, they may be terminated from the program. Note that households that are terminated for noncompliance are still considered circumstantially eligible for purposes of this study, as long as their income and resources still fall within the FSP eligibility limits.

Additionally, all households need to complete periodic recertification requirements in which their continuing eligibility for the FSP is determined. Recertification requirements are generally similar to initial certification requirements. Households need to file a recertification application, participate in a recertification interview, and provide additional documents to verify their situation. Households that do not complete all steps in the recertification process are terminated from the FSP. Those households that remain circumstantially eligible for the FSP and complete all necessary requirements are approved to continue receiving food stamp benefits.

This conceptual model assumes that households make sequential decisions about FSP participation by deciding to take or not take certain steps. These decisions are based on households' awareness and understanding of the requirements and their assessment of the expected costs and benefits of taking the required action. Households' interactions with the FSP often involve other programs as well, primarily TANF, Medicaid, Supplemental Security Income (SSI), and General Assistance. Because these programs are so extensively linked, households will consider the costs and benefits of all programs combined, rather than for each program separately.

At all points in the decision-making process, food stamp policies and practices may affect households' decisions.<sup>3</sup> Some policies may make it easier or harder to complete necessary requirements. They may increase the costs of obtaining benefits or decrease the value of those benefits. For example, in terms of the application process, FSP practices with respect to the number and difficulty of the steps required to complete an application may affect whether households apply for benefits. Additional or more difficult steps raise the cost of applying and therefore reduce the net value of participation. This in turn reduces the likelihood that a given household will apply or complete the application process. In addition, TANF policies, such as providing lump-sum payments in lieu of welfare may affect a households' decision by altering the expected benefits. Current food stamp recipients may be affected by the extent of participation requirements—reporting income on a periodic basis and participating in job search activities. They may also be affected by TANF requirements and sanctions imposed on TANF and food stamp benefits.

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<sup>3</sup> Households' decisions will also be affected by their own characteristics and experiences, and these are taken into account in the analyses.



## Research Methodology

The research objectives required a complex sampling, data collection effort, and analysis strategy. It involved numerous separate samples and data collection activities at the local office level and household level. Sampling and data collection activities were designed to fit together to provide a systematic and comprehensive look at how local program policies and procedures influenced potentially eligible households' participation in the Food Stamp Program. This section discusses the sampling, data collection and data analysis activities. Additional detail is presented in Appendix A.

### Sample Selection

The sampling for this nationally representative study involved two steps. In the first step, a nationally representative sample of local food stamp offices was selected. Samples of food stamp caseworkers and their supervisors were selected within the sampled offices and interviewed concerning local office policies and practices that might affect access to the FSP. For each office, samples were drawn of food stamp eligible nonparticipants, food stamp applicants, households recertifying for food stamp benefits, and households leaving the FSP, and information was obtained about their characteristics, their relationship to the FSP, and their participation decisions.

### Sample of Offices

The sampling plan for selection of local food stamp offices was designed to be nationally representative and to ensure that most States in the continental U.S. would be represented. Welfare reform strategies have been quite diverse among States, resulting in distinctive administrative practices, which may have important implications for food stamp participation. Therefore, it was important to maximize the representation of States. The sampling plan was also designed to yield a sufficiently large number of offices to support office-level analysis of the effects of administrative practices on caseload entry and exit.

Each State in the continental U.S. and the District of Columbia provided a complete list of local offices, along with caseload information for each office. In places where different offices served distinct segments of the local caseload (e.g. the elderly or TANF clients), these offices were combined to make a single office that served all segments of the local program population. Offices with caseloads less than 150 were excluded from the sampling frame because of the difficulties they would have presented in obtaining an adequate sample of applicants.<sup>4</sup>

To ensure a reasonable distribution of local offices across the country and to decrease sampling variability, the sampling design involved stratifying the 3,359 local food stamp offices in the U.S. by the seven FNS regions, and by State within each region. States with small populations were grouped together to ensure the representation of smaller States in the office sample. In large States, the sample

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<sup>4</sup> Our sampling design called for samples in each office of 10 applicant households and 10 households due for recertification in the sample month. Assuming 7 percent turnover in caseload per month, the minimum office size required was estimated to be 150 (10/.07). Of the 3,789 food stamp offices located in the continental United States and the District of Columbia, 430 had monthly caseloads below 150. These small offices accounted for only 0.44 percent of the total food stamp caseload. The remaining 3,359 offices were included in the sampling frame.

was further stratified based on the degree of urbanicity (defined as offices located within Metropolitan Statistical Areas, or MSAs, versus offices located outside MSAs).

Probability-proportional-to-size (PPS) sampling was used to draw a sample of 120 local food stamp offices. The sampled offices were located in 40 States and the District of Columbia. All selected States, with the exception of New York, agreed to participate in the research study. New York was unable to participate due to a pending lawsuit in New York City, concerning access to the Food Stamp Program, which was scheduled for trial during the data collection period. The final research sample included 109 local food stamp offices, located in 39 States and the District of Columbia.<sup>5</sup>

Table 2.1 shows the characteristics of the final sample of offices by region, metropolitan status, caseload size, and the number of separate sites that comprised the sampled offices. The table provides the unweighted distribution, the weighted distribution, and the distribution of the offices weighted by the national caseload.

**Table 2.1—Characteristics of the office sample**

Office Characteristic	Number of Offices in Sample (N=109)	Percent of Sample	Weighted Percent of National Food Stamp Offices	Weighted Percent of National Caseload
<b><i>FNS region</i></b>				
Northeast	5	5%	2%	8%
Mid-Atlantic	15	14	15	19
Southeast	28	26	25	23
Midwest	19	17	16	16
Southwest	16	15	16	13
Mountain Plains	8	7	7	7
Western	18	17	18	15
<b><i>Metro/Nonmetro location</i></b>				
Metropolitan county	80	73	45	77
Nonmetropolitan county	29	27	55	23
<b><i>Office size</i></b>				
FSP caseload less than 2,000	33	30	70	26
FSP caseload 2,000 or greater	76	70	30	74
<b><i>Number of sites</i></b>				
1	101	93	94	92
2	7	6	5	8
4	1	1	1	1

<sup>5</sup> Adjustments to the sampling weights were made to account for the nonparticipation of New York State. See discussion in Appendix A.

The distribution of food stamp office size was moderately skewed. Large offices (with a caseload of 2,000 or more) served almost three-quarters of the participants, while comprising only 30 percent of the offices nationwide. Because of the PPS sampling, large offices comprised about three-quarters of the study sample. The sample was thus roughly self-weighting with regard to population served.

### ***Sample of Caseworker Supervisors***

Caseworker supervisors provided detailed information on local office policies and practices that might affect access to the Food Stamp Program. The sample of caseworker supervisors was a purposive sample. The objective was to complete one survey in each sampled office. This generally involved interviewing more than one supervisor as workers specialized in the types of cases they handled (for example, TANF versus non-TANF cases) or in the part of the food stamp process in which they were involved (for example, intake versus ongoing). The local office director identified the most knowledgeable supervisor, or the supervisor who had been working at the office the longest, to complete the interview. A total of 201 supervisors were selected for interviews across the 109 local offices.

### ***Sample of Caseworkers***

Caseworkers were interviewed concerning their practices for handling different aspects of the food stamp application and participation processes. The objective was to obtain two complete interviews in each sampled office. As with the supervisor survey, the level of worker specialization determined the number of workers interviewed in each office. For example, if the offices consisted of an intake unit and a unit for ongoing cases, two caseworkers from each unit were interviewed. The list of all caseworkers was divided into mutually exclusive, collectively exhaustive groups, defined by worker responsibility. Caseworkers were then randomly selected within each group. A total of 509 caseworkers were sampled.

### ***Samples of Applicant, Recertified Recipient, and Terminated Recipient Households***

The samples of new applicants, recertified cases, and terminated cases were drawn from lists provided by the sampled States (or counties) of all households that, in June 2000, experienced one of the following events:

- ***New applicants:*** households that filed a food stamp application in June 2000. These included households who completed the application process and were ***approved*** to receive food stamp benefits. They also included households that were ***denied*** assistance either because they did not meet the eligibility criteria or because they did not complete all procedural requirements.<sup>6</sup>
- ***Recertified recipients:*** households whose certification period ended in June 2000 and were approved for continuing food stamp benefits.
- ***Terminated recipients:*** households whose food stamp benefits ended in June 2000. These included cases that reached the end of their certification period and were ***not recertified***.

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<sup>6</sup> All analyses excluded households that were denied benefits due to circumstantial ineligibility. These households were included in the initial sample frame because excluding them would have presented operational difficulties for the State agencies providing the household lists.

They also included *interim closures*—households whose cases were closed in the midst of a certification period.<sup>7</sup>

Within each of the 109 sampled offices, systematic random samples were drawn from the groups of interest. The final sample comprised an average of 20 to 25 households in each of the local offices.

### **Sample of TANF-diverted Households**

TANF-diverted applicants, defined as households that filed a TANF application and were diverted before completing the TANF application process, were a group of particular interest. The concern among policy makers was that these households may not receive food stamp benefits for which they are entitled. The TANF-diverted applicants included in the study were those that received lump-sum cash benefits, in lieu of on-going TANF benefits, in June 2000.

In June 2000, ten of the sampled States reported providing cash diversion payments in the offices selected for the sample. The 179 households that received such payments comprise the TANF-diverted sample and represent the universe of households that were diverted from applying for TANF benefits by the use of lump-sum cash payments.<sup>8</sup>

### **Sample of Eligible Nonparticipant Households**

Eligible nonparticipants are households who are circumstantially eligible for the Food Stamp Program but are not participating in it. While Food Stamp Program applicants and participants in an office can be enumerated, no list or sampling frame exists for eligible nonparticipants. The sample frame was created from a random-digit-dialing (RDD) telephone survey of the entire population in the catchment areas, or areas served by the 109 sampled offices. Catchment areas were defined by the telephone prefixes (or zip codes, when telephone numbers were unavailable) of food stamp applicant and participant households.<sup>9</sup> The use of a random-digit-dial sampling approach limits the sample to those with working telephones. Adjustments were made to correct for this limitation during creation of sample weights.

A list-assisted RDD sample of 72,711 telephone numbers was drawn using the GENESYS sampling system, which helped ensure that a high percentage of the sampled numbers belonged to residential households.<sup>10</sup> Once a household was reached, a short screening questionnaire was administered to

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<sup>7</sup> Some terminated recipients in the sample frame left the FSP due to circumstantial ineligibility. To the extent possible, they are excluded from relevant analyses.

<sup>8</sup> Some of these households also appeared on the lists of new applicants, recertified recipients, and closed cases. They were removed from these lists prior to sample selection.

<sup>9</sup> The lists of applicant and participant households were provided by the States or local offices sampled for the study. These lists were used to sample households, as discussed in an earlier section.

<sup>10</sup> The GENESYS sampling system, supported by Marketing Systems Group, a division of AUS, Inc., is a hardware and software system that allows one to draw list-assisted RDD samples. In list-assisted RDD sampling, each prefix area is divided into 100 banks, each with 100 consecutive telephone numbers. A data base of residential directory listed telephone numbers is used to eliminate banks that contain no residential directory listed numbers. The GENESYS system also contains a zip code module that can be used to determine which prefix areas overlap with zip codes.

determine whether the household was apparently eligible for food stamps, but not currently receiving benefits. Households were screened out if they were current FSP participants or had applied for benefits in the prior month. Households were deemed to be presumptively eligible for food stamps if their gross household income was no more than 130 percent of the federal poverty level, their financial assets were less than \$3,000 if the household included an elderly member and less than \$2,000 if there were no elderly members of the household, and all vehicles owned were at least five years old, unless they were used for business or to transport disabled persons.<sup>11</sup> Apparently eligible households were then interviewed in more detail, as described below.

## **Data Collection**

A variety of methods were used to collect the data required for the study. Local office-level data were collected through telephone interviews and by in-person observations. Household-level data were collected using telephone surveys, in-person interviews, and through food stamp case record abstraction. The rest of this section discusses the various data collection activities. Data collection instruments are presented in Appendix E.

### ***Caseworker Supervisors and Caseworkers***

Caseworker supervisors were interviewed by telephone to collect information about official local office policies that may affect accessibility, including:

- Food stamp outreach, application, reporting, and recertification processes operating at the local office level;
- TANF and Medicaid policies and procedures that may impact accessibility to the FSP; and
- Policies affecting specific types of households, including immigrants, TANF-diverted households, working families, and elderly and disabled.

Information concerning supervisors' views on issues affecting FSP access and the extent to which specific policies affected FSP participation was also collected.

In each office, one supervisor survey instrument was completed. As mentioned above, more than one supervisor was generally interviewed, because supervisors were responsible for different types of food stamp cases or different parts of the FSP process and could therefore answer only those questions within their realm of responsibility. Demographic characteristics, attitudes, and opinions on the reasons for the decline in FSP participation and on program changes since welfare reform, and recommendations for changes to increase program access were asked of all supervisors surveyed.

A separate telephone survey, designed to collect detailed information on caseworkers' practices and experiences, was conducted with caseworkers. Topics were similar to those included in the supervisor survey. In each office, two caseworker survey instruments were completed to obtain more than one perspective on the range of local caseworkers' practices and experiences. In most offices,

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<sup>11</sup> This set of screening questions has been shown to be quite accurate in predicting FSP eligibility. Nonetheless, without collecting information on all factors that determine eligibility, some errors will be made, and households that are actually eligible will be screened out and others that are ineligible will be included (McConnell, 1997).

caseworkers were responsible for different types of food stamp cases and/or different parts of the food stamp application process. Therefore, multiple caseworkers were needed to complete a single survey instrument. An average of five caseworkers were interviewed to complete two full surveys per office. Demographics, attitudes, opinions on the reasons for the decline in FSP participation and on program changes since welfare reform, and recommendations for changes to increase program access were collected from all caseworkers surveyed.<sup>12</sup>

Data collection began in January 2001 and was completed in June 2001. A total of 201 supervisor interviews and 509 caseworker interviews were completed, yielding a response rate of 100 percent.

### ***Local Office Observations***

Although most measures of local office practices come from supervisor and caseworker survey responses, some features could be determined directly by independent observers. Field interviewers visited the 109 offices three times to observe unobtrusively various aspects of the office environment, including location and accessibility, reception area activities, and waiting times. These observations, which were scheduled in advance, occurred on different days of the week and at different times during the day. The interviewers' findings were documented in a close-ended data collection instrument.

### ***Applicant, Recertified Recipient, and Terminated Recipient Households***

Data were collected from the applicant and recipient populations for the sample month of June 2000 using survey and case file record abstraction instruments that were designed to provide information about their circumstances and the participation decisions they made. Data collection began in February 2001 and was completed in August 2001. Data abstraction focused on the application, recertification, or closure that occurred in June 2000. The survey questionnaire was retrospective in nature, asking respondents about the June 2000 event.

Data abstraction from the food stamp case file records of sampled applicant and recipient households provided the majority of information for the analysis. Data on households' characteristics, including demographic characteristics and household composition were abstracted from their food stamp case files. The files also provided information defining households' level of need for benefits, including income, assets, and expenditures. Finally, case files provided data on administrative events surrounding the food stamp application or recertification application and FSP participation requirements.

Data were abstracted from case files of 2,296 food stamp applicant and recipient households in the 109 local offices (table 2.2). These cases represented 81 percent of the original sample. Most of the remaining cases were ineligible for the study, either because they were outside the sampled office's jurisdiction or because the cases did not fit the sample criteria. During the sampling stage, it was discovered that, due to constraints of MIS systems, several States would be unable to provide household lists that conformed exactly to the required specifications. In these States, we oversampled to insure that, after excluding ineligible households, we would obtain the desired number of completed record abstractions.

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<sup>12</sup> Weighting procedures, detailed in Appendix A, discuss treatment of data from multiple supervisor and caseworker respondents in the analysis.

**Table 2.2—Data collection: New applicants, recertifying recipients, terminating recipients**

Household Type <sup>a</sup>	Sampled		Record Abstraction Complete	Survey Complete	
	Number	Percent of sample		Number	Percent of cases sampled
New applicant—approved	748	26.4%	748	424	56.7%
New applicant—not approved	316	11.2	316	206	65.2
Did not complete application requirements <sup>b</sup>			162	105	64.8
Circumstantially ineligible			154	101	65.6
Recertifying recipient—approved	753	26.6	753	NA	NA
Terminating recipient	479	16.9	479		
Interim closure			215	NA	NA
Closed at recertification					
Did not complete recertification requirements <sup>c</sup>			177	71	40.1
Denied due to circumstantial ineligibility			87	NA	NA
Undetermined	50	1.8			
Ineligible <sup>d</sup>	485	17.1			
Total <sup>e</sup>	2,831	100.0%	2,296	701	

a As determined during record abstraction. In some cases, this differs from the household type reported by States and used for drawing the sample.

b Includes voluntary withdrawals and cases whose denial reason was not reported.

c Reason for closure at recertification was identified during case record abstraction. Includes all cases not denied due to circumstantial ineligibility.

d Includes cases not in the jurisdiction of the sampled office and cases that were neither new applicants, recertifying recipients, nor terminating recipients in June 2000.

e Includes TANF-diverted households that were either new FSP applicants, recertifying FSP recipients, or terminating FSP recipients in June 2000.

NA = Not applicable—group not surveyed.

New applicant households, both those that were approved and those that were denied food stamp benefits, were surveyed to learn about the circumstances that precipitated their application for assistance and their understanding of the application process and requirements. These households were asked questions about their expected benefits and costs (monetary, time, and psychological) of food stamp participation. The survey also collected information on household circumstances not available in food stamp case files, including food security. Households that did not complete the application process were asked to explain their decision.

Households due for recertification in June 2000 that did not complete all recertification requirements were a group of particular interest. They were surveyed to understand why, after having received food stamp benefits, they left the program. These households were asked questions similar to those asked

of applicant households, focusing on the circumstances surrounding their decision to not continue in the FSP.

The surveys were conducted by telephone, with in-person followup for those who did not have telephones or who could not be reached by telephone. Many of these households were difficult to locate. Extensive tracking procedures were implemented, including credit bureau checks and national change of address files. Interviews were completed with 630 new applicant households, which represented 59 percent of initial sample. Interviews were completed with 71 households that did not complete the recertification process, representing 40 percent of the households identified. These households were extremely difficult to locate. More than half the sample did not even file a recertification application and thus no current contact information was available. They could not be located at their last known address or through collateral contacts.

### ***TANF-diverted Households***

TANF-diverted households were surveyed using the same instrument and procedures employed for new applicant households. Interviews were completed with 99 of the 179 selected households, a completion rate of 55 percent. Interviews took place between February and August 2001 and asked respondents about the events surrounding the TANF diversion payment they received in June 2000.

### ***Eligible Nonparticipants***

The list-assisted sample of 72,711 telephone numbers was released to the telephone interview center beginning in February 2001; interviewing was completed in June 2001. Screeners were completed with 16,825 households and of these, 1,374 (8 percent) were determined to be eligible for food stamp benefits, based on the screening criteria (table 2.3). An additional 28,933 telephone numbers were found to be nonworking or nonhousehold numbers, and thus ineligible for the survey. The resolution rate for the screener—62.9 percent—is calculated as the number of nonworking nonhousehold numbers plus the number of completed household screeners as a percentage of the total released sample.

Households that were determined to be eligible for food stamp benefits were asked to complete the full interview questionnaire. Questions focused on respondents' perceptions, motivations, and experiences with the Food Stamp Program, including their perceived eligibility, reasons they had not applied for food stamp benefits, previous experiences with the FSP, TANF, and Medicaid programs, and their perceptions of the costs and benefits of participation in the FSP. Detailed information on their demographic characteristics, economic situation, and food security status were also collected.

Of the 1,374 households selected for interview, 1,323 completed the survey resulting in a response rate of 96.3 percent. Of the 1,323 completed interviews, 1,220 of the households were classified as apparently circumstantially eligible.



**Table 2.3—Data collection: Eligible nonparticipants**

<b>Final status</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percent</b>
<b><i> Screener survey </i></b>		
Screener complete—food stamp-eligible household	1,374	1.9%
Screener complete—household ineligible for food stamps	15,451	21.2
Ineligible telephone number—nonworking, nonhousehold	28,933	39.8
Unresolved	26,953	37.1
Total screener sample	72,711	100.0%
<b><i> Full interview survey </i></b>		
Complete interview	1,323	96.3%
Incomplete interview	51	3.7
Total interview sample	1,374	100.0%

## **Data Analysis**

The research questions addressed by the study required the use of both descriptive and multivariate analyses. First, descriptive analyses present an overall picture of the characteristics, experiences, and perceptions of food-stamp eligible households. Differences between groups, defined by their relationship to the FSP—nonparticipants, applicants, recipients, and terminating recipients—are examined to shed light on why some eligible households are not participating in the program.<sup>13</sup> Where relevant, results are compared to those obtained in other studies. Second, descriptive analyses of the local office data provide a nationally-representative picture of the policies and practices in effect in local food stamp offices that may affect access to the program.<sup>14</sup> Finally, a series of multivariate logistic models relate food stamp participation by eligible households to local office policies and practices, household characteristics, and local area characteristics.

Sampling weights, needed for both the descriptive and multivariate analyses, were constructed in two stages, reflecting the sample design.<sup>15</sup> First-stage office weights were constructed for the final sample of 109 offices. The base sampling weights—the reciprocal of the probability of selection of the office—were adjusted for the nonparticipation of New York and then ratio-adjusted so the weighted total number of offices was in agreement with the known total from the sampling frame.

Second-stage weights were created for all other samples—supervisors, caseworkers, nonparticipants, applicants, recertified recipients, terminated recipients, and TANF-diverted households. Supervisor and caseload weights were constructed such that weighted responses reflect the percent of the national food stamp caseload served by offices with particular practices and policies. The second-

<sup>13</sup> Additional analyses of the eligible nonparticipants can be found in Bartlett and Burstein (2004).

<sup>14</sup> These analyses are summarized in this report. More detailed analyses are presented in Gabor et al. (2003).

<sup>15</sup> Weights are needed for the multivariate analyses because of our use of outcome-based sampling, in which we drew the same number of applicants, recertifying recipients, and terminating recipients in sites that had many such events as in sites that had few.

stage household-level weights were constructed such that weighted responses reflect the universe of each household type sampled. Table 2.4 presents the population estimates, based on the weighted sample, for each of the household types analyzed. Appendix A provides a detailed description of how the different weights were calculated.

**Table 2.4—Distribution of sampled households by status of food stamp receipt**

<b>Household type</b>	<b>Population (weighted N)</b>	<b>Unweighted N</b>
Eligible nonparticipants	5,500,000	1,220
Applicants	508,770	1,064
Approved	363,164	748
Did not complete application requirements	77,008	162
Circumstantially ineligible	68,598	154
Recertifying recipient--approved	726,094	753
Terminating recipient	383,352	479
Interim closure	180,178	215
Circumstantially ineligible <sup>a</sup>	44,148	43
All other reasons <sup>a</sup>	136,030	172
Closure in recertification month	203,174	264
Circumstantially ineligible	70,578	87
All other reasons	132,596	177

a Based on closure codes in record abstraction data. All other reasons includes cases in which reason was not reported.

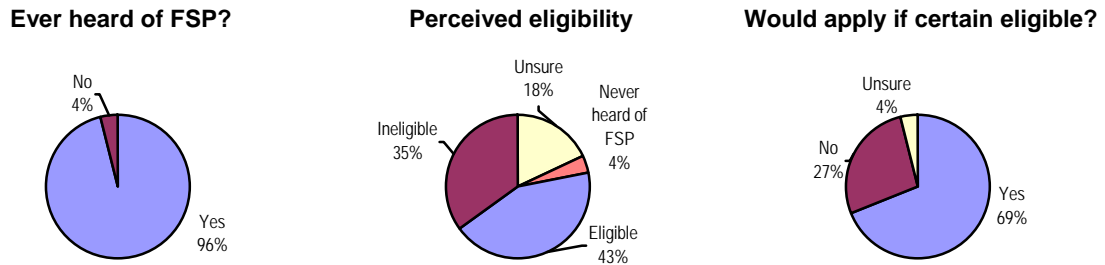
# Chapter 3

## Characteristics and Perceptions of Potentially Eligible Nonparticipant Households

In order to participate in the Food Stamp Program, a potentially eligible person must know of the program’s existence, must realize that his or her household might be eligible, and must be interested in applying for benefits. In principle then, local office practices could encourage participation by informing people about the FSP and by structuring the application process to make it easy for people to apply for benefits.

According to the 2000 survey of potentially eligible nonparticipant households, general awareness of the FSP is nearly universal (96 percent), as figure 3.1 shows.<sup>1</sup> Only 43 percent of the nonparticipants believed that they might be eligible, however, while one-third (35 percent) thought that they were ineligible for benefits and the remaining 18 percent were unsure whether or not they would be eligible.<sup>2</sup> A majority of the respondents (69 percent) said they would apply if they knew for certain that they were eligible, although 27 percent said they would not apply and 4 percent were unsure.<sup>3</sup>

**Figure 3.1— Awareness, perceived eligibility, and interest in applying to the FSP among eligible nonparticipants**



Data from appendix table B.1.

In our conceptual model of FSP participation, the first step in the process of becoming a food stamp participant is for the household to be aware of its potential eligibility. Previous research has indicated that many nonparticipant households do not realize that they might be eligible for benefits, and this study shows the same pattern.

<sup>1</sup> The “reference month” for the study was June 2000. Data abstracted from case records were drawn for this month, and participant samples were drawn from lists of applicants and terminating cases in June 2000. Other data collection efforts occurred in later months. The eligible nonparticipant survey was conducted between February and June 2001. For convenience, we refer to the study in general as the 2000 study. The analysis approach assumes that eligible nonparticipants in early 2001 can be considered representative of those in June 2000. In fact, deterioration in the national economy during this period may have caused some changes in the population of eligible nonparticipants, which the analysis cannot take into account.

<sup>2</sup> The survey question asked, “Do you think you may be eligible to receive food stamp benefits?”

<sup>3</sup> The survey question asked, “If you found out you were eligible for food stamp benefits, would you apply?”

These patterns are quite similar to the findings of previous studies of FSP non-participation. Reviews of participation studies conducted during the 1980s and early 1990s, while not strictly comparable, suggest that about half of all households that apparently met food stamp eligibility requirements did not believe that they qualified for benefits (McConnell and Nixon, 1996; Bartlett et al., 1992). The National Food Stamp Program Survey, conducted in 1996, found even greater confusion, as almost three-quarters (72 percent) of all apparently eligible non-participant households reported that they did not think they met the food stamp eligibility criteria (Ponza et al., 1999).

This remainder of this chapter presents descriptive information on factors related to nonparticipants' perceptions regarding their potential eligibility and their attitudes about applying for benefits, with particular attention to factors that may be related to local FSP office policy and practices. The data source is the survey of 1220 potentially eligible nonparticipants conducted as part of this study.

## Who Believes They Are Ineligible?

One might expect households in relatively more favorable economic circumstances—i.e., those who are closer to the eligibility cutoff—to be less certain of their eligibility for food stamps. The data support this expectation (figure 3.2).<sup>4</sup> Nonparticipants who believed themselves ineligible for benefits, or were unsure, were more likely to have above-poverty incomes than those who believed themselves eligible (63 percent versus 44 percent).<sup>5</sup> Those who believed themselves ineligible were also more likely to have bank accounts (74 percent versus 62 percent). Respondents who believed they were ineligible to receive benefits were also less likely to be food insecure or to have experienced hunger. Those who believed they were ineligible were also less likely to have received food stamp benefits in the past, suggesting they may not have had a very accurate understanding of eligibility requirements.

Demographic characteristics were not closely associated with whether respondents believed they were eligible for food stamp benefits (Appendix table B.3). Those who believed they were ineligible were somewhat less likely to be black. Two-fifths of nonparticipant households reported feelings of stigma

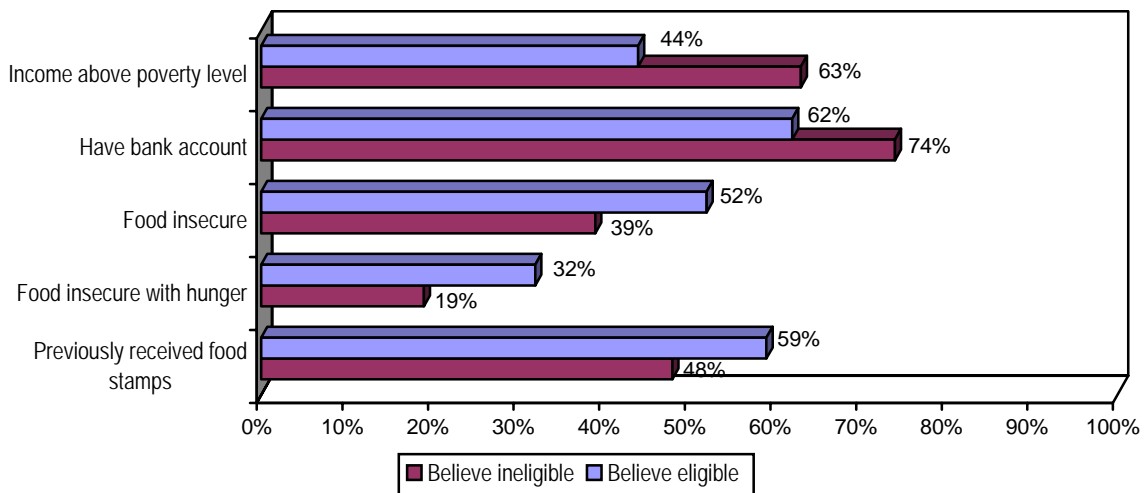
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<sup>4</sup> Significance levels are computed using chi-squared tests when there are more than two categories defined for the variable (e.g., poverty-level categories, food security), and these significance levels are shown in the tables. These chi-squared tests tell us whether the distributions differ as a whole between two strata. They do not tell us, however, what parts of the distributions are different. For that, t-tests are required. While t-tests on the individual categories are not exact, because they were performed after first learning whether there was a difference in the distribution as a whole, they nonetheless give interesting supplementary information on how and where the distributions differ. We therefore refer in the text to differences in specific categories, based on t-tests.

<sup>5</sup> All nonparticipant households that responded to the survey reported on the screener questionnaire that their total family income was less than 130 percent of the poverty level. The main body of the survey collected more detailed information on income and using these responses, some households appeared to have incomes above 130 percent of the poverty level. We excluded households whose reported detailed income exceeded 200 percent of the poverty level but retained those with incomes between 130 percent and 200 percent. See Appendix A for a more detailed discussion of this issue.

associated with FSP participation, but the strength of the feelings was not related to households' perceived eligibility (Appendix table B.4).<sup>6</sup>

**Figure 3.2—Income, assets, food security status, and prior FSP experience of eligible nonparticipants by perceived eligibility for food stamps (percent of group with characteristic)**



Data from appendix tables B.2 and B.3.

## Why Do Some People Think They Are Ineligible?

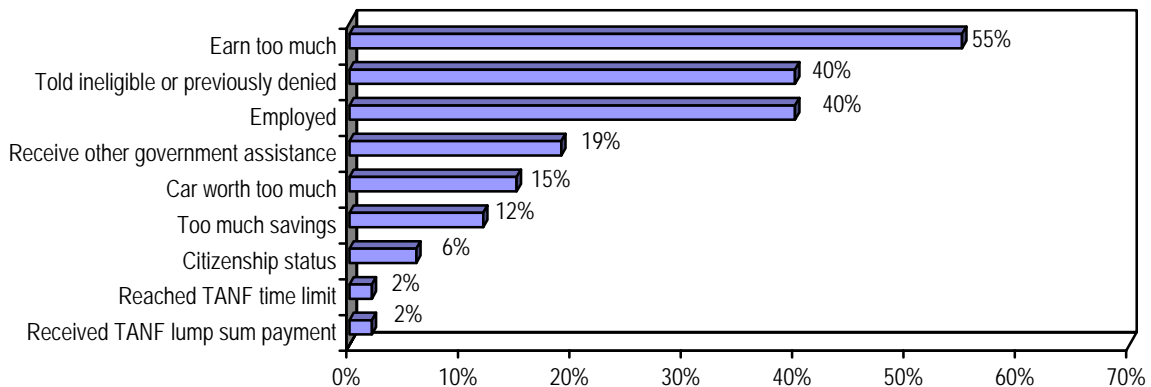
People who wrongly believe that they are ineligible for food stamp benefits presumably have an insufficient or incorrect understanding of program rules. To learn what misunderstandings exist, we asked about the reasons for perceived ineligibility. Respondents who believed they were not eligible, or who were not sure, were asked about a series of possible reasons for their perceptions. Their responses are shown in figure 3.3.

Many of the responses focused on central aspects of the eligibility criteria: the amount of earned income (55 percent), the value of an owned vehicle (15 percent), the value of financial assets (12 percent), and citizenship status (6 percent). These rules are quite specific and complicated, so it is not surprising that they seem to be an important source of incorrect perceptions of ineligibility.<sup>7</sup>

<sup>6</sup> Stigma index created from the responses to a series of questions (four or six questions, depending on whether the household had ever received food stamps) concerning feelings of stigma associated with the FSP.

<sup>7</sup> It is also important to point out that some of the respondents may actually have been ineligible on these grounds, particularly if detailed information on their circumstances differed from the general information they provided in the survey. It was beyond the scope of this study to determine eligibility exactly as is done by the Program.

**Figure 3.3—Reasons for perceived ineligibility**



Data from appendix table B.5.

Note that, while most of these responses probably represent incorrect perceptions of ineligibility, some may have been correct. Respondents were screened for apparent eligibility in terms of income relative to household size, value of vehicles (estimate based on make, model, and year), and value of liquid assets. Such questions have shown to predict eligibility reasonably well, but they do not provide the detail that would be needed for a definitive determination of eligibility. Thus some of the respondents may actually have been ineligible for the reasons they cited. Most of the rest were probably unaware of the specific limits on income and assets or how those limits would apply to their own situation.

Some people who cited their citizenship status as a reason for ineligibility may have correctly interpreted their situation, but misunderstanding of the rules seems to have been common. For example, of 13 respondents who gave this reason and said they were not citizens themselves, 9 had children born in the US. Those children, as U.S. citizens, would have been eligible to receive food stamp benefits.<sup>8</sup>

A substantial number of responses seem to indicate misunderstanding of broader program rules. These include the responses that the reason for ineligibility was being employed (40 percent),<sup>9</sup> receiving other government assistance (19 percent), having reached the time limit on cash assistance (2.2 percent of all households and 6.6 percent of households with children), and having received a TANF lump sum payment (2 percent of all households and 6 percent of households with children). None of these factors necessarily make a household ineligible for food stamp benefits, and from a policy point of view, it would be far easier to communicate that general fact than the details of income and asset limits.

<sup>8</sup> The 2002 Farm Bill restored eligibility for all legal immigrants living in the United States for at least five years, so after that point the parents also might have been eligible.

<sup>9</sup> For some of these households, perceived ineligibility was due to employment status combined with amount of earned income; for others it was due to employment status alone.

The most clearly inaccurate perceptions are those indicating that the respondent was ineligible because of exceeding TANF time limits or receiving a lump sum payment: neither action could cause ineligibility without some other change in household circumstances. To see whether these misperceptions were held by particular types of people, we tabulated the characteristics of the survey respondents who cited these two reasons for believing themselves ineligible (see Appendix tables B.6 through B.9). The data must be interpreted with caution, however, as only about 20 respondents cited each of these reasons.

People who believed themselves ineligible because of TANF time limits or lump sum payments were more likely to have earnings, had less liquid assets, and were less likely to be elderly than people who only cited other reasons for ineligibility.<sup>10</sup> These characteristics would be expected in a population that had been TANF-eligible, and no other striking differences were observed. Although we suspected that the people who believed such TANF events could make them ineligible for food stamps might have limited education or be non-English speakers, which might limit their understanding of the rules, the data provide no evidence that this occurred.

Almost two-fifths of the respondents who had previously received food stamps, and a quarter of those who had not, thought they were ineligible because they had previously been denied benefits or told that they were probably ineligible. Almost half of these respondents had been denied or told they were ineligible more than one year prior to the survey and another fifth had been told so six to twelve months before (Appendix table B.5). This raises the possibility that some people may continue to believe an ineligibility message even after their circumstances change in a way that makes them eligible.

The reasons for perceived ineligibility differed somewhat depending on whether the household had previously received food stamp benefits (Appendix table B.5). Former participants were much more likely to note that they had been denied or told they were ineligible, which is not surprising since many would have stopped participating because they were found ineligible. Former participants were significantly less likely to see excess savings as a cause of ineligibility, but were significantly more likely to say they were ineligible because they earned too much. This may reflect their own experiences, as food stamp participants more commonly become ineligible due to increased earnings than increased assets.

Reviews of previous research studies are consistent with findings from the current study. Past studies provide some information on the reasons for perceived ineligibility among apparently eligible nonparticipant households, though less detail is available than collected for the current study. Among households that did not think they were eligible for benefits, 35 to 40 percent believed that their income and/or assets were too high (Coe, 1983; GAO, 1988; Blaylock and Smallwood, 1984). Another 8 to 15 percent believed that they did not meet some other FSP eligibility requirements (Coe, 1983; GAO, 1988).

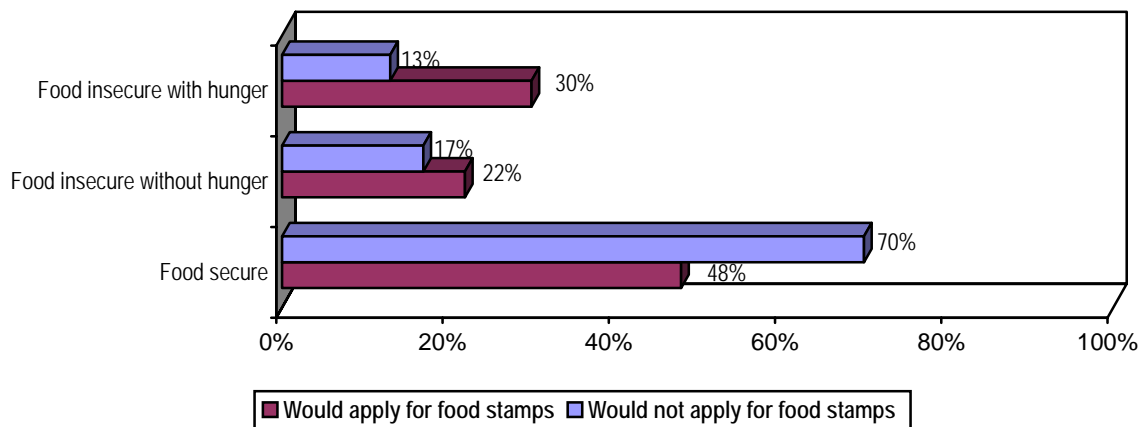
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<sup>10</sup> Differences in the presence of children are also evident, but this variable was artificially constrained. Some respondents who had no children in the household cited lump sum payments or exceeding the TANF time limit as reasons for ineligibility. We excluded these responses, which were assumed to reflect confusion about the question.

## Who Would Not Apply Even If They Found They Were Eligible?

Households that reported they would not apply for food stamp benefits even if they knew for certain they were eligible were overall more food secure than households that reportedly would apply to the FSP, possibly indicating a lower need for benefits (figure 3.4). Households that were not interested in the FSP were significantly less likely than others to have experienced hunger in the previous year (13 percent versus 30 percent) and significantly more likely to be food secure (70 percent versus 48 percent).

**Figure 3.4—Food security status of eligible nonparticipants by whether would apply for food stamps (percent of group with characteristic)**



Data from appendix table B.10.

The current economic circumstances of households were not associated with whether households would apply for food stamp benefits if they found they were eligible (Appendix table B.10). This is somewhat surprising, since those who would not apply tended to be more food secure and food security is generally positively associated with economic circumstances. The contrast may occur because economic circumstances are measured for the most recent month while food security is measured for a 12-month period. People who expect to have only a brief period of economic deprivation may be less inclined to apply for food stamps than those who expect or have already experienced a lengthy period. Other evidence related to this point will be seen below.

Households that reportedly would apply for benefits if they knew for certain they were eligible were significantly more likely to have received food stamps in the past compared to households that would not apply for benefits (61 percent versus 39 percent as shown in figure 3.5). This indicates that previous food stamp participation is not generally a deterrent to future participation, even though some former participants report negative experiences with the program.

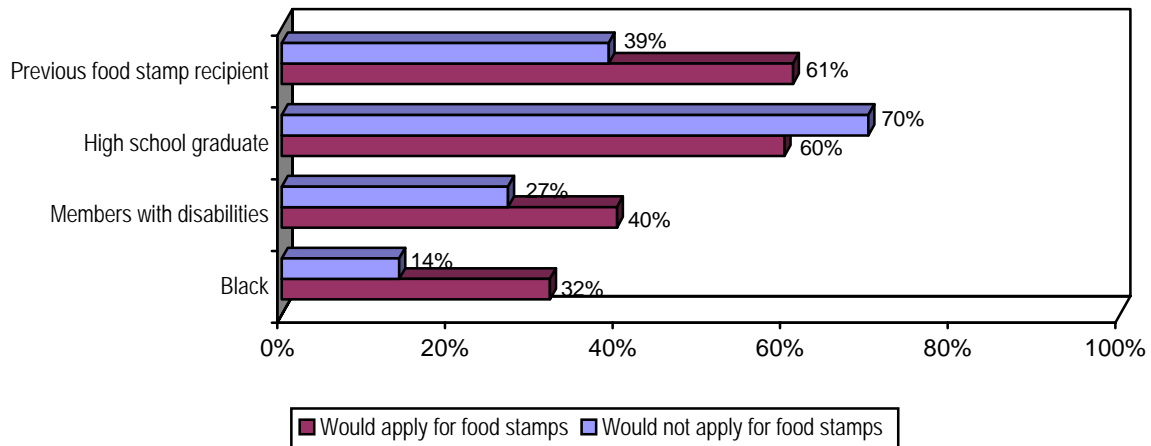
Only a few demographic characteristics were associated with whether households would apply for benefits (figure 3.5). Those who would apply were less likely to be high school graduates, possibly indicating an expectation of long-term low income. Households that reportedly would apply for benefits were significantly more likely to include members with disabilities, which may suggest a greater need for benefits and less employment potential. Those who would apply were also more likely to be black, another factor commonly associated with lower long-term earnings. All of these



points are consistent with research showing that many nonparticipants experience relatively brief periods of eligibility, with longer-term income well above the eligibility level (Farrell et al., 2003).

Neither perceived eligibility nor feelings of stigma related to the FSP was associated with whether households would apply for benefits if they were told they were eligible (Appendix tables B.12 and B.13).

**Figure 3.5—Characteristics of eligible nonparticipants by whether would apply for food stamps (percent of group with characteristic)**



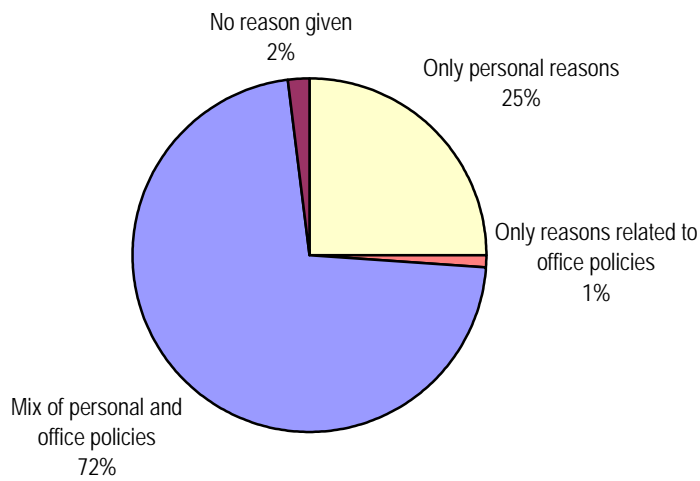
Data from appendix table B.11.

## Why Would Some People Not Apply Even If They Believed They Were Eligible?

Survey respondents who believed they were eligible but had not applied for food stamp benefits, together with those who said they would not apply even if they found they were eligible, were read a list of 17 “reasons people have provided for deciding not to apply for food stamps” and asked which reasons applied to them. Their responses indicate a mix of personal considerations and factors that might be related to policies and practices of food stamp offices (figure 3.6).

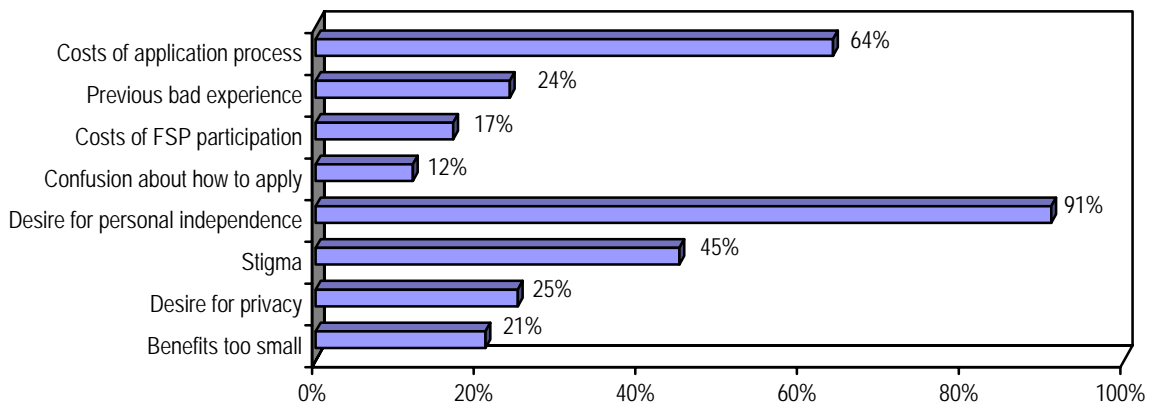
Nearly three-quarters (73 percent) of respondents chose at least one reason that might be related to local food stamp office policies and practices. Perceived costs of applying—including the paperwork required, the necessity of taking time away from work or dependent care responsibilities, and the difficulty of getting to the food stamp office—were cited by 64 percent of households as reasons for not applying for benefits (figure 3.7). Seventeen percent of households indicated that work requirements or other participation requirements would deter them from applying. For one-quarter of households, a previous “bad experience” with the Food Stamp Program or some other government program would prevent them from applying. A relatively small number (12 percent) reported that they did not know how to apply.

**Figure 3.6—Reasons households would not apply for FSP benefits**



Data from appendix table B.14.

**Figure 3.7—Detailed reasons households would not apply for FSP benefits**



Data from appendix table B.14.

Almost all respondents (97 percent) mentioned personal reasons for not applying. The most common set of personal reasons, reported by 91 percent of households, was related to a Stated desire for personal independence. These reasons include the feeling that the household “could get by on their own” without food stamps and the desire not to “rely on government assistance.” Forty-five percent of respondents cited reasons that pertained to a perceived stigma of food stamp participation. These respondents did not want to be seen shopping with food stamps, did not want people to know they needed financial assistance, or did not want to go to the welfare office. Other reasons related to personal preferences or judgments included a desire for privacy (25 percent) and low expected benefits (21 percent).

Although households that had never received food stamps gave generally similar reasons as those who had previously participated, a few significant differences emerged. Those who had never participated more often cited an uncertainty about how to apply. Previous food stamp recipients were more likely to mention a negative prior experience and to feel that the benefits were too low to make participation worthwhile (Appendix table B.14).

Respondents to the 1996 survey of eligible non-participants reported similar, though not identical, reasons for not applying to the Food Stamp Program (Ponza et. al, 1999). The most commonly cited factors in 1996 were related to a desire for personal independence—not wanting to rely on government assistance or charity and feeling that they did not need food stamps. High costs of program participation, including excessive paperwork and the difficulty of obtaining transportation to the welfare office, ranked second, followed by low expected benefits, previous bad experiences with the Food Stamp Program, and confusion about how to apply for benefits.

A larger proportion of respondents in 2000 than 1996 mentioned stigma as a reason for not applying to the FSP.<sup>11</sup> This is somewhat surprising in view of the fact that the 2000 survey found a somewhat lower overall level of reported stigma than the 1996 survey, particularly among respondents who had not previously received food stamp benefits.<sup>12</sup> Even though fewer people were reporting stigma in 2000, this factor seemed to have more prominence in the minds of those who would not apply even if they knew they were eligible.

## Conclusion

In the 2000 survey of households that were not participating in the Food Stamp Program despite being apparently eligible, over half of respondents either believed that they were ineligible (35 percent) or were not sure whether they would be eligible (18 percent). Probably some of these households actually were ineligible—the survey could not measure income, assets, and other factors as carefully as is done in an official eligibility determination. Nonetheless, the magnitude of the numbers as well as some of the respondents' more detailed statements suggest that one of the most important reasons that potentially eligible households do not participate is that they do not realize they are eligible.

These findings suggest that outreach might affect participation in the FSP. The issue is not to make nonparticipants aware of the program—nearly everyone already knows of it—but to give them better information on some key eligibility rules that seem widely misunderstood. For example, outreach could convey the message that people may be eligible for food stamp benefits even if they are employed, receive TANF or other government assistance, have reached their TANF time limit, or have received a TANF lump-sum payment. General outreach cannot deliver enough specific

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<sup>11</sup> Ponza et al., measured reasons for not applying only for respondents who believed they might be eligible for benefits; among this group, 10.7 percent cited reasons related to stigma. The comparable proportion in the current study is 44.5 percent. Both studies defined the stigma-related factors as not wanting to be seen shopping with food stamps, did not want people to know they need financial assistance, and did not want to go to the welfare office.

<sup>12</sup> The percent of former participants reporting some stigma was comparable in the two time periods at about 40 percent, but among those who had never received food stamp benefits, a larger proportion reported some stigma in 1996 than 2000 (60 vs. 48 percent). See Bartlett and Burstein, 2004, Table B.19.

information about income and assets rules to allow a household to determine its eligibility, especially those households who are relatively close to the eligibility limit and who apparently are least likely to think they are eligible. However, community organizations sometimes use counselors or automated systems to assess the likely eligibility of individual households. Chapter 8 will therefore examine in more detail whether variations in local office outreach practices are related to people's perception of their eligibility.

Outreach is not the only relevant policy. Many survey respondents said they would not apply for benefits even if they believed they were eligible. Most expressed personal reasons, such as a desire not to rely on government assistance, and some may have felt little need for food assistance or expected their situation to improve soon without assistance. But nearly two-thirds gave some reason that concerned the food stamp application process, such as the difficulty of the paperwork or of taking time away from their job or from caring for children or elderly household members. Some also mentioned the program's work-related requirements as a reason for not applying. Given the evidence that these factors are in peoples' minds when they say they whether they would apply for benefits, Chapter 8 will consider whether local variations in the handling of applicants and in work requirements are related to the likelihood that nonparticipants actually complete the application process.

It is interesting to note that the levels of program awareness, perceived eligibility, and interest in applying for benefits found in this study are very similar to the patterns seen in prior research. These characteristics of the nonparticipant population were stable even though the late 1990s saw a substantial decline in the food stamp participation rate and a corresponding increase in the proportion of potentially eligible households who were nonparticipants.

The major policy changes associated with welfare reform had little directly identifiable impact on nonparticipants' attitudes and perceptions. Some people did say that they were ineligible for food stamp benefits because of exceeding the TANF time limit or receiving a lump sum payment, which would indicate a misunderstanding of the program rules. This is a potentially important issue. Effects of welfare reform may also underlie some of the reasons that nonparticipants gave for not wanting to apply for food stamps—such as the employment and training requirements, stigma-related reasons, and difficulties with the application process—but none of these reasons can be explicitly linked to welfare reform policies.

## Chapter 4

# Applicant Households

People who believe that their household may be eligible for the Food Stamp Program and who are interested in participating must apply for benefits. This typically involves visiting the food stamp office, filling out forms, having one or more interviews, and providing supplementary documentation of the household's income and other aspects of eligibility. The specific procedures for would-be participants vary considerably across local offices, as discussed in Chapter 7, and some of these variations may make it easier or harder for applicants actually to complete the process and receive benefits.

Approximately one-tenth of these applicants (9 percent) were circumstantially ineligible—that is, their income or some other aspect of their household circumstances did not meet the FSP eligibility criteria, as shown in Figure 4.1.<sup>1</sup> The other 91 percent of applicants were apparently circumstantially eligible.<sup>2</sup> Most of those who were apparently circumstantially eligible completed the application process and were approved for benefits, but 18 percent failed to meet one or more procedural requirements and were denied benefits for this reason. Program records indicate that 7 percent failed to provide information that was required to verify eligibility, 3 percent failed to appear for an interview, and 1 percent withdrew their applications. For the remaining 6 percent, program records do not provide a clear sense of the point at which the household left the application process.

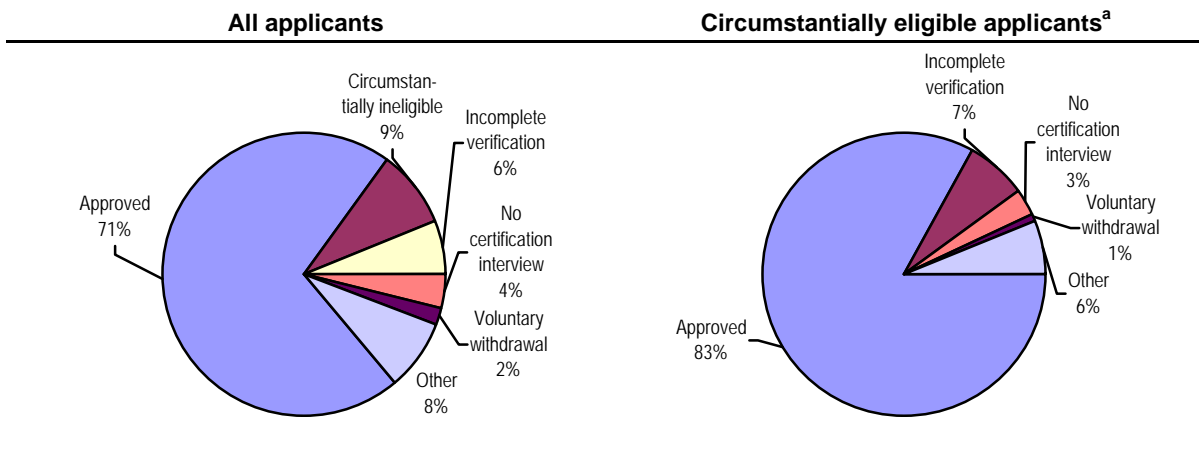
This chapter examines the characteristics of circumstantially eligible applicants and their experience in applying for food stamp benefits, with particular attention to the distinctions between households that do and do not complete the application process. The sample includes a total of 910 circumstantially eligible households for whom data on basic household characteristics and application outcome were abstracted from program records. Survey data on households' experiences and perceptions are also available for 529 of those households.

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<sup>1</sup> The study classified two types of households as circumstantially ineligible: (a) those whose application was denied because their household characteristics did not meet eligibility requirements; and (b) those whose application was denied for other reasons (such as failing to provide verification) but whose application data (supplemented by survey responses if missing data) indicated that they would probably have been ineligible for benefits because of their household circumstances.

<sup>2</sup> Households that were approved for benefits were automatically classified as circumstantially eligible. In addition, households were classified as circumstantially eligible if their program records (supplemented by survey responses, if missing data) indicated that they would meet the eligibility criteria based on income and household size, vehicle ownership, and liquid assets. Because these factors did not cover all aspects of eligibility, we often refer to these households as “apparently” or “potentially” circumstantially eligible. See Appendix A for discussion of the accuracy with which these items predict actual circumstantial eligibility.

**Figure 4.1—Outcome of application process**



<sup>a</sup> Excludes households whose application was denied for circumstantial ineligibility. Also excludes households whose program records indicated that they were denied for not completing the application process and whose circumstances indicated that they would have been ineligible for benefits.

Data from appendix table B.15.

## Who Applies for Benefits?

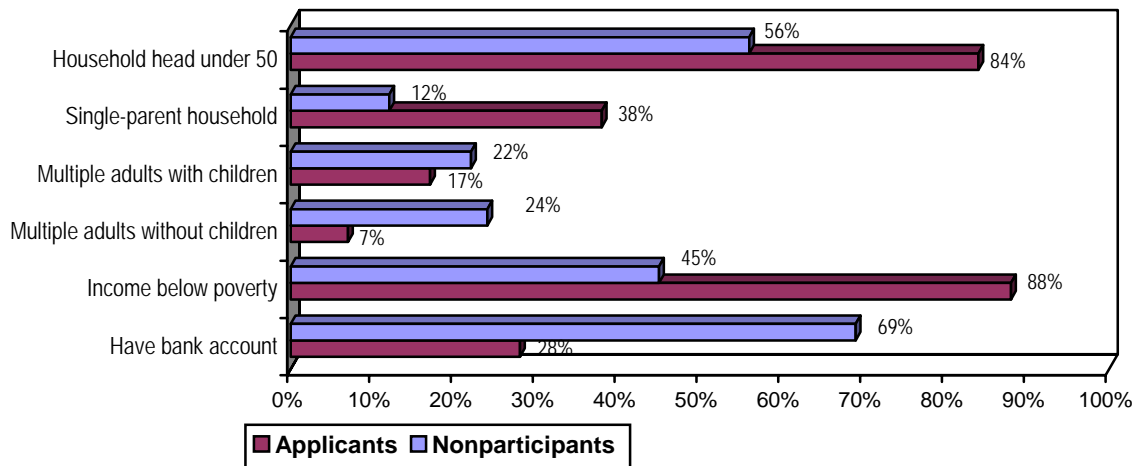
Eligible households who applied for food stamp benefits had a profile that differed in several respects from the general population of apparently eligible nonparticipants (figure 4.2). Relative to the apparently eligible nonparticipants, the eligible<sup>3</sup> food stamp applicants were:

- **Non-elderly**—The household head was under age 50 in 84 percent of applicant households, compared to 56 percent of nonparticipants.
- **Single-parent households**—More than a third of applicant households (38 percent) consisted of one adult with one or more children, compared to 12 percent of nonparticipant households. Fewer applicants than nonparticipants were in households consisting of multiple adults with children (17 versus 22 percent), and fewer applicant households included multiple adults with no children (7 versus 24 percent).
- **In worse financial condition**—A large majority of applicants (88 percent) had below poverty incomes, compared to just under half (45 percent) of apparently eligible nonparticipants. Relatively few applicants had bank accounts. Their financial assets averaged \$77 compared to \$804 for nonparticipants; this includes cash, checking and savings accounts, and other liquid resources such as other bank accounts and financial investments.

<sup>3</sup> These comparisons are based on all applicant households who were apparently circumstantially eligible, including those who were approved for benefits and those who did not complete the application process. Because we determined circumstantial eligibility based on reported income and assets, the latter group could include some households that would have been determined circumstantially ineligible during the full food stamp certification process.

The fact that applicants were in worse financial condition appears to conflict with the earlier finding that economic circumstances were unrelated to whether people would apply for benefits if they found out they were eligible (Appendix table B.10). Recall, however, that respondents who thought they might be eligible had less income and fewer assets, on average, than those who believed themselves ineligible.

**Figure 4.2—Characteristics of food stamp applicants and nonparticipants (percent of group with characteristic)**



Data from appendix tables B.16, B.17, and B.18.

All of these patterns are consistent with the literature on food stamp participation, which shows higher participation rates for the non-elderly, for single-parent households, multiple adult households with children, and for lower-income households (Cunnyngham, 2003).

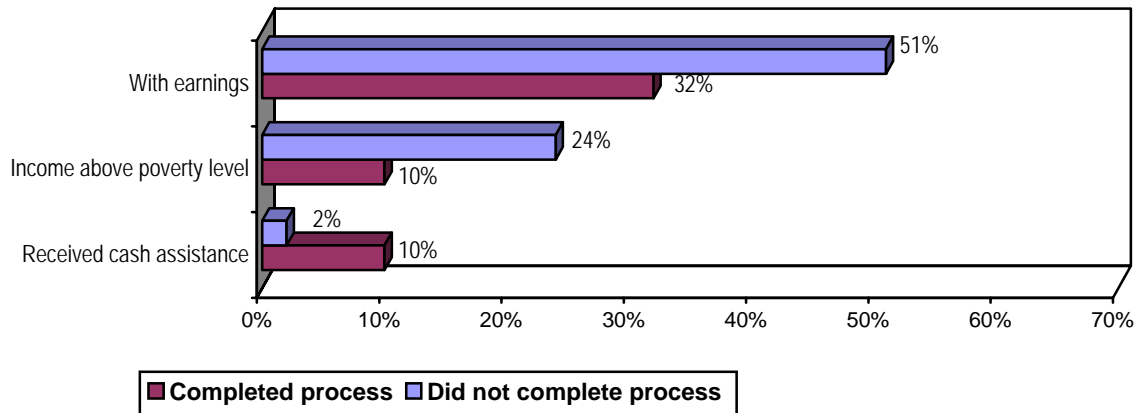
It is worth noting that the applicant and nonparticipant samples did not differ significantly in terms of primary language or citizenship of the head of household. Both communications barriers and regulations concerning aliens might be hypothesized to discourage some people from seeking food stamp benefits, but no such problems were visible in this overall comparison.

### Who Fails to Complete the Application Process?

Eligible applicants who did not complete the application process were in a somewhat better financial situation, on average, than those who completed the process and received benefits (figure 4.3). The non-completers were more likely to have earnings (51 versus 32 percent) and to have above-poverty income (24 versus 10 percent). This pattern is again consistent with the research showing that participation rates are inversely related to income.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>4</sup> It may also indicate that some of the applicants who did not complete the process would have been determined ineligible on income grounds during the certification process, even though they appeared eligible in the available data.

**Figure 4.3—Economic circumstances of food stamp applicants among those who did and did not complete the application process (percent of group with characteristic)**

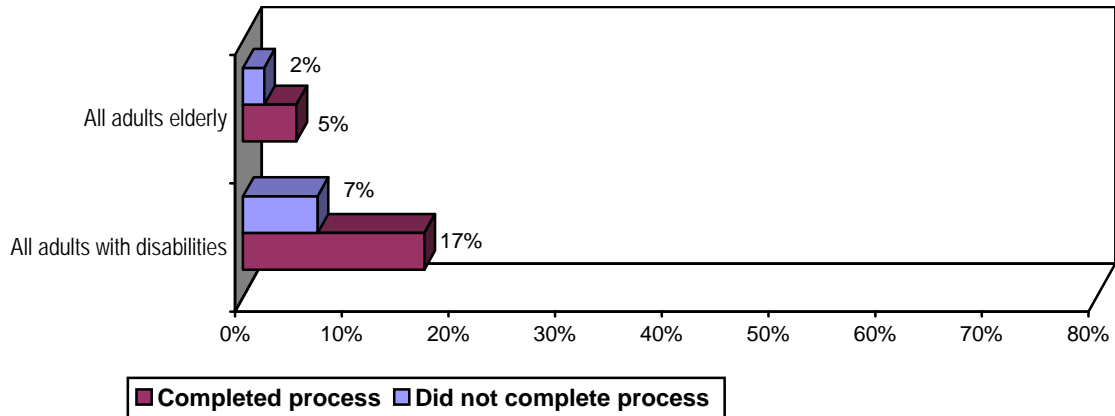


Data from appendix table B.19.

Households not completing the application process were less likely to be receiving TANF or other cash assistance than were the households approved for benefits. Since the income cutoff for cash assistance is typically lower than that for food stamps, this is consistent with the idea that applicants who do not complete the process are in somewhat better circumstances, on average, than those who are approved for benefits.

Two groups that might be expected to encounter difficulties in the application process—households consisting entirely of elderly adults or households in which all adults have disabilities—actually made up significantly larger proportions of the successful applicant group than the non-completers (figure 4.4). The finding regarding the elderly is particularly interesting because of the strong tendency of elderly households not to apply for benefits (appendix table B.17). Elderly and disabled persons who anticipate difficulty with the application process may decide not to apply for that reason. Those who do apply, however, successfully complete the process at an above-average rate.

**Figure 4.4—Demographic characteristics of applicant households among those who did and did not complete the application process (percent of group with characteristic)**



Data from appendix table B.20.

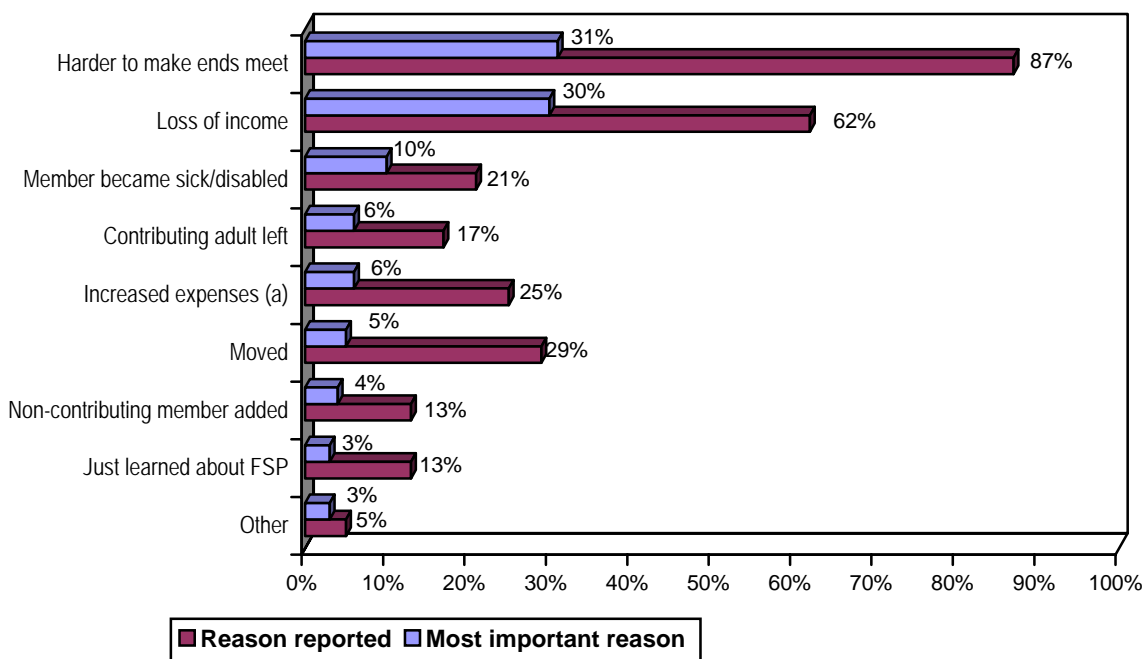


Other household characteristics were not significantly different for those who did and did not complete the application process. This includes household composition and the head of household’s age, gender, race/ethnicity, primary language, citizenship status, and education level.

The 1990 study of the food stamp application process cited earlier (Bartlett et al., 1992) found similar demographic and economic differences between households that completed the application process and those that did not. In that in-depth study in five sites, households headed by adults with disabilities and those headed by high school dropouts were significantly more likely to complete the process than other households.<sup>5</sup> Households with elderly members were also apparently more likely to complete the process, though the difference (based on a fairly small sample size) was not statistically significant. Households with earners were less likely to complete the process and those receiving cash assistance were more likely to complete it.

The 2000 survey of applicants, in addition to asking about general household characteristics, asked whether particular “trigger events” had occurred—that is, events that might be expected to precipitate an increase in the household’s financial need or its interest in applying for benefits. Respondents were asked whether the event was among the reasons that they applied for food stamps and, if so, whether it was the most important reason. Figure 4.5 shows the results.

**Figure 4.5—Circumstances precipitating FSP application**



a Increased rent, mortgage, utilities

Data from appendix table B.21.

<sup>5</sup> Our data also show that educational attainment was greater for noncompletes than for those approved for benefits, though the difference is not statistically significant (Appendix table B.20).

Almost 90 percent of all food stamp applicants reported that it became “harder to make ends meet,” which represented some combination of changes in income and expenses. For 31 percent of households, this was the most important reason that led to their application. A decrease in income, usually because of a termination of employment, was a major reason many other households decided to apply for food stamp benefits. About 30 percent of households cited income loss as the most important trigger event. Other precipitating events were reported much less frequently. About 13 percent said that they had “just learned about” the Food Stamp Program, a somewhat surprising figure since 96 percent of apparently eligible nonparticipants said they were aware of the FSP. This suggests that some peoples’ awareness is quite general and must be supplemented with additional information before they apply.

This pattern is quite similar to the findings of Ponza et al. (1999), who analyzed reported reasons for applying for benefits among the 1996 sample of food stamp participants. As in the present study, the two reasons most frequently reported as “most important” were increased need and loss of income, cited by 40 percent and 25 percent of households, respectively.<sup>6</sup> Other reasons were reported by similar percentages of households in both the 1996 and 2000 studies.

Among the applicants in 2000, trigger events generally did not significantly distinguish applicants who completed the application process from those who did not. The main exception is the onset of disability or serious illness of a household member. The proportion of respondents citing this reason was larger among those who completed the application process (23 percent versus 9 percent, appendix table B.21). This is consistent with the earlier finding that the applicants who completed the process included a larger proportion of households consisting entirely of elderly or disabled persons.

## **Why Do Some People Fail to Complete the Application Process?**

Applicants who did not complete the process were read a series of possible reasons for abandoning their application and asked which ones contributed to their action. About one-quarter (26 percent) of the applicant dropouts indicated that their situation had changed and they no longer needed benefits (figure 4.6). These people were presumably not affected by any aspect of local office policies and practices.

About half of the dropouts (46 percent) said they believed they were ineligible because they had too much income or assets,<sup>7</sup> even though the information in their application form did not seem to indicate ineligibility.<sup>8</sup> These applicants had gotten some information that made them believe they were ineligible. Their conclusion may have been correct if, for example, their application form had

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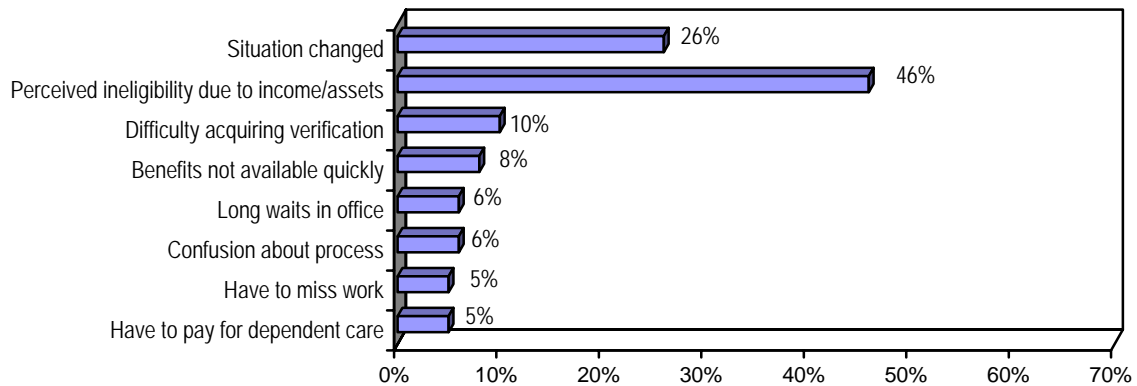
<sup>6</sup> Ponza et al. separately list income change (15 percent) and lost job (10 percent). We combine those categories here as “loss of income.”

<sup>7</sup> Households were classified as indicating “perceived ineligibility” if they responded that (a) they received a letter from the food stamp office that said they were ineligible because of income or resources, (b) they thought they were ineligible because food stamp staff told them or made them think so, or (c) they concluded they were ineligible after hearing the eligibility requirements.

<sup>8</sup> Interestingly, only 7 percent of those who believed they were ineligible also reported that their situation had changed and they no longer needed food stamps. Most of those who said their circumstances had changed did not say that they now believed themselves ineligible.

under-reported their income. Alternatively, they might have reached the wrong conclusion, perhaps by misinterpreting information such as a caseworker statement that the applicant would not be eligible for TANF. The available data do not allow us to assess the accuracy of applicants' belief that they were ineligible.<sup>9</sup>

**Figure 4.6—Detailed reasons for not completing application process<sup>a</sup>**



a Includes reasons reported by more than 4 percent of respondents.

Data from appendix table B.22.

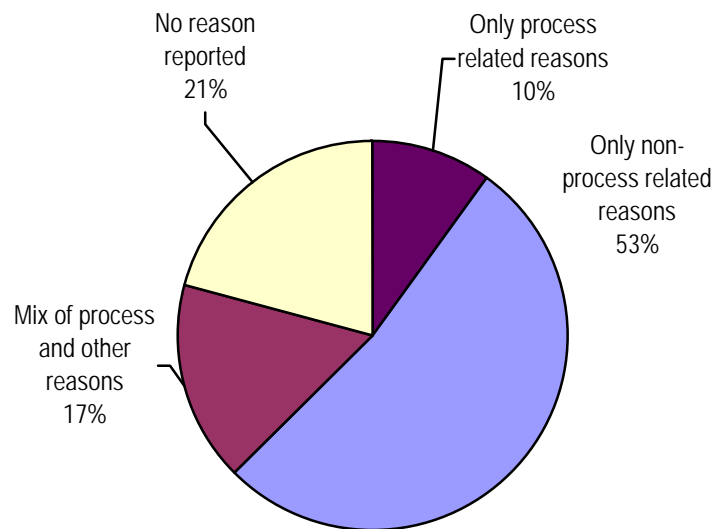
About 27 percent of the applicant dropouts said that their reasons for abandoning the application included some aspect of the process or the program (figure 4.7). Their issues included the need to acquire documents for verification (10 percent), the length of time before benefits would be available (8 percent), long waits in the food stamp office (6 percent), missing work (5 percent), paying for someone to care for their child or elderly dependent (5 percent), and general confusion about the process (6 percent).

These responses are generally similar to those found in the 1990 study of the food stamp application process in five sites (Bartlett et al., 1992), which also indicated that perceived ineligibility was a reason for not completing the application by approximately half of all dropout households. A larger proportion of respondents in 1990 than 2000 cited problems with the application process as a factor that deterred them. Small samples and the difference in study designs make it impossible to conclude that the process has become more applicant-friendly, but there is certainly no evidence that it has become more difficult.

<sup>9</sup> The single most common reason for classifying people as “perceived ineligible” was the response that they “got a letter from the food stamp office saying you were not eligible because you have too much income or resources.” This would suggest that many of these households were actually ineligible. However, the case records for these applicants did not indicate that the applications were denied for circumstantial reasons. Thus we do not know what kind of letter the applicants actually received or whether they interpreted it correctly.

We had hypothesized that apparently eligible applicant dropouts would be distinguished from completers by cost-benefit considerations—that is, the dropouts would experience greater difficulty with the application process, or they would expect to get lower food stamp or other program benefits. The data provide quite limited support of the hypothesis, however (appendix table B.23). On the one hand, applicants who completed the process were significantly more likely to find the office hours convenient (85 versus 70 percent) and to expect to receive monthly benefits of over \$200 (21 versus 9 percent).<sup>10</sup> On the other hand, no significant difference was found for the convenience of office location, or whether the applicant was also applying for cash assistance or Medicaid.

**Figure 4.7—Reasons for not completing application requirements: process versus other<sup>a</sup> reasons**



a Other reasons include: perceived ineligibility due to income/assets, benefits too small, situation changed and no longer needed benefits, and other.

Data from appendix table B.22.

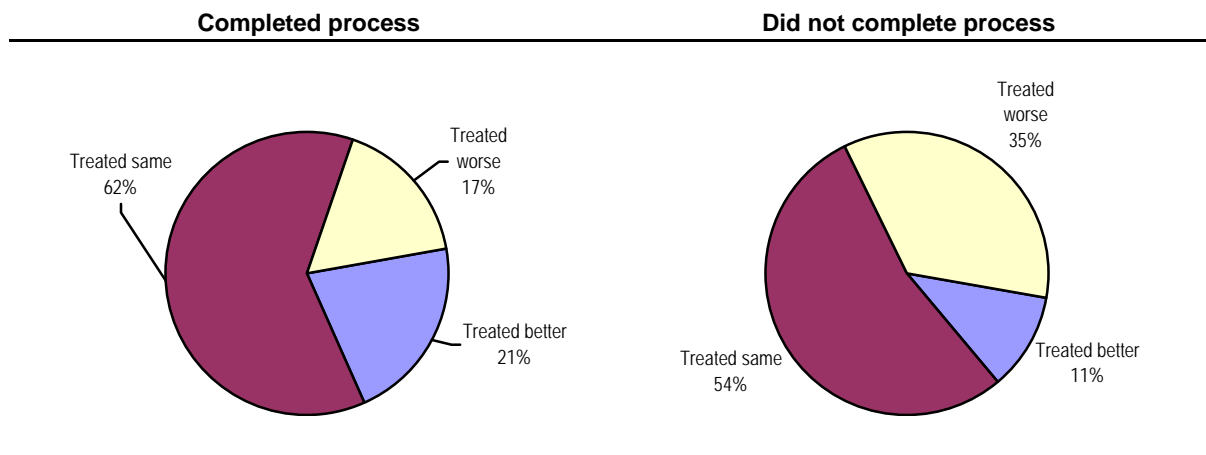
Although application difficulties were not substantially different for applicants who completed the process and those who did not, those who completed and were approved for benefits reported significantly higher levels of satisfaction with the process (appendix table B.24). Far fewer of the dropouts expressed satisfaction with the overall process (43 versus 76 percent) and they had significantly more negative comparisons of the food stamp office to other government offices (figure 4.8). This pattern cannot be taken as a clear indication of problems with the application process, because we cannot know whether the dropouts abandoned the process because they were less satisfied with the experience or whether, in making a retrospective assessment, the people who got benefits felt more satisfied with the process than those who did not. Nonetheless, analysis in Chapter 8 shows that applicants are more likely to complete the process successfully when supervisor attitudes are positive, which may contribute to the pattern of differential satisfaction seen here.

The costs of application include out-of-pocket costs and time associated with completing all the application requirements. Those applicants who completed the process reported making an average of

<sup>10</sup> Statistically significant difference at the 5 percent level based on t-test.

2.4 trips to the food stamp office for filing the application, meetings, and dropping off documentation (appendix table B.25).<sup>11</sup> They spent, on average, 6.1 hours completing the process—3.9 hours at the office and 2.2 hours traveling between their home and the office. On average, they made 1.2 additional trips to other locations to acquire necessary documentation of their circumstances. Households also applying for TANF or Medicaid made 0.4 extra trips to complete the additional application(s). Twelve percent of households—39 percent of those with earnings—reported that they missed work in the course of applying for food stamps. Nine percent of applicants incurred dependent care expenses, either for the care of children or elderly household members.

**Figure 4.8—Treatment at food stamp office compared to other government offices<sup>a</sup>**



a Other government offices include Division of Motor Vehicles, voter registration, WIC, post office, unemployment office.

Data from appendix table B.24.

It appears that completing the food stamp application required somewhat more visits to the food stamp office in 2000 than during the 1990s. In 1996, participants reported making an average of 1.6 trips to the food stamp office for their most recent application (Ponza et al., 1999). Approved applicants made an average of 1.8 trips to the local food stamp office in the course of applying for benefits in 1990 (Bartlett et al., 1992). These figures compare to an average of 2.4 trips in 2000. In addition, applicants in 2000 made an average of 1.3 additional trips to obtain documentation compared to an average of 0.7 trips in 1996. The total time spent at the food stamp office and traveling to the office also increased between 1996 and 2000—from 3.9 hours to 6.1 hours, on average.

## Conclusion

Of those applicants who were not found to be ineligible because of excess income or other household circumstances, 18 percent failed to complete the application process. About a quarter of those dropout households abandoned the application after their circumstances changed and they felt they no longer needed food stamp benefits. The remaining 13 percent of applicants would amount to about 57,000

<sup>11</sup> These data are not tabulated for those who did not complete the application process because by definition they did not go through all the necessary visits and hours.

households each month nationwide. This is a small fraction of the estimated 6 million eligible nonparticipant households, but not a trivial number.

Many applicant dropouts may have been discouraged from pursuing their application in part by some aspect of local office practices. About 27 percent mentioned some aspect of office policy or practice as a reason for abandoning the application. They emphasized the need to acquire documents for verification, the length of time before benefits would be received, long waits in the office, and the need to take time off from work or to pay for child or elder care. Most of those who did not mention specific aspects of the application process said that they believed they were ineligible because of having too much income or assets; it is quite possible that some of these people misinterpreted information that they received during the process.

The analysis suggests that difficulty with the application is not focused on particular population subgroups. For example, although elderly households are much less likely to participate in the program, age is not significantly related to completing the application process, and households consisting exclusively of elderly or adults with disabilities were significantly more likely to complete the process. Non-English speakers were no less likely to complete the application process, suggesting that office practices have overcome most difficulties that might be associated with language barriers.

The patterns of application behavior—who applies, who fails to complete the process, and their reasons—do not differ markedly from those found in the prior studies of these issues. In particular, the percentage of applicants who abandoned the application process was quite similar to the proportion seen in a five-site study in 1990 by Bartlett et al. (20 percent of all applicants in 2000, compared to 19 percent in 1990). The data suggest that the number of times that applicants must visit the food stamp office has increased over time and that, as a result, the total hours spent in completing the application process has increased. Thus, despite concerns that the application process has become more complex since the welfare reforms of 1996, the evidence on complexity is mixed and the rate of failure to complete the process does not appear to have increased substantially.

## Chapter 5

# TANF-Diverted Households

Welfare reform gave States the option of using TANF diversion policies to encourage families not to become TANF recipients. Diversion policies are designed to help TANF applicants find employment or temporary financial assistance rather than seek welfare benefits. States use a variety of diversion policies, including requiring TANF applicants to conduct job searches before they can apply or be approved for TANF benefits, offering lump sum cash payments or expense vouchers to help households deal with short-term financial crises, and requiring applicants to explore programs and resources besides TANF before filing an application.

Diversion is not a component of the Food Stamp Program, but because TANF and food stamp applications are usually conducted concurrently, concerns have been raised that applicants might be confused about the differing program requirements. Some applicants might think, for example, that accepting TANF lump sum payments would make them ineligible for food stamp benefits. (A 1999 regulatory initiative clarifying this issue indicated that families who receive any form of TANF benefit are categorically eligible for food stamps.) Or they might view a TANF job search requirement as a hurdle that must be cleared before they could receive food stamps. Such confusion and misunderstanding might discourage some households from applying for food stamp benefits or from completing the application process once they begin it.

To examine this issue, a special survey focused on households that received lump-sum diversion payments. Job search diversion was not covered in this survey because it proved impossible to obtain lists of the households subject to this policy.<sup>1</sup> In addition to the special survey, the survey of applicants provided some limited information on households who experienced TANF diversion.

Lump-sum diversion was found to be a rather uncommon TANF practice. In June 2000, the focus month for the special survey, only 18 of the 40 States in the study reported that they used lump-sum diversion.<sup>2</sup> Even those States with a diversion policy applied the policy infrequently. Seven of the 18 States made no lump-sum diversion payments to cases in the sample office in June 2000, and one State kept no separate records of lump sum payments. Ten States made some diversion payments in June 2000, but the total number of payments in the sampled offices was only 179 and only about half of the sampled offices in those States had one or more cases that received a lump-sum payment. Based on sampling ratios, this implies that 3,246 households received TANF lump sum payments in June 2000.

All of the 179 households that were given cash payments in lieu of applying for TANF in June 2000 were included as candidates for the survey. The survey questions were designed to learn about their

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<sup>1</sup> Few States or local offices could provide lists of applicants subject to job search requirements. Information on job search appears to be maintained in a variety of ways, but often is accessible only at the caseworker level.

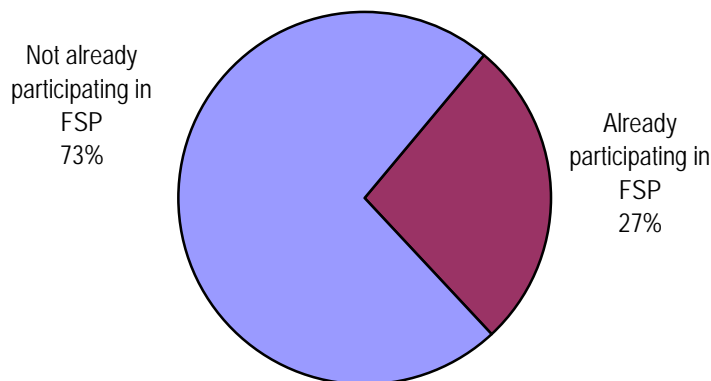
<sup>2</sup> Our sample States varied in their adoption of other types of TANF diversion policies in 2000. According to Maloy et al. (2000), nine of the 40 States had no TANF diversion policy, 24 States used some type of job search diversion and 7 States required applicants to seek alternative resources.

household circumstances, whether or not they applied for food stamps, and their experiences and perceptions that might bear on their pursuit of food stamp assistance. The survey was able to reach 99 of those households. All these households are included in the analysis.

## Did Households That Received Diversion Payments Apply for Food Stamp Benefits?

When concerns are expressed about the effect of TANF diversion on food stamp participation, the usual assumption is that the diverted household would be a nonparticipating household applying for TANF who might also apply for food stamp benefits. Almost three-quarters of the TANF-diverted households (73 percent) found in the study fit the assumed model, but the other 27 percent of the cases were in fact already participating in the FSP (figure 5.1).

**Figure 5.1—FSP status of TANF-diverted households in month of lump-sum payment**



Percentages derived from appendix table B.26.

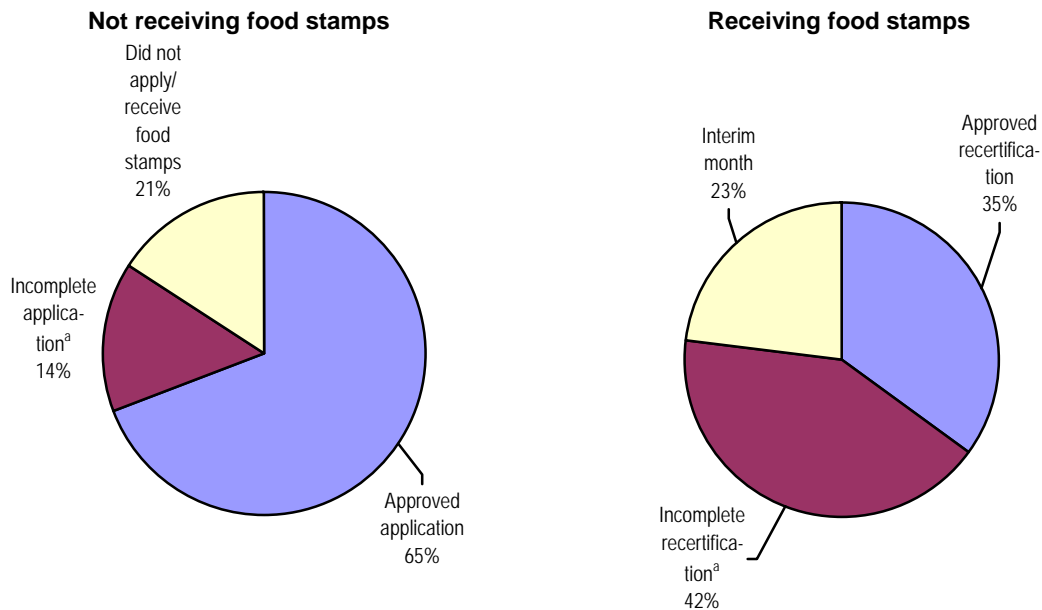
Two-thirds (65 percent) of the TANF-diverted households that were not already receiving food stamp benefits went on to do so—they filed FSP applications and were approved (figure 5.2). The remaining households were divided between those who did not apply for food stamps (21 percent) and those who filed an application but did not complete the application process (14 percent). The latter group may include some households that filed a food stamp application before receiving the lump sum TANF payment and abandoned their application after the lump sum was awarded. The available data do not describe the sequence of these events, however. Excluding the households who did not apply for food stamps, 83 percent of the TANF-diverted households were approved for food stamps—almost exactly the same as the approval rate for circumstantially eligible applicants seen in Chapter 4.

Among the TANF-diverted households that were already receiving FSP benefits, just over three quarters (77 percent) were due for recertification in the month in which they received the lump sum payment. These cases might not have been receiving TANF previously and used the FSP recertification as an opportunity to apply. Alternatively, they may have been receiving TANF benefits already, and the opportunity to receive the lump-sum diversion payment may have arisen as part of the TANF recertification. Whatever the circumstances, 35 of the 77 percent—or 45 percent of those in their recertification month—completed the food stamp recertification process and were approved for continued benefits. The 45 percent continuation rate for TANF diverted households was



considerably lower than the 78 percent continuation rate for all households that were in their recertification month in June 2000.

**Figure 5.2—FSP status by whether receiving FSP benefits at TANF diversion**



a Households who received diversion payments were categorically eligible for food stamps. All denials are therefore assumed to have occurred because the household did not complete the required application or recertification process.

Percentages derived from appendix table B.26.

The remaining 23 percent of TANF-diverted households who were already receiving food stamp benefits were not in a food stamp recertification month when they received their lump sum payment. All of these households continued to receive FSP benefits following receipt of the lump sum.

In sum, nearly two-thirds of the households who received lump sum TANF payments went on to receive food stamp benefits. The other 36 percent did not receive food stamps; either they did not file a food stamp application or they did not complete their certification or recertification process.

The households who did not receive food stamp benefits after receiving a TANF lump sum payment are the ones of primary concern here. These households would have been categorically eligible for food stamp benefits, provided that all members of the food stamp household were considered in making the TANF award. We therefore look more closely below at the characteristics and experiences of this group, and compare them with the households who did go on to receive FSP benefits after TANF diversion. Because the sample is so small, these comparisons can be only suggestive.

### Who Received Lump Sum Diversion Payments?

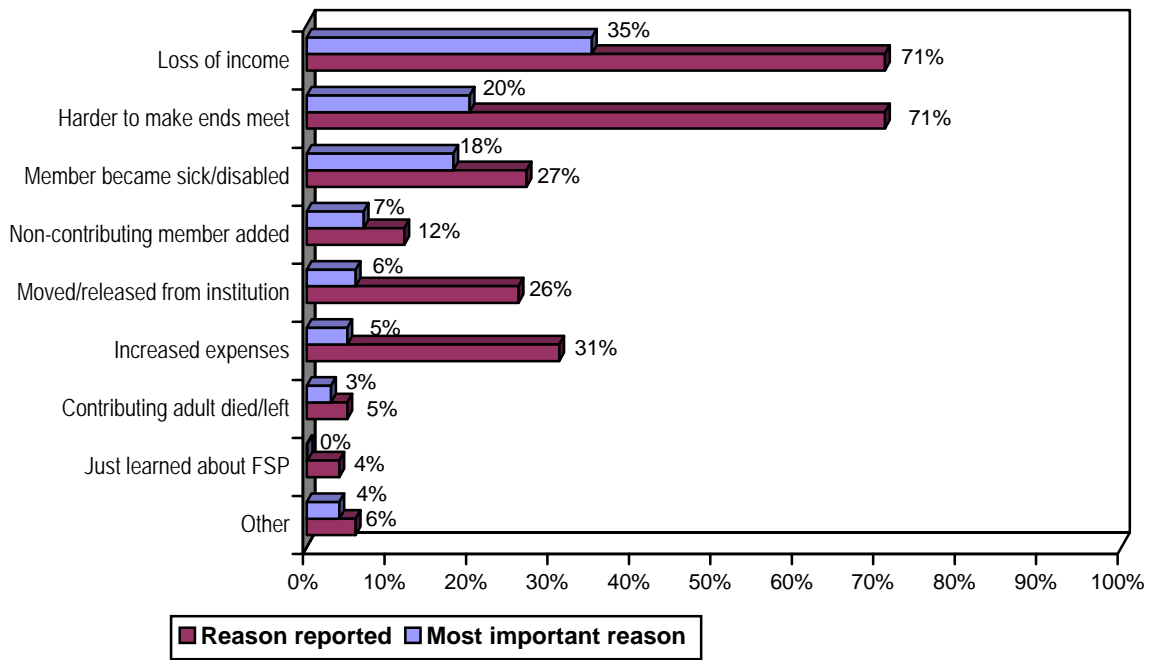
TANF-diverted households all included children and were predominantly headed by women, as expected given that they qualified for TANF benefits (appendix table B.27). In other respects, their characteristics were very similar to those of the food stamp applicant population (compare to

appendix table B.20). The demographic characteristics of TANF-diverted households did not differ significantly between those who did and those who did not subsequently receive FSP benefits.

The economic profile of TANF-diverted households (appendix table B.28) is similar to that of FSP applicants (compare to appendix table B.19). Among the TANF-diverted households, the data contain some hints that the group that did not subsequently receive food stamp benefits may have been better off economically than those who did receive benefits. These differences are generally not statistically significant, however.

TANF-diverted households were asked whether particular “trigger events” had occurred that led them to apply for assistance. Respondents were also asked whether the event was the most important reason. Figure 5.3 shows the results.

**Figure 5.3—Circumstances precipitating application for assistance**



Data from appendix table B.29.

One might expect that the events precipitating an application for benefits would tend to be of a short-term nature for TANF-diverted households, because the lump sum is intended to meet relatively temporary needs. No statistically significant differences were observed, however, between the “most important” trigger events for these households (appendix table B.29) and for food stamp applicants in general (see appendix table B.21). Likewise, the trigger events for TANF-diverted households who subsequently received food stamp benefits did not differ significantly from the events occurring to those who did not participate.

## **Why Do Some Households Not Get FSP Benefits After TANF Diversion?**

Because very few households nationwide received lump sum payments and most of those subsequently received food stamp benefits, the survey reached only a small number of households for whom TANF diversion might have been an obstacle to receiving food stamp benefits. The sample includes 32 households that did not go on to receive food stamp benefits. Of those households, 16 applied for initial benefits and did not complete all application requirements, 9 closed at recertification, and 7 applied only for TANF and did not apply for food stamp benefits. It is obviously not possible to derive precise estimates from such a small number, but it is still worth examining the experiences of these households as illustrative examples.

TANF-diverted households that applied to the FSP all cited numerous reasons for not completing the application process. Many did not think that they were eligible for food stamp benefits. We do not know exactly why they believed they were ineligible, but if they made the judgment of the basis of receiving a TANF diversion payment, additional information from the local office could clarify their FSP eligibility. Households also cited the inconvenience, cost, and hassle associated with the application process. Confusion about the process and the length of time required to apply and receive benefits were also noted by a number of the households.

Most of the TANF diverted households that left the FSP at recertification did not even bother to file their recertification application. The predominant reason cited in this small sample was that the recertification process was too difficult or costly or required too much time. Some reported that their situation changed and they no longer needed or wanted food stamp benefits. A few households also reported that there were too many rules to comply with or that it was too difficult to participate in the program. All these reasons suggest that these households essentially decided that the food stamp benefits received were no longer worth the costs of participation.

Three-quarters of the TANF-diverted households that did not go on to receive FSP benefits believed that they were eligible for the program, though they tended to believe that they would receive only small benefits (appendix table B.30). Almost a fifth believed their benefit would be \$100 or less, and only 23 percent expected it to exceed \$150. In contrast, 46 percent of those who did receive food stamp benefits after TANF diversion expected a benefit over \$150.

About half the TANF-diverted households reported some feelings of stigma associated with the FSP. Their feelings were not, however, more intense than those of food stamp applicants (compare to appendix table B.23), nor were there significant differences between TANF-diverted households that received food stamp benefits and those that did not.

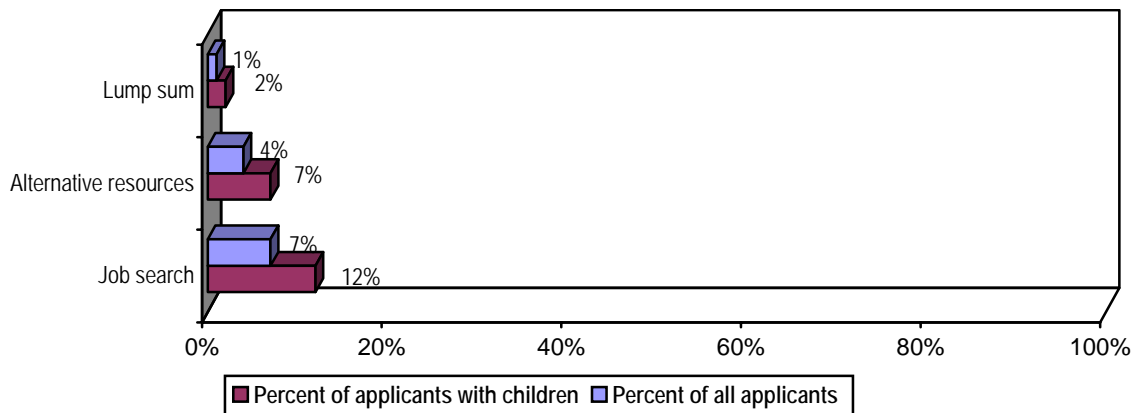
### **TANF Diversion Reported by Applicants**

The data described above came, as noted, from a special survey of households identified in agency records as having received TANF lump sum payments in June 2000. In addition, the survey of applicants provides a glimpse of TANF diversion from the perspective of would-be participants. The survey asked applicants whether, when they contacted the local office, the caseworker arranged for a lump sum payment, assigned job search activities, or suggested contacting other agencies instead of

applying for assistance. A small number of the responding applicants did report encountering these forms of diversion, as described below.

Most food stamp applicants said they did not experience TANF diversion (figure 5.4). Among those who did, job search diversion was the most commonly reported, with 12 percent of households with children (7 percent of all applicants) indicating that their caseworker had assigned job search activities.<sup>3</sup> Referral to alternative resources was next most common, reported by 7 percent of applicants with children, while 2 percent of applicants with children reported lump sum payments.

**Figure 5.4—Percent of applicants reporting TANF diversion**



Data from appendix table B.31.

This response pattern corresponds to information provided in the local office supervisor survey regarding the prevalence of the policies. Over a third of offices (38 percent, weighted by caseload) reported a job search requirement for food stamp applicants who were also applying for TANF, and most of these offices applied the requirement to at least half of the TANF/food stamp applicants.<sup>4</sup> Only 9 percent of offices required applicants to explore alternative resources before applying for TANF, but most of these required it of all TANF/food stamp applicants. Lump sum payment policies were reported in more than half of the offices (55 percent), but as discussed previously, very few such payments were made in any given month.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>3</sup> Some households without children, who would not have been eligible for TANF, responded positively to diversion questions. The analyses presented include only households with children. Because the procedures and terminology of diversion vary considerably from office to office, and each form of diversion was covered in a single brief question, some respondents may have reported incorrectly that they experienced (or did not experience) diversion.

<sup>4</sup> Gabor et al., 2003, Appendix tables A3.4, A3.5, and A3.6.

<sup>5</sup> About half of the households who reported lump sum diversion on the applicant survey were on the agencies' lists of households receiving lump sum payments in June 2000. Some households may have received their payment in a different month (for example, although their application was filed in June, they might have received a lump sum payment in July). Some households may have discussed the lump sum payments with their worker but not actually received such a payment.

TANF diversion has been considered an issue for food stamp participation because of the possibility that diversion would prevent eligible households from pursuing the food stamp application. The survey did not provide any evidence of such an effect. More than 90 percent of the applicants who reported each form of TANF diversion successfully completed the food stamp application process and were approved for benefits (Appendix table B.32). This successful completion rate was actually a bit higher than the rate for respondents who did not experience diversion, although the difference is not statistically significant.

These data do not rule out the possibility that TANF diversion sometimes led households away from the FSP. The applicant survey included only households who actually filed a food stamp application, and the previous discussion showed that a fifth of the nonparticipating households that received TANF lump sum payments in June 2000 did not apply for food stamps.

The data do suggest, however, that TANF diversion may not affect many people who are sufficiently “in the system” to file an application. This would be consistent with information from supervisors and caseworkers in the local offices, which indicated that most offices have taken steps to deal with the issue. Supervisors in offices with diversion policies generally said that workers are trained to inform clients that the diversion does not affect FSP eligibility, and caseworkers reported that they usually encouraged diversion clients to apply for food stamps.<sup>6</sup>

Households who reported TANF diversion had economic and demographic profiles similar to those of other applicants with children, although the small numbers of respondents reporting diversion make such comparisons tenuous (Appendix tables B.33–B.38). A small number of statistically significant differences appear in the tables, but these do not appear to reflect any meaningful general pattern.

## Conclusion

The data reviewed in this chapter provide a mixed and fragmentary view of the role of TANF diversion in food stamp participation. Overall, TANF diversion appears to have affected a relatively small proportion of eligible non-participants. Based on the survey of households applying for food stamp benefits in June 2000, about 51,000 households experienced one or more forms of TANF diversion. That would amount to about 21 percent of the eligible food stamp applicants with children, or 12 percent of all food stamp applicants. Food stamp agency records suggest that TANF lump sum payments, the least common form of TANF diversion, were made to about 3,200 households nationwide in June 2000. This includes 1,850 who were applying for benefits, 670 who were already participating and were in their recertification month, 200 who were participating in an interim month, and 480 who were neither participating in nor applying for benefits.

Although most eligible applicants were not touched by TANF diversion, the issue is still important if TANF diversion frequently leads to confusion about whether the household is eligible for food stamp benefits or what it must do to receive them. The study suggests that some confusion did exist: about a quarter of the households who failed to complete the food stamp application or recertification after receiving TANF lump sum payments said they believed they were ineligible, which was incorrect. On the other hand, over 90 percent of the applicants who said they had experienced TANF diversion went

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<sup>6</sup> Gabor et al., 2003, Appendix tables A3.4, A3.5, and A3.6.

on to receive food stamps. And only 1 percent of households who failed to complete the application process gave reasons that seemed related to TANF diversion.

In addition to the applicants, Chapter 3 showed that 2 percent of non-participants who believed they were ineligible for food stamps (6 percent of those with children) said it was because they had received a lump sum payment. This suggests that confusion about eligibility after TANF diversion may not only lead some households to abandon their food stamp application or recertification, but may have a lasting effect on the households' perception of their eligibility.

It remains puzzling that about a third of the households that received TANF lump sum payments did not subsequently receive food stamp benefits. Most or all of these households would have been categorically eligible for food stamps, three-quarters perceived themselves to be eligible, and all were in contact with the social services network. Unfortunately, the number of these households reached by the survey was too small, and their circumstances and stated reasons for nonparticipation were too various, to determine whether they represent a problem that should be addressed or simply a group of households that chose not to participate in the FSP.

## Chapter 6

# Households That Left the Food Stamp Program

Households receiving food stamp benefits must comply with various participation requirements, such as reporting changes in their household circumstances or participating in employment and training activities, as a condition of continued participation. The specific requirements depend on individual State and local policies, and vary depending on the type of household. In addition, all households must periodically be recertified through a process that is similar to the initial application for benefits: completing a recertification application, attending an interview, and providing documents verifying household circumstances. Households that fail to comply with participation or recertification requirements are removed from the Food Stamp Program.<sup>1</sup>

The active food stamp caseload can be subdivided into four groups:

- Households in a month when they are not required to recertify for benefits (an “interim month” and who continue to receive benefits in the following month (non-recertification month, continue)<sup>2</sup>;
- Households that close in the midst of a recertification period, also called “interim closures” (non-recertification month, close);
- Households whose certification period ends during the month, who reapply, and who are approved to continue receiving food stamps (recertification month, continue); and
- Households whose certification period ends during the month and who are denied continuing benefits (recertification month, close).

In any given month, the vast majority of the food stamp caseload is in the midst of an active certification period and will continue to receive benefits in the following month. For the sample month of June 2000, 85 percent of the active caseload was in this situation (figure 6.1). An additional 10 percent of cases were recertified during month, and thus continued to receive benefits the following month. A relatively small proportion of cases closed during the month—2 percent of households experienced interim closures and 3 percent were denied continuing benefits at recertification.

The discussion below examines the characteristics and experiences of households that left the FSP in June 2000. The 109 food stamp offices participating in the study provided for June 2000 lists of all food stamp cases that were due for recertification, plus all cases that were closed but not in a recertification month. For a sample of 1,232 cases, data were abstracted from the households’ case files. These data include information on the nature of the action (such as whether the certification was approved or denied and a reason for denial, if available) and the characteristics of the case as recorded at the most recent previous (re)certification. The 177 households in the sample that were due for a

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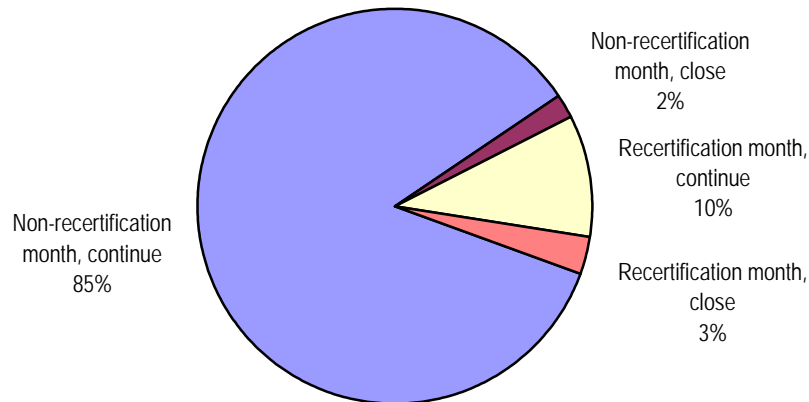
<sup>1</sup> In some circumstances a participant may have multiple opportunities to meet the requirements, so termination of benefits does not necessarily follow from (initial) non-compliance.

<sup>2</sup> This also includes households that submitted a new application and were approved for benefits during the month and will thus continue to receive benefits in the following month.

recertification but did not complete the process were targeted for a follow-up survey. These households were no longer in contact with the program and were therefore difficult to reach, but interviews were completed with 71 of the households. The survey obtained additional information on the households' circumstances when they left the FSP in June 2000 and their perceptions of the recertification process.

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**Figure 6.1—Status of active food stamp caseload**



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Data from appendix table B.39.

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Among food stamp cases that closed in non-recertification months, 29 percent were closed because the household no longer met the eligibility criteria for income and assets (see figure 6.2). Another 20 percent were sanctioned, most commonly for failing to comply with income reporting requirements. Agency codes for recording cases that closed for other reasons were quite inconsistent across locations, and sometimes no closure reason could be found in the file. About 15 percent were recorded as having terminated voluntarily or moved, and it is quite possible that these reasons also apply to some closures in the “other” category. Because no survey was conducted of households exiting in interim months, we do not know what proportion were still circumstantially eligible among the households whose cases were closed for reasons other than excess income or assets.

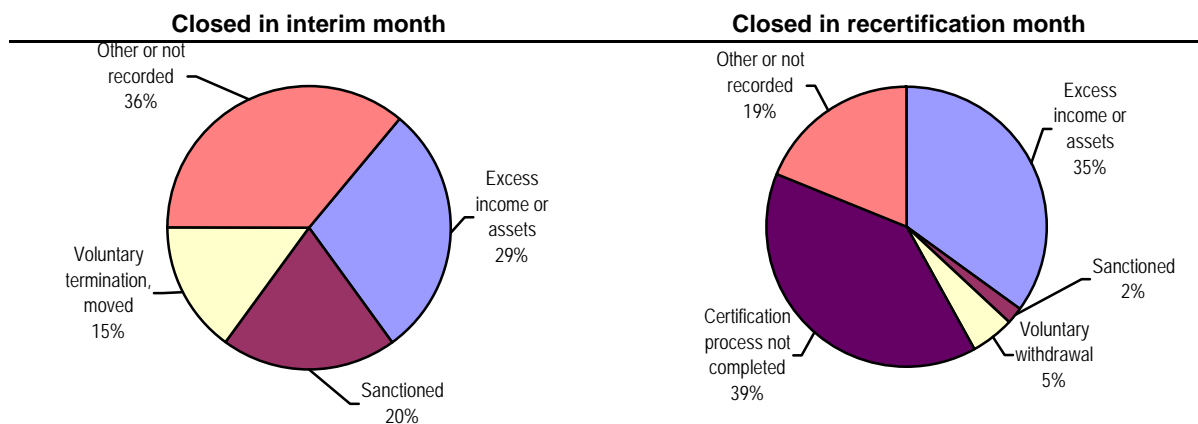
About 35 percent of households that exited in recertification months were denied because of excess income or assets. Most of the remaining households had their certification denied because they failed to complete the recertification process.<sup>3</sup> Just two percent were sanctioned, considerably less than in interim months (although failure to complete the recertification process is analogous to failure to comply with interim reporting requirements).

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<sup>3</sup> The coding of cases closed at recertification for reasons other than excess income/assets and sanctions is based on agency codes and, for survey cases, responses to survey questions. Some cases that would have been coded “other or not recorded” were reclassified, nearly always to “certification process not complete.” Among households that were targeted for the survey but not reached, 20 percent were “other or not recorded.”



**Figure 6.2—Recorded reasons for case closures**



Data from appendix table B.40.

Many households who did not complete the recertification process appear to have been circumstantially eligible for continued benefits. Among those surveyed, 93 percent were categorized as circumstantially eligible on the basis of their survey responses. The low survey response rate makes it difficult to know whether this high rate of circumstantial eligibility applies to the other households who closed at recertification. However, at the time of their most recent previous (re)certification, the surveyed households had very similar characteristics to the households not surveyed (see Appendix tables B.41 and B.42).<sup>4</sup> In fact, the survey respondents seem to have been economically better off than the non-respondents, on average, with significantly more of the respondents having above-poverty incomes. Thus it seems likely that a very substantial proportion of the households who did not complete the recertification process were potentially circumstantially eligible. This is consistent with follow-up studies on households leaving the FSP, which have found more than half of the households had incomes that would apparently make them eligible for benefits (Mills and Kornfeld, 2000; Jensen et al., 2002; Richardson et al., 2003).

Although the circumstantially eligible households are the ones of principal interest to the study, most of the tables presented in this chapter include all households who exited the FSP, including those who were closed or denied because of excess income or assets. Tables based only on survey data are limited to circumstantially eligible households, and are so indicated.

## Who Leaves the Food Stamp Program?

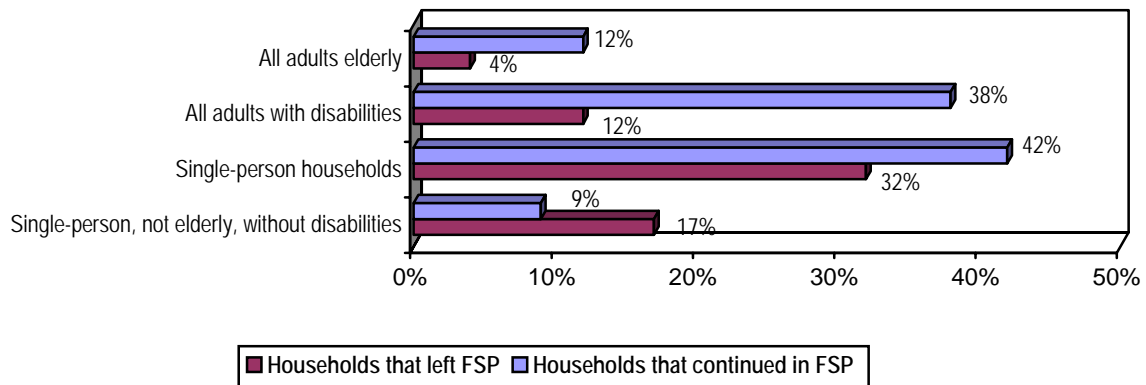
The households who left the Food Stamp Program in June 2000 were significantly younger, on average, than the participating households who continued to receive benefits (figure 6.3).<sup>5</sup> In

<sup>4</sup> Survey respondents appear in table B.41 to include a significantly smaller proportion of households headed by Hispanics than the abstract-only respondents. However, this information was missing from the case record in a substantial proportion of cases and, for those surveyed, survey responses were used when case record data were missing.

<sup>5</sup> This analysis includes all households who left the FSP, including those who closed due to circumstantial ineligibility.

particular, the departing households were significantly less likely to be made up entirely of elderly adults or adults with disabilities. Because most one-person households in the FSP are elderly or people with disabilities, the households leaving the program included a smaller proportion of one-person households than those that continued. However, the exiting households included a significantly larger proportion of one-person households in which the recipient was an able-bodied adult (i.e., neither elderly nor with disabilities).

**Figure 6.3—Demographic characteristics of households that left the FSP and households that continued (percent of group with characteristic)**



Data from appendix table B.43.

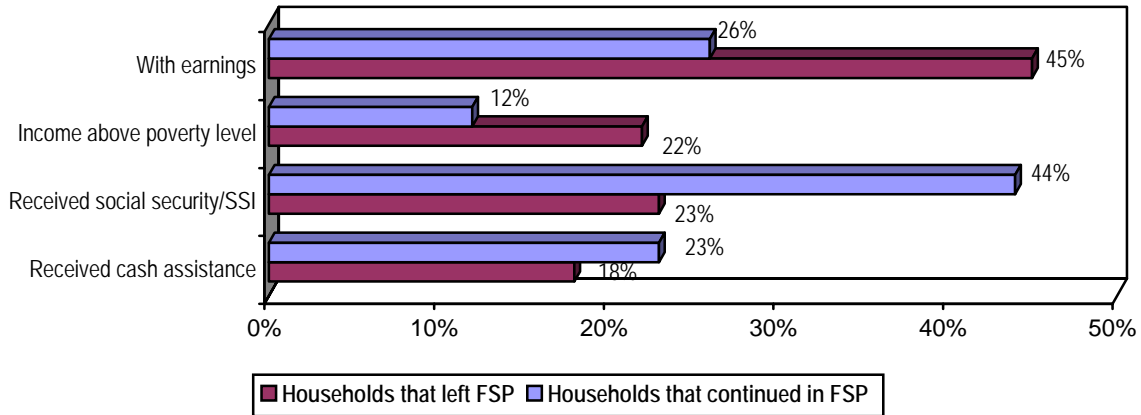
The households who left the FSP in June 2000 also tended to be in better economic circumstances than those who stayed (where circumstances are those reported at the beginning of the certification period that ended in June). Significantly more of the departing households had earnings (figure 6.4). On average, the earnings of those who left the FSP were \$1004 compared to \$791 for households that remained (Appendix table B.44). Moreover, 22 percent of the cases leaving the FSP had incomes above the federal poverty line, compared to 12 percent of participating households who continued to receive benefits. In contrast, the departing cases included significantly fewer households with Social Security or SSI income and with cash assistance.

None of these patterns are surprising. Elderly participants and participants with disabilities have long been observed to be in circumstances that fluctuate little over time, which is the major reason that such cases are traditionally assigned relatively long certification periods.<sup>6</sup> Conversely, households with earnings have more opportunity for income increases that will make them ineligible for FSP benefits, and consequently they are often assigned short certification periods. The one somewhat surprising pattern in the data is the relatively high prevalence of Hispanic households among interim month closures (29 percent, compared to 14 percent of the continuing cases in non-recertification

<sup>6</sup> When continuing cases in recertification months are compared to continuing cases in non-recertification months, we find a significantly smaller proportion of elderly/disabled and one-person households in the former group.

months). This pattern is not repeated among cases in their recertification month, so it is not clear whether it is meaningful or simply a random feature of this particular sample.<sup>7</sup>

**Figure 6.4—Economic characteristics of households that left the FSP and households that continued (percent of group with characteristic)**



Data from appendix table B.44.

## Who Fails to Complete the Recertification Process?

Just over half (53 percent) of the households that left the Food Stamp Program in June 2000 were due for recertification in that month (Appendix table B.39). Of those that closed in their recertification month, 35 percent were determined to be ineligible on the basis of their income or other household circumstances.<sup>8</sup> Most of the remaining households failed to complete the recertification process, although a small fraction were sanctioned. For convenience, we will refer to all households who were neither approved for benefits nor denied for excess income/assets as having failed to complete the recertification process.

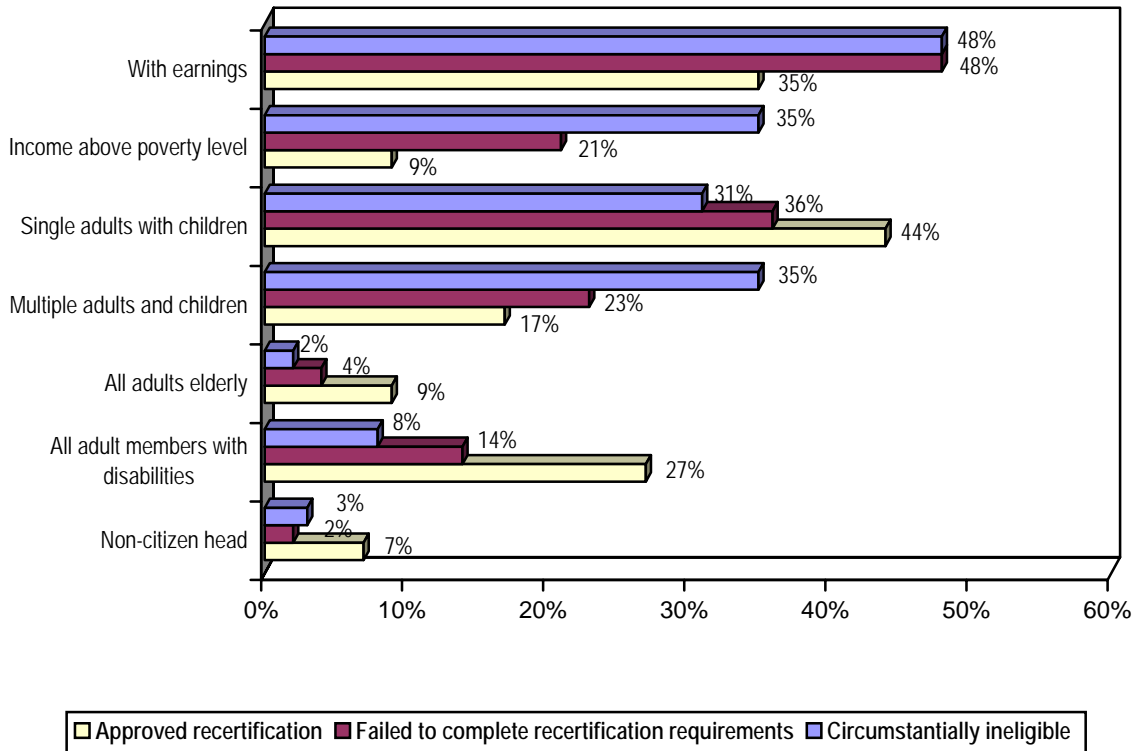
Households that failed to complete the recertification tended to be in better economic circumstances (as measured at the most recent previous recertification) than those households who were approved for continuing benefits at recertification, but somewhat worse off than those who closed at recertification due to circumstantial ineligibility (figure 6.5). As noted in the previous section, households that left the FSP were more likely than those who stayed to have earnings. Among households with earnings, those who did not complete the recertification process had average monthly earnings of \$930, higher than the \$803 reported by households that continued in the FSP, but lower than the \$1,362 of those deemed circumstantially ineligible for benefits at recertification. A similar pattern is observed in total family income—21 percent of households that failed to complete recertification had incomes exceeding the poverty level, compared to 9 percent for those that

<sup>7</sup> See table B.45. A substantial proportion of case records on closed cases did not have sufficient data on race/ethnicity for accurate coding. Survey responses supplemented the case record data, but no households who closed in interim months were surveyed.

<sup>8</sup> Calculated from data in table 2.4.

remained in the FSP and 35 percent for those whose circumstances made them ineligible for benefits at recertification.

**Figure 6.5—Characteristics of households due for recertification (percent of group with characteristic)**



Data from appendix tables B.46 and B.47.

The food security of households that did not complete the recertification process was similar to that of applicant households—two-thirds reported food insecurity and one-quarter experienced hunger (Appendix table B.48).

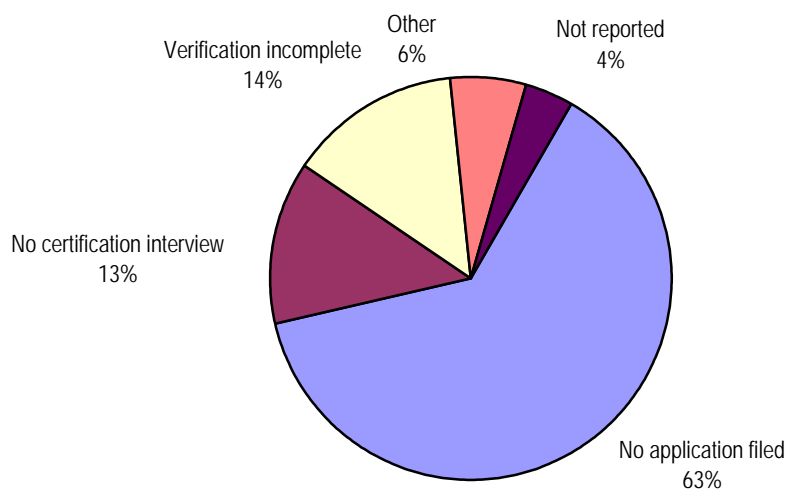
The household composition of those that left the FSP for failing to complete all recertification requirements differed from that of households who continued to receive benefits. While both groups were equally likely to include children, households that left were more likely to include multiple adults and thus less likely to be headed by single adults. In addition, one-person households were equally represented in both groups, but households that failed to complete the recertification process were less likely to be comprised of only elderly adults or only adults with disabilities.

One might expect that households headed by non-citizens would be more likely not to complete food stamp recertification due to concern or confusion over alien regulations. This does not appear to be the case, however, as these households comprised a smaller proportion of those that failed to complete all requirements than of those approved for continuing benefits at recertification.

## Why Do Some Households Fail to Complete the Recertification Process?

Many households who failed to complete the recertification process did not even begin it. Almost two-thirds of the survey sample of non-completers (63 percent) reportedly did not file an application (figure 6.6). Smaller proportions of households either did not complete their certification interview or did not complete their verification—13 or 14 percent in each category, based on case records and survey responses. The remaining 10 percent reported a variety of other responses or could not remember enough about the certification process to classify them. The patterns seen in the survey responses and the case files are roughly similar after excluding the “not reported” group (Appendix table B.49).

**Figure 6.6—Status of recertification application of households that did not complete the process**



Data from appendix table B.49.

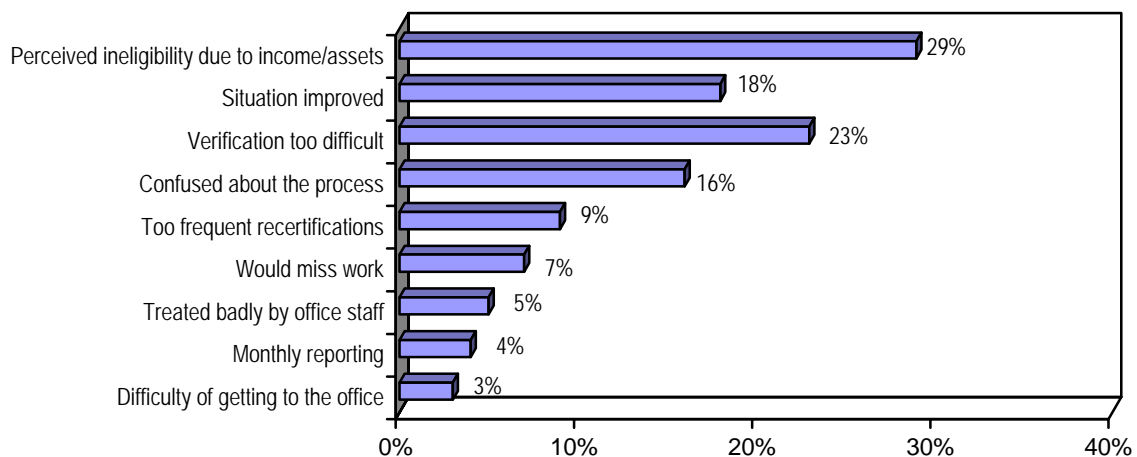
Nearly all of the households (93 percent) that failed to complete their recertification were still apparently eligible for food stamp benefits, based on the income and household information they provided in the survey describing their circumstances in June 2000. The discussion below focuses on those survey respondents who failed to complete the process and were apparently circumstantially eligible for benefits.<sup>9</sup> The relatively small number of households (67) makes the estimated proportions imprecise, as indicated by their standard errors, and cautious interpretation is needed.

Like the households who failed to complete the initial application process (described in Chapter 4), those who failed to complete their recertification were read a list of possible obstacles to participation and asked whether these factors applied to their situation and, if so, whether they were reasons for not completing the recertification. The survey also asked about food security, stigma, and satisfaction with the Food Stamp Program.

<sup>9</sup> One household whose circumstantial eligibility could not be determined is also included.

Eighteen percent of households that failed to complete their recertification said that their circumstances had improved so that they had less need of benefits (figure 6.7), including 9 percent who said they believed they were ineligible for continued participation. Another 20 percent believed themselves ineligible even though they did not indicate that their situation had improved. For 29 percent to believe themselves ineligible is somewhat surprising, given that these households were already participating in the program and might be expected to have relatively good understanding of program rules.<sup>10</sup>

**Figure 6.7—Reasons circumstantially eligible households did not complete recertification requirements<sup>a</sup>**



a Includes only households classified as circumstantially eligible based on their survey responses.

Data from appendix table B.50.

Overall, 38 percent cited some difficulty in the recertification process or some program participation requirement as their reason for not completing the recertification, including 24 percent who cited these reasons only and 14 percent who also mentioned a change in their situation and/or perceived ineligibility (Appendix table B.50). About a quarter of the non-completers said that the verification requirements were too difficult and 16 percent reported that confusion about the recertification process played a role in their decision not to pursue the recertification. In addition some households mentioned program reporting requirements—9 percent cited the requirement for periodic recertifications and 4 percent cited monthly reporting—as reasons for not completing the process. No

<sup>10</sup> Recall that about half (46 percent) of households who did not complete the initial application process believed themselves ineligible (see Appendix table B.22). This figure is not significantly different from the perceived ineligibility percentage among households not completing recertification. On the other hand, some of these households may, in fact, have been ineligible. As mentioned earlier, the income and assets criteria used to determine eligibility have been shown to be quite accurate, but will lead to some classification errors.

one mentioned employment and training requirements, child support, or child immunization requirements, however.

It is interesting to note that TANF issues were not a major factor. None of the households who failed to complete the process saw the receipt of TANF benefits, the termination of TANF receipt, or being subjected to some type of TANF diversion as a reason for food stamp ineligibility.

Questions regarding the perceived convenience of the office location and office hours show that inconvenience was not a problem for most households who failed to complete their recertification (appendix table B.51). Responses were quite similar to those of households who successfully completed an initial application. Likewise, the level of perceived stigma was quite similar to that reported by successful applicants. These patterns are not surprising, since the households leaving the program were once successful applicants.

Finally, households who failed to complete their recertification expressed mixed opinions about the FSP and their treatment by program personnel (appendix table B.51). Overall, the majority (59 percent) were “satisfied” or “somewhat satisfied,” but 41 percent were “dissatisfied” or “somewhat dissatisfied” with the program. Comparing treatment by the food stamp office to that by other government offices, most households saw no important difference; but households who felt the food stamp office treated them worse than other government offices outnumbered those who felt better treated in the food stamp office (figure 6.8). These point estimates lie between (but are not statistically different from) the pattern for successful applicants and the pattern for applicants who did not complete the application process.

## Conclusion

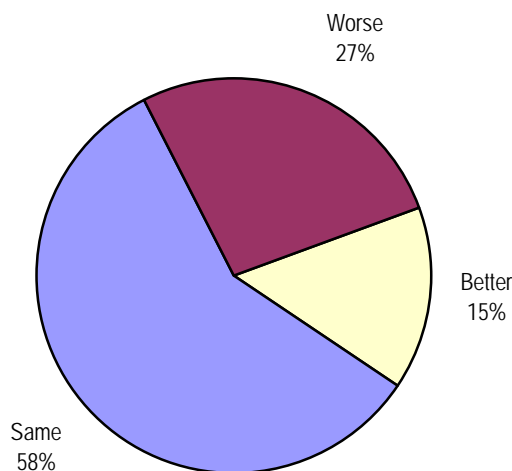
In June 2000, about 203,000 participating households who were in their recertification month left the FSP. Based on the limited available data, we project that as many as 123,000 of these households may still have been circumstantially eligible for benefits.<sup>11</sup> This is approximately 50 percent greater than the number of apparently eligible initial applicants who failed to complete the application process. This suggests that, to the extent that local office policies and practices can influence participation among people who are already in contact with the program, the opportunity for influence may be greater at recertification than initial certification. Nonetheless, both the recertification and initial certification numbers are small compared to the number of apparently eligible households who were not in any direct contact with the program during a given month.

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<sup>11</sup> About 71,000 households were denied continued benefits because their income or resources exceeded program eligibility limits. Of the remainder, 93 percent of those who were reached by the survey were classified as apparently circumstantially eligible. If the rate of circumstantial eligibility was the same for households not reached by the survey, 123,000 households would be classed as circumstantially eligible. While this is the best estimate available, the low survey response rate suggests that it should be viewed with caution.

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**Figure 6.8—Treatment at food stamp office compared to other government offices<sup>a</sup>**



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<sup>a</sup> Includes only households classified as circumstantially eligible based on their survey responses.

Data from appendix table B.51.

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Among the small sample (67) of apparently eligible households who failed to complete the recertification, 29 percent believed that they were not eligible. This proportion is rather surprising—one might expect active food stamp recipients to be more knowledgeable about program eligibility rules—and may represent an opportunity for communication to influence participation.

Another somewhat surprising finding is that nearly a quarter of the households who failed to complete their recertification cited difficult verification requirements as a reason. Verification requirements at recertification are not normally more stringent than those at initial application, and these households had already succeeded at passing through the application process.<sup>12</sup>

Consistent with the findings in previous chapters, households' responses do not indicate that confusion related to TANF policies has any pervasive effect on FSP participation. If important effects exist, they are apparently too subtle or indirect to be captured by the types of direct questions used in the surveys.

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<sup>12</sup> Because verification requirements do vary across offices, the multivariate analysis reported in Appendix D will examine whether this variation is associated with the likelihood that a household will continue to receive benefits after its recertification month.



# Chapter 7

## Local Food Stamp Office Policies and Practices that May Affect Participation Decisions

The survey results presented in Chapters 3-6 show that household participation in the food stamp program depends on a complicated set of perceptions, such as believing that the household may be eligible for benefits, and actions, such as filing an initial application or appearing for recertification. The data further suggest that people's perceptions and actions are influenced by aspects of their own situation, such as whether they are employed, and by factors that may be related to policies and practices in place at the local food stamp office, such as the convenience of office hours.

To learn about office practices that might influence participation, the study design included surveys of supervisors and caseworkers in the same 109 local offices where nonparticipants and participants were surveyed. The supervisor and caseworker surveys asked about a very large number of practices that were expected to affect some household perception or action related to food stamp participation. A previous report (Gabor et al., 2003) presented a comprehensive description of these policies and practices. It showed very substantial variation in practices: in practically every area examined, some offices employed practices that would be hypothesized to promote or facilitate participation, while others chose practices that seemed less likely to encourage participation.

This chapter summarizes the previous report's findings regarding variations in local practice that may affect participation. This information sets the stage for analyses presented in Chapter 8 and Appendix D, which examined the extent to which local practices are associated with the likelihood that households will perceive themselves eligible for benefits, successfully complete the application process, and continue receiving benefits once they have been approved.

The surveys and the analysis were guided by a broad set of hypotheses about what kinds of local office practices might influence each of five key household perceptions or decisions:

- Whether a household thinks it might be eligible for food stamps;
- Whether, thinking it might be eligible, a household contacts the local food stamp office;
- Whether, having contacted the food stamp office, a household files an application and completes all the necessary steps for approval;
- Whether, having been approved for benefits, a household continues to participate throughout the certification period; and
- Whether, having participated throughout the certification period, a household completes all the necessary steps for recertification.

Chapter 8 presents two multivariate models, which examine the first three decision points. One model focuses on factors affecting the likelihood that an apparently circumstantially eligible household will be aware that it is eligible. The second analyzes the likelihood that, once a circumstantially eligible

household believes it is eligible and contacts the food stamp office, it will file an application and successfully complete the application process.<sup>1</sup>

Ideally we would estimate a parallel model of the likelihood that households who are approved for benefits and remain circumstantially eligible will continue participate through their recertification period and then be approved for continued benefits at recertification. Because the data do not indicate circumstantial eligibility for some groups of households who left the FSP, we estimated models of the factors affecting the likelihood that a participating household will exit the program, including eligible and ineligible exiters indistinguishably. This analysis is presented in Appendix D.

The local office practices and policies that might influence participation were grouped into seven categories:

- ***Outreach to nonparticipants*** in the community;
- ***Availability of information*** about the FSP to nonparticipants who are interested;
- ***Office accessibility***, such as the flexibility of office hours or availability of child care;
- ***Subjective office features*** that could influence the household's in-office experience, such as waiting lines or staff attitudes;
- ***Certification requirements*** that an applicant must meet to be approved for benefits, including factors such as the number of required office visits or a requirement for pre-approval job search;
- ***Interim month requirements***, such as periodic reporting or participation in employment-related activities; and
- ***Recertification requirements***, such as the required frequency of recertification and practices for rescheduling missed recertification appointments.

Many office practices might influence more than one of the household decisions, and therefore to have multiple types of influence on participation. Most practices, however, are expected mainly to affect one or two actions, and the principal hypotheses are summarized in table 7.1 below.

The sections below consider in turn each of the seven groups of office practices that are hypothesized to affect participation. For each group, we describe the general hypothesis, summarize the prevalence of office practices (from Gabor et al., 2003), and indicate how the relevant office practices are represented in the multivariate analysis.

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<sup>1</sup> The sample for this second analysis combines respondents to the applicant survey with those respondents to the nonparticipant survey who said they had contacted the agency recently.

**Table 7.1—Characteristics of the office sample**

	Awareness of eligibility	Contact office and completion of application	Interim month participation	Recertification
Outreach to nonparticipants	✓			
Availability of Information		✓		
Office accessibility		✓		✓
Subjective office features		✓	✓	✓
Certification requirements		✓		
Interim month requirements		✓	✓	✓
Recertification requirements		✓		✓

## Outreach to Nonparticipants

Nearly all nonparticipant households that appear to be eligible for FSP benefits had heard of the Stamp Program (96 percent). Nonetheless, 55 percent of those who knew about the program reported that they did not think they were eligible for food stamps, or did not know if they are eligible. Outreach to nonparticipant households might increase participation by increasing these households' awareness of the program and their potential eligibility. The USDA encourages outreach and supports it through special demonstration grants as well as general administrative funding sources.

### Local Office Outreach Practices

The survey of local office supervisors found that outreach campaigns were quite prevalent, existing in 76 percent of offices nationwide (weighted by office caseload size).<sup>2</sup> Nonetheless, substantial variations were observed in outreach practices:

- Outreach was conducted by the FSP agency in 57 percent of offices. Other community agencies conducted outreach in the same proportion of offices, and 38 percent of the areas were served by outreach from both sources.
- Nine distinct outreach modes were used, with multiple modes in many areas. The modes and the proportion of areas in which they were used were:
  - Community presentations—70 percent of the areas
  - Flyers, posters, and brochures—69 percent
  - Toll-free number or hotline—54 percent
  - Newspaper articles—37 percent
  - Public service announcements—33 percent
  - Internet—28 percent
  - Direct mailing—24 percent
  - Calls or home visits to former participants—14 percent

<sup>2</sup> Throughout this chapter, we describe the distribution of office practices in terms of the weighted percent of offices engaging in the practice, where the weighting factor is the number of active cases in the office in June 2000. Thus, “x percent of the offices” is equivalent to “offices serving x percent of the national caseload.”

- Billboards or advertisements on buses—10 percent
- Some outreach was targeted to particular types of nonparticipants, with 63 percent of offices reporting some targeted outreach. About 37 percent of offices targeted elderly households, which was the most commonly targeted group. Other groups targeted in more than 10 percent of the offices include immigrant and refugee populations, persons with disabilities, homeless persons, working families, and former TANF recipients.
- Food stamp outreach was coordinated with outreach for Medicaid or State Child Health Insurance (SCHIP) in 59 percent of the offices.

### **Approach to Multivariate Analysis**

The first analysis presented in Chapter 8 explores the possibility that these variations in outreach influence eligible nonparticipants' perceptions of their own eligibility for food stamp benefits. Six measures of outreach policy are used. These include indicators of whether outreach is performed by the food stamp agency and/or community agencies and whether it is coordinated with Medicaid/SCHIP. Other measures indicate the number of population groups to which outreach is targeted and, for each respondent to the nonapplicant survey, whether the household is in a group that is targeted in that area. Finally, the model includes a count of the total number of outreach modes used, which is intended to reflect the intensity and breadth of coverage of outreach.

It seems quite possible that these measures will not fully capture the effect of variations in local outreach strategies. Given the nonparticipant survey results reported in Chapter 3, it would have been desirable to have more information on the content of outreach, such as whether outreach emphasized that earnings are not an automatic barrier to eligibility. It would also be desirable to know more about the intensity of outreach (e.g., the number of flyers or brochures distributed relative to the size of the nonparticipant population). These limitations should be borne in mind in interpreting the analysis.

## **Availability of Information for Potential Applicants**

Many nonparticipants said in the survey that they would not apply for food stamp benefits even if they were sure they were eligible, typically because they did not want to depend on government assistance. But other nonparticipants were not opposed to applying, and a few (4.6 percent of nonparticipants) said they had recently contacted the FSP office but had not applied. Households who might wish to apply, and especially those who visit the office, may be influenced by whether they can easily obtain program information and application forms.

### **Information Available in Local Offices**

Observers visited the food stamp offices in the local office survey and found general program information to be readily available in nearly all offices (91 percent). Potential applicants could obtain application forms in the reception area of most offices (90 percent), though 10 percent required the individual to see a caseworker to request the form; 87 percent would mail an application form to anyone who requested it.

Other practices varied in ways that might affect participation, as summarized below.

- Some reception areas offered general program information only on posters, but others used material that might communicate better, such as take-away brochures (64 percent) or videotapes (21 percent).
- Some offices made information available for special groups or issues. Sixty-two percent presented information in at least one non-English language, and 49 percent had information for people who were not applying for or already receiving TANF.
- About three quarters of offices reported that they routinely served immigrants. Among those offices, about two-thirds provided specific information on eligibility rules for those households, and almost all of those provided information in at least one non-English language.
- Two thirds of offices made application forms available at other locations in the community besides the food stamp office. Common locations included hospitals and clinics, community action agencies, and senior centers.

### **Approach to the Multivariate Analysis**

The multivariate analysis examines whether informational materials influence the probability that a household that contacts the food stamp office will apply for benefits and complete the application process. The analysis includes two items measuring the availability of information. One measure indicates whether brochures and pamphlets were available to potential applicants and the other represents whether information about the FSP was shown on video in the reception area. These items, which showed substantial variation among offices, were selected to represent policies that might potentially be particularly effective means of communicating basic information about the FSP and its eligibility requirements.

## **Office Accessibility**

Applicants who were certified for food stamp benefits reported making an average of 2.4 visits to the local food stamp office. Making those visits always requires some time and effort, and may entail taking time off from work, paying for transportation, or paying for child or elder care. The survey of applicants and applicant dropouts (see Chapter 4) indicated that getting to the office, travel costs, taking time off from work, paying for care, and the convenience of office hours are factors that affect people's assessment of the feasibility of an office visit.

Local office practices may determine how accessible the office is—i.e., how much time, effort, and financial expense the potential applicant has to spend on the visit. Practices that make the office more accessible are expected to make would-be applicants more likely to complete the application process and receive benefits.

### **Local Office Practices**

The local office survey examined five dimensions of office accessibility: hours of operation, transportation options, physical accessibility, adaptations for non-English speakers, and child friendliness. Results are summarized below.

- About two-fifths of offices (43 percent) conducted some eligibility interviews outside the standard business hours of Monday-Friday, 8:00 AM to 5:00 PM. Pre-8:00 interviews were conducted in 39 percent of offices, post-5:00 interviews in 16 percent, and Saturday interviews in 2 percent. Late-hour interviews were significantly more common in offices with more than 2,000 cases.
- About one-quarter of offices provided a secure after-hours drop box which could be used for application materials.
- Although 63 percent of offices had some clients who lived 10 miles or more from the office, public transit routes came within half a mile of 76 percent of offices.
- Just over one-quarter of offices offered transportation assistance in the form of cash, vouchers or transit tokens (15 percent) or van or car service (11 percent).
- Nearly all offices provided free parking, signage outside the building with the office name, handicapped parking, and wheelchair accessibility. Each of these features was available in 88 to 95 percent of offices.
- Bilingual caseworkers or interpreters were available during most office hours in virtually all offices that routinely saw non-English speaking clients.
- Local practices regarding child-friendliness varied considerably: 88 percent of offices had some space where children could play; 47 percent had diaper changing areas; 41 percent had some toys or materials for children; and 15 percent made child care available at the office. Clients in 6 percent of offices were asked not to bring children.

### **Approach to the Multivariate Analysis**

Chapter 8 presents a multivariate model examining the likelihood that an eligible nonparticipant who contacts the food stamp office will successfully complete the application process. The model includes predictor variables representing all of the local office practices described above that show meaningful variation across offices. No measures are included for physical accessibility (parking, etc.) or for non-English language accessibility because nearly all offices met each of these criteria. Child-friendliness is represented by three variables: indicators of whether child care is provided and whether parents are asked not to bring children, and an index combining the remaining three practices.

## **Subjective Office Features**

Subjective aspects of clients' experience in the food stamp office may encourage or discourage them from persisting in the application process. For example, 6 percent of applicants who failed to complete the application process said that one reason was the long wait in the office. Many of the nonparticipants who said they would not apply for benefits even if they were eligible cited a previous "bad experience." In general, we expect that local practices that tend to provide a more subjectively pleasant in-office experience will encourage a higher proportion of applicants to complete the process.

### **Local Office Practices**

The local office surveys focused on three factors that seemed likely to reflect the extent to which a client would find an office visit pleasant: the adequacy of seating in the reception area, the presence

of waiting lines, and the attitudes of office staff. The first two factors were assessed by observers who visited the offices. To address staff attitudes, the supervisor survey asked whether the supervisor agreed or disagreed with three judgmental statements related to food stamp participation. The results are summarized below.

- Over a third of offices (37 percent) were observed to have no waiting lines at any time, while 52 percent sometimes had lines and 11 percent always did. Lines were much more common in large offices than smaller ones.
- The vast majority (87 percent) always had enough seats for everyone in the reception area, and the remaining 13 percent had insufficient seating at some times.
- At least 80 percent of supervisors expressed pro-participation positions on each of the following three attitude items:
  - Being on food stamps encourages dependency (81 percent chose “disagree” or “strongly disagree”).
  - People who leave TANF and are potentially eligible for food stamps should be actively encouraged to apply for food stamps (95 percent agreed or strongly agreed).
  - Immigrants should not get food stamps until they become citizens (81 percent disagreed or strongly disagreed).

### **Approach to the Multivariate Analysis**

The local office variations above are represented in two items in the model of the probability of completing the application process. One measure combines the seating and waiting line issues in an indicator that some problem existed—either there were not always enough seats, or the average waiting time was at least 5 minutes, or both. The second measure is a supervisor attitude scale based on a count of the number of pro-participation responses (as defined above) to the three items.

## **Certification Requirements**

The certification process involves multiple steps that place varying requirements on applicants. Some steps require understanding potentially complex rules, such as the distinctions between TANF and food stamp eligibility criteria. Some require applicants to take actions, such as obtaining documentation or carrying out a job search. Some require cooperation with procedures that might seem invasive, such as fingerprinting and home visits. Applicants who dropped out of the process listed among their reasons difficulty with the application form, confusion about the application process, and problems in acquiring necessary documents. A few stated concerns about third party verification and fingerprinting.

Although basic FSP eligibility criteria and requirements are uniform across locations, local offices exercise considerable discretion in structuring the application process. Local office practices that make the application process simpler, shorter, less invasive, and with fewer required applicant actions are expected to increase the proportion of eligible applicants who complete the process.

### **Local Office Practices**

The eligibility interview is the universally central element of the application process, but the local office surveys found substantial variation in the process leading up to the interview.

- Applicants in 55 percent of the offices scheduled appointments in advance. In 47 percent of offices, applicants would visit the office, sign in, and be interviewed as soon as possible. Two percent of the offices used both procedures.
- Some offices required attendance at meetings or group sessions prior to the eligibility interview, usually to discuss employment-related issues and to review program information. Applicants for TANF faced this requirement in 26 percent of offices, and 11 percent of offices also required pre-interview meetings for FSP-only applicants.
- The signing of the application form, which begins the 30-day period within which agencies must determine eligibility, occurred before the eligibility interview in 64 percent of offices, during the interview in 35 percent, and after the interview in 1 percent.
- Supervisors in about half the offices said that applicants usually needed only one visit to the food stamp office during the application process (51 percent reported one meeting for non-TANF applicants, 48 percent for TANF applicants). Only 2 percent of offices reported that more than 2 visits were usually needed. (Note, however, that successful applicants reported an average across all offices of 2.4 visits. This includes visits to complete the interview, provide documents, and receive an EBT card and training.)
- When applicants missed their interview, the interview was automatically rescheduled in 17 percent of offices and the application was automatically denied in 5 percent. Most of the remaining offices either notified the client to reschedule (31 percent) or held the case open for client-initiated rescheduling (45 percent). Two percent had some other procedure.

Some practices in the application process are designed to encourage applicants to move toward employment rather than depend on assistance. In terms of completing the application process, however, these practices constitute additional steps that the client must take and complexities to understand.

- Most offices (80 percent) had some form of “diversion” policy in place for TANF applicants. Policies included a lump sum payment option (55 percent), job search before the application could be approved (38 percent), and a requirement to seek alternative resources before applying (9 percent).<sup>3</sup>
- TANF applicants were typically informed about the relevant diversion policies during the same interview in which they would sign the food stamp application. Diversion information preceded the point of FSP application signing in 14 percent of all offices for lump sum payments, 9 percent for job search, and 1 percent for alternative resources.
- Some non-TANF applicants were required to conduct up-front job search in 14 percent of offices. The requirement was usually applicable to able-bodied adults without dependents (13 percent) and sometimes to all mandatory work registrants (10 percent).

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<sup>3</sup> While a large proportion of offices had lump sum diversion policies available, relatively few households received such payments in June 2000.



FSP eligibility rules for the elderly and disabled allow a special deduction from income for the costs of medical care and medications. National statistics show that the deduction is rarely used, perhaps because of the complexity of the rule or the difficulty of documenting medical expenses.

- To ensure that caseworkers understood the special rules, 69 percent of offices had held special training sessions, 47 percent had developed simplified guides for caseworkers, and 8 percent made this issue a topic in staff meetings.
- To help their elderly and disabled clients use the deduction, caseworkers in 92 percent of offices reported providing written or oral information, 48 percent called medical providers or pharmacists directly, and 18 percent helped applicants review medical receipts. Special assistance was more common in offices with fewer than 2,000 cases.

Some elements of the application process are designed to prevent error or fraud in the food stamp benefits awarded. Some of these procedures may require action by the applicant (e.g., obtaining documents), and some may be perceived as embarrassing or harmful to the individual's reputation (e.g., contacts with employers) or as invasive or intimidating (e.g., fingerprinting).

- Special forms usually had to be filled out by third parties to verify TANF applicants' income (56 percent of offices), household circumstances (45 percent), or shelter costs (37 percent). Thirty percent of offices required no third-party forms for TANF applicants, while 22 percent required forms for all three types of verification. Third party income verification was somewhat less common for non-TANF applicants, with 45 percent of offices usually requiring it.
- Caseworkers routinely contacted third parties to verify one or more of these same three topics (income, household circumstances, and shelter costs) for TANF applicants in 45 percent of offices. No third-party contacts were usually made for TANF applicants in 55 percent of offices, while all three topics involved third-party contacts in 12 percent. Third-party contacts for income verification were somewhat less common for non-TANF applicants. No third-party contacts were routinely made for non-TANF applicants in 62 percent of offices; 10 percent of offices used third-party contacts for all three items.
- For clients applying for TANF as well as food stamp benefits, 50 percent of offices required third-party verifications of topics other than income, household circumstances, and shelter costs.
- When some required verification documents are missing at the end of the 30 day processing period, most offices (77 percent) notified the applicant of the missing item before denying the application, but 22 percent proceeded to an automatic denial.
- Fraud investigations involving unscheduled home visits were conducted in 49 percent of offices, with 13 percent reporting such investigations for at least a quarter of all applications. These investigations were much more common in larger than smaller offices and more common for households whose expenses exceeded their income and for households whose household composition or income was questionable.
- Fingerprinting or finger imaging was required for at least some food stamp applicants in 23 percent of offices, and for all food stamp applicants in 18 percent. This practice was significantly more common offices with caseloads over 2,000.

## Approach to Multivariate Analysis

The model of the probability of completing the application process needs to take into account variations in local office practice that may affect the applicant's perception of how difficult or burdensome the process is. Because the list of varying practices is so long, however, it is necessary to select among practices or to combine multiple practices in summary index variables. In addition, many practices apply only to some households—such as elderly and disabled, or TANF applicants—and useful measures should interact the practice with household characteristics. For example, an office's job search requirements may be applicable only for households applying for TANF as well as food stamp benefits, so the appropriate measure must distinguish between households that are applying for TANF *and* are in an office requiring TANF job search and households that either are not applying for TANF or are applying in an office with no job search requirement.<sup>4</sup>

For the analysis, we combine information on *required trips and meetings* into a single indicator that clients needed to attend a pre-interview meeting or to visit the office more than once in the course of being certified. This measure is defined separately for TANF and non-TANF applicants. An indicator of whether walk-in appointments were allowed is also included. Regarding *diversion policies*, indicators are included for the presence of a TANF lump sum option, a requirement to seek alternative resources, a TANF job search requirement, and a non-TANF job search requirement (each defined only for the appropriate group). To represent practices regarding the *medical deduction for elderly or disabled applicants*, we use an indicator of whether caseworkers routinely called medical providers or pharmacists directly to get information on medical expenses (defined only for elderly and disabled applicants). *Third party verification* practices are represented by two indices. One indicates how many of the three verification topics (income, household circumstances, and shelter costs) involved getting third parties to submit forms. The other indicates the number of topics involving caseworker contact with third parties. Finally, we include indicators for whether the office conducted any *home visits* or did any *fingerprinting*.

## Interim Participation Requirements

Among households who are actively receiving food stamp benefits, it is far more common to end their FSP participation in a recertification month than an interim month. Still, in any given month, 2.4 percent of households in an interim month leave the program. Some exit because their situation changed in a way that would make them ineligible and some for other reasons that may not have changed their circumstantial eligibility. We do not know what proportion fell in each of these categories, and this study did not interview participants who exited in interim months.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> Whether potential TANF applicants (i.e. households with dependent children under age 18 that are not already receiving TANF) actually do file a TANF application could be affected by the office's policies. Potential TANF applicants that decide not to apply for TANF, as well as actual TANF applicants, might be discouraged from applying for food stamps by TANF diversion or job search requirements. Hence, potential rather than actual TANF application was interacted with the relevant policy variables.

<sup>5</sup> A six-State study of the FSP negative action Quality Control system found that 79 percent of cases terminated in interim months failed to comply with all procedural requirements and 21 percent terminated due to circumstantial ineligibility (Mills et al., 1990). The study could not, however, analyze whether households that closed for procedural reasons were also circumstantially ineligible. In the current study, we collected information on a sample of 71 cases that failed to complete recertification requirements. All but 4 (6 percent) of the cases were apparently still circumstantially eligible for food stamps when they

Whatever the overall frequency of interim exits by circumstantially eligible households, we expect exits to be more likely when the households perceive the requirements for continued participation to be burdensome or onerous, or when they perceive the benefit to be too small to justify the effort of continued participation.

### **Local Office Practices**

Local office practices that might influence perceived burden of continued participation include requirements for participant action, such as reporting household information or participating in employment-related programs.

- At the time of the local office survey, half of the local offices reported having a mandatory periodic reporting requirement for some cases. This included 28 percent of offices that used monthly reporting and 29 percent that used quarterly reporting. Other offices, rather than requiring reports at specified intervals, required participants to report specified types of changes in circumstances whenever such changes occurred. Both monthly and quarterly reporting requirements were applicable mainly to households with earnings and infrequently to other kinds of households.
- When a household fails to submit a required monthly or quarterly report on time, most offices reported sending a notice instructing the client to report within a specified time period. In 12 percent of offices, however, the case was automatically closed.
- Caseworkers reported that 69 percent of offices had a Food Stamp Employment and Training (FSET) program available. The program was usually available to non-TANF non-ABAWD cases as well as ABAWDs.
- In 33 percent of offices, FSET participation was required as a condition of eligibility for some non-TANF non-ABAWD households.
- The ABAWD work requirement was applicable in 69 percent of offices and waived in 31 percent; 14 percent had the work requirement but no FSET services.
- Among offices with ABAWD work requirements, most offices reported no follow-up with ABAWDs who had reached their time limit (59 percent). Other offices sent written notices (31 percent) or made telephone calls (12 percent) to explain how the household might regain eligibility.

Policies that could reduce or end participants' food stamp benefits, such as sanctions or time limits, might lead participants to see a lower value in continued participation. FSP/TANF participants who leave TANF may similarly feel that continuing with food stamp benefits alone is not worth much effort. Local practices regarding the actions necessary to maintain food stamp benefits may consequently affect participation.

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terminated, according to income and asset information collected through telephone and in-person interviews. The survey did not, however, collect information on whether households were ineligible due to procedural violations.

- States have the discretion to impose food stamp sanctions on TANF/FSP participants who fail to comply with TANF rules. This practice was employed in 58 percent of offices, with 55 percent applying sanctions for non-compliance with TANF work requirements and 25 percent sanctioning non-compliance with other TANF rules.
- Eighteen percent of offices applied sanctions to non-TANF households failing to comply with child support requirements.
- When FSP/TANF households exit the TANF program, they may be required to visit the food stamp office within a month to have their benefit adjusted, be recertified, or reapply for benefits. Twenty-five percent of offices reported applying such requirements for cases that lost their TANF benefits due to full-family sanctions, 22 percent for cases exiting due to employment or other reasons, and 8 percent for cases reaching the TANF time limit.

### **Approach to the Multivariate Analysis**

Because this study is principally concerned about circumstantially eligible households, and the available data do not allow us to determine circumstantial eligibility for most households who left the FSP in interim months, Chapter 8 does not include multivariate analysis on this topic. However, Appendix D presents models of the probability of closing versus continuing to receive benefits in which the sample includes all households who exited the program. The main model includes a term indicating whether the month is an interim month or a recertification month. This term is interacted with variables representing the practices described above—that is, each practice variable is conditional on the household being in an interim month.

The model includes predictor variables intended to represent all of the dimensions of local office practice identified above. The measures of periodic reporting, one for monthly reporting and one for quarterly reporting, are tailored to a household characteristics (e.g., TANF status, presence of earnings) to indicate whether the household was subject to monthly or quarterly reporting in its particular office. Two indicators of FSET services are included: availability of any FSET services, and participation requirement, given households' characteristics. A single measure of presence of any food stamp sanctions for any TANF violations is used.

### **Recertification Requirements**

Recertification requirements are largely similar to initial certification requirements. The main differences are that some requirements do not have to be repeated (e.g. fingerprinting), and eligibility interviews are nearly always prescheduled. Given the participant's familiarity with the process, it is somewhat surprising that a larger proportion of the households exiting the program in the recertification month failed to complete the recertification process. Many of those households cited confusion or difficulty with the process, with particular emphasis on the verification requirements. Some cited having to do recertifications frequently as an obstacle. Others mentioned features of the program that were not specific to recertification, such as periodic reporting requirements. For these people, the recertification was apparently a convenient point to stop participating.

Whether eligible households continue to receive food stamp benefits after a recertification month may be influenced in part by practices that make the recertification process more/less difficult or convenient for the recipient. In addition, we expect that continued participation may be influenced by

routine participation requirements, such as periodic reporting or participation in employment-related programs. These requirements may pose a burden that discourages participation, and failure to meet the requirements may lead to sanctions, including termination.

Local offices exercise discretion not only in the structure of the recertification procedure, but in the frequency with which each case is recertified—households with shorter certification periods are recertified more frequently. Because recertification requires the household to complete a more complicated and demanding process than is required in interim months, we expect households to be more likely to stop participating in a recertification month than an interim month.

### **Local Office Practices**

Apart from practices described previously, the local office survey examined only two practices that were specific to the structure of the recertification process: whether participants were required to come to the food stamp office for a recertification interview and, for those required to appear, what happened if the participant missed the appointment.

- Telephone or at-home interviews were routinely offered to persons with disabilities and the elderly in 70 percent and 54 percent of offices, respectively. Smaller numbers of offices offered this opportunity to households with transportation problems (16 percent), homebound or hospitalized clients (14 percent), and clients with work-related scheduling conflicts (7 percent).
- When participants missed recertification appointments, 33 percent of offices automatically closed the case. Most other offices either automatically rescheduled the appointment (10 percent) or notified the client to do so (51 percent).

Another key policy issue concerns the frequency with which recertifications are required. States and local offices have considerable discretion to set the length of certification periods, with longer periods generally assigned to types of cases whose circumstances are expected to be stable (e.g., elderly and disabled persons) and shorter periods for more volatile cases (e.g., ABAWDs). Certification policies reported by supervisors varied considerably across local offices, as illustrated by the following examples.

- For elderly or disabled clients, 17 percent of offices used certification periods of more than 12 months and 76 percent used 7–12 month periods.
- For TANF cases without earnings, 58 percent of offices usually set 4–6 month certification periods, but 11 percent used shorter periods and 31 percent used longer ones.
- Among offices in which ABAWDs were subject to time limits, 73 percent of offices used 1–3 month certification periods and 37 percent used longer certification periods.

### **Approach to the Multivariate Analysis**

Because the available data do not indicate circumstantial eligibility for many of the sample households who left the FSP in their recertification month, closures at recertification are not analyzed in Chapter 8. Appendix D presents models exploring the relationship between office practices and all closures at recertification, not distinguishing between eligible and ineligible households. As described

previously, the main model examines the probability that a participating household will continue or not continue to receive benefits in a given month, with a term indicating whether it is a recertification month. Recertification practices are interacted with the recertification month term.

The local office requirement for office visits is represented by a variable indicating whether the individual is in a group for which telephone or at-home interviews are allowed. For the treatment of missed appointments, we use an indicator of whether cases that miss appointments are automatically closed. We also include a number of variables discussed previously to capture dimensions such as the difficulty of getting to the office, staff attitudes, and verification policies. Because the survey data suggested that participants who were unhappy with routine reporting or participation requirements may have chosen not to pursue recertification, we include those interim-month practices in the recertification portion of the model as well.

Certification length is represented by in the model by two variables: the indicator of whether the month is an interim or recertification month, and the measure of the length of the certification period.<sup>6</sup> The coefficient on the recertification month term indicates the extent to which cases are more or less likely to continue participating in a recertification month than an interim month. The certification length term, which is conditional on being in a recertification month, indicates whether this probability increases with certification length, testing whether participants with short recertification periods are less likely to complete the recertification process.

## Summary

Although the Food Stamp Program is a national program, with a uniform set of rules governing eligibility and benefit amounts, local administration of the program varies in ways that might affect participation. This chapter has summarized about 50 distinct dimensions of administrative variation identified by the local office supervisor and caseworker surveys. The more detailed data presented in Gabor et al. show an even greater array of differing practices.

The variations in local practice are expected to affect household participation in several ways. The extent of outreach, for example, may determine whether a nonparticipant knows enough about the FSP to understand that his or her household might be eligible for benefits. The structure of the application process may determine whether the household finds it too confusing, difficult, or unpleasant to continue. Staff attitudes may suffuse all office operations, encouraging or discouraging households in their participation decisions.

Some of the practices that may affect participation are related to changes introduced by the 1996 welfare reform legislation. Examples include TANF diversion practices and time limits for ABAWDS. The majority of the practices identified, however, have long been matters of State or local discretion and are not directly connected to changes at the Federal level.

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<sup>6</sup> The length of the certification period was estimated using the FY 2000 FSP Integrated Quality Control System Database. For each State in the study sample, the frequency distribution of certification lengths was calculated for each of 10 case profiles. All individuals were assigned the mean certification period length found for their case profile within their State. The certification period lengths for each State are shown in Appendix C, table C.2.

For most practices, one can readily hypothesize the direction but not the magnitude of an effect on participation. For example, we would expect that a requirement for applicants to be fingerprinted would not encourage participation, and might—or might not—discourage it. But given such a large number of practices that *might* encourage or discourage participation, it is important to learn which ones actually do so. Local offices cannot simply adopt all practices that might encourage participation; they must also attempt to maximize the accuracy of their eligibility and benefit decisions, minimize administrative cost, meet processing deadlines, and comply with federal and State regulations. Although this study cannot address those tradeoffs, Chapter 8 presents initial analyses of the links between local office practices and selected household participation behaviors.

# Chapter 8

## Impact of Local Food Stamp Office Policies and Practices on Selected Aspects of Participation

In this chapter we present a pair of multivariate models that relate food stamp application behavior by eligible households to local office policies and practices, household characteristics, and contextual variables. The sections below describe the models to be estimated and present the results for each model in turn.

### Models Estimated

Local office policies and practices were hypothesized to affect particular aspects of FSP participation, as described in Chapter 7:

- *Whether eligible nonparticipating households believe they might be eligible for food stamps* could be affected by outreach activities.
- *Whether households that contact the office complete the food stamp application process* could be affected by logistical considerations (such as office hours and availability of public transportation), subjective considerations (office ambience, supervisor attitudes), availability of information (such as videos and pamphlets), and specific local office application procedures (such as TANF diversion and third-party verification of documentation) and participation requirements (such as periodic reporting or employment and training).

In addition, whether households that are approved for food stamps continue to receive food stamps could be affected by a variety of local office policies and practices, including required frequency of recertification. This chapter does not include models for continuation in interim and recertification months, however, because the available data do not allow us to distinguish clearly between circumstantially eligible and ineligible households. Models estimating the effect of policies on continued participation can be found in Appendix D.<sup>1</sup>

Most of the measures of these policies were taken from the supervisor and caseworker surveys. The exceptions were the presence of videotapes in the reception area, the presence of pamphlets and brochures in the reception area, office ambience, and child friendliness, measures of which were based on unobtrusive observations; and certification period length, which was calculated from the FY 2000 Food Stamp Program Integrated Quality Control Database.<sup>2</sup> Many of the policies considered are relevant only for households with particular characteristics, such as earned income, TANF benefit

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<sup>1</sup> Local office policies and practices could also affect the likelihood that households that think they may be eligible contact the food stamp office. We were, however, unable to estimate a satisfactory model in this area. See Appendix D for details.

<sup>2</sup> The distribution of certification lengths was analyzed by State for each of 10 types of households, and each household was assigned the corresponding expected value. These means are shown in table C.2 in Appendix C.



receipt, presence of young children, and so on. These policies appear in the model interacted with the appropriate characteristics. Policy measures considered for inclusion in the models are listed and described in table 8.1. The samples included in the models are summarized in table 8.2.

The models discussed in this chapter include a wide array of policy variables. This approach was taken, rather than a more parsimonious one, because of a desire to use the rich data on policies and practices to explore the potential effects of many possible influences, including such hard-to-measure conditions as office ambience and supervisor attitudes. Policy measures that were similar were combined to the extent possible, either by averaging items to develop a measure of intensity for a set of related practices, or else by creating indicators that offices used one or more of a list of related practices. Even so, the number of policies to be considered in some models was large. To test that the models were not failing to find significant effects as a result of the large number of policies considered simultaneously, auxiliary models were also examined that included only one policy variable at a time. The results were nearly always consistent, increasing our confidence in the models presented here. We ultimately excluded “superfluous” policy measures from our final models, i.e., measures for which the standard errors substantially exceeded the estimated coefficients, in order to increase the precision of the estimated coefficients of interest.<sup>3</sup>

In addition to the policy measures, two other types of variables are included in the models: household characteristics and contextual variables. Household characteristics were obtained from case record abstractions or surveys. They include:

- Demographics of case head (indicators for gender, age, marital status, and race/ethnicity)<sup>4</sup>;
- “ABAWD-like” status<sup>5</sup>;
- Presence of children (indicators for children under age 5 and under age 18);
- Measures of resources (presence of earnings, presence of assets, income under FPL); and
- Benefit receipt (current receipt of TANF, previous receipt of food stamps).<sup>6</sup>

Contextual variables, which describe the county in which the office is located, include:

- The county unemployment rate
- A rural/urban indicator

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<sup>3</sup> The criterion for inclusion was generally that the magnitude of the estimated coefficient be at least 0.75 times its standard error. The full models appear in Appendix D.

<sup>4</sup> Excluded categories are female, age 54 and under, ever married, and white non-Hispanic.

<sup>5</sup> It is not possible to determine with certainty whether a case with given characteristics would have been subject to ABAWD time limits in a given office in June 2000. Offices differed in how they exempted cases based on presence of dependent children, employment status, and other factors. We identified “ABAWD-like” cases as childless households containing at least one able-bodied adult aged 18 to 50, and households with dependent children containing at least two able-bodied adults aged 18 to 50.

<sup>6</sup> Several additional characteristics were included in the model of perceived eligibility to identify groups that were specifically targeted for outreach in some localities: presence of any non-citizens, presence of any elderly household members, presence of any disabled household members, and current or previous receipt of AFDC/TANF. Other targeted groups were already identified by indicators for presence of earnings and ABAWD-like status.

**Table 8.1—Policy measures**

<b>Domain</b>	<b>Policy</b>	<b>Measure</b>
Outreach	Local office outreach	Indicator that some outreach is conducted by local food stamp office
	Community group outreach	Indicator that some outreach is conducted by local community groups
	Coordination with MA/SCHIP	Indicator that outreach is coordinated between Food Stamp Program and Medicaid/SCHIP
	Intensity of outreach	Number of modes of outreach used in local area (0 to 9, scaled 0 to 1)
	Targeted personal outreach	Indicator that household is in a group specially targeted for outreach in local area
	Number of targeted groups	Number of categories that local office targets for outreach
Logistical considerations	Limited hours of operation	Indicator that eligibility interviews are available only between the hours of 8 AM and 5 PM, Monday to Friday, interacted with presence of earners
	Child care available	Indicator that child care is available at local office, interacted with presence of young children (under age 5)
	Clients asked to leave children home	Indicator that clients are asked to leave their children home, interacted with presence of young children (under age 5)
	Child-friendliness	Number of other child-friendly features (0 to 3, scaled 0 to 1), interacted with presence of young children (under age 5)
	Public transportation	Indicator that office is served by public transportation
	Transportation assistance	Indicator that office provides transportation assistance when needed
	Drop-box available	Indicator of presence of drop-box for completed applications and documentation
Subjective considerations	Negative ambience	Indicator of not enough seats in waiting room, or waiting times of 5+ minutes to see receptionist
	Positive supervisor attitudes	Supervisor's positive attitudes with respect to receipt of food stamps by TANF leavers, immigrants, general population (0 to 3, scaled 0 to 1)
Availability of information	Videotapes	Indicator that informational videotapes are shown in reception area
	Pamphlets and brochures	Indicator that informational pamphlets and/or brochures are available in reception area

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**Table 8.1—Policy measures—Continued**

<b>Domain</b>	<b>Policy</b>	<b>Measure</b>
Certification requirements	Fingerprinting	Indicator that fingerprinting required of all applicants
	Third party verification: forms	Number of types of third parties from whom verification forms are required, specific to TANF <i>versus</i> non-TANF (0 to 3, scaled 0 to 1)
	Third party verification: contacts	Number of types of third parties who are contacted by the caseworker for verification, specific to TANF <i>versus</i> non-TANF cases (0 to 3, scaled 0 to 1)
	Medical deduction assistance	Indicator that caseworker helps elderly or disabled applicants obtain documentation for medical expense deduction
	Home visits	Indicator that up-front home visits are conducted for fraud investigation
	Extra trips, visits, meetings	Indicator that more than one office visit, visits to another building, or a pre-interview meeting is required
	TANF diversion: lump-sum	Indicator that TANF-eligible applicants are offered lump-sum payment in lieu of TANF benefits, interacted with TANF eligibility
	TANF diversion: alternative resources	Indicator that TANF-eligible applicants are required to explore alternative resources before being approved for TANF benefits, interacted with TANF eligibility
	Job search requirement	Indicator of job search requirement for non-elderly, non-disabled case members, specific to TANF <i>versus</i> non-TANF cases
	Only prescheduled interviews	Indicator that certification interview must be prescheduled, cannot be walk-in
Serious consequences for missing prescheduled interviews	0 if walk-in interviews, 1/3 if caseworker automatically reschedules or notifies client to reschedule, 2/3 if kept pending or sent to supervisor, 1 if application automatically denied	
Ongoing participation requirements	Monthly reporting	Indicator that household is in a group that must file monthly reports
	Quarterly reporting	Indicator that household is in a group that must file quarterly reports
	Employment and training services available	Indicator that office offers employment and training services for non-ABAWD households
	Employment and training requirements	Indicator that office has any employment and training requirements, specific for ABAWDs and other types of non-TANF households
	TANF sanctions affect FS benefits	Indicator that TANF work or nonwork sanctions lead to food stamp benefit reduction or case closure, interacted with TANF participation

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**Table 8.1—Policy measures—Continued**

Domain	Policy	Measure
	TANF closures require FS action	Indicator that client needs to come to the office within a month of TANF closure in order to maintain food stamp benefits, interacted with TANF participation
	Time limit for ABAWDs	Indicator that office has time limits for ABAWDs, interacted with ABAWD status
	Certification period length	Expected number of months in certification period, conditional on case characteristics

**Table 8.2—Analysis samples for multivariate models**

Model	Types of households included	Affirmative responses
Household thinks it may be eligible (given that it apparently is eligible but is not participating)	Eligible nonparticipants, including applicants	Nonparticipants who reportedly think they might be eligible, applicants
Apparently eligible household completes FSP application process (given that it contacts the local FSP office)	Applicants, near applicants <sup>a</sup>	Approved applicants

<sup>a</sup> Near applicants are defined as households that contacted the food stamp office but did not file an application. They were identified in the RDD sample of eligible nonparticipants.

- Regional indicators (North, Midwest, and West).<sup>7</sup>

The models describe dichotomous outcomes for households, such as completing or not completing an application. Office policies and contextual variables are included in the models as attributes of the households. Use of the SAS procedure GENMOD and the SUDAAN procedure LOGISTIC, with observations nested by office and stratified to reflect sample construction, ensured the correct calculation of standard errors. The statistical methods used are described in detail in Appendix C.

<sup>7</sup> Excluded region is the South. This standard four-way categorization was used rather than the FNS set of seven regions in consideration of the possibility that some office policies or practices could be linked to FNS region and their effects obscured if FNS regional indicators were also in the model. Among the States included in this study, the North comprised Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, and Rhode Island; the South comprised Alabama, Arkansas, District of Columbia, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maryland, Mississippi, North Carolina, Oklahoma, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, Virginia, and West Virginia; the Midwest comprised Illinois, Indiana, Kansas, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, Ohio, and Wisconsin; and the West comprised Arizona, California, Colorado, Idaho, Montana, New Mexico, Oregon, Utah, and Washington.

## Awareness of Eligibility

Among households that were apparently eligible to receive food stamps, but were not doing so, about half (49 percent) were aware that they might be eligible. Local offices and community groups engage in a variety of activities to raise the consciousness of eligible households with regard to the Food Stamp Program. These include, for example, articles in newspapers, public service announcements on radio or television, telephone hotlines, presentations to community groups, direct mailings, and telephone calls to former recipients.

The model included six measures of outreach activity. The first two measures were indicators of whether any outreach activity was carried out by the local food stamp office or community groups, respectively. Intensity of outreach was measured by the number of modes used, ranging from 0 to 9 and scaled 0 to 1 for convenience. The model included an indicator of whether FSP outreach was coordinated with Medicaid/SCHIP, and two measures of targeting. One targeting measure was an indicator that a particular household was targeted for outreach, which (conditional on its characteristics) should increase its awareness of eligibility. The second targeting measure was a count of the number of groups targeted by the local office; a larger number of targeted groups might indicate a dilution of outreach efforts and reduce the likelihood that a particular targeted household was aware of its eligibility.

The model was estimated using data on nonparticipants from the nonparticipant survey and data on applicants from the applicant survey and record abstraction. Table 8.3 shows the results, with results for policy variables shown in *italics* and statistically significant results ( $p < 0.10$ ) shown in **bold**.

The analysis indicates that employing a larger number of outreach modes increased the likelihood that households thought they might be eligible ( $p < 0.01$ ).<sup>8</sup> We interpret this result as indicating a positive return to increasing the scope or intensity of information dissemination.

The model provides no evidence that targeted outreach was more effective than other forms. Coordinating outreach efforts with Medicaid/SCHIP was found to significantly reduce the likelihood that a household believed it was eligible, by 16 percentage points.<sup>9</sup> This finding might indicate that

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<sup>8</sup> We have not attempted to calculate a percentage point effect of the number of modes used. The number of types of outreach is only a rough proxy for outreach intensity. We do not assume that intensity increased by a fixed amount per mode.

<sup>9</sup> For policies that potentially affected all clients, and were not interacted with household characteristics, impacts were estimated as follows:

Let  $f$  = frequency of policy in the weighted sample

$p$  = overall mean of dependent variable in the weighted sample

$p_1$  = mean of dependent variable, in the presence of the policy

$p_0$  = mean of dependent variable, in the absence of the policy

Then we note that

$$p = p_1 f + p_0 (1 - f),$$

and the desired estimate is

$$p_1 - p_0.$$

Furthermore, if we denote the logistic of  $p_1$  and  $p_0$  by  $m_1$  and  $m_0$ , respectively, and the coefficient on the policy indicator in the logistic regression as  $b$ , then we have

such joint outreach activities can sometimes dilute the message about food stamps, or possibly confuse households that are eligible for one but not the other.

Several personal characteristics were associated with the likelihood that an apparently eligible household thought it might be eligible for food stamps. Households with Hispanic heads were significantly less likely, while those without assets and with income under the federal poverty level were more likely to think they might be eligible. The latter two results reflect the universal awareness that food stamps are means-tested. Two groups of households that are often targeted for outreach were significantly less likely to think they were eligible: those with elderly members, and those containing apparent ABAWDs.

The results regarding household characteristics may be compared with the bivariate analyses in Chapter 3. The two key results, that the absence of assets and low household income were significantly associated with households being more likely to think they might be eligible, were found in both the descriptive and the multivariate analysis. While both approaches found that, compared to non-Hispanic whites, blacks tended to be more likely, and Hispanics less likely, to think they might be eligible, only the difference between blacks and whites was statistically significant in the bivariate comparisons, and only the difference between whites and Hispanics was significant in the multivariate model. In addition, former food stamp recipients were significantly more likely than other households to think they might be eligible in the bivariate comparisons, but not in the multivariate analysis, after controlling for such characteristics as income and assets.

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$$\begin{aligned} p_1 &= \exp(m_1) / (1 + \exp(m_1)), \\ p_0 &= \exp(m_0) / (1 + \exp(m_0)), \text{ and} \\ m_1 &= m_0 + b. \end{aligned}$$

This system of equations can be solved numerically (not analytically) to yield the desired estimates of  $p_1$ ,  $p_0$ , and their difference.

Outreach was coordinated with Medicaid/SCHIP used in offices that served 63.7 percent of the sample, and the mean proportion was 49.0 percent. So we have  $f=0.637$ ,  $p=0.490$ ,  $b=-0.658$  (from table 8.3), from which we calculate  $p_1=0.431$ ,  $p_0=0.594$ , and  $p_1-p_0 = -16.3$  percentage points. (Solution obtained via SAS procedure MODEL.)

For policies that affect only a subset of the population, the value used for  $p$  is the mean of the dependent variable for the subset (e.g., households with children under age 5).

**Table 8.3—Logistic model of awareness of eligibility**

	Coefficient (standard error)
<b>Policy variables</b>	
<i>Number of modes of outreach, scaled 0-1</i>	<b>1.684***</b> (0.489)
<i>Outreach coordinated with Medicaid/SCHIP</i>	<b>-0.658**</b> (0.277)
<b>Contextual variables</b>	
County unemployment rate in 1999	-0.022 (0.033)
Office located in urban area	-0.231 (0.229)
Office located in Northern State	-0.172 (0.497)
Office located in Midwestern State	0.311 (0.262)
Office located in Western State	-0.197 (0.295)
<b>Household characteristics</b>	
Male head of household	0.171 (0.218)
Black head of household	0.191 (0.263)
<b>Hispanic head of household</b>	<b>-0.396*</b> (0.227)
Head of household never married	-0.006 (0.332)
Current TANF receipt	-0.753 (0.896)
Prior food stamp receipt	0.212 (0.202)
Household has children under 5	0.161 (0.345)
Household has children under 18	-0.148 (0.269)
Head of household is elderly (≥ 60)	-0.158 (0.419)
Household has earnings	-0.048 (0.205)
<b>Household has some assets</b>	<b>-0.413**</b> (0.199)

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**Table 8.3—Logistic model of awareness of eligibility—Continued**

	Coefficient (standard error)
<b>Household's income is below poverty level</b>	<b>1.075***</b> <b>(0.208)</b>
<b>Household is ABAWD-like</b>	<b>-0.593***</b> <b>(0.213)</b>
<b>Additional potential targeting criteria for outreach</b>	
Household contains any non-citizens	0.163 (0.437)
<b>Household contains any elderly members</b>	<b>-0.661*</b> <b>(0.376)</b>
Household contains any disabled members	0.040 (0.259)
Current or previous AFDC/TANF receipt	-0.087 (0.207)
Intercept	1.229 (0.412)
Mean of dependent variable	0.490
Sample size	2079
Policy measures and their effects shown in <i>italics</i> ; variables with statistically significant effects ( $p < 0.10$ ) shown in <b>bold</b> .	
*** Statistically significant at the 1 percent level.	
** Statistically significant at the 5 percent level.	
* Statistically significant at the 10 percent level.	

## Completing the Application Process

Once a household has contacted the local FSP office, completion of the application process is hypothesized to be most affected by logistical considerations, subjective considerations, availability of information, certification requirements, and ongoing participation requirements. Overall, 78.4 percent of eligible households completed the application process and were approved for benefits.

Based on data from the applicant survey and file abstraction, the factors found to be significant are (table 8.4):

- Restricted office hours for households that include earners ( $p < 0.05$ )
- Positive supervisor attitudes ( $p < 0.10$ ).
- Asking clients to leave children at home, for households with young children ( $p < 0.10$ )
- Fingerprinting of applicants ( $p < 0.01$ )
- Time limits for ABAWDs ( $p < 0.05$ )

The estimated coefficients correspond to sizeable impacts on application completion. These impacts, calculated at the sample means, are –21 percentage points for asking clients with young children to



leave their children at home, -23 percentage points for fingerprinting,<sup>10</sup> and -17 percentage points for time limits for ABAWD-type cases. The estimated effect of restricted office hours for households with earnings is -9 percentage points. Finally, an additional positive response by a supervisor on the three item index is associated with a 10 percentage point increase in the likelihood of application completion.

Nearly two dozen other policies were considered but were not found to have significant effects on application completion. Some of these were deleted from the model presented in table 8.4 because the corresponding standard errors were above our threshold. These included: availability of a drop-box for completed applications and documents, third party verification contact requirements, caseworker assistance to elderly and disabled with medical deductions, home visits for fraud investigation, job search requirements, scheduling of interviews, treatment of missed interview appointments, monthly reporting requirements, availability of application forms prior to meeting with caseworker, brochures and pamphlets in the reception area, and certification length. Others were retained in the model but also did not have significant effects: provision of child care to visitors, an index of child friendliness, availability of public transportation, availability of transportation assistance, shortage of seats and long wait times, informational videotapes in the reception area, third party verification forms, a requirement for extra visits and/or meetings, TANF lump sum payment diversion, TANF alternative resource requirements, and quarterly reporting.

As might have been anticipated, application completion was significantly more likely in counties with higher unemployment rates, i.e., with fewer alternatives for households in need. Of households that contacted the office, completion was significantly less likely among those with some earnings and resembling ABAWDs, and significantly more likely among households with young children and with income below the federal poverty level. These demographic results also correspond to a pattern of households with fewer alternatives being more likely to complete their applications.

The bivariate analyses in Chapter 4 similarly found that households with earnings were significantly less likely to complete the application process, and those with income under the federal poverty level were significantly more likely to do so. Furthermore, the significantly higher rate of completion seen in the bivariate analyses for TANF applicants may correspond to the multivariate result for households with young children. Elderly applicants, though seen in Chapter 4 to be significantly more likely on average to complete their applications, were not found to be so after controlling for their household characteristics and other factors.

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<sup>10</sup> In their report on biometric identification technology, Sticha et al. (1999) conclude that the best available estimate of the impact of a finger-imaging requirement on program participation is that obtained by Ernst and Young (1995) in their study of the automated fingerprint image reporting and match system for AFDC recipients in Los Angeles. This impact, 1.3 percent, includes both fraud reduction and deterrence of eligible householders.

**Table 8.4—Logistic model of application completion**

	Coefficient (standard error)
<b>Policy variables</b>	
<i>Office open only Monday to Friday, 8 to 5 x household includes earners</i>	<b>-0.448**</b> (0.206)
<i>Children not allowed in office x household includes children under 5</i>	<b>-1.039*</b> (0.567)
<i>Child care provided to office visitors x household includes children under 5</i>	-0.266 (0.470)
<i>Index of child friendliness of office x household includes children under 5</i>	-0.877 (0.608)
<i>Public transportation goes near office</i>	0.302 (0.333)
<i>Transportation assistance to office offered</i>	0.433 (0.297)
<i>Long wait times or shortage of seats in reception area</i>	-0.454 (0.355)
<i>Informational videotapes in reception area</i>	0.406 (0.314)
<b>Positive supervisor attitudes</b>	<b>1.522*</b> (0.860)
<b>Fingerprint applicants of household type (TANF versus non-TANF)</b>	<b>-1.170***</b> (0.305)
<i>Third party verification forms required, by household type (TANF versus non-TANF)</i>	0.306 (0.316)
<i>More than one visit, visits to other building, or pre-interview meeting required to complete application, by household type (TANF versus non-TANF)</i>	0.348 (0.417)
<i>TANF diversion x potential TANF applicant: lump sum</i>	0.322 (0.376)
<i>TANF diversion x potential TANF applicant: alternative resources</i>	0.788 (0.686)
<b>ABAWDs subject to time limits x ABAWD-type household</b>	<b>-0.990**</b> (0.413)
<i>Quarterly reporting required</i>	-0.308 (0.320)

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**Table 8.4—Logistic model of application completion—Continued**

	Coefficient (standard error)
<b>Contextual variables</b>	
<b>County unemployment rate in 1999</b>	<b>0.250***</b> <b>(0.076)</b>
Office located in urban area	-0.193 (0.251)
<b>Office located in Northern State</b>	<b>-0.677*</b> <b>(0.347)</b>
Office located in Midwestern State	-0.346 (0.309)
Office located in Western State	-0.366 (0.310)
<b>Household characteristics</b>	
Male head of household	0.238 (0.294)
Black head of household	-0.343 (0.301)
Hispanic head of household	-0.193 (0.455)
Head of household never married	-0.182 (0.269)
TANF recipient	0.430 (0.480)
Prior FSP recipient	0.271 (0.251)
<b>Household has children under 5</b>	<b>0.993**</b> <b>(0.481)</b>
Household has children under 18	-0.348 (0.432)
Head of household is elderly (≥60)	0.193 (0.431)
<b>Household has earnings</b>	<b>-0.660**</b> <b>(0.266)</b>
Household has some assets	0.070 (0.241)
<b>Household's income is below poverty level</b>	<b>0.903***</b> <b>(0.299)</b>
<b>Household is ABAWD-like</b>	<b>-0.679**</b> <b>(0.335)</b>

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**Table 8.4—Logistic model of application completion—Continued**

	<b>Coefficient (standard error)</b>
Intercept	-1.153 (1.111)
Mean of dependent variable	0.784
Sample size	976

Policy measures and their effects shown in *italics*; variables with statistically significant effects ( $p < 0.10$ ) shown in **bold**.

\*\*\* Statistically significant at the 1 percent level.  
\*\* Statistically significant at the 5 percent level.  
\* Statistically significant at the 10 percent level.

## Conclusions

The survey results reported in Chapter 3 showed that one of the most important reasons that low-income households were not participating in the FSP was that they did not think they were likely to be eligible. The analysis presented here suggests that outreach is a policy tool that can influence such perceptions. Nonparticipants were more likely to think themselves eligible if they lived in areas where relatively intense outreach included the use of multiple modes, such as community presentations, flyers and posters, and public service announcements. The extent of outreach appears to be more important than what agency implements the outreach or whether it is targeted to particular types of households.

These findings are consistent with Food and Nutrition Service policies encouraging the use of outreach, such as “best practice” guidelines and outreach grants (Food and Nutrition Service, 2002). Somewhat surprisingly, however, the analysis found that coordinating food stamp outreach with outreach for Medicaid or SCHIP was negatively associated with perceived eligibility. Such coordination has often been recommended as a means of bringing nonparticipant households into the network of assistance programs, presumably leading to participation for all programs for which the household is eligible. The analysis finding raises the possibility that coordinated outreach may be less effective than focused food stamp outreach in getting households to understand their eligibility for the FSP. Of course, if coordinated outreach succeeds in bringing households into the network, they might be referred to the food stamp agency even though they did not previously think they were eligible. The analysis presented here addresses only the effect on perceptions of eligibility, not the effect on ultimate participation.

Several local office practices were significantly associated with the likelihood that households who actually contacted the food stamp office would complete the application process and be approved for benefits. Households with earnings were more successful where the office offered extended hours, and households with children were less successful where offices discouraged bringing children. Positive supervisor attitudes were associated with higher completion rates, while requiring that all applicants be fingerprinted was negatively linked to completion.

None of these findings is surprising and they are generally consistent with “best practice” guidelines, but they do show some interesting contrasts with the survey results reported in Chapter 4. For

example, only 1 percent of applicants who failed to complete the process mentioned fingerprinting as a reason, while 10 percent cited the difficulty of acquiring documents – yet fingerprinting had a significant effect in the model, while the requirements for documentation did not.

Although we cannot be certain about the source of these differences, several factors seem likely to be at work. First, even if a policy causes many households to drop out of the application process, the modeling approach will not find an effect if the policy does not vary enough across offices to cause real differences in the dropout rate. Documentation requirements, for example, are a virtually universal element of the food stamp application process, and it is quite possible that the local variations in requirements are not sufficient to make a clear difference in the number of people who find the requirement an insurmountable hurdle. Second, people's survey responses may not accurately reflect the factors influencing their behavior for reasons such as recall error, hesitation about mentioning some topics (some might fear that objecting to fingerprinting would suggest they have something to hide), or a phrasing of the survey question that fails to resonate with the respondent's experience. Finally, even where the model shows significant effects, as with supervisor attitudes, the significant variable may be acting as a proxy for other practices that were not measured in the study.

Local office practices may affect not only the likelihood that eligible nonparticipants are approved for food stamp benefits, but also the chances that a circumstantially eligible participating household will leave the program. Data limitations make it impossible to model the probability that households will leave the program while still circumstantially eligible. Nonetheless, a model that did not distinguish between eligible and ineligible households found that the availability of childcare in the food stamp office was significantly related to the probability that households with children would successfully complete the recertification and receive continued benefits (see Appendix D). This practice would not affect the ineligible households because they would be denied benefits whether they completed the recertification or not. It is quite possible that an analysis limited to circumstantially eligible households would identify additional practices that influence their departure.

## **Chapter 9**

# **Conclusions: How Local Offices May Affect the Program's Accessibility to Eligible Households**

About 7.2 million households received food stamp benefits in June 2000. An additional 6.3 million households had income and resources that would have made them eligible, based on participation rates estimated for that fiscal year (Cunyngham, 2002).<sup>1</sup>

The Food Stamp Program is intended to be accessible to all households who are eligible and wish to receive benefits. Some eligible households deliberately choose not to seek food stamp benefits, however. The survey of eligible nonparticipants found that 27 percent, or 1.7 million households, would not apply even if they were certain that they were eligible. These deliberate nonparticipants typically cited a desire not to depend on government assistance or a belief that they did not need it, although many also mentioned some aspect of FSP policy or practice as a reason for not wanting to participate. About 25 percent gave only personal reasons and 72 percent mentioned both personal and program issues. Thus it is reasonable to say that the accessibility of the FSP was not an issue for somewhere between 0.4 million and 1.7 million of the eligible nonparticipating households.

Accessibility was potentially an issue for the remaining 4.6 to 5.9 million eligible nonparticipating households. But the policies and practices affecting accessibility would be different for three different groups of nonparticipant households: those who have no direct contact with the FSP in a given month, those who contact the program with an interest in receiving benefits, and those who exit the program despite continued eligibility.

### **Nonparticipants Who Are Not in Contact with the Program**

Excluding households that say they would not apply for benefits, about 4.6 million eligible nonparticipant households in June 2000 had no contact with the FSP in that month. This was by far the largest group whose nonparticipation might have been influenced by local office policies and practices.

A key hurdle for these nonparticipants was whether they perceived themselves to be eligible for benefits. More than a third believed they were ineligible, another fifth were unsure whether they were eligible, and a few (4 percent) were unaware of the Food Stamp Program. Those who believed themselves ineligible gave some reasons that suggested misunderstanding of program rules, such as the fact that they were employed or had reached their TANF time limit.

Outreach to nonparticipants might provide information on key aspects of the FSP eligibility criteria and thereby help nonparticipants understand their eligibility situation. Outreach activities—conducted by the local food stamp office, other community organizations, or both—were reported in about three-quarters of the areas examined. The multivariate analysis showed that eligible nonparticipants in

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<sup>1</sup> These figures represent food stamp units (all people in a household who eat together) rather than households as sampled in the nonparticipant survey (all people living in a dwelling unit), which could contain more than one food stamp unit.

areas where a greater number of outreach modes were employed (community presentations, public service announcements, etc.) were more likely to be aware of their potential eligibility. The number of modes seems to represent the intensity or breadth of outreach, and hence the likelihood that any given member of the nonparticipant population was reached.

Because so much of the eligible nonparticipant population is not in direct contact with the FSP, it would be very useful for future research to expand upon the limited information that the present study could provide. One would like to know, for example, what outreach modes and levels of intensity are most effective in reaching various segments of the nonparticipant population. It would also be desirable to examine alternative strategies for influencing perceptions of eligibility, such as directly providing information on key eligibility criteria vs. individualized telephone hot-lines or in-person application assistance. The national FSP emphasis on outreach in recent years, exemplified in the outreach grants to States, may make such information particularly useful.

Research on outreach effectiveness should also consider the dynamic nature of the eligible population, where the present study could provide only a static view. Households move into and out of eligibility (see Farrell et al., 2003). At any given time the audience for an outreach message includes some newly eligible households who may not have heard (or paid attention to) any previous outreach, while others have been eligible long enough to have heard the message multiple times. It would be useful to know whether outreach modes and messages are differentially effective for households at differing points in their eligibility spell.

## **Nonparticipants Who Contact the FSP Office**

In June 2000, an estimated 463,000 circumstantially eligible nonparticipant households contacted a food stamp office, and 363,000 were approved for benefits. But 23,000 did not apply for benefits and 57,000<sup>2</sup> applied but did not complete the application process. These 80,000 households may have faced accessibility issues related to the application process.

Applying for food stamp benefits can be a difficult, time-consuming, and perhaps intimidating experience. Applicants who were ultimately approved for benefits reported spending an average of 6.1 hours at the process, with 2.4 required trips to the food stamp office. For most applicants, some information must be obtained from third parties such as employers or landlords. Some applicants receive unscheduled home visits, and some are fingerprinted.

About a quarter of those who abandoned the application process mentioned among their reasons experiences that were related to office policies or practices. They emphasized the need to acquire documents for verification, the length of time before benefits would be received, long waits in the office, and the need to take time off from work or to pay for child or elder care.

Local offices have a great deal of discretion in structuring the procedures and requirements of the application process. The surveys of local office supervisors and caseworkers found more than 30 major areas in which practices varied across offices in ways that were hypothesized to affect the program's accessibility to all or a subset of nonparticipants. The multivariate analysis confirmed the

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<sup>2</sup> This excludes about 20,000 applicants who did not complete the process but said it was because their circumstances had changed and they no longer needed benefits.

proposition that such variations can make a difference, finding that failure to complete the application process was significantly related to the following practices:

- No office hours outside Monday-Friday, 8:00 AM to 5:00 PM
- Fingerprinting of applicants
- Supervisor attitudes less positive toward participation
- Asking clients to leave children at home, for households with young children
- Time-limits for ABAWDs

These findings from the multivariate analysis are plausible and useful, but are probably not the whole story. The significant relationships are all in the expected direction and are consistent with some major themes that have been presented in “promising practices” guidance for improving program access (FNS, 2002), such as “family friendly” arrangements and minimally intrusive verification.

If there is any surprise in these findings, it is that so few of the practices that would be hypothesized to enhance access show statistically significant relationships to household behavior. This probably occurred because the study design was simply not strong enough to capture and disentangle the effects of complicated combinations of practices. Local offices do not adopt a particular practice in isolation, but as part of a procedure that is intended to optimize across the goals of accessibility, program integrity, timeliness, and administrative efficiency. For example, the choice of verification practices involves a potential tradeoff between accessibility and program integrity, and offices may deliberately choose a mix of less intrusive (e.g., no third-party contacts) and more intrusive (e.g., fingerprinting) practices in seeking to balance competing objectives. Findings regarding a single policy in isolation may be misleading if offices avoid one stringent policy but adopt another one instead. Our sample of 109 offices, though quite large for studies of this type, was not sufficient to explore the effects of all combinations of practices, and it even provides limited power for examining large numbers of presumably independent practices. Research using larger samples of offices and households or focusing on narrower sets of practices might reveal more ways in which office practices influence participation.

Note also that the multivariate analysis can find effects only when practices differ across offices—a particular practice might be very difficult and discouraging for applicants, but if all agencies implement it similarly, the multivariate analysis would not find a significant effect. A case in point might be the requirement for applicants to provide documentation of their circumstances. Although 10 percent of people who began but did not complete the application process said that the difficulty of providing documents was one of the reasons for non-completion. Variations in documentation requirements among offices, though included in the model, may have been too small to affect applicant completion rates.

One hypothesis when the study began was that policy changes stemming from welfare reform might have made the application process more difficult or burdensome, or the FSP less appealing, especially for households applying for TANF as well as food stamp benefits. The study provides only limited direct support for this hypothesis, but does not rule it out. A handful of applicants mentioned TANF diversion as a reason for not completing the application process, but none mentioned sanctions or work requirements; the ABAWD time limit had significant effect in the multivariate analysis, but no other welfare reform-related policies were significant in that analysis. More generally, applicants who successfully completed the application process in 2000 reported making an average of 2.4 trips to the



food stamp office and spending 6.1 hours traveling to and dealing with the office, compared to estimates of 1.6 trips and 3.9 hours in the 1996 study. This might reflect an increase in the overall complexity and burden of the application process, but there is no clear link to welfare reform.<sup>3</sup> In any event, the overall applicant dropout rate in 2000 was quite similar to that found in earlier studies, as were the general characteristics of the dropouts and the reasons they gave for failing to complete the application.

Even though we cannot see clear links between welfare reform and the likelihood that eligible households would complete the application process, one cannot dismiss the possibility that welfare reform reduced overall participation by eligible households. Other research has shown that the percentage of eligible households receiving benefits declined sharply in the late 1990s, from 69.2 percent in 1996 to 59.7 percent in 2000 (Cunnyngham, 2003). The economic recovery during this period reduced the number of households whose income and resources met FSP eligibility criteria, but would be expected to have less influence on whether eligible households would participate. It is reasonable to suspect that welfare reform contributed to the declining participation rate even though the effect of specific policies cannot be isolated.

### **Eligible Participants Who Exit the Program**

Some eligible households that received benefits in June 2000 ended their participation in that month and became eligible nonparticipants in July. The study provided only imprecise information on how many of the 383,000 households who exited in that month were circumstantially eligible. We estimated that 123,000 households terminating in their recertification month may have been circumstantially eligible, but the estimate was derived from survey whose response rate was low enough to warrant caution. No data were obtained on the circumstances of households exiting in non-recertification months, but many may have been circumstantially eligible. Even allowing for imprecision, it appears that the eligible participating households who exited the FSP in June 2000 substantially exceeded the number of nonparticipants who contacted the food stamp office but failed to become participants.

Households who failed to complete the recertification usually did not even file a recertification or appear for the recertification interview. Most non-completing households said that some aspect of the recertification process was too difficult, such as providing documentation or missing work, or that they were not sure what they needed to do to complete the process. These reasons are somewhat surprising, since these households had previously completed at least the initial certification process, which is usually more demanding than the recertification. Moreover, more than a quarter of the recertification dropouts said that they believed they were ineligible, despite providing information in the survey that indicated apparent eligibility.

Because the study did not obtain data on circumstantial eligibility for some types of households exiting the program, we could not directly model the effect of local office practices on this aspect of eligible households' participation behavior.

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<sup>3</sup> It would be interesting to examine time estimates separately for TANF and non-TANF households. However, published data for 1996 do not present this information.

One policy whose importance can be seen even without multivariate analysis is the length of the certification period, which determines the frequency with which households are recertified. Nearly a tenth of households who did not complete the recertification mentioned the frequency of recertification as an issue. Participating households who were in their recertification month were far more likely to leave the program than those who were in an interim month. Closures in June 2000—not counting cases that were closed because of excess income or resources—represented 14.3 percent of the cases that were in a recertification month, compared to 2.3 percent of cases in an interim month (derived from table 2.4 and Appendix table B.39). Unless circumstantial ineligibility rates were dramatically different for these two types of households, being in a recertification month substantially increased the likelihood that a circumstantially eligible case would close rather than continue to receive benefits in the following month.

## **The Opportunities to Reduce Nonparticipation among Eligible Households**

If policy makers wish to increase the level of participation by eligible households, the most obvious target is the households who have had no recent contact with the FSP and who would apply for benefits if they believed themselves eligible. This group included more than 4 million households in June 2000—somewhat more than half as many as the number of active participant households in that month. Communicating with these nonparticipant households would be difficult because they are not easy to identify and they are not necessarily the same households from month to month. Nonetheless, increasing these households' understanding of their likely eligibility may be the only way to achieve a substantial reduction in the overall rate of nonparticipation. The State outreach grants and outreach guidance offered since the study period may be useful steps in this direction.

Numbers notwithstanding, a higher program objective may be to avoid discouraging participation by households who have taken action to seek program benefits, including both nonparticipants who contact the office and households who are actively participating. The processes of application and recertification—and to a lesser extent, complying with program requirements in non-recertification months—are hurdles that a sizable number of apparently eligible households fail to surmount. The 2002 Farm Bill and earlier regulatory initiatives introduced changes intended to simplify eligibility rules and the application process. Time and future research will tell whether these changes have effectively lowered the hurdles.

It is important to remember, however, that these processes are not capricious, but are necessary for the program to deliver benefits and to ensure program integrity. Local office practices can adjust the height of the hurdles somewhat, but cannot remove them. Thus while substantial proportions of the application and recertification dropouts cited procedural obstacles, the statistical analysis found few variations in office practices that showed significant effects on the probability that households would complete the processes.

Any effort to increase accessibility through local office practices could benefit from further research on the links between office practices and household behavior. Much of the research to date has been limited to descriptive analysis of households' experiences and stated reasons for their behavior. These analyses can point to practices that may influence participation, but they cannot indicate whether variations in the practices actually affect participation behaviors. Analyses that model participation behaviors have used State-level policy variables, which do not account for differences in office

practices within a State. Such variation is quite substantial: even though the study included only a few offices in each State, we found hardly any policies with no within-State variation.<sup>4</sup>

More focused office-level and household-level research is needed to know how much reduction in non-participation can realistically be achieved, what practices and combinations of practices can have the greatest impact, and how those practices affect goals such as program integrity and administrative costs. Such information would provide invaluable guidance for enhancing the Food Stamp Program's accessibility to eligible households.

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<sup>4</sup> As an illustration, we selected ten practices that were included in dichotomous form in the multivariate models (whether: any outreach was conducted; targeted outreach was conducted; outreach was coordinated with Medicaid/SCHIP; the office had any extended office hours; clients were asked not to bring children to the office; non-TANF clients were fingerprinted; unscheduled home visits were conducted; employment and training services were available to ABAWDS; employment and training requirements existed for non-ABAWDS; and TANF closure requires visiting the food stamp office to continue benefits). For each of the 26 States with 2 or more offices in the sample, we determined how many of the State's sample offices gave the same response. The number of States in which all offices reported the same policy ranged from 6 to 25 across the ten variables, with an average of 12.2. Since 17 of the 26 States had only 2 or 3 offices in the sample, and we selected variables that only allowed a yes/no choice, it is clear that the extent of within-State policy variation was even greater than indicated by this exercise.

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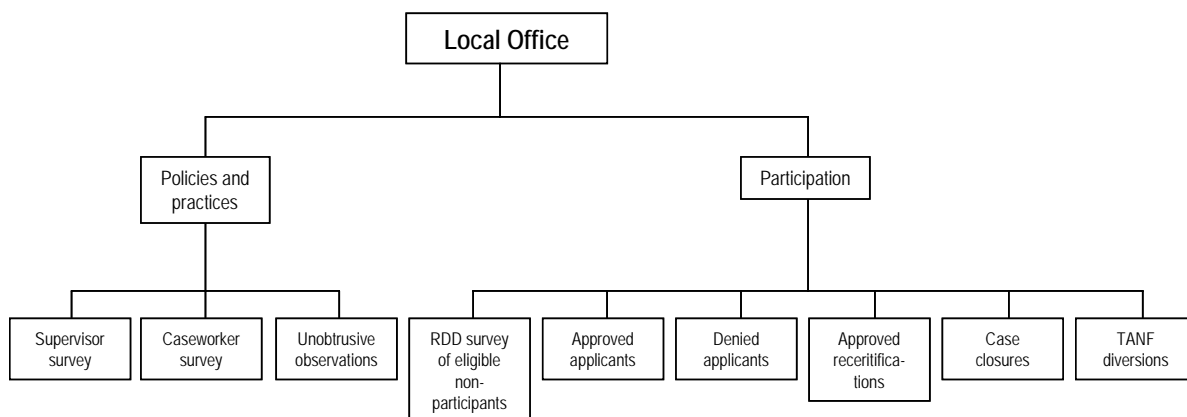
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# Appendix A

## Sample Design and Analysis Weights

This study analyzes data from a nationally representative sample of local food stamp offices and households served by those offices. To obtain these data, the design used a two-stage cluster sampling approach. The first stage led to the selection of a national probability sample of local food stamp offices. Within the sampled offices, second stage samples were drawn and data were collected in two domains: policies and practices, and participation (figure A.1). Data on *policies and practices* came from surveys of local office supervisors and caseworkers, and from unobtrusive observations in and around the offices.<sup>1</sup> Data on *participation* came from a survey of eligible nonparticipants living in the catchment areas of the sampled offices who did not apply for food stamp benefits in the month prior to the study, and from surveys and case record abstractions of five groups of applicants and participants in June 2000: approved applicants, denied applicants, approved recertifications, case closures, and TANF diversions.<sup>2</sup> (This last category could overlap with any of the other participant groups.)

**Figure A.1—Data collection**



The sampling objectives were to achieve national representation, to encompass substantial variation in administrative practices both between States and within States, and to support office-level analyses of the effects of administrative practices on caseload entry and exit. The sampling plan was designed to ensure that most States (among the 48 in the continental US and the District of Columbia) were represented. Maximizing the representation of States was deemed an important consideration, because welfare reforms under PRWORA created distinctive administrative regimes in each State, which may have had important implications for food stamp participation. Appropriate weights were used to make the household samples represent the universe of food stamp-eligible households in its entirety:

<sup>1</sup> These policies and practices are described in Chapter 7 and Gabor et al. (2003).

<sup>2</sup> The eligible nonparticipant survey was conducted between February and June 2001. Households were neither current FSP recipients nor applicants for benefits in the month prior to the survey. We assume that they are similar to eligible nonparticipant households in June 2000.



households that were not participating and did not apply in a given month, approved and denied applicants, ongoing cases in recertification months, and ongoing cases in interim months.

The following sections in this appendix describe the two-stage sample and the construction of the weights used in the analyses:

- The first stage sample (local food stamp offices)
- The second stage sample
  - Caseworker supervisors
  - Caseworkers
  - New applicants, recertifying cases, closed cases
  - TANF diverted cases
  - Expansion sample of ongoing cases in interim months
  - Eligible nonparticipants
- Office, supervisor, and caseworker weights
- Participant household weights
- Eligible nonparticipant household weights

### **First-Stage Sample: Local Food Stamp Offices**

In the first stage sampling, the universe of 3,359 local food stamp offices<sup>3</sup> was stratified by FNS region, and State within region to maximize the diversity of the distribution of sampled offices throughout the various States. Within States, sub-stratification was based on degree of urbanicity, using the OMB definition of Metropolitan Statistical Areas (MSA) to define metropolitan *versus* nonmetropolitan areas. In those instances where the expected number of office selections for an individual State fell below one, neighboring States were placed in frame proximity in order to assure the proportionate representation of the first stage sample with respect to groups of neighboring States. This approach helped ensure that most States had at least one sample office.

Probability-proportional-to-size (PPS) sampling was used to draw a sample of 120 local food stamp offices from the strata, with caseload as the measure of size.<sup>4</sup> Using this methodology, larger offices within a stratum had a greater probability of being selected than smaller offices. The sampled offices were located in 40 States and the District of Columbia. All selected States, with the exception of New York State, agreed to participate in the research study. New York declined to participate due to a pending lawsuit in New York City concerning access to the Food Stamp Program that was scheduled

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<sup>3</sup> A local office is defined as the smallest geographic jurisdiction within which food stamps are administered to all segments of the program population. Thus, within any geographic area, separate sites that served discrete segments of the caseload (for example, cash assistance cases or the elderly) were combined to form one office. We excluded the 430 offices with monthly caseloads below 150 from the sampling frame because of the difficulties in obtaining an adequate sample of applicants. These small offices accounted for only 0.44 percent of the total food stamp caseload.

<sup>4</sup> In some States caseload information was not available by office, and summary caseload data by county was used instead. For those counties that were selected, office and caseload lists were then obtained, and specific offices chosen.

for trial during the data collection period. The final research sample included 109 local food stamp offices, located in 39 States and the District of Columbia.<sup>5</sup>

## **Second Stage Sample: Caseworker Supervisors**

The supervisor survey was designed to collect information on office policies that may affect access to the Food Stamp Program. These policies included those regulating food stamp intake, application processing, and ongoing case maintenance for all different types of households. The objective of the data collection effort was to complete one survey in each sampled office. The level of worker specialization determined the number of supervisors interviewed in each office.

In offices with generic workers, one supervisor was able to answer all the survey questions. In offices in which the caseworkers did not have generic roles and supervisors were therefore specialized based on the types of clients their workers served (for example, households receiving TANF, or elderly cases) or by the portion of the application and eligibility process for which their workers were responsible (for example, intake *versus* ongoing cases), multiple supervisors were interviewed, each about his or her areas of specialization.

Supervisors were selected for interviewing based on their responsibilities. When multiple supervisors had the same responsibilities, the supervisor designated by the office manager as most knowledgeable was interviewed. If the office manager did not designate a specific individual, then the supervisor who had been working at the office the longest was interviewed. A total of 201 supervisors was selected for interviews.

## **Second Stage Sample: Food Stamp Office Caseworkers**

The caseworker survey was designed to collect information regarding caseworker practices. The goal was to obtain two caseworker responses for each set of questions covering particular types of cases. (This was not possible in small offices that did not have two caseworkers handling particular types of cases.) As with the supervisors, the level of worker specialization determined the number of workers interviewed in each office

Caseworkers hired after April 1, 2000 were excluded from the sample frame because of their limited experience in the office. In addition, they may have undergone a training period and not worked a full caseload for very long. All other caseworkers were included in the sampling frame. The list of caseworkers for each office was divided into mutually exclusive, collectively exhaustive groups defined by responsibility. Caseworkers were then randomly selected from each group. A total of 509 caseworkers, an average of 5 workers per office, were sampled.

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<sup>5</sup> Three of the offices initially sampled were determined to be specialized offices—processing initial applications only, or serving only elderly/persons with disabilities or institutional clients—and therefore ineligible for the study. They were replaced with three additional offices. See table 2.1 for summary characteristics of the sampled offices.

## Second-Stage Sample: New Applicants, Recertified Cases, Closed Cases

The second stage participant household samples were drawn directly from pools of new applicants, reapproved cases, and case closures within the sampled local food stamp offices in June 2000. The universe for these food stamp cases included:

- ***New applicants:*** households who filed a food stamp application in June 2000. These households included two subcategories of interest: those whose application was subsequently approved for assistance; and those whose application was not approved, because it was denied by the agency (for failure to meet either a circumstantial or procedural requirement of initial eligibility) or was voluntarily withdrawn by the client prior to an agency decision.
- ***Recertified cases:*** households whose food stamp certification expired in June 2000 and were reapproved for continuing benefits.
- ***Closed cases:*** households whose food stamp benefits ended in June 2000. These included cases that reached the end-month of their certification period and were not approved for continued assistance, and cases that were closed by the agency in the midst of a certification period (interim case closures)—either for failure to comply with some participation requirement such as ABAWD work requirements or monthly reporting, because the household voluntarily withdrew from the program, or because income and/or assets exceeded eligibility limits.

In order to have analytic samples of sufficient size to answer the research questions, a target initial sample size of 2,400 applicants and recipients was needed. The sample allocation relied on stratified sampling within each office to obtain samples of the domains of interest. The allocation oversampled the two new applicant domains in order to have a sufficient number for analysis purposes. Table A.1 shows the sampling plan and the target initial sample sizes by type.

Domain	Target initial sample size	Actual initial sample size
New applicants—approved	800	882
New applicants—not approved	400	400
Recertifying applicants—approved	600	652
Closures	600	821
Total	2,400	2,755

The sampling of four different domains per office required careful control over the sample selection equations. For each domain we first computed an approximate overall sampling fraction. Given the probability of selection of the office, we divided the overall sampling fraction for each domain by the office selection probability to obtain a within-office sampling fraction for each domain. The

reciprocal of this within-office sampling fraction was used as a sampling interval to draw a systematic random sample of applicants from a given domain. The final sample comprised an average of 20 to 25 households in each of the 109 offices.

The samples of new applicants, recertified cases, and closures in June 2000 were drawn from lists provided by the sampled States (or counties). In some instances, due to the structure of a State's management information system, the State was unable to provide files conforming exactly to the required specifications. We anticipated, in some States, that the files would contain some ineligible households. In these cases, we increased sampling rates in order to obtain the desired number of cases in the final sample. The actual initial sample sizes are also shown in table A.1.

## **Second Stage Sample: TANF Diversions**

TANF-diverted applicants, defined as households who entered the TANF application process and were diverted before completing the application process, are a group of particular concern to policy makers to the extent that they may not receive food stamp benefits for which they are eligible. Three types of TANF diversion policies are commonly used to encourage families to avoid becoming TANF recipients:

- *Lump-sum cash benefits* provide a cash payment to help families with short-term emergency needs.
- *Applicant job search* requires some TANF applicants to begin to look for work as a condition of eligibility.
- *Referral to alternative assistance sources*, where caseworkers encourage households to look for other sources of assistance before filing a TANF application.

The TANF-diverted applicants sampled for the current study were those that received lump-sum cash benefits in June 2000. The sample was restricted to this group of households as management information systems in the sampled States did not keep track of applicants assigned to job search or those referred to other assistance sources.

In June 2000, eighteen of the sampled States reported that they had lump-sum diversion policies in effect. Seven States reported that no one in any of the sampled offices received a payment in June 2000 and one other State could not provide any information on payments. The remaining ten States provided lists of households in the sampled offices that received cash payments. The 179 households listed comprised the TANF-diverted sample and represent the universe of households who were diverted from applying for TANF by the use of lump-sum cash payments in the sampled offices in June 2000. These cases were removed from the lists of new applicants, recertified cases, and closed cases before the respective samples were drawn.

## **Second Stage Sample: Expansion Sample**

The samples described above were not sufficient to represent the entire active caseload in June 2000, for use with multivariate models involving interim closures (Appendix D) and in the descriptive analysis of households leaving the FSP (Chapter 6). They cover cases that were in their first month of receipt (approved applicants), in their last month of receipt (closures), or in the final month of a

recertification period that is not the last month of receipt (approved recertifications). Omitted is the great majority of active cases in *ongoing interim months*, for whom no case action was taken in June 2000. These cases must be accounted for correctly in order to be able to represent the full caseload by the sampled cases.

This gap was filled by noting that in a steady state, the cohort of cases with six-month recertification periods ending in June 2000 looked very similar to five other cohorts of cases with six-month recertification periods that ended in July, August, September, October, and November 2000. The first cohort was sampled for this study, although the other five cohorts were not. We could represent the unsampled cases, therefore, by “expanding” the sample that we already have, creating five additional observations for every one we drew. (In general, we expanded by a factor of  $(L-1)$ , where  $L$  is the certification length.)

This solution needs to be elaborated upon in three regards. First, while this expansion provides representation of cases which will reach their next *recertification* in July, August, etc., it does not represent cases that will experience *interim closures* in that period. To cover these cases as well, we similarly expanded the sample of interim closures, by a factor of  $(E-1)$ , where  $E$  is the time elapsed since the last certification or recertification. For example, for a cohort of cases that was recertified in March and closed in June, we assumed that there were two similar cohorts of cases, recertified in April and May, respectively, that would experience interim closures in July and August, respectively. We expanded the sampled cohort by a factor of two, to represent the two cohorts that were not sampled.

The second issue was the need to avoid double counting of initial months of a spell. The expansion sample generated from *cases in their first certification period* included the first month of that period; but those months were, in fact, already represented by approved applications. It is not generally possible to tell if a particular sampled case is in its first or subsequent certification period. Therefore Month 1 of the expansion samples was given a relative weight of  $(R/(R+A))$ , where  $R$  was the estimated number of cases coming up for recertification in June 2000, and  $A$  was the estimated number of approved initial applications in June.

The final issue was the need to determine the length of the certification period for each sampled case, in order to know how many replicates it should contribute to the expansion sample. This turned out to be surprisingly difficult. The *case records* of a substantial proportion of closed and recertified cases did not include the date of the last certification, and many of the dates that were included were implausible (e.g. in the same month as the current certification, or many years previously).<sup>6</sup> A second data source that was considered was the *usual certification period length reported by the office supervisor* for cases of each type (e.g. all members elderly and disabled, TANF cases with earnings, ABAWDs subject to time limits, and so on). This approach was also unsatisfactory because the supervisor reports contained numerous anomalies, such as cases with all elderly and members with disabilities being assigned 3-month certification periods while TANF cases in the same office had 12-month certification periods, or cases with earnings being assigned 24-month certification periods. While the central tendencies of the reported certification lengths were reasonable, there was concern

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<sup>6</sup> The case record abstraction form included an item that was to record the start date of the certification period ending June 2000 (or the most recent certification, for cases closed in June 2000). This item was missing for 21 percent of cases, and represented a date less than one month previous or more than 24 months previous to the June recertification date for an additional 17 percent of cases.

that random inaccuracies could lead to biases in the composition of the expansion sample. The chosen solution was to determine certification lengths from an external source, namely the FY 2000 FSP Quality Control Database. For each State in the study sample, the frequency distribution of certification lengths was calculated for each of ten case profiles.<sup>7</sup> For example, in Alabama, 61 percent of active cases with both TANF and earnings had certification lengths of 12 months, another 13 percent had certification lengths of 6 months, etc. Certification lengths were assigned to recertifying cases by drawing probabilistically from these frequencies, given the State and the case characteristics.

To determine the number of replicates for the much smaller expansion sample generated from interim closures, no alternative existed to compare the recorded date of last recertification with June 2000. When this information was missing or implausible, elapsed months since last recertification was imputed probabilistically, based on the certification length appropriate to the type of case and the observed distribution of time elapsed for other interim closure cases with the same certification length. For example, if a case was assigned a six-month certification length based on its State and characteristics, and among cases with six-month certification periods that experienced interim closures 40 percent experienced the closure in the second interim month, then that case had a 40 percent chance of being assigned a second interim month closure.

The characteristics of the expansion sample households are similar to the characteristics of similar households in the food stamp Quality Control data (table A.2)—evidence of the validity of the procedures used to create the expansion sample.

## **Second Stage Sample: Eligible Non-Participants**

Eligible nonparticipants are households who are circumstantially eligible for the Food Stamp Program but are not participating in it. While Food Stamp Program applicants and participants in an office can be enumerated, no list or sampling frame exists for eligible nonparticipants. As described in Chapter 2, the sample frame was created from a random-digit-dialing telephone survey of the entire population in the catchment areas around the 109 sampled offices. Catchment areas were defined by the telephone prefixes (or zip codes, when telephone numbers were unavailable) of the food stamp new and recertifying applicant households that were included in the applicant and participant sampling frames discussed above. The use of a random-digit-dial sampling approach limits the sample to those with working telephones. Adjustments were made to correct for this limitation during creation of sample weights (see page A-13).

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<sup>7</sup> The ten household types were child only, all adults elderly and/or disabled but with earnings, all adults elderly and/or disabled with no earnings, ABAWD-like with children, ABAWD-like without children, other non-TANF cases with earnings, other non-TANF cases with no earnings but government benefits, other non-TANF cases with neither earnings nor government benefits, other TANF cases with earnings, and other TANF cases without earnings. It is not possible to determine with certainty whether a case with given characteristics would have been subjected to ABAWD time limits in a given office in June 2000. Offices differed in how they exempted cases based on presence of dependent children, employment status, and other factors. We identify “ABAWD-like” cases as childless households containing at least one able-bodied adult aged 18 to 50, and households with dependent children containing at least two able-bodied adults aged 18 to 50.

**Table A.2—Sample Characteristics: Food stamp access study vs. June 2000 quality control data**

Characteristics	Food stamp cases in interim months, June 2000 <sup>a</sup>		Active food stamp cases, June 2000 <sup>b</sup>	
	Food stamp access study data	FSP quality control data	Food stamp access study data	FSP quality control data
<b>Characteristics of household head</b>				
Male	22.5	22.8	22.5	21.3
Female	77.5	77.2	77.5	78.7
<b>Race of household head</b>				
White	57.9	45.0	56.5	44.7
Black	24.5	34.3	25.2	34.9
Hispanic	13.3	17.0	14.2	16.6
Other	4.2	3.8	4.1	3.8
<b>Citizenship of household head</b>				
US citizen	95.2	91.4	94.9	91.9
Non-citizen	4.8	8.6	5.1	8.1
<b>Household composition</b>				
Single adult without children	44.5	43.0	41.5	40.6
Multiple adults without children	5.0	5.6	5.0	5.4
Single adult with children	37.2	34.5	38.3	37.1
Multiple adults with children	12.2	12.0	14.0	12.4
Children only	1.2	4.8	1.2	4.6
Elderly in household	15.8	22.9	14.1	20.4
<b>Income sources</b>				
Earned income	23.3	26.2	26.6	28.7
Cash assistance (TANF or GA)	23.5	33.9	27.9	30.1
SSI	36.5	34.7	38.4	31.6
Social security	23.6	27.9	26.1	25.1
<b>Income as a percent of poverty</b>				
0-50	41.0	29.1	44.8	31.8
>50 –100	45.1	58.9	43.0	56.0
>100-130	10.4	10.5	9.3	11.0
>130	2.8	1.4	2.9	1.2

a Interim months include all active cases except those in the first month of a certification or recertification in June 2000. For the food stamp access study data, this includes the expansion sample and the interim closure sample (who received benefits in June 2000).

b Active cases are those that received food stamp benefits in June 2000, including approved applicants, ongoing cases, and terminating cases.

A list-assisted RDD sample of 72,711 telephone numbers was drawn using the GENESYS sampling system, which helped ensure that a high percentage of the sampled numbers belonged to residential households. Once a household was reached, a short screening questionnaire was administered to determine whether the household was apparently eligible for food stamps, but not currently receiving benefits. Households were screened out if they were current FSP participants or had applied for benefits in the prior month. Households were deemed to be presumptively eligible for food stamps if:

- Their gross household income was no more than 130 percent of the federal poverty level;
- Their financial assets were less than \$3,000 if the household included an elderly member and less than \$2,000 if there were no elderly members of the household; and
- All vehicles owned were at least five years old, unless they were used for business or to transport disabled persons.

This set of screening questions has been shown to be quite accurate in predicting FSP eligibility (McConnell, 1997).<sup>8</sup> All respondents included in the complete survey responded that their total income was less than the threshold amount. The main body of the survey collected more detailed information on income, including earnings and receipt of various types of unearned income. Using these responses, a second measure of household income was calculated and, as expected, some households appeared to have incomes above 130 percent of the poverty level. We excluded households whose reported detailed incomes exceeded 200 percent of the federal poverty level, though we retained those with incomes between 130 percent and 200 percent. Even if we excluded the latter group, we would still not have a true measure of FSP eligibility. The survey did not collect all the information necessary for a full determination of eligibility, and undoubtedly not all the reported information is accurate, as we did not require proof, such as wage receipts for verification of earnings. In addition, some households that were excluded on the income screening question would have provided detailed income information that resulted in a measure of total income equal to or less than 130 percent of poverty. In order to make certain that survey results were not affected by this aspect of the sampling methodology, all analyses reported in the eligible nonparticipant report (Bartlett and Burstein, 2004) were also conducted on a sample that excluded households with incomes greater than 130 percent of the poverty level. No substantial differences were noted in the results between the two approaches and thus the tables present analyses using the full sample of 1,220 households.

## **Office, Supervisor, and Caseworker Weights**

First-stage office weights were calculated for the final sample of 109 offices. The base sampling office weight equals the reciprocal of the probability of selection of the office. (When the office had been chosen within a county, the base sample weight associated with the selection of the county was multiplied by the inverse of the probability of selection for the office within the county.) Office nonresponse was taken into account at this stage.<sup>9</sup> For each office in the sampling frame, a set of

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<sup>8</sup> The screening procedures did not take into account changes in eligibility rules instituted with PRWORA (e.g., immigrant status).

<sup>9</sup> The nonresponse adjustments made to the sampling weights accounted for the nonparticipation of New York State, mentioned above. This involved increasing the weights of offices in the Northeast and Mid-Atlantic regions that were similar in size and degree of urbanicity to the New York State offices. All the selected offices in New York City were large, urban offices, and thus the weights of other large, urban offices were increased. To the extent that offices in New York City are similar to other large urban offices in the Northeast and Mid-Atlantic along the dimensions measured in the study, bias will be minimized. If food stamp policies and practices in New York City are very different from other large, urban offices, the study will not accurately represent the practices in New York. The other four offices in New York were a mix of small, medium, and large offices, and thus the weights of similar offices in the Northeast and Mid-Atlantic were appropriately increased.



ratio-adjustment cells was formed by three variables: FNS region (five categories, with New England and the Mid-Atlantic regions combined and the Western and Mountain Plains regions combined); MSA vs. non-MSA status; and office size (four categories).<sup>10</sup> The weights of the offices that participated in the study were then ratio-adjusted so that the weighted total number of offices was in agreement with the known totals from the sampling frame.

A *caseload-adjusted* office weight was also created by multiplying the office weights by the office caseloads. These could be used to determine the fraction of the national caseload subject to particular policies (in contrast to the fraction of offices implementing particular policies). These weights were ratio-adjusted using office caseload to create the ratio-adjustment cells. A final adjustment was made to these weights so that the weighted caseload by region was in agreement with total caseload for November 1999, the month used for sampling local offices.<sup>11</sup>

The caseload-adjusted office-level weights were used directly in analyzing office-level data in the description of policies and practices in Gabor et al. (2003) and in Chapter 7 of this report. The supervisor survey was designed so that a single supervisor answered each item even if multiple supervisors were interviewed. Hence the weights for this survey were simply the caseload-adjusted office weights. Multiple caseworkers in a office were asked the same questions about procedures (for example, “If someone comes in at least 30 minutes late for their food stamp appointment with you, do you usually reschedule their appointment for that same day, or reschedule the appointment for another day, or automatically deny the application?”) and could respond differently. Their responses were given equal proportional weight, adding up to the office weight—that is, the office weight was divided up among the caseworkers in that office answering each question.

Office weights (not caseload-adjusted) were also a component of the weights used to analyze data on individual households. The household-level weights were conceptually equal to the office-level weights divided by the probability that the household would be included in the sample once the office had been selected. These weights were intended to add up to the corresponding national populations for each group. This calculation was done separately by analysis sample, as described below.

## Participant Household Weights

Participant households were sampled from lists provided by the 109 sites in five categories, corresponding to events occurring in June 2000:

- approved applications
- denied applications
- approved recertifications
- case closures
- TANF diversions

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<sup>10</sup> Size categories were caseloads of 1,651 and under, caseloads of 1,652 to 4,261, caseloads of 4,262 to 7,834, and caseloads of 7,835 and over.

<sup>11</sup> The total caseload in the sample frame was 7.29 million, compared with an actual total of 7.4 million based on more accurate FNS data. The FNS total was available by State. We aggregated this total by region (using the five categories) and scaled the caseload weights to get the correct totals.

In general, the sample comprised 6 to 8 approved applications, 3 to 5 denied applications, 5 to 6 approved recertifications, and 5 to 6 case closures from each site.<sup>12</sup> In Indiana, Tennessee, and Ohio, the lists provided by States did not conform to our requested specifications. Cases in offices from those States were therefore oversampled, so that the number of completes would be adequate. Also, three offices in Ohio were unable to provide any lists of case closures. It was not possible to obtain closure samples for the Ohio offices, so these sites were dropped from the corresponding analyses. All identified TANF diversions in the sample were included—a total of 179 households.

In principle the weights assigned to each household were equal to the size of the list divided by the number of sampled cases in each category and site. Several adjustments to this procedure were needed, however, following the steps outlined below.

**Step 1:** Due to the inability of some sites to provide separate listings of approved and denied applications, occasionally cases in these two categories could not be distinguished. In these instances the categories for new applications were collapsed within an office. In addition, other offices could not provide separate lists of denied applications and case closures. These categories were similarly collapsed. This type of adjustment occurred in 13 offices.

**Step 2:** Once the proper adjustments to the sample categories were made, base sampling weights for the first four categories were constructed using the actual numbers sampled and numbers in the lists provided by each office for each category. If  $s_{hj}$  is the number of cases sampled and  $p_{hj}$  is the number of cases on the case list in site  $h$  and category  $j$ , then the base sampling weight  $BSWI_{hj} = p_{hj} / s_{hj}$ .

Alternate procedures were required in the Kansas office, which was unable to provide a list of case closures. In this instance, samples were physically drawn from the file cabinets, sampling at every 62 inches. The Kansas office estimated an average case file is one inch thick, so  $BSWI$  for the case closures in Kansas is 62.

**Step 3:** As noted above, all identified TANF-diverted cases were selected into the sample. (Only a few offices practiced TANF diversion.) These households could appear on any of the other four lists, as they could be approved applicants, denied applicants, and so on. Their identity as a TANF diversion trumped their other identity with regard to sampling. Since these households were selected with certainty,  $BSWI$  for these households equals 1.

**Step 4:** The goal was to have the sample drawn represent the total number of applicants, recertifications, closed cases and TANF-diverted cases in the country for June 2000.  $BSW2_{hj}$  was defined as  $BSWI_{hj}$  multiplied by the caseload weight for each office described in section 1. If completed data was obtained on all of the sampled cases, this was the analysis weight used. However, abstraction data for a few of the sampled cases did not exist, so a non-response adjustment was made to  $BSW2$ . If  $a$  is the number of cases sampled in an office, and  $b$  is the number of cases with complete data, then the final analysis weight  $W_{hj} = BSW2_{hj} \times (a/b)$ . The non-response adjustments generated

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<sup>12</sup> The exact numbers drawn varied from office to office for two reasons. First, the desired sample size per office in each category was not an integer, so in some offices the number drawn was the next lowest integer and in others the next highest integer. Second, after New York State declined to participate in the study, a supplemental sample was drawn to replace it, leading to additional cases being taken from offices whose samples had already been drawn.

weights outside of the median plus 6 times the interquartile range for three denied applicants, who consequently had their weights trimmed.

Once the samples were drawn, the record abstraction sometimes found that a case was of a different type than its sample type (e.g. a case that was on the list of approved applicants might actually have been an approved recertification). Such cases were reclassified for the purpose of analysis, but their weights still reflected the basis on which they were selected into the sample.

Some groups of participant households were also surveyed, in addition to having their case records abstracted: approved applicants, denied applicants, incomplete recertifications, and TANF diversions. The survey weights were the same as the abstraction weights, with an additional factor representing survey nonresponse.

## Eligible Nonparticipant Household Weights

Eligible nonparticipants were identified in the random digit dialing (RDD) survey. For each site  $h$ , a list was constructed of telephone exchanges of households that would be served by that office (based on the actual telephone exchanges of cases served by that office).<sup>13</sup> From these exchanges, a list of phone numbers was randomly generated.

The final disposition codes for the released phone numbers were as follows:

- 1: Nonworking, business, or nonresidential
- 2: Unresolved; unknown whether in category 1, 3, 4, 5, or 6
- 3: Known to be a household, but not known if eligible for RDD interview (i.e. might be a current FSP participant or ineligible for food stamps)
- 4: Known household, ineligible for RDD interview
- 5: Known household, known eligible for RDD interview, but interview incomplete
- 6: Known household, eligible for RDD interview, interview complete (the analysis sample).

The goal of weighting was to make households in Category 6 represent not only themselves, but also: (a) Category 5; (b) that fraction of Category 3 that was eligible for the interview; and (c) that fraction of Category 2 that was eligible for the interview. This was done as described below.

**Step 1:** Let  $N_h$  = the total number of phone numbers in the site (= number of exchanges  $\times$  10,000);  $m_h$  = the number of sample phone numbers released;  $t_h$  = the number of phone numbers drawn in *all* sample replicates (including those not released); and  $s_h$  = the number of phone numbers remaining in all sample replicates after GENESYS ID removed identifiable nonworking and business numbers.<sup>14</sup> The ratio between  $s_h$  and  $t_h$  was assumed to be the same for all replicates and released replicates. The base sampling weight for each site,  $BSW_h$ , was then equal to  $(N_h / m_h) \times (s_h / t_h)$ . This weight was assigned to each household in Category 6.

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<sup>13</sup> Some offices were unable to provide this information. In these cases the offices' catchment area was defined in terms of covered zipcodes—either based on case records or as stated by office staff—and then the corresponding telephone exchanges were determined.

<sup>14</sup> GENESYS ID only captures a portion of these numbers. For example, it could identify the Abt main switchboard number (492-7100), but not the individual office phone numbers at Abt (e.g. 349-2796).

**Step 2:** For each of the completes, the number of voice-use lines in the household was known from the survey (or randomly imputed when missing, based on the distribution of this variable in the site). The average number of voice-use lines per eligible complete in each site was calculated as  $v_h$ , and the baseweight was adjusted for this factor:  $BSW_{P_h} = BSW_h / v_h$ .<sup>15</sup>

**Step 3:** Three nonresponse adjustments (NRAs) were then applied to take account of Categories 2, 3, and 5 above. Let  $N_j$  be the number of phone numbers in Category  $j$  in a site. In each site,

- The completes were scaled up so they also represent the known eligibles who did not complete:  $NRA1 = (N5+N6) / N6 = \text{known eligibles} / \text{eligible completes}$ .
- The known eligibles were scaled up further so they also represent households of unknown eligibility—under the assumption that the same proportion of Category 3 are eligible as among Categories 4, 5, and 6 (for whom eligibility is known):
 
$$NRA2 = \{(N5+N6) + [N3 \times (N5+N6) / (N4+N5+N6)]\} / (N5+N6)$$

$$= \{\text{known eligibles} + [\text{households, eligibility unknown} \times (\text{known eligibles} / \text{households, eligibility known})]\} / \text{known eligibles}$$
- The numerator of NRA2 corresponds to total estimated eligibles among phone numbers known to be residential. For the final nonresponse adjustment, the count was scaled up so it also included an appropriate fraction of those phone numbers for which it was not known whether they were nonworking, business, nonresidential, or households. This fraction, the estimated proportion of unresolved numbers that are residential, was taken to be 0.27.<sup>16</sup>

$$NRA3 = [\{(N5+N6) + [N3 \times (N5+N6) / (N4+N5+N6)]\} + ((N5+N6) / (N4+N5+N6)) \times N2 \times 0.27] / \{(N5+N6) + [N3 \times (N5+N6) / (N4+N5+N6)]\}$$

$$= \{\text{total estimated eligibles, residential status known} + (\text{known eligibles} / \text{households, eligibility known}) \times \text{unresolveds} \times 0.27\} / \text{total estimated eligibles, residential status known}$$

The nonresponse-adjusted base sampling weight applied to the completes in each site is then given by  $W = BSW_P \times NRA1 \times NRA2 \times NRA3$ .

**Step 4:** An adjustment was made to account for households without telephones, which according to the March 2001 CPS comprises 12.4 percent of households under 130 percent of poverty. These households were represented by sampled households that experienced interruptions in phone service.<sup>17</sup> The adjustment was performed by proportionately increasing the weight on that subgroup of households.

<sup>15</sup> Recall that the weights are intended to sum to the number of households. Thus if eligible households in a site have on average 1.1 voice-use lines, then the number of their voice-use lines (represented by  $BSW_h$ ) should be divided by 1.1, to get the number of eligible households per se.

<sup>16</sup> The source for this estimate is the National Immunization Survey (NIS) run by Abt Associates. For the NIS we drew a large sample of unresolved numbers and called local telephone company business offices to determine if the numbers were residential, business, or not assigned.

<sup>17</sup> Sixteen percent of the sample reported that they had experienced an interruption in phone service of a week or more in the past 12 months. For further discussion of this issue, see Frankel et al. (2003).

**Step 5:** An adjustment was made to account for the exclusion from the sampling frame of telephone exchanges which accounted for only a few active cases in an office.<sup>18</sup> The rule for constructing the sampling frame was as follows. Starting with the set of exchanges that accounted for at least 75 percent of cases in an office, as many exchanges as necessary were added to bring in an additional 10 percent of cases, as long as that addition to the set was no greater in number than the original set. For example, 4 exchanges might comprise 81 percent of the cases, while another 4 exchanges might bring the total to 89 percent of the cases. The final adjustment increased the sum of the weights in each site to include households not in the sample frame of exchanges. Weights were then truncated at the median plus 6 times the interquartile range.

**Step 6:** The weights constructed up to this point were constant within a catchment area. As a final step, these weights were raked to correspond to national control totals for 2000 from the Current Population Survey (CPS) and the FSP Quality Control (QC) Database, as reported in Cunnyngham (2002).<sup>19</sup> Characteristics that were taken into account in the raking were household type (presence of children, single *versus* multiple adults), presence of elderly, presence of earnings, presence of noncitizens, and household income relative to FPL (0 to 50 percent, 50 to 100 percent, over 100 percent).

A subsample of eligible nonparticipants of special interest in the analysis was *near-applicants*: households that contacted the local FSP office but did not formally apply. As this was a rare event, households were asked about their contacts with the local office in the past year. It could thus be supposed that the sample included 12 times as many near applicants as would have been identified for any one month. When combined with applicants in June 2000 to represent all households contacting the local office in a month, the weights on the nonparticipant near-applicants were therefore divided by 12.<sup>20</sup>

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<sup>18</sup> This adjustment was not made for offices whose catchment area was defined by zipcodes.

<sup>19</sup> The number of eligible nonparticipants is calculated as the difference between the number of eligible households (from the CPS) and the number of participating households (from QC data).

<sup>20</sup> While the assumption that near-applicants contacted the office only once in 12 months is questionable, it seemed the most reasonable procedure. The weight on near-applicants who responded early in the course of the survey was adjusted further, to account for the fact that data on near-applicant status was initially collected only for the past 6 rather than the past 12 months. To make the adjustment it was assumed that the ratio of non-participants who were near applicants 1 to 6 months ago to those who were near applicants 7 to 12 months ago was the same in the earlier and the later segments of the sample; this ratio could be calculated for the later respondents.

## Appendix B

### Supplementary Descriptive Tables

**Table B.1—Awareness, perceived eligibility, and interest in applying to the FSP among potentially eligible nonparticipant households**

	<b>Percent</b>
<b><i>Ever heard of the FSP?</i></b>	
Yes	96.4% (0.8)
No	3.6 (0.8)
Total	100.0%
<b><i>Perceived eligibility</i></b>	
Eligible	43.2% (2.5)
Ineligible	35.0 (2.4)
Unsure	18.2 (2.0)
Never heard of FSP	3.6 (0.8)
Total	100.0%
<b><i>Would apply if certain of eligibility?</i></b>	
Would apply	69.1 (2.5)
Would not apply	27.1 (2.4)
Unsure if would apply	3.9 (0.8)
Total <sup>a</sup>	100.0%
<b><i>Unweighted N</i></b>	<b>1220</b>
<p>a Excludes the 51 households that never heard of the FSP.</p> <p>Standard errors shown in parentheses.</p> <p>Totals may not add to 100.0% due to rounding.</p>	

**Table B.2—Level of need of eligible nonparticipant households by perceived eligibility**

<b>Level of need</b>	<b>Don't believe eligible for food stamps<sup>a</sup></b>	<b>Believe eligible for food stamps</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b><i>Economic characteristics of household</i></b>			
Earnings in previous month (%)	52.0% (2.9)	46.8% (4.0)	49.8% (2.2)
Mean earnings of those with positive earnings	\$1219 (\$58)	\$1130 (\$62)	\$1181 (\$41)
<b><i>Unearned income (% receiving)<sup>b</sup></i></b>			
Cash assistance	1.0 (0.9)	1.3 (0.7)	1.1 (0.6)
Social Security/SSI	48.0 (3.2)	48.2 (3.5)	48.1 (2.2)
Other	23.1 (2.6)	20.4 (2.7)	22.0 (1.8)
<b><i>Percent of poverty (%)</i></b>			
Less than 50%	13.2††† (1.9)	20.4 (3.1)	16.3 (1.5)
50-less than 100%	23.6 (2.8)	35.8 (3.8)	29.0 (2.3)
100-less than 130%	34.8 (3.5)	18.5 (3.4)	27.6 (3.0)
Greater than 130%	28.5 (3.5)	25.3 (3.5)	27.1 (2.6)
<b><i>Assets</i></b>			
Bank accounts (%)	73.8** (2.5)	62.2 (3.9)	68.7 (2.3)
Other financial assets (%)	9.3 (2.7)	9.8 (3.2)	9.5 (2.3)
Mean amount in accounts	\$938 (\$204)	\$600 (\$128)	\$804 (\$132)
Mean (non-zero) amount in accounts	\$1078 (\$228)	\$675 (\$159)	\$915 (\$147)
Any motor vehicles	66.2 (3.2)	56.9 (5.2)	62.4 (3.2)
<b><i>Food security status (%)<sup>c</sup></i></b>			
Food secure	60.9††† (2.6)	47.9 (3.8)	55.2 (2.5)
Food insecure without hunger	20.3 (2.2)	20.3 (2.3)	20.3 (1.8)
Food insecure with hunger	18.8 (3.2)	31.9 (3.7)	24.5 (3.0)
Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
<b><i>Unweighted N<sup>d</sup></i></b>	707	513	1220

—Continued

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**Table B.2—Level of need of eligible nonparticipant households by perceived eligibility—  
Continued**

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- a Includes responses of “unsure,” “don’t know,” and those who never heard of the FSP. This is consistent with the approach used in multivariate modeling.
- b Households can report more than one source of unearned income.
- c The food security questions reference the year preceding the survey.
- d Tabulations exclude households with missing data, ranging from 19 to 293 depending upon the item.

\*\*\*, ††† Statistically significant difference at the 1 percent level relative to the excluded category (t-test) or across all listed categories (chi-squared test), respectively.

\*\* , †† Statistically significant difference at the 5 percent level relative to the excluded category (t-test) or across all listed categories (chi-squared test), respectively.

\* , † Statistically significant difference at the 10 percent level relative to the excluded category (t-test) or across all listed categories (chi-squared test), respectively.

Numbers without asterisks (\*) or daggers (†) are not statistically significantly different at the 10 percent level relative to the excluded category or across all listed categories.

Standard errors shown in parentheses.

Totals may not add to 100.0% due to rounding.

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**Table B.3—Characteristics of eligible nonparticipant households by perceived eligibility**

Characteristics	Don't believe eligible for food stamps <sup>a</sup>	Believe eligible for food stamps	Total
<b>Demographic characteristics of household head</b>			
Female (%)	72.9% (2.8)	74.5% (2.5)	73.6% (1.9)
Age (mean years)	49.3 (1.7)	47.1 (1.6)	48.3 (1.3)
Black (%)	22.3* (3.9)	31.2 (5.2)	26.1 (4.0)
Hispanic (%)	13.6 (2.7)	9.6 (2.2)	11.9 (2.2)
Non-English speaker (%)	6.7 (1.6)	4.8 (1.1)	5.9 (1.1)
Non-U.S. citizen (%)	5.8 (1.6)	4.2 (1.2)	5.1 (1.1)
High school graduate (%)	63.8 (3.1)	61.8 (4.4)	62.9 (2.6)
Previous FSP recipient (%)	47.6*** (3.8)	59.1 (3.1)	52.6 (2.9)
<b>Household composition</b>			
One-person household (%)	39.3 (3.0)	46.7 (3.6)	42.5 (2.1)
Multiple adults without children (%)	27.3 (2.4)	19.9 (2.1)	24.1 (1.6)
Single adult with children (%)	10.7 (1.6)	12.6 (1.8)	11.5 (1.0)
Multiple adults with children (%)	22.8 (2.2)	20.8 (2.6)	21.9 (1.6)
Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
All adults elderly (%)	26.8 (3.3)	25.2 (3.0)	26.1 (2.5)
Any members with disabilities (%)	34.4 (3.0)	38.0 (3.4)	36.0 (1.8)
<b>Unweighted N<sup>b</sup></b>	707	513	1220

a Includes responses of “unsure,” “don’t know,” and those who never heard of the FSP. This is consistent with the approach used in multivariate modeling.

b Tabulations exclude households with missing data, ranging from 0 to 129 depending upon the item.

\*\*\*, ††† Statistically significant difference at the 1 percent level relative to the excluded category (t-test) or across all listed categories (chi-squared test), respectively.

\*\* , †† Statistically significant difference at the 5 percent level relative to the excluded category (t-test) or across all listed categories (chi-squared test), respectively.

\* , † Statistically significant difference at the 10 percent level relative to the excluded category (t-test) or across all listed categories (chi-squared test), respectively.

Numbers without asterisks (\*) or daggers (†) are not statistically significantly different at the 10 percent level relative to the excluded category or across all listed categories.

Standard errors shown in parentheses.

Totals may not add to 100.0% due to rounding.

**Table B.4—Perceptions of stigma associated with the FSP among nonparticipant households by perceived eligibility**

Stigma index		Don't believe eligible for food stamps <sup>a</sup>	Believe eligible for food stamps	Total
0	No stigma	64.5% (2.9)	56.7% (4.0)	61.1% (2.2)
1	Low stigma	15.4 (2.7)	22.1 (2.6)	18.3 (1.8)
2		10.0 (1.7)	12.3 (2.2)	11.0 (1.4)
3		4.2 (1.4)	5.7 (1.7)	4.8 (1.0)
4	High stigma	5.9 (1.5)	3.2 (1.3)	4.8 (1.2)
Total		100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
Mean stigma		0.7 (0.1)	0.8 (0.1)	0.7 (0.1)
<b>Unweighted N<sup>b</sup></b>		707	513	1220

a Includes responses of “unsure,” “don’t know,” and those who never heard of the FSP. This is consistent with the approach used in multivariate modeling.

b Tabulations exclude 26 households with missing data.

\*\*\*, ††† Statistically significant difference at the 1 percent level relative to the excluded category (t-test) or across all listed categories (chi-squared test), respectively.

\*\* , †† Statistically significant difference at the 5 percent level relative to the excluded category (t-test) or across all listed categories (chi-squared test), respectively.

\* , † Statistically significant difference at the 10 percent level relative to the excluded category (t-test) or across all listed categories (chi-squared test), respectively.

Numbers without asterisks (\*) or daggers (†) are not statistically significantly different at the 10 percent level relative to the excluded category or across all listed categories.

Standard errors shown in parentheses.

Totals may not add to 100.0% due to rounding.

**Table B.5—Reasons for perceived ineligibility<sup>a</sup>**

	Previously received food stamps	Never received food stamps	Total
<b>Stated reasons</b>			
Earn too much money	60.5%* (4.0)	49.1% (4.9)	54.9% (3.0)
Told ineligible or previously denied	56.4*** (5.5)	23.4 (3.6)	40.2 (3.5)
Employed	44.3 (4.0)	35.1 (4.3)	39.8 (2.9)
Receive other government assistance	21.6 (4.1)	16.6 (3.3)	19.1 (2.8)
Car is worth too much	16.0 (3.4)	14.0 (3.5)	15.0 (3.1)
Have too much in savings	4.2*** (1.7)	19.8 (4.5)	11.9 (2.7)
Citizenship status	6.3 (1.8)	5.5 (1.8)	5.9 (1.2)
Reached time limit on cash assistance	4.0** (1.5)	0.4 (0.3)	2.2 (0.8)
Received lump sum payment	2.3 (1.2)	1.6 (0.8)	2.0 (0.7)
<b>When told was ineligible</b>			
Within the last month	1.4 (0.9)	10.0 (6.5)	4.0 (2.2)
Within the last 6 months	34.2 (5.9)	16.5 (8.6)	28.8 (5.2)
Within the last year	16.5 (3.5)	21.7 (8.3)	18.1 (3.5)
More than a year ago	47.1 (6.3)	49.0 (6.5)	47.7 (4.9)
Don't know	0.8 (0.6)	2.8 (1.7)	1.4 (0.7)
<b>Unweighted N</b>	<b>351</b>	<b>303</b>	<b>654</b>

a Includes only households that did not think they were eligible for food stamps or were unsure of their eligibility.

\*\*\*, ††† Statistically significant difference at the 1 percent level relative to the excluded category (t-test) or across all listed categories (chi-squared test), respectively.

\*\* , †† Statistically significant difference at the 5 percent level relative to the excluded category (t-test) or across all listed categories (chi-squared test), respectively.

\* , † Statistically significant difference at the 10 percent level relative to the excluded category (t-test) or across all listed categories (chi-squared test), respectively.

Numbers without asterisks (\*) or daggers (†) are not statistically significantly different at the 10 percent level relative to the excluded category or across all listed categories.

Standard errors shown in parentheses.

Totals may not add to 100.0% due to rounding.

**Table B.6—Level of need of eligible nonparticipant households who do not believe they are eligible for food stamp benefits by reason for perceived ineligibility**

Level of need	Perceived ineligible because reached time limit on cash assistance	Perceived ineligible for other reasons	Total
<b><i>Economic characteristics of household</i></b>			
Earnings in previous month (%)	93.0** (5.5)	51.7 (3.2)	52.5 (3.1)
Mean earnings of those with positive earnings	\$1,391 (\$223)	\$1,216 (\$60)	\$1,220 (\$59)
<i>Unearned income (% receiving)<sup>a</sup></i>			
Cash assistance	0.0 (—)	1.1 (1.0)	1.1 (0.9)
Social Security/SSI	29.2 (17.7)	49.3 (3.4)	48.9 (3.3)
Other	3.0** (2.5)	23.9 (2.8)	23.5 (2.7)
<i>Percent of poverty (%)</i>			
Less than 50%	20.9 (12.9)	11.7 (1.8)	11.9 (1.8)
50-less than 100%	14.0 (7.3)	24.1 (2.9)	23.9 (2.8)
100-less than 130%	35.9 (24.3)	36.5 (3.6)	36.5 (3.5)
Greater than 130%	29.2 (15.0)	27.7 (3.5)	27.8 (3.5)
<b><i>Assets</i></b>			
Bank accounts (%)	77.2 (10.4)	74.9 (2.4)	75.0 (2.4)
Other financial assets (%)	0.0* (0.0)	9.8 (2.9)	9.6 (2.8)
Mean amount in accounts	\$349*** (\$121)	\$872 (\$181)	\$861 (\$177)
Mean (non-zero) amount in accounts	\$503** (\$82)	\$998 (\$205)	\$990 (\$200)
Any motor vehicles	90.3* (5.8)	67.3 (3.6)	67.9 (3.5)
<b><i>Food security status (%)<sup>b</sup></i></b>			
Food secure	45.5 (19.5)	61.0 (2.7)	60.7 (2.7)
Food insecure without hunger	45.8 (19.0)	20.3 (2.4)	20.8 (2.4)
Food insecure with hunger	8.7 (4.2)	18.7 (3.4)	18.5 (3.3)
Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
<b><i>Unweighted N<sup>c</sup></i></b>	21	633	654

—Continued

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**Table B.6—Level of need of eligible nonparticipant households by perceived eligibility—  
Continued**

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- a Households can report more than one source of unearned income.
- b The food security questions reference the year preceding the survey.
- c Tabulations exclude households with missing data, ranging from 0 to 168 depending upon the item.

\*\*\*, ††† Statistically significant difference at the 1 percent level relative to the excluded category (t-test) or across all listed categories (chi-squared test), respectively.

\*\* , †† Statistically significant difference at the 5 percent level relative to the excluded category (t-test) or across all listed categories (chi-squared test), respectively.

\* , † Statistically significant difference at the 10 percent level relative to the excluded category (t-test) or across all listed categories (chi-squared test), respectively.

Numbers without asterisks (\*) or daggers (†) are not statistically significantly different at the 10 percent level relative to the excluded category or across all listed categories.

Standard errors shown in parentheses.

Totals may not add to 100.0% due to rounding.

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**Table B.7—Characteristics of eligible nonparticipant households who do not believe they are eligible for food stamp benefits by reason for perceived ineligibility**

Characteristics	Perceived ineligible because reached time limit on cash assistance	Perceived ineligible for other reasons	Total
<b><i>Demographic characteristics of household head</i></b>			
Female (%)	94.1* (5.6)	73.4 (2.8)	73.8 (2.8)
Age (mean years)	41.0 (6.0)	49.5 (1.6)	49.3 (1.6)
Black (%)	63.7 (18.4)	21.6 (4.2)	22.5 (4.1)
Hispanic (%)	10.1 (6.7)	13.4 (3.1)	13.3 (3.0)
Non-English speaker (%)	6.3 (4.8)	4.9 (1.4)	4.9 (1.4)
Non-U.S. citizen (%)	7.7 (6.3)	3.9 (1.2)	3.9 (1.2)
High school graduate (%)	48.8 (19.6)	64.9 (3.0)	64.6 (3.0)
Previous FSP recipient (%)	92.0** (5.6)	49.8 (4.0)	50.8 (3.9)
<b><i>Household composition</i></b>			
One-person household (%)	0.0†† (—)	40.3 (3.3)	39.4 (3.3)
Multiple adults without children (%)	0.0 (—)	27.9 (2.6)	27.3 (2.6)
Single adult with children (%)	27.3 (16.3)	10.9 (1.5)	11.3 (1.7)
Multiple adults with children (%)	72.7 (16.3)	20.9 (2.4)	22.1 (2.3)
Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
All adults elderly (%)	0.0*** (—)	26.4 (3.3)	25.8 (3.2)
Any members with disabilities (%)	10.7* (6.7)	35.5 (3.0)	35.0 (3.1)
<b><i>Unweighted N<sup>a</sup></i></b>	21	633	654

a Tabulations exclude households with missing data, ranging from 0 to 61 depending upon the item.

\*\*\*, ††† Statistically significant difference at the 1 percent level relative to the excluded category (t-test) or across all listed categories (chi-squared test), respectively.

\*\* , †† Statistically significant difference at the 5 percent level relative to the excluded category (t-test) or across all listed categories (chi-squared test), respectively.

\* , † Statistically significant difference at the 10 percent level relative to the excluded category (t-test) or across all listed categories (chi-squared test), respectively.

Numbers without asterisks (\*) or daggers (†) are not statistically significantly different at the 10 percent level relative to the excluded category or across all listed categories.

Standard errors shown in parentheses.

Totals may not add to 100.0% due to rounding.

**Table B.8—Level of need of eligible nonparticipant households who do not believe they are eligible for food stamp benefits by reason for perceived ineligibility**

Level of need	Perceived ineligible because received lump sum payment	Perceived ineligible for other reasons	Total
<b><i>Economic characteristics of household</i></b>			
Earnings in previous month (%)	91.6** (4.2)	51.7 (3.2)	52.5 (3.1)
Mean earnings of those with positive earnings	\$1,529 (\$329)	\$1,213 (\$60)	\$1,220 (\$59)
<b><i>Unearned income (% receiving)<sup>a</sup></i></b>			
Cash assistance	0.9 (1.0)	1.1 (1.0)	1.1 (0.9)
Social Security/SSI	29.6 (15.4)	49.3 (3.4)	48.9 (3.3)
Other	3.6** (2.7)	23.9 (2.8)	23.5 (2.7)
<b><i>Percent of poverty (%)</i></b>			
Less than 50%	18.9 (13.1)	11.8 (1.8)	11.9 (1.8)
50-less than 100%	12.8 (5.2)	24.1 (2.9)	23.9 (2.8)
100-less than 130%	37.5 (22.3)	36.5 (3.5)	36.5 (3.5)
Greater than 130%	30.8 (13.2)	27.7 (3.5)	27.8 (3.5)
<b><i>Assets</i></b>			
Bank accounts (%)	53.9 (10.7)	75.3 (2.4)	75.0 (2.4)
Other financial assets (%)	0.0* (0.0)	9.8 (2.9)	9.6 (2.8)
Mean amount in accounts	\$592 (\$78)	\$865 (\$181)	\$861 (\$177)
Mean (non-zero) amount in accounts	\$658 (\$90)	\$995 (\$204)	\$990 (\$200)
Any motor vehicles	80.0 (11.6)	67.6 (3.5)	67.9 (3.5)
<b><i>Food security status (%)<sup>b</sup></i></b>			
Food secure	25.5 (9.5)	61.3 (2.7)	60.7 (2.7)
Food insecure without hunger	72.0 (9.4)	19.9 (2.4)	20.8 (2.4)
Food insecure with hunger	2.5 (2.0)	18.8 (3.3)	18.5 (3.3)
Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
<b><i>Unweighted N<sup>c</sup></i></b>	19	635	654

—Continued

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**Table B.8—Level of need of eligible nonparticipant households who do not believe they are eligible for food stamp benefits by reason for perceived ineligibility—Continued**

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- a Households can report more than one source of unearned income.
- b The food security questions reference the year preceding the survey.
- c Tabulations exclude households with missing data, ranging from 0 to 168 depending upon the item.

\*\*\*, ††† Statistically significant difference at the 1 percent level relative to the excluded category (t-test) or across all listed categories (chi-squared test), respectively.

\*\* , †† Statistically significant difference at the 5 percent level relative to the excluded category (t-test) or across all listed categories (chi-squared test), respectively.

\* , † Statistically significant difference at the 10 percent level relative to the excluded category (t-test) or across all listed categories (chi-squared test), respectively.

Numbers without asterisks (\*) or daggers (†) are not statistically significantly different at the 10 percent level relative to the excluded category or across all listed categories.

Standard errors shown in parentheses.

Totals may not add to 100.0% due to rounding.

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**Table B.9—Characteristics of eligible nonparticipant households who do not believe they are eligible for food stamp benefits by reason for perceived ineligibility**

Characteristics	Perceived ineligible because received lump sum payment	Perceived ineligible for other reasons	Total
<b>Demographic characteristics of household head</b>			
Female (%)	72.5 (18.1)	73.8 (2.8)	73.8 (2.8)
Age (mean years)	45.5 (3.9)	49.4 (1.6)	49.3 (1.6)
Black (%)	37.9 (5.8)	22.2 (4.2)	22.5 (4.1)
Hispanic (%)	17.2 (10.5)	13.2 (3.0)	13.3 (3.0)
Non-English speaker (%)	2.8 (1.8)	4.9 (1.4)	4.9 (1.4)
Non-U.S. citizen (%)	5.3 (2.8)	3.9 (1.2)	3.9 (1.2)
High school graduate (%)	62.8 (14.1)	64.7 (2.9)	64.6 (3.0)
Previous FSP recipient (%)	60.0 (11.6)	50.6 (4.0)	50.8 (3.9)
<b>Household composition</b>			
One-person household (%)	0.0 <sup>††</sup> (—)	40.2 (3.3)	39.4 (3.3)
Multiple adults without children (%)	0.0 (—)	27.8 (2.7)	27.3 (2.6)
Single adult with children (%)	13.6 (10.1)	11.2 (1.8)	11.3 (1.7)
Multiple adults with children (%)	86.4 (10.1)	20.8 (2.3)	22.1 (2.3)
Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
All adults elderly (%)	2.2 <sup>***</sup> (2.3)	26.3 (3.3)	25.8 (3.2)
Any members with disabilities (%)	36.7 (17.3)	35.0 (3.1)	35.0 (3.1)
<b>Unweighted N<sup>a</sup></b>	19	635	654

a Tabulations exclude households with missing data, ranging from 0 to 61 depending upon the item.

\*\*\*, ††† Statistically significant difference at the 1 percent level relative to the excluded category (t-test) or across all listed categories (chi-squared test), respectively.

\*\* , †† Statistically significant difference at the 5 percent level relative to the excluded category (t-test) or across all listed categories (chi-squared test), respectively.

\* , † Statistically significant difference at the 10 percent level relative to the excluded category (t-test) or across all listed categories (chi-squared test), respectively.

Numbers without asterisks (\*) or daggers (†) are not statistically significantly different at the 10 percent level relative to the excluded category or across all listed categories.

Standard errors shown in parentheses.

Totals may not add to 100.0% due to rounding.

**Table B.10—Level of need of eligible nonparticipant households by whether would apply for benefits if knew eligible**

Level of need	Would not apply if eligible <sup>a</sup>	Would apply if eligible	Total
<b><i>Economic characteristics of household</i></b>			
Earnings in previous month (%)	50.0% (4.3)	50.0% (2.7)	50.0% (2.3)
Mean earnings of those with positive earnings	\$1122 (\$85)	\$1204 (\$59)	\$1180 (\$42)
<b><i>Unearned income (% receiving)<sup>b</sup></i></b>			
Cash assistance	0.2 (0.1)	1.6 (0.9)	1.2 (0.6)
Social Security/SSI	46.0 (4.3)	49.8 (2.4)	48.6 (2.3)
Other	25.0 (3.6)	20.8 (2.1)	22.1 (1.9)
<b><i>Percent of poverty (%)</i></b>			
Less than 50%	19.4 (4.0)	14.3 (1.6)	15.7 (1.6)
50-less than 100%	31.3 (4.8)	28.7 (2.7)	29.4 (2.4)
100-less than 130%	23.9 (5.0)	30.0 (3.4)	28.3 (3.0)
Greater than 130%	25.4 (4.7)	27.0 (3.2)	26.6 (2.6)
Total			
<b><i>Assets</i></b>			
Bank accounts (%)	80.2** (2.6)	64.4 (3.3)	69.1 (2.3)
Other financial assets (%)	12.6 (3.8)	8.5 (2.2)	9.7 (2.3)
Mean amount in accounts	\$737 (\$122)	\$763 (\$156)	\$755 (\$116)
Mean (non-zero) amount in accounts	\$832 (\$130)	\$874 (\$181)	\$859 (\$130)
<b><i>Food security status (%)<sup>c</sup></i></b>			
Food secure	70.3††† (4.7)	48.2 (2.2)	54.9 (2.4)
Food insecure without hunger	16.9 (3.4)	22.2 (2.3)	20.5 (1.9)
Food insecure with hunger	12.9 (3.1)	29.7 (3.5)	24.6 (3.0)
Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
<b><i>Unweighted N<sup>d</sup></i></b>	333	836	1169

—Continued

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**Table B.10—Level of need of eligible nonparticipant households by whether would apply for benefits if knew eligible—Continued**

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- a Includes responses of “don’t know.”
- b Households can report more than one source of unearned income.
- c The food security questions reference the year preceding the survey.
- d The 51 households that never heard of the FSP were not asked whether they would apply. Tabulations exclude households with missing data, ranging from 17 to 273 depending upon the item.

\*\*\*, ††† Statistically significant difference at the 1 percent level relative to the excluded category (t-test) or across all listed categories (chi-squared test), respectively.

\*\* , †† Statistically significant difference at the 5 percent level relative to the excluded category (t-test) or across all listed categories (chi-squared test), respectively.

\* , † Statistically significant difference at the 10 percent level relative to the excluded category (t-test) or across all listed categories (chi-squared test), respectively.

Numbers without asterisks (\*) or daggers (†) are not statistically significantly different at the 10 percent level relative to the excluded category or across all listed categories.

Standard errors shown in parentheses.

Totals may not add to 100.0% due to rounding.

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**Table B.11—Characteristics of eligible nonparticipant households by whether would apply for benefits if eligible**

<b>Characteristics</b>	<b>Would not apply if eligible<sup>a</sup></b>	<b>Would apply if eligible</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b><i>Demographic characteristics of household head</i></b>			
Female (%)	73.5% (4.6)	74.5% (2.1)	74.2% (1.8)
Age (mean years)	50.2 (1.7)	47.4 (1.4)	48.3 (1.2)
Black (%)	13.8*** (2.6)	31.9 (5.8)	26.4 (4.1)
Hispanic (%)	8.5 (2.8)	13.0 (2.6)	11.6 (2.2)
Non-English speaker (%)	3.4 (1.2)	5.5 (1.3)	4.9 (1.1)
Non-U.S. citizen (%)	2.1* (1.1)	4.9 (1.1)	4.0 (0.9)
High school graduate (%)	70.3** (3.4)	60.4 (3.0)	63.4 (2.6)
Previous FSP recipient (%)	39.2*** (4.4)	61.4 (2.8)	54.6 (2.9)
<b><i>Household composition<sup>b</sup></i></b>			
One-person household (%)	50.2 (4.0)	39.2 (2.8)	42.6 (2.3)
Multiple adults without children (%)	21.6 (3.3)	25.0 (2.0)	23.9 (1.7)
Single adult with children (%)	8.7 (1.9)	13.3 (1.4)	11.9 (1.0)
Multiple adults with children (%)	19.5 (2.8)	22.5 (2.0)	21.6 (1.6)
Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
All adults elderly (%)	29.6 (4.0)	23.7 (2.5)	25.5 (2.4)
Any members with disabilities (%)	27.0*** (3.8)	40.3 (2.3)	36.3 (1.8)
<b><i>Unweighted N<sup>b</sup></i></b>	333	836	1169

—Continued

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**Table B.11—Characteristics of eligible nonparticipant households by whether would apply for benefits if eligible—Continued**

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a Includes responses of “don’t know.”

b The 51 households that never heard of the FSP were not asked if they would apply. Tabulations exclude households with missing data, ranging from 0 to 118, depending upon the item.

\*\*\*, ††† Statistically significant difference at the 1 percent level relative to the excluded category (t-test) or across all listed categories (chi-squared test), respectively.

\*\* , †† Statistically significant difference at the 5 percent level relative to the excluded category (t-test) or across all listed categories (chi-squared test), respectively.

\* , † Statistically significant difference at the 10 percent level relative to the excluded category (t-test) or across all listed categories (chi-squared test), respectively.

Numbers without asterisks (\*) or daggers (†) are not statistically significantly different at the 10 percent level relative to the excluded category or across all listed categories.

Standard errors shown in parentheses.

Totals may not add to 100.0% due to rounding.

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**Table B.12—Whether nonparticipant households would apply for food stamps by perceived eligibility**

<b>Whether would apply for benefits if knew eligible</b>	<b>Don't believe eligible for food stamps<sup>a</sup></b>	<b>Believe eligible for food stamps</b>	<b>Total</b>
Would apply	66.1% (3.4)	72.7% (3.6)	69.1% (2.5)
Would not apply	29.3 (3.3)	24.2 (3.5)	27.1 (2.4)
Unsure if would apply	4.5 (1.1)	3.0 (1.1)	3.9 (0.8)
<b>Total</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>
<b><i>Unweighted N<sup>b</sup></i></b>	<b>707</b>	<b>513</b>	<b>1220</b>

a Includes responses of “unsure” and “don’t know.”

b Tabulations exclude the 51 households that never heard of the FSP and were not asked whether they would apply.

\*\*\*, ††† Statistically significant difference at the 1 percent level relative to the excluded category (t-test) or across all listed categories (chi-squared test), respectively.

\*\* , †† Statistically significant difference at the 5 percent level relative to the excluded category (t-test) or across all listed categories (chi-squared test), respectively.

\* , † Statistically significant difference at the 10 percent level relative to the excluded category (t-test) or across all listed categories (chi-squared test), respectively.

Numbers without asterisks (\*) or daggers (†) are not statistically significantly different at the 10 percent level relative to the excluded category or across all listed categories.

Standard errors shown in parentheses.

Totals may not add to 100.0% due to rounding.

**Table B.13—Perceptions of stigma associated with the FSP among nonparticipant households by whether would apply for benefits if knew eligible**

Stigma index		Would not apply if eligible <sup>a</sup>	Would apply if eligible	Total
0	No stigma	60.8% (4.6)	61.3% (2.8)	61.2% (2.1)
1	Low stigma	16.3 (3.4)	19.6 (2.5)	18.5 (1.8)
2		7.9 (1.8)	12.4 (1.7)	11.0 (1.4)
3	High stigma	7.1 (2.2)	3.9 (0.9)	4.9 (1.0)
4		7.9 (2.6)	2.8 (0.9)	4.4 (1.2)
Total		100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
Mean stigma		0.9 (0.1)	0.7 (0.0)	0.7 (0.0)
<b>Unweighted N<sup>b</sup></b>		333	836	1169

a Includes responses of “don’t know.”

b The 51 households that never heard of the FSP were not asked if they would apply. Tabulations exclude 26 households with missing data.

\*\*\*, ††† Statistically significant difference at the 1 percent level relative to the excluded category (t-test) or across all listed categories (chi-squared test), respectively.

\*\* , †† Statistically significant difference at the 5 percent level relative to the excluded category (t-test) or across all listed categories (chi-squared test), respectively.

\* , † Statistically significant difference at the 10 percent level relative to the excluded category (t-test) or across all listed categories (chi-squared test), respectively.

Numbers without asterisks (\*) or daggers (†) are not statistically significantly different at the 10 percent level relative to the excluded category or across all listed categories.

Standard errors shown in parentheses.

Totals may not add to 100.0% due to rounding.

**Table B.14—Reasons households would not apply for FSP benefits<sup>a</sup>**

Reason	Previously received food stamps	Never received food stamps	Total
<b>Personal reasons</b>			
Desire for personal independence	86.6% (5.1)	94.4% (2.2)	91.4% (2.4)
Stigma	40.7 (7.2)	46.9 (5.5)	44.5 (5.0)
Desire for privacy	29.5 (5.8)	22.3 (4.2)	25.1 (3.5)
Benefits too small	31.3* (6.2)	14.0 (4.2)	20.7 (3.2)
<b>Related to office policies and practices</b>			
Costs of application process	69.0 (7.7)	60.0 (4.2)	63.5 (3.5)
Previous bad experience	47.3*** (5.5)	9.3 (3.6)	24.1 (3.3)
Costs of FSP participation	24.7 (5.4)	12.4 (4.3)	17.1 (3.1)
Confusion about how to apply	3.2*** (2.1)	18.2 (4.8)	12.4 (3.4)
<b>Overall</b>			
Only personal reasons	14.9† (5.2)	32.0 (4.2)	25.4 (3.5)
Only reasons related to office policies	2.2 (1.4)	0.1 (0.1)	0.9 (0.6)
Mix of personal and office policies	81.2 (5.2)	66.0 (4.1)	71.9 (3.2)
No reason given	1.7 (1.0)	1.9 (1.1)	1.8 (0.8)
<b>Unweighted N</b>	<b>156</b>	<b>177</b>	<b>333</b>

a Includes only households that reportedly would not apply for food stamp benefits even if they were certain of their eligibility

\*\*\*, ††† Statistically significant difference at the 1 percent level relative to the excluded category (t-test) or across all listed categories (chi-squared test), respectively.

\*\* , †† Statistically significant difference at the 5 percent level relative to the excluded category (t-test) or across all listed categories (chi-squared test), respectively.

\* , † Statistically significant difference at the 10 percent level relative to the excluded category (t-test) or across all listed categories (chi-squared test), respectively.

Numbers without asterisks (\*) or daggers (†) are not statistically significantly different at the 10 percent level relative to the excluded category or across all listed categories.

Standard errors shown in parentheses.

Totals may not add to 100.0% due to rounding.



**Table B.15—Outcome of application process**

<b>Outcome<sup>a</sup></b>	<b>All applicants</b>	<b>Circumstantially eligible applicants</b>
<b><i>Approved</i></b>	<b>71.4%</b> <b>(1.8)</b>	<b>82.5%</b> <b>(1.5)</b>
<b><i>Denied</i></b>	<b>28.6</b> <b>(1.8)</b>	<b>17.5</b> <b>(1.5)</b>
Circumstantially ineligible	9.1 (1.4)	—
Did not complete the application process	11.8 (1.4)	12.0 (1.5)
No certification interview	3.5 (0.9)	3.1 (1.0)
Incomplete verification	6.4 (1.1)	6.9 (1.3)
Other	1.5 (0.5)	1.7 (0.5)
Reason not reported	0.3 (0.2)	0.3 (0.2)
Voluntary withdrawal <sup>b</sup>	2.0 (0.8)	1.4 (0.5)
Other	2.8 (0.7)	2.1 (0.5)
Don't know	2.9 (1.1)	2.0 (0.7)
Total	100.0%	100.0%
<b><i>Unweighted N</i></b>	<b>1064</b>	<b>910</b>

a Outcome as reported in case records

b Household may have withdrawn its application before or after completing all application requirements.

Standard errors shown in parentheses.

Totals may not add to 100.0% due to rounding.

**Table B.16—Characteristics of eligible nonparticipant and applicant households**

Characteristic of Household Head	Eligible nonparticipants	Eligible applicants
<b>Age</b>		
Less than 20	0.4%††† (0.2)	4.0% (0.9)
20 to 49	55.3 (3.2)	79.9 (1.5)
50 to 59	13.6 (1.6)	8.9 (1.2)
60 and over	30.7 (2.8)	7.2 (1.1)
<b>Gender</b>		
Male	26.4 (1.9)	25.4 (2.3)
Female	73.6 (1.9)	74.6 (2.3)
<b>Race/Ethnicity</b>		
White (non-Hispanic)	52.8†† (4.1)	49.3 (3.7)
Black (non-Hispanic)	26.1 (4.0)	29.8 (4.2)
Hispanic	11.9 (2.2)	17.0 (2.9)
Other (non-Hispanic)	9.2 (1.4)	3.9 (1.2)
<b>Primary language</b>		
English	94.1 (1.1)	94.7 (1.1)
Spanish	4.5 (1.0)	4.1 (1.0)
Other	1.3 (0.7)	1.2 (0.5)
<b>Citizenship</b>		
U.S. citizen	94.9 (1.1)	94.8 (1.3)
Non-citizen	5.1 (1.1)	5.2 (1.3)
<b>Marital Status</b>		
Married	33.1††† (3.1)	24.4 (2.9)
Divorced/separated	26.7 (2.1)	31.7 (2.6)
Widowed	17.4 (2.2)	4.8 (1.0)
Never married	22.8 (3.2)	39.1 (3.4)
<b>Unweighted N<sup>a</sup></b>	1220	910

—Continued

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**Table B.16—Characteristics of eligible nonparticipant and applicant households—Continued**

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a Tabulations exclude households with missing data ranging from 17 to 129 for the nonparticipants and 0-149 for the applicants.

\*\*\*, ††† Statistically significant difference at the 1 percent level relative to the excluded category (t-test) or across all listed categories (chi-squared test), respectively.

\*\* , †† Statistically significant difference at the 5 percent level relative to the excluded category (t-test) or across all listed categories (chi-squared test), respectively.

\* , † Statistically significant difference at the 10 percent level relative to the excluded category (t-test) or across all listed categories (chi-squared test), respectively.

Numbers without asterisks (\*) or daggers (†) are not statistically significantly different at the 10 percent level relative to the excluded category or across all listed categories.

Standard errors shown in parentheses.

Totals may not add to 100.0% due to rounding.

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**Table B.17—Household composition of eligible nonparticipant and applicant households**

Household Composition	Eligible nonparticipants	Eligible applicants
One-person households	42.5%††† (2.1)	37.2% (3.0)
Multiple adults without children	24.1 (1.6)	6.6 (1.3)
Single adults with children	11.5 (1.0)	37.5 (2.6)
Multiple adults with children	21.9 (1.6)	16.7 (2.4)
Child-only households		2.0 (0.5)
Total	100.0%	100.0%
All adults elderly	26.1*** (2.5)	4.8 (0.9)
Some members with disabilities	36.0*** (1.8)	24.9 (2.2)
<b>Unweighted N<sup>a</sup></b>	1220	910

a Tabulations exclude 9 applicant households with missing data.

\*\*\*, ††† Statistically significant difference at the 1 percent level relative to the excluded category (t-test) or across all listed categories (chi-squared test), respectively.

\*\* , †† Statistically significant difference at the 5 percent level relative to the excluded category (t-test) or across all listed categories (chi-squared test), respectively.

\* , † Statistically significant difference at the 10 percent level relative to the excluded category (t-test) or across all listed categories (chi-squared test), respectively.

Numbers without asterisks (\*) or daggers (†) are not statistically significantly different at the 10 percent level relative to the excluded category or across all listed categories.

Standard errors shown in parentheses.

Totals may not add to 100.0% due to rounding.

**Table B.18—Economic characteristics of eligible nonparticipant and applicant households**

	Eligible nonparticipants	Eligible applicants
<b>Earnings</b>		
Earnings in previous month (%)	49.8%*** (2.2)	35.0% (2.2)
Mean household earnings of those with positive earnings	\$1181*** (\$41)	\$746 (\$30)
Mean household earnings of all households	\$529*** (\$37)	\$293 (\$21)
<b>Unearned income—percent receiving<sup>a</sup></b>		
Cash assistance	1.1*** (0.6)	8.4 (1.3)
SSI	19.9 (2.6)	21.3 (2.2)
Social Security	24.6*** (2.6)	14.7 (2.3)
Other unearned income	19.6 (1.8)	21.2 (1.9)
<b>Total income—percent of poverty</b>		
Less than 50%	16.3††† (1.5)	57.0 (2.9)
50 to less than 100%	29.0 (2.3)	30.5 (2.5)
100 to less than 130%	27.6 (3.0)	8.9 (1.6)
Greater than 130%	27.1 (2.6)	2.5 (0.9)
<b>Assets</b>		
Bank accounts (%)	68.7*** (2.3)	27.8 (2.7)
Other financial assets (%)	9.5*** (2.3)	1.9 (0.6)
Mean amount in accounts	\$804*** (\$132)	\$77 (\$11)
Mean (non-zero) amount in accounts	\$915*** (\$147)	\$271 (\$35)
<b>Unweighted N<sup>b</sup></b>	1220	910

—Continued

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**Table B.18—Economic characteristics of eligible nonparticipant and applicant households—  
Continued**

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a Households can report more than one source of unearned income.

b Tabulations exclude households with missing data, ranging from 19-286 for the eligible nonparticipants and 0-213 for the applicants..

\*\*\*, ††† Statistically significant difference at the 1 percent level relative to the excluded category (t-test) or across all listed categories (chi-squared test), respectively.

\*\* , †† Statistically significant difference at the 5 percent level relative to the excluded category (t-test) or across all listed categories (chi-squared test), respectively.

\* , † Statistically significant difference at the 10 percent level relative to the excluded category (t-test) or across all listed categories (chi-squared test), respectively.

Numbers without asterisks (\*) or daggers (†) are not statistically significantly different at the 10 percent level relative to the excluded category or across all listed categories.

Standard errors shown in parentheses.

Totals may not add to 100.0% due to rounding.

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**Table B.19—Level of need of circumstantially eligible applicants**

Level of need	Completed application process	Did not complete application process	Total
<b><i>Economic characteristics of household</i></b>			
Earnings in previous month (%)	32.2%*** (2.4)	50.9% (5.7)	35.2% (2.2)
Mean earnings of those with positive earnings	\$721 (\$36)	\$831 (\$63)	\$747 (\$30)
<i>Unearned income (% receiving)<sup>a</sup></i>			
Cash assistance	9.8*** (1.6)	2.1 (1.3)	8.5 (1.4)
Social Security/SSI	26.8 (2.2)	22.8 (6.1)	26.1 (2.4)
Other	22.2 (2.4)	16.9 (5.0)	21.3 (1.9)
<i>Percent of poverty (%)</i>			
Less than 100%	89.7** (1.8)	76.2 (7.3)	87.5 (2.2)
100% and greater	10.3** (1.8)	23.8 (7.3)	12.5 (2.2)
<i>Assets</i>			
Bank accounts (%)	29.1 (2.9)	24.3 (5.7)	28.2 (2.8)
Other financial assets (%)	2.4*** (0.7)	0.2 (0.2)	2.0 (0.6)
Mean assets	\$77 (\$11)	\$85 (\$39)	\$78 (\$11)
Mean (non-zero) amount in accounts	\$257 (\$34)	\$342 (\$123)	\$269 (\$33)
Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
<b><i>Unweighted N<sup>b</sup></i></b>			
	748	139	887
<b><i>Food security status (%)<sup>c</sup></i></b>			
Food secure	37.3 (2.8)	26.5 (6.1)	35.7 (2.6)
Food insecure without hunger	31.7 (2.6)	33.4 (6.2)	31.9 (2.2)
Food insecure with hunger	31.0 (2.5)	40.1 (8.0)	32.3 (2.6)
Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
<b><i>Unweighted N<sup>d</sup></i></b>			
	424	85	509

—Continued

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**Table B.19—Level of need of circumstantially eligible applicants—Continued**

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- a Households can report more than one source of unearned income.
- b Tabulations exclude the 23 households whose application status could not be determined (and therefore total column differs from table B.20). Tabulations also exclude households with missing record abstraction data, ranging from 12 to 79 depending upon the item.
- c The food security questions reference the year preceding the survey.
- d Tabulations exclude the 14 households with missing survey data.

\*\*\*, ††† Statistically significant difference at the 1 percent level relative to the excluded category (t-test) or across all listed categories (chi-squared test), respectively.

\*\* , †† Statistically significant difference at the 5 percent level relative to the excluded category (t-test) or across all listed categories (chi-squared test), respectively.

\* , † Statistically significant difference at the 10 percent level relative to the excluded category (t-test) or across all listed categories (chi-squared test), respectively.

Numbers without asterisks (\*) or daggers (†) are not statistically significantly different at the 10 percent level relative to the excluded category or across all listed categories.

Standard errors shown in parentheses.

Totals may not add to 100.0% due to rounding.

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**Table B.20—Characteristics of circumstantially eligible applicant households**

Characteristics	Completed application process	Did not complete application process	Total
<b><i>Demographic characteristics of household head</i></b>			
Female (%)	74.4 (2.3)	75.7 (4.2)	74.6 (2.3)
Age (mean years)	36.4 (0.6)	34.6 (1.6)	36.2 (0.6)
Black (%)	27.6 (4.0)	40.1 (8.2)	29.7 (4.3)
Hispanic (%)	17.4 (3.3)	16.5 (4.1)	17.2 (2.9)
Non-English speaker (%)	5.8 (1.2)	3.4 (1.5)	5.4 (1.1)
Non-U.S. citizen (%)	5.5 (1.5)	3.2 (1.5)	5.2 (1.3)
High school graduate (%) <sup>a</sup>	59.2 (3.0)	69.4 (10.2)	60.7 (2.9)
<b><i>Household composition</i></b>			
One-person household (%)	37.3 (3.3)	32.8 (5.6)	36.6 (3.0)
Multiple adults without children (%)	6.0 (1.1)	9.5 (4.9)	6.5 (1.3)
Single adult with children (%)	38.4 (2.6)	35.9 (5.1)	38.0 (2.6)
Multiple adults with children (%)	16.2 (2.8)	20.5 (4.0)	16.9 (2.4)
Child only (%)	2.1 (0.6)	1.3 (0.8)	2.0 (0.5)
Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
All adults elderly (%)	5.4** (1.0)	2.0 (1.2)	4.9 (0.9)
All adults with disabilities (%)	17.0* (3.0)	7.2 (5.0)	15.4 (2.8)
<b><i>Unweighted N<sup>b</sup></i></b>	748	139	887

—Continued

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**Table B.20—Characteristics of circumstantially eligible applicant households—Continued**

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a Survey data only (unweighted n = 509).

b Tabulations exclude the 23 households whose application status could not be determined (and therefore total column differs from tables B.18 and B.19). Tabulations also exclude households with missing data ranging from 1 to 149 depending upon item.

\*\*\*, ††† Statistically significant difference at the 1 percent level relative to the excluded category (t-test) or across all listed categories (chi-squared test), respectively.

\*\* , †† Statistically significant difference at the 5 percent level relative to the excluded category (t-test) or across all listed categories (chi-squared test), respectively.

\* , † Statistically significant difference at the 10 percent level relative to the excluded category (t-test) or across all listed categories (chi-squared test), respectively.

Numbers without asterisks (\*) or daggers (†) are not statistically significantly different at the 10 percent level relative to the excluded category or across all listed categories.

Standard errors shown in parentheses.

Totals may not add to 100.0% due to rounding.

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**Table B.21—Circumstances precipitating Food Stamp Program application**

Circumstance	Reason Reported			Most Important Reason		
	Completed application process (%)	Did not complete application process (%)	Total (%)	Completed application process (%)	Did not complete application process (%)	Total (%)
Harder to make ends meet	86.7 (1.7)	89.7 (4.2)	87.1 (1.5)	31.1 (3.4)	29.5 (6.5)	30.9 (3.2)
Loss of income	62.4 (3.2)	58.3 (7.2)	61.8 (2.7)	29.4 (3.0)	29.9 (6.7)	29.5 (3.1)
Earned less	54.3 (3.0)	52.9 (7.4)	54.1 (2.5)	24.8 (2.5)	27.6 (6.7)	25.2 (2.3)
Stopped working	36.8 (3.2)	30.2 (9.8)	35.8 (2.9)			
Worked fewer hours	12.0 (2.1)	20.0 (8.6)	13.1 (1.8)			
Wage rate reduced	6.4*** (1.5)	1.1 (1.0)	5.6 (1.3)			
Lost unearned income	15.9 (2.9)	17.0 (9.3)	16.1 (3.7)	4.5** (1.7)	0.0 (—)	3.8 (1.4)
Lost TANF income	2.3 (0.9)	9.1 (8.9)	3.3 (1.4)			
Lost unemployment compensation	2.7** (0.9)	0.2 (0.2)	2.4 (0.7)			
Lost SSI	2.1 (1.0)	3.1 (2.3)	2.3 (0.9)			
Lost child support	8.2 (2.3)	5.7 (2.8)	7.8 (2.1)			
Lost help from relative/friend	12.1 (1.8)	18.3 (9.2)	13.0 (2.0)	0.7 (0.5)	2.6 (1.9)	1.0 (0.5)
Household member became sick/disabled	22.8*** (3.0)	9.2 (3.5)	20.9 (2.5)	10.4* (1.7)	4.1 (2.6)	9.5 (1.5)
Contributing adult died	1.4 (0.9)	0.8 (0.7)	1.3 (0.8)	1.2 (0.9)	0.0 (—)	1.0 (0.8)
Contributing adult left household	16.7 (2.7)	21.3 (9.6)	17.4 (2.8)	5.4 (1.6)	8.9 (4.4)	5.9 (1.3)
Due to a marital breakup	10.2 (2.2)	17.6 (9.5)	11.3 (2.6)			
Increased rent, mortgage, utilities	25.3 (3.2)	24.4 (5.4)	25.2 (2.8)	5.5 (1.7)	8.1 (3.3)	5.8 (1.4)
Moved, released from institution	30.4 (2.6)	23.5 (5.8)	29.4 (2.4)	4.6 (1.3)	3.8 (2.0)	4.5 (1.2)
Non-contributing household member added	12.0 (1.8)	15.9 (9.2)	12.6 (2.5)	4.7 (1.5)	2.6 (1.6)	4.4 (1.4)
Newborn	5.8 (1.7)	11.3 (8.9)	6.6 (1.4)			
Older child	2.2 (0.8)	0.7 (0.5)	1.9 (0.7)			
Adult	1.3 (0.7)	3.9 (1.7)	1.7 (0.7)			
Just learned about the FSP	12.3 (1.7)	16.9 (6.8)	13.0 (1.6)	2.3 (0.8)	9.3 (6.3)	3.3 (1.0)

—Continued

**Table B.21—Circumstances precipitating Food Stamp Program application—Continued**

Circumstance	Reason Reported			Most Important Reason		
	Completed application process (%)	Did not complete application process (%)	Total (%)	Completed application process (%)	Did not complete application process (%)	Total (%)
Other	4.7 (1.2)	6.2 (3.6)	4.9 (1.2)	2.8 (1.0)	2.7 (1.7)	2.8 (0.9)
Not reported				2.4 (0.6)	1.3 (1.0)	2.3 (0.6)
Total				100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
<b>Unweighted N<sup>a</sup></b>	424	85	509	424	85	509

a Tabulations exclude the 5 households with missing data.

\*\*\*, ††† Statistically significant difference at the 1 percent level relative to the excluded category (t-test) or across all listed categories (chi-squared test), respectively.

\*\* , †† Statistically significant difference at the 5 percent level relative to the excluded category (t-test) or across all listed categories (chi-squared test), respectively.

\* , † Statistically significant difference at the 10 percent level relative to the excluded category (t-test) or across all listed categories (chi-squared test), respectively.

Numbers without asterisks (\*) or daggers (†) are not statistically significantly different at the 10 percent level relative to the excluded category or across all listed categories.

Standard errors shown in parentheses.

Totals may not add to 100.0% due to rounding.

**Table B.22—Reasons for not completing the application process**

Stated reasons	Situation occurred	Reason for not completing the application process
<b>Process-related</b>		
<b><i>Difficulty of application process</i></b>	<b>28.7</b> <b>(9.4)</b>	<b>20.6</b> <b>(8.7)</b>
Time to get benefits too long	13.3 (8.1)	7.9 (6.7)
Wait in the office too long	8.2 (5.0)	5.5 (4.7)
Application form	9.6 (3.9)	2.5 (2.0)
Getting to food stamp office	6.4 (3.9)	3.3 (2.2)
Confusion about process	5.6 (3.1)	5.6 (3.1)
<b><i>Costs of application</i></b>		
	<b>17.5</b> <b>(7.0)</b>	<b>11.9</b> <b>(6.2)</b>
Travel costs	8.0 (4.9)	2.4 (1.9)
Miss work	6.7 (4.7)	4.9 (4.6)
Pay child/elder care to apply	8.6 (5.6)	4.6 (4.6)
<b><i>Verification and anti-fraud requirements</i></b>		
	<b>14.2</b> <b>(7.4)</b>	<b>9.5</b> <b>(6.7)</b>
Acquiring documents	14.2 (7.4)	9.5 (6.7)
Third-party verification	0.9 (0.9)	0.9 (0.9)
Fingerprinting	0.9 (0.9)	0.9 (0.9)
Home visits	0.0 —	0.0 —
<b><i>Costs of participation</i></b>		
	<b>6.4</b> <b>(5.0)</b>	<b>1.8</b> <b>(1.9)</b>
Monthly reporting	0.9 (0.9)	0.9 (0.9)
Frequent recertifications	5.5 (4.7)	0.9 (0.9)
Stigma	0.0 —	0.0 —
<b><i>Perceived ineligibility due to TANF diversion</i></b>		
	<b>1.4</b> <b>(1.0)</b>	<b>1.4</b> <b>(1.0)</b>
<b><i>Citizenship issues</i></b>		
	<b>0.0</b> —	<b>0.0</b> —

—Continued

**Table B.22—Reasons for not completing the application process—Continued**

Stated reasons	Situation occurred	Reason for not completing the application process
<b>Not process-related</b>		
<i>Perceived ineligibility due to income/assets</i>	<b>46.2</b> <b>(11.1)</b>	<b>45.6</b> <b>(11.1)</b>
<i>Benefits too small</i>	<b>5.3</b> <b>(3.9)</b>	<b>3.1</b> <b>(3.1)</b>
FSP benefits	5.3 (3.9)	3.1 (3.1)
Bundled benefits	3.1 (3.1)	0.0 —
<i>Situation changed and no longer needed benefits</i>	<b>25.8</b> <b>(12.0)</b>	<b>25.8</b> <b>(12.0)</b>
<i>Other</i>	<b>7.9</b> <b>(6.7)</b>	<b>0.9</b> <b>(0.9)</b>
<b>Type of reason<sup>a</sup></b>		
Only process-related reasons	11.2 (5.5)	9.8 (5.3)
Only not process-related reasons	48.9 (10.1)	52.8 (9.8)
Mix of process and not process-related reasons	23.2 (8.5)	16.5 (7.9)
No reason reported	16.7 (6.2)	21.0 (6.8)
Total	100.0%	100.0%
<b>Unweighted N</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>52</b>

a Groups defined as above.

Standard errors shown in parentheses.

Totals may not add to 100.0% due to rounding.

**Table B.23—Expected benefits and costs of FSP participation**

Expected benefits	Completed application process	Did not complete application process	Total
<b>Expected FSP benefit</b>			
\$50 or less	8.4%† (2.3)	0.0% (-)	7.3% (1.9)
\$51-50	11.8 (1.8)	19.7 (7.7)	12.9 (1.9)
\$101-150	18.6 (2.8)	15.5 (5.9)	18.1 (2.6)
\$151-200	14.2 (2.5)	25.9 (11.8)	15.8 (3.1)
\$201-300	15.5 (2.4)	5.0 (2.6)	14.0 (1.9)
Over \$300	5.5 (1.4)	3.8 (2.9)	5.3 (1.3)
Unsure	25.9 (4.0)	30.1 (7.3)	26.5 (3.9)
Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
<b>Other applications filed</b>			
Cash assistance (TANF, GA, SSI)	27.4 (3.4)	34.5 (9.2)	28.4 (3.1)
Medical assistance (Medicaid, SCHIP)	59.0 (3.4)	52.0 (7.0)	58.0 (3.3)
Other	8.8** (2.7)	2.0 (1.1)	7.9 (2.3)
<b>Stigma index</b>			
0 No stigma	55.0%† (3.4)	59.7% (9.3)	55.5% (3.3)
1 Low stigma	20.7 (3.2)	21.9 (6.5)	20.9 (3.0)
2	14.1 (2.3)	8.2 (4.0)	13.5 (2.2)
3	5.8 (1.2)	0.9 (0.9)	5.3 (1.2)
4 High stigma	4.3 (1.8)	9.2 (8.1)	4.8 (1.7)
Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
Mean stigma	0.8 (0.1)	0.8 (0.3)	0.8 (0.1)
<b>Convenience</b>			
Location convenient (%)	83.4 (3.0)	76.5 (6.9)	82.4 (2.7)
Office hours convenient (%)	85.3* (3.0)	69.6 (6.2)	82.9 (2.3)
<b>Unweighted N<sup>a</sup></b>	424	85	509

—Continued

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**Table B.23—Expected benefits and costs of FSP participation—Continued**

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a Tabulations exclude households with missing data, ranging from 3 to 46 depending upon the item.

\*\*\*, ††† Statistically significant difference at the 1 percent level relative to the excluded category (t-test) or across all listed categories (chi-squared test), respectively.

\*\* , †† Statistically significant difference at the 5 percent level relative to the excluded category (t-test) or across all listed categories (chi-squared test), respectively.

\* , † Statistically significant difference at the 10 percent level relative to the excluded category (t-test) or across all listed categories (chi-squared test), respectively.

Numbers without asterisks (\*) or daggers (†) are not statistically significantly different at the 10 percent level relative to the excluded category or across all listed categories.

Standard errors shown in parentheses.

Totals may not add to 100.0% due to rounding.

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**Table B.24—Satisfaction with FSP application process**

<b>Satisfaction</b>	<b>Completed application process</b>	<b>Did not complete application process</b>	<b>Total</b>
Satisfied with receptionist	87.9 (2.6)	84.3 (5.7)	87.4 (2.1)
<i>Satisfaction with caseworker</i>			
Satisfied with caseworker	87.1 (3.1)	77.7 (7.5)	86.1 (2.7)
Dissatisfied with caseworker	12.9 (3.1)	22.3 (7.5)	13.9 (2.7)
Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
Satisfied with overall application process	75.9%*** (3.4)	43.1% (7.7)	71.1% (2.9)
<i>Treatment at food stamp office compared to other government offices</i>			
Treated better	21.4 (2.1)	11.0 (5.7)	19.8 (1.9)
Treated same	61.6 (3.1)	54.4 (8.0)	60.5 (2.7)
Treated worse	17.1* (3.0)	34.6 (8.3)	19.6 (2.7)
Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
<b>Unweighted N<sup>a</sup></b>	424	85	509

a Tabulations exclude households with missing data, ranging from 3 to 46 depending upon the item.

\*\*\*, ††† Statistically significant difference at the 1 percent level relative to the excluded category (t-test) or across all listed categories (chi-squared test), respectively.

\*\* , †† Statistically significant difference at the 5 percent level relative to the excluded category (t-test) or across all listed categories (chi-squared test), respectively.

\* , † Statistically significant difference at the 10 percent level relative to the excluded category (t-test) or across all listed categories (chi-squared test), respectively.

Numbers without asterisks (\*) or daggers (†) are not statistically significantly different at the 10 percent level relative to the excluded category or across all listed categories.

Standard errors shown in parentheses.

Totals may not add to 100.0% due to rounding.

**Table B.25—Costs of FSP application for households that completed the process**

	<b>Percent</b>
Number of trips to FSP office (mean)	2.4 (0.1)
Total travel time, all trips (mean hours)	2.2 (0.2)
Total time at FSP office (mean hours)	3.9 (0.2)
Number of additional trips to acquire documentation (mean)	1.2 (0.1)
Number of additional trips for TANF or Medicaid (mean)	0.4 (0.1)
Missed work to apply for benefits (%)	12.4 (2.3)
Paid child/elder care to apply for benefits (%)	8.7 (1.7)
<b><i>Unweighted N<sup>a</sup></i></b>	<b>424</b>

a Tabulations exclude households with missing data, ranging from 0 to 10 depending upon the item.

Standard errors shown in parentheses.

**Table B.26—Food Stamp Program status of households receiving lump sum TANF diversion**

<b>FSP status</b>	<b>Percent</b>
<b><i>Not receiving food stamps at TANF diversion</i></b>	
Did not apply for, or receive food stamps	15.0% (9.7)
Approved application	47.8 (10.0)
Denied application <sup>a</sup>	10.1 (3.3)
<b><i>Receiving food stamps at TANF diversion</i></b>	
Interim month, continued participating	6.2 (1.9)
Recertification, approved	9.5 (6.3)
Recertification, denied <sup>a</sup>	11.3 (10.7)
Total	100.0%
<b><i>Unweighted N</i></b>	<b>99</b>

a Because households receiving TANF lump sum payments are categorically eligible for food stamps, all denials are assumed to occur because the household did not complete the required application or recertification process.

Standard errors shown in parentheses.

Totals may not add to 100.0% due to rounding.

**Table B.27—Characteristics of households receiving lump sum TANF diversion**

Characteristics	Currently receiving or approved for food stamps	Did not apply or application/recertification was denied	Total
<b><i>Demographic characteristics of household head</i></b>			
Female (%)	96.7 (2.4)	93.1 (6.1)	95.4 (3.7)
Age (mean years)	30.8 (1.8)	32.3 (3.2)	31.4 (1.8)
Black (%)	35.0 (6.2)	42.3 (22.7)	37.6 (9.2)
Hispanic (%)	14.4 (7.2)	11.7 (6.8)	13.4 (6.8)
Non-English speaker (%)	11.5 (7.1)	10.2 (6.6)	11.1 (6.3)
Non-U.S. citizen (%)	3.4 (2.5)	6.4 (4.4)	4.5 (2.8)
High school graduate (%)	68.1 (3.7)	67.6 (6.4)	67.9 (2.4)
<b><i>Household composition</i></b>			
Single adult with children <sup>a</sup> (%)	67.5 (6.8)	80.4 (6.2)	72.4 (4.8)
Multiple adults with children (%)	32.5 (6.8)	19.6 (6.2)	27.6 (4.8)
Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
<b><i>Unweighted N<sup>b</sup></i></b>	67	32	99

a Includes child-only households.

b Tabulations exclude households with missing data, ranging from 0 to 2 depending upon the item.

\*\*\*, ††† Statistically significant difference at the 1 percent level relative to the excluded category (t-test) or across all listed categories (chi-squared test), respectively.

\*\* , †† Statistically significant difference at the 5 percent level relative to the excluded category (t-test) or across all listed categories (chi-squared test), respectively.

\* , † Statistically significant difference at the 10 percent level relative to the excluded category (t-test) or across all listed categories (chi-squared test), respectively.

Numbers without asterisks (\*) or daggers (†) are not statistically significantly different at the 10 percent level relative to the excluded category or across all listed categories.

Standard errors shown in parentheses.

Totals may not add to 100.0% due to rounding.

**Table B.28—Level of need of households receiving lump sum TANF diversion**

Level of need	Currently receiving or approved for food stamps	Did not apply or application/recertification was denied	Total
<b><i>Economic characteristics of household</i></b>			
Earnings in previous month (%)	49.8 (10.7)	49.1 (9.0)	49.5 (8.2)
Mean earnings of those with positive earnings	\$674** (\$125)	\$1182 (\$123)	\$866 (\$113)
<b><i>Unearned income (% receiving)<sup>a</sup></i></b>			
Cash assistance	14.1 (12.4)	28.0 (15.2)	22.4 (10.5)
Social Security/SSI	17.5 (9.4)	21.8 (4.8)	20.0 (3.6)
Other	26.6 (12.6)	34.3 (5.1)	31.2 (7.1)
<b><i>Percent of poverty (%)</i></b>			
Less than 50%	44.7 (10.9)	24.6 (7.0)	37.6 (8.8)
50-100%	46.4 (12.3)	38.4 (11.9)	43.6 (7.9)
100-130%	1.1 (1.0)	36.1 (15.0)	13.5 (5.8)
Greater than 130%	7.7 (5.3)	0.9 (1.2)	5.3 (4.1)
<b><i>Assets</i></b>			
Bank accounts (%)	39.2 (15.7)	42.2 (6.6)	41.1 (8.6)
Other financial assets (%)	0.0 (0.0)	0.4 (0.5)	0.3 (0.3)
Mean amount in accounts	\$51 (\$24)	\$96 (\$65)	\$71 (\$37)
Mean (non-zero) amount in accounts	\$130 (\$35)	\$157 (\$56)	\$144 (\$36)
Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
<b><i>Food security status (%)<sup>b</sup></i></b>			
Food secure	46.3 (14.8)	38.8 (7.9)	43.6 (9.0)
Food insecure without hunger	37.2 (12.1)	38.0 (9.0)	37.4 (10.1)
Food insecure with hunger	16.5 (6.0)	23.3 (16.6)	19.0 (7.5)
Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
<b><i>Unweighted N<sup>c</sup></i></b>	67	32	99

—Continued

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**Table B.28—Level of need of households receiving lump sum TANF diversion—Continued**

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a Households can report more than one source of unearned income.

b The food security questions reference the year preceding the survey.

c Tabulations exclude households with missing data, ranging from 0 to 43 depending upon the item.

\*\*\*, ††† Statistically significant difference at the 1 percent level relative to the excluded category (t-test) or across all listed categories (chi-squared test), respectively.

\*\* , †† Statistically significant difference at the 5 percent level relative to the excluded category (t-test) or across all listed categories (chi-squared test), respectively.

\* , † Statistically significant difference at the 10 percent level relative to the excluded category (t-test) or across all listed categories (chi-squared test), respectively.

Numbers without asterisks (\*) or daggers (†) are not statistically significantly different at the 10 percent level relative to the excluded category or across all listed categories.

Standard errors shown in parentheses.

Totals may not add to 100.0% due to rounding.

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**Table B.29—Circumstances precipitating application for assistance of households receiving lump sum TANF diversion**

Circumstance	Reason reported			Most important reason		
	Currently receiving or approved for food stamps (%)	Did not apply or application/recertification was denied (%)	Total (%)	Currently receiving or approved for food stamps (%)	Did not apply or application/recertification was denied (%)	Total (%)
Loss of income	71.5 (5.3)	70.5 (6.8)	71.1 (5.0)	33.1 (6.6)	37.5 (4.7)	34.6 (5.1)
Harder to make ends meet	72.1 (7.6)	68.7 (14.0)	70.9 (8.9)	21.3 (8.6)	17.2 (4.9)	19.9 (6.6)
Household member become sick/disabled	25.4 (7.9)	30.8 (13.9)	27.3 (9.4)	15.3 (10.7)	22.7 (10.6)	17.8 (10.8)
Non-contributing household member added	11.8 (3.6)	13.4 (5.5)	12.3 (3.0)	4.5 (2.8)	12.8 (5.4)	7.4 (3.0)
Moved, released from institution	25.3 (5.2)	27.6 (6.2)	26.1 (4.0)	8.5 (6.6)	0.2 (0.2)	5.7 (5.0)
Increased expenses	30.1 (8.3)	33.9 (5.6)	31.4 (4.6)	7.2 (6.5)	0.8 (1.0)	5.0 (4.8)
Contributing adult died/left household	4.8 (3.8)	4.1 (4.3)	4.6 (2.9)	2.7 (2.9)	4.1 (4.3)	3.2 (2.6)
Just learned about the FSP	5.4 (4.6)	1.9 (1.8)	4.2 (3.5)	0.2 (0.2)	0.4 (0.5)	0.3 (0.2)
Other	7.1 (3.2)	3.8 (3.8)	6.0 (2.2)	4.3 (2.1)	3.8 (3.8)	4.2 (1.3)
Not reported	—	—	—	3.1 (2.7)	0.4 (0.5)	2.2 (2.0)
Total				100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
<b>Unweighted N</b>	67	32	99	67	32	99

a Tabulations exclude the 3 households with missing data.

\*\*\*, ††† Statistically significant difference at the 1 percent level relative to the excluded category (t-test) or across all listed categories (chi-squared test), respectively.

\*\* , †† Statistically significant difference at the 5 percent level relative to the excluded category (t-test) or across all listed categories (chi-squared test), respectively.

\* , † Statistically significant difference at the 10 percent level relative to the excluded category (t-test) or across all listed categories (chi-squared test), respectively.

Numbers without asterisks (\*) or daggers (†) are not statistically significantly different at the 10 percent level relative to the excluded category or across all listed categories.

Standard errors shown in parentheses.

Totals may not add to 100.0% due to rounding.

**Table B.30—Expected benefits and costs of FSP participation of households receiving lump sum TANF diversion**

Expected benefits	Currently receiving or approved for food stamps	Did not apply or application/recertification was denied	Total
<b>Perceived eligible for FSP</b>			
Yes		74.7 (2.8)	
No		20.6 (3.5)	
Unsure		4.7 (3.9)	
Total		100.0%	
<b>Expected FSP benefit<sup>a</sup></b>			
\$50 or less	0.0† (0.0)	0.7 (0.7)	0.2 (0.2)
\$51-100	6.5 (5.6)	17.3 (14.0)	10.2 (7.2)
\$101-150	9.2 (3.1)	30.6 (4.3)	16.6 (3.7)
\$151-200	25.3 (8.1)	9.6 (4.9)	20.0 (5.7)
\$201-300	11.3 (4.4)	13.6 (6.1)	12.1 (3.8)
\$Over \$300	9.0 (3.5)	0.0 (0.0)	5.9 (2.2)
Unsure	38.7 (11.5)	28.0 (4.9)	35.0 (8.2)
Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
<b>Stigma index</b>			
0 No stigma	49.4 (9.7)	58.6 (5.9)	53.0 (7.7)
1 Low stigma	28.7 (9.8)	21.7 (2.7)	25.9 (5.6)
2	20.8 (6.1)	11.2 (1.2)	17.0 (4.4)
3	0.3 (0.3)	0.0 (0.0)	0.2 (0.2)
4 High stigma	0.9 (0.7)	8.4 (9.4)	3.8 (2.9)
Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
Mean stigma	0.7 (0.1)	0.8 (0.3)	0.8 (2.9)
<b>Unweighted N</b>	67	32	99

—Continued



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**Table B.30—Expected benefits and costs of FSP participation of households receiving lump sum TANF diversion—Continued**

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a Tabulations exclude households with missing data, ranging from 0 to 18.

\*\*\*, ††† Statistically significant difference at the 1 percent level relative to the excluded category (t-test) or across all listed categories (chi-squared test), respectively.

\*\* , †† Statistically significant difference at the 5 percent level relative to the excluded category (t-test) or across all listed categories (chi-squared test), respectively.

\* , † Statistically significant difference at the 10 percent level relative to the excluded category (t-test) or across all listed categories (chi-squared test), respectively.

Numbers without asterisks (\*) or daggers (†) are not statistically significantly different at the 10 percent level relative to the excluded category or across all listed categories.

Standard errors shown in parentheses.

Totals may not add to 100.0% due to rounding.

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**Table B.31—Reported TANF diversion among FSP applicants**

Type of TANF diversion	All households	Households with children
Lump-sum payment	1.4 (0.5)	2.4 (0.8)
Job search diversion	7.3 (1.5)	12.0 (2.5)
Alternative resources	4.3 (1.5)	7.1 (2.3)
<b><i>Unweighted N</i></b>	524	325

Standard errors shown in parentheses.

**Table B.32—Status of food stamp application among households with children, by receipt of TANF diversion**

<b>Lump Sum Payment</b>		
<b>FSP application status</b>	<b>Received</b>	<b>Did not receive</b>
Approved	94.5 (5.7)	83.9 (2.5)
Denied	5.5 (5.7)	16.1 (2.5)
Did not complete application	0.0 (—)	11.2 (3.3)
No certification interview	0.0 (—)	2.0 (1.0)
Incomplete verification	0.0 (—)	6.3 (2.1)
Other	0.0 (—)	2.3 (1.2)
Don't know reason	0.0 (—)	0.6 (0.6)
Voluntary withdrawal	0.0 (—)	2.7 (2.0)
Other	5.5 (5.7)	1.0 (0.4)
Don't know why denied	0.0 (—)	1.2 (0.8)
Total	100.0%	100.0%
<b>Unweighted N</b>	22	293
<b>Job Search</b>		
<b>FSP application status</b>	<b>Subject to diversion</b>	<b>Not subject to diversion</b>
Approved	90.6 (5.2)	83.4 (2.8)
Denied	9.4 (5.2)	16.6 (2.8)
Did not complete application	8.7 (5.2)	11.1 (3.6)
No certification interview	0.1 (0.1)	2.2 (1.1)
Incomplete verification	6.5 (4.7)	6.0 (2.2)
Other	2.2 (2.2)	2.2 (1.2)
Don't know reason	0.0 (—)	0.7 (0.7)
Voluntary withdrawal	0.0 (—)	3.0 (2.2)
Other	0.2 (0.2)	1.2 (0.5)
Don't know why denied	0.5 (0.5)	1.3 (0.9)
Total	100.0%	100.0%
<b>Unweighted N</b>	47	269

—Continued

**Table B.32—Status of food stamp application among households with children, by receipt of TANF diversion—Continued**

FSP application status	Alternative Resources	
	Subject to diversion	Not subject to diversion
Approved	92.1 (5.4)	83.7 (2.6)
Denied	7.9 (5.4)	16.3 (2.6)
Did not complete application	7.9 (5.4)	11.1 (3.3)
No certification interview	4.2 (4.4)	1.8 (1.0)
Incomplete verification	3.7 (3.0)	6.3 (2.2)
Other	0.0 (—)	2.4 (1.2)
Don't know reason	0.0 (—)	0.6 (0.6)
Voluntary withdrawal	0.0 (—)	2.8 (2.1)
Other	0.0 (—)	1.2 (0.5)
Don't know why denied	0.0 (—)	1.3 (0.9)
Total	100.0%	100.0%
<b>Unweighted N</b>	22	293

\*\*\*, ††† Statistically significant difference at the 1 percent level relative to the excluded category (t-test) or across all listed categories (chi-squared test), respectively.

\*\* , †† Statistically significant difference at the 5 percent level relative to the excluded category (t-test) or across all listed categories (chi-squared test), respectively.

\* , † Statistically significant difference at the 10 percent level relative to the excluded category (t-test) or across all listed categories (chi-squared test), respectively.

Numbers without asterisks (\*) or daggers (†) are not statistically significantly different at the 10 percent level relative to the excluded category or across all listed categories.

Standard errors shown in parentheses.

Totals may not add to 100.0% due to rounding.

**Table B.33—Characteristics of circumstantially eligible applicant households with children, by receipt of TANF lump sum diversion<sup>a</sup>**

Characteristics	Received TANF lump sum diversion	Did not receive TANF lump sum diversion	Total
<b>Household demographics</b>			
Female	96.2 (3.8)	92.3 (1.5)	92.4 (1.4)
Age	27.6 (2.4)	31.3 (0.7)	31.3 (0.7)
Black	10.5* (7.9)	31.2 (4.0)	30.7 (3.9)
Hispanic	36.5 (17.6)	15.9 (3.3)	16.4 (3.1)
Non-English speaking	19.4 (13.0)	7.1 (1.6)	7.4 (1.5)
Non-citizen	19.4 (13.0)	5.8 (1.9)	6.1 (1.8)
High school graduate	81.7 (10.4)	61.4 (3.8)	61.8 (3.7)
<b>Household composition</b>			
One adult	0.0† (—)	0.0 (—)	0.0 (—)
Multiple adults, no children	0.0 (—)	0.0 (—)	0.0 (—)
Single adult with children	70.8 (16.3)	67.2 (4.9)	67.3 (4.9)
Multiple adults with children	29.2 (16.3)	29.6 (4.8)	29.6 (4.8)
Child only	0.0 (—)	3.2 (1.0)	3.1 (1.0)
All adults elderly	0.0 (—)	2.0 (1.6)	1.9 (1.6)
All adults with disabilities	10.4 (7.9)	3.9 (1.6)	4.0 (1.6)
<b>Unweighted N</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>293</b>	<b>315</b>

a Based on survey data only.

\*\*\*, ††† Statistically significant difference at the 1 percent level relative to the excluded category (t-test) or across all listed categories (chi-squared test), respectively.

\*\* , †† Statistically significant difference at the 5 percent level relative to the excluded category (t-test) or across all listed categories (chi-squared test), respectively.

\* , † Statistically significant difference at the 10 percent level relative to the excluded category (t-test) or across all listed categories (chi-squared test), respectively.

Numbers without asterisks (\*) or daggers (†) are not statistically significantly different at the 10 percent level relative to the excluded category or across all listed categories.

Standard errors shown in parentheses.

Totals may not add to 100.0% due to rounding.

**Table B.34—Characteristics of circumstantially eligible applicant households with children, by whether subject to job search diversion<sup>a</sup>**

Characteristics	Subject to job search diversion	Not subject to job search diversion	Total
<b>Household demographics</b>			
Female	100.0*** (—)	91.4 (1.8)	92.4 (1.4)
Age	31.4 (1.1)	31.1 (0.8)	31.3 (0.7)
Black	49.0 (12.8)	27.9 (4.1)	30.7 (3.9)
Hispanic	21.6 (8.1)	16.3 (3.5)	16.4 (3.1)
Non-English speaking	1.1*** (0.9)	8.0 (1.6)	7.4 (1.5)
Non-citizen	0.4*** (0.4)	6.6 (2.0)	6.1 (1.8)
High school graduate	71.8 (12.7)	61.0 (4.2)	61.8 (3.7)
<b>Household composition</b>			
One adult	0.0†† (—)	0.0 (—)	0.0 (—)
Multiple adults, no children	0.0 (—)	0.0 (—)	0.0 (—)
Single adult with children	78.0 (8.3)	65.9 (4.9)	67.3 (4.9)
Multiple adults with children	22.0 (8.3)	30.6 (4.8)	29.6 (4.8)
Child only	0.0 (—)	3.5 (1.1)	3.1 (1.0)
All adults elderly	0.0 (—)	2.2 (1.8)	1.9 (1.6)
All adults with disabilities	8.8 (5.3)	3.4 (1.6)	4.0 (1.6)
<b>Unweighted N</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>268</b>	<b>315</b>

a Based on survey data only.

\*\*\*, ††† Statistically significant difference at the 1 percent level relative to the excluded category (t-test) or across all listed categories (chi-squared test), respectively.

\*\*, †† Statistically significant difference at the 5 percent level relative to the excluded category (t-test) or across all listed categories (chi-squared test), respectively.

\*, † Statistically significant difference at the 10 percent level relative to the excluded category (t-test) or across all listed categories (chi-squared test), respectively.

Numbers without asterisks (\*) or daggers (†) are not statistically significantly different at the 10 percent level relative to the excluded category or across all listed categories.

Standard errors shown in parentheses.

Totals may not add to 100.0% due to rounding.

**Table B.35—Characteristics of circumstantially eligible applicant households with children, by whether subject to alternative resources diversion<sup>a</sup>**

Characteristics	Subject to alternative resources diversion	Not subject to alternative resources diversion	Total
<b>Household demographics</b>			
Female	100.0**	91.8	92.4
	—	(1.6)	(1.4)
Age	33.8	31.0	31.3
	(2.9)	(0.7)	(0.7)
Black	32.3	30.4	30.7
	(15.2)	(3.9)	(3.9)
Hispanic	8.9	17.3	16.4
	(6.8)	(3.6)	(3.1)
Non-English speaking	4.2	7.2	7.4
	(4.4)	(1.6)	(1.5)
Non-citizen	4.2	6.2	6.1
	(4.4)	(1.9)	(1.8)
High school graduate	78.1	61.2	61.8
	(10.9)	(4.4)	(3.7)
<b>Household composition</b>			
One adult	0.0††	0.0	0.0
	(—)	(—)	(—)
Multiple adults, no children	0.0	0.0	0.0
	(—)	(—)	(—)
Single adult with children	85.0	66.2	67.3
	(9.2)	(4.6)	(4.9)
Multiple adults with children	15.0	30.5	29.6
	(9.2)	(4.6)	(4.8)
Child only	0.0	3.3	3.1
	(—)	(1.0)	(1.0)
All adults elderly	0.0	2.0	1.9
	(—)	(1.7)	(1.6)
All adults with disabilities	16.1	3.1	4.0
	(11.0)	(1.5)	(1.6)
<b>Unweighted N</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>293</b>	<b>315</b>

a Based on survey data only.

\*\*\*, ††† Statistically significant difference at the 1 percent level relative to the excluded category (t-test) or across all listed categories (chi-squared test), respectively.

\*\* , †† Statistically significant difference at the 5 percent level relative to the excluded category (t-test) or across all listed categories (chi-squared test), respectively.

\* , † Statistically significant difference at the 10 percent level relative to the excluded category (t-test) or across all listed categories (chi-squared test), respectively.

Numbers without asterisks (\*) or daggers (†) are not statistically significantly different at the 10 percent level relative to the excluded category or across all listed categories.

Standard errors shown in parentheses.

Totals may not add to 100.0% due to rounding.

**Table B.36—Level of need of circumstantially eligible applicant households with children, by receipt of TANF lump sum diversion<sup>a</sup>**

Characteristics	Received TANF lump sum diversion	Did not receive TANF lump sum diversion	Total
<b><i>Economic characteristics</i></b>			
Earnings in previous month (%)	25.7 (16.4)	49.6 (3.3)	49.0 (3.3)
Mean earnings of those with earnings	\$1,365** (\$236)	\$865 (\$49)	\$871 (\$48)
<b><i>Unearned income<sup>b</sup></i></b>			
Cash assistance (%)	31.9 (16.8)	6.6 (2.0)	7.1 (1.9)
Social Security/SSI (%)	18.6 (11.4)	15.2 (3.5)	15.3 (3.4)
Other (%)	21.8 (14.9)	26.0 (4.3)	25.9 (4.2)
<b><i>Percent of Poverty</i></b>			
Less than 50% (%)	64.0 (16.5)	51.6 (4.4)	51.9 (4.3)
50-100% (%)	17.2 (9.8)	30.0 (3.6)	29.7 (3.5)
100-130% (%)	18.8 (16.8)	15.6 (4.2)	15.7 (4.1)
>130% (%)	0.0 (—)	2.8 (1.3)	2.7 (1.3)
<b><i>Assets</i></b>			
Any bank accounts (%)	5.3** (5.6)	36.9 (4.0)	36.2 (3.8)
Any other assets (%)	0.0 (—)	1.1 (0.6)	1.1 (0.6)
Mean assets	\$26 (\$28)	\$72 (\$20)	\$71 (\$20)
Mean assets of those with assets	\$494*** (\$21)	\$190 (\$51)	\$191 (\$49)
<b><i>Unweighted N</i></b>	22	293	315

a Based on survey data only.

b Households can report more than one source of unearned income.

\*\*\*, ††† Statistically significant difference at the 1 percent level relative to the excluded category (t-test) or across all listed categories (chi-squared test), respectively.

\*\* , †† Statistically significant difference at the 5 percent level relative to the excluded category (t-test) or across all listed categories (chi-squared test), respectively.

\* , † Statistically significant difference at the 10 percent level relative to the excluded category (t-test) or across all listed categories (chi-squared test), respectively.

Numbers without asterisks (\*) or daggers (†) are not statistically significantly different at the 10 percent level relative to the excluded category or across all listed categories.

Standard errors shown in parentheses.

Totals may not add to 100.0% due to rounding.



**Table B.37—Level of need of circumstantially eligible applicant households with children, by whether subject to job search diversion<sup>a</sup>**

Characteristics	Subject to job search diversion	Not subject to job search diversion	Total
<b><i>Economic characteristics</i></b>			
Earnings in previous month (%)	24.5** (9.0)	52.4 (3.3)	49.0 (3.3)
Mean earnings of those with earnings	\$874.2 (\$57.9)	\$867.9 (\$50.1)	\$871 (\$48)
<b><i>Unearned income<sup>b</sup></i></b>			
Cash assistance (%)	10.0 (4.5)	6.7 (2.0)	7.1 (1.9)
Social Security/SSI (%)	24.9 (13.5)	13.8 (3.7)	15.3 (3.4)
Other (%)	42.9 (14.0)	23.7 (3.3)	25.9 (4.2)
<b><i>Percent of Poverty</i></b>			
Less than 50% (%)	58.7 (13.1)	50.6 (4.7)	51.9 (4.3)
50-100% (%)	20.1 (9.0)	31.4 (4.0)	29.7 (3.5)
100-130% (%)	18.4 (13.7)	15.3 (4.4)	15.7 (4.1)
>130% (%)	2.8 (2.9)	2.7 (1.4)	2.7 (1.3)
<b><i>Assets</i></b>			
Any bank accounts (%)	27.9 (9.6)	37.3 (4.3)	36.2 (3.8)
Any other assets (%)	0.0* (—)	1.2 (0.7)	1.1 (0.6)
Mean assets	\$88 (\$58)	\$69 (\$21)	\$71 (\$20)
Mean assets of those with assets	\$295 (\$164)	\$182 (\$55)	\$191 (\$49)
<b><i>Unweighted N</i></b>	47	268	315

a Based on survey data only.

b Households can report more than one source of unearned income.

\*\*\*, ††† Statistically significant difference at the 1 percent level relative to the excluded category (t-test) or across all listed categories (chi-squared test), respectively.

\*\* , †† Statistically significant difference at the 5 percent level relative to the excluded category (t-test) or across all listed categories (chi-squared test), respectively.

\* , † Statistically significant difference at the 10 percent level relative to the excluded category (t-test) or across all listed categories (chi-squared test), respectively.

Numbers without asterisks (\*) or daggers (†) are not statistically significantly different at the 10 percent level relative to the excluded category or across all listed categories.

Standard errors shown in parentheses.

Totals may not add to 100.0% due to rounding.

**Table B.38—Level of need of circumstantially eligible applicant households with children, by whether subject to alternative resources diversion<sup>a</sup>**

Characteristics	Subject to alternative resources diversion	Not subject to alternative resources diversion	Total
<b><i>Economic characteristics</i></b>			
Earnings in previous month (%)	68.9 (12.9)	47.8 (3.6)	49.0 (3.3)
Mean earnings of those with earnings	\$703** (\$51)	\$889 (\$52)	\$871 (\$48)
<b><i>Unearned income<sup>b</sup></i></b>			
Cash assistance (%)	13.8 (8.9)	6.6 (2.1)	7.1 (1.9)
Social Security/SSI (%)	9.1 (6.4)	15.2 (3.5)	15.3 (3.4)
Other (%)	41.6 (21.6)	24.9 (3.6)	25.9 (4.2)
<b><i>Percent of Poverty</i></b>			
Less than 50% (%)	28.0 (11.5)	53.0 (4.2)	51.9 (4.3)
50-100% (%)	34.2 (14.5)	29.8 (3.2)	29.7 (3.5)
100-130% (%)	33.1 (23.1)	14.6 (3.3)	15.7 (4.1)
>130% (%)	4.7 (5.0)	2.6 (1.3)	2.7 (1.3)
<b><i>Assets</i></b>			
Any bank accounts (%)	46.4 (24.2)	35.8 (4.2)	36.2 (3.8)
Any other assets (%)	0.0 (—)	1.1 (0.7)	1.1 (0.6)
Mean assets	\$33 (\$33)	\$74 (\$21)	\$71 (\$20)
Mean assets of those with assets	\$68 (\$92)	\$202 (\$51)	\$191 (\$49)
<b><i>Unweighted N</i></b>	<b>22</b>	<b>293</b>	<b>315</b>

a Based on survey data only.

b Households can report more than one source of unearned income.

\*\*\*, ††† Statistically significant difference at the 1 percent level relative to the excluded category (t-test) or across all listed categories (chi-squared test), respectively.

\*\* , †† Statistically significant difference at the 5 percent level relative to the excluded category (t-test) or across all listed categories (chi-squared test), respectively.

\* , † Statistically significant difference at the 10 percent level relative to the excluded category (t-test) or across all listed categories (chi-squared test), respectively.

Numbers without asterisks (\*) or daggers (†) are not statistically significantly different at the 10 percent level relative to the excluded category or across all listed categories.

Standard errors shown in parentheses.

Totals may not add to 100.0% due to rounding.

**Table B.39—Status of active food stamp caseload**

<b>Status</b>	<b>Percent</b>	<b>Weighted N</b>
Non-recertification month—continue	85.1% (0.6)	6,356,227
Non-recertification month—close	2.4 (0.3)	180,178
Recertification month—continue	9.7 (0.5)	726,094
Recertification month—close	2.7 (0.2)	203,174
Total	100.0%	7,465,674 <sup>a</sup>
<b><i>Unweighted N</i></b>	1980	

a Active caseload estimates from study data. FNS administrative data indicate that 7,303,373 households received FSP benefits in June 2000.

Standard errors shown in parentheses.

Totals may not add to 100.0% due to rounding.

**Table B.40—Reasons for closure in recertification and interim months<sup>a</sup>**

<b>Reason</b>	<b>Percent</b>
<b><i>Recertification month closures</i></b>	
Denied for income, resources	34.7 (5.5)
Sanctioned	2.0 (1.8)
Voluntary withdrawal	5.1 (2.1)
Certification process not completed	39.3 (4.3)
No application filed	19.2 (3.5)
Certification interview not completed	9.1 (3.4)
Verification not completed	4.8 (1.8)
Other/Not recorded	6.3 (2.4)
Other or not recorded	18.8 (3.3)
Total	100.0%
<b><i>Unweighted N</i></b>	
	264
<b><i>Interim month closures</i></b>	
Denied for income, resources	28.7 (4.4)
Sanctioned	20.1 (4.1)
Noncompliance with income reporting	14.5 (3.7)
Noncompliance with FSP E&T	2.1 (1.0)
Noncompliance with TANF E&T	2.0 (1.4)
Intentional program violation	1.5 (0.8)
Voluntary termination/moved	15.1 (3.9)
Voluntary termination	10.1 (3.3)
Moved	5.0 (1.7)
Other	36.1 (5.8)
Total	100.0%
<b><i>Unweighted N</i></b>	
	215

—Continued

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**Table B.40—Reasons for closure in recertification and interim months<sup>a</sup>—Continued**

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a Excludes the 26 households with missing data.

\*\*\*, ††† Statistically significant difference at the 1 percent level relative to the excluded category (t-test) or across all listed categories (chi-squared test), respectively.

\*\* , †† Statistically significant difference at the 5 percent level relative to the excluded category (t-test) or across all listed categories (chi-squared test), respectively.

\* , † Statistically significant difference at the 10 percent level relative to the excluded category (t-test) or across all listed categories (chi-squared test), respectively.

Numbers without asterisks (\*) or daggers (†) are not statistically significantly different at the 10 percent level relative to the excluded category or across all listed categories.

Standard errors shown in parentheses.

Totals may not add to 100.0% due to rounding.

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**Table B.41—Characteristics of food stamp households: Survey sample vs. Abstract data only sample**

Characteristics <sup>a</sup>	Survey sample	Abstract data only sample	Total
<b><i>Demographic characteristics of household head</i></b>			
Female (%)	81.7 (5.7)	80.2 (5.9)	81.1 (4.3)
Age (mean years)	34.5 (1.6)	33.5 (1.5)	34.1 (1.0)
Black (%)	33.8 (7.0)	27.9 (9.8)	32.4 (5.5)
Hispanic (%)	4.9*** (2.2)	45.2 (9.3)	14.6 (3.1)
Non-English speaker (%)	3.2 (1.8)	4.3 (2.1)	3.6 (1.5)
Non-U.S. citizen (%)	2.7 (1.7)	1.8 (0.9)	2.4 (1.3)
<b><i>Household composition</i></b>			
One-person household (%)	38.7 (7.8)	33.0 (5.8)	36.5 (5.7)
Multiple adults without children (%)	0.4 (0.4)	9.8 (4.8)	4.0 (2.1)
Single adult with children (%)	30.2 (7.3)	35.9 (8.6)	32.4 (4.8)
Multiple adults with children (%)	30.6 (7.3)	20.0 (6.7)	26.6 (5.5)
Child only (%)	0.0 (—)	1.3 (1.0)	0.5 (0.4)
Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
All adults elderly (%)	2.4 (1.7)	4.7 (2.5)	3.3 (1.4)
All adults with disabilities (%)	14.8 (5.2)	13.1 (3.9)	14.2 (3.7)
<b><i>Unweighted N<sup>b</sup></i></b>	71	106	177

a Household characteristics as of the beginning of the certification period that ended in June 2000.

b Tabulations exclude households with missing data, ranging from 0 to 52 depending upon the item.

\*\*\*, ††† Statistically significant difference at the 1 percent level relative to the excluded category (t-test) or across all listed categories (chi-squared test), respectively.

\*\* , †† Statistically significant difference at the 5 percent level relative to the excluded category (t-test) or across all listed categories (chi-squared test), respectively.

\* , † Statistically significant difference at the 10 percent level relative to the excluded category (t-test) or across all listed categories (chi-squared test), respectively.

Numbers without asterisks (\*) or daggers (†) are not statistically significantly different at the 10 percent level relative to the excluded category or across all listed categories.

Standard errors shown in parentheses.

Totals may not add to 100.0% due to rounding.

**Table B.42—Characteristics of food stamp households: Survey sample vs. Abstract data only sample**

Level of need <sup>a</sup>	Survey sample	Abstract data only sample	Total
<b><i>Economic characteristics of household</i></b>			
Earnings in previous month (%)	52.4 (7.2)	45.0 (7.5)	49.5 (5.7)
Mean earnings of those with positive earnings	\$870 (\$117)	\$969 (\$146)	\$905 (\$90)
<b><i>Unearned income (% receiving)<sup>b</sup></i></b>			
Cash assistance	16.0 (5.3)	21.2 (5.0)	17.9 (4.1)
Social Security/SSI	20.6 (7.3)	19.7 (4.9)	20.3 (4.7)
Other	13.1 (4.8)	16.9 (5.0)	14.5 (3.5)
<b><i>Percent of poverty (%)</i></b>			
Less than 100%	65.0*** (7.5)	88.7 (2.8)	74.1 (5.0)
100% and greater	35.0*** (7.5)	11.3 (2.8)	25.9 (5.0)
<b><i>Assets</i></b>			
Bank accounts (%)	26.7 (7.0)	22.8 (7.9)	25.4 (5.4)
Other financial assets (%)	1.0 (1.0)	1.9 (1.9)	1.3 (0.9)
Mean amount in accounts	\$61 (\$34)	\$118 (\$66)	\$79 (\$32)
Mean (non-zero) amount in accounts	\$251 (\$118)	\$790 (\$161)	\$373 (\$135)
<b><i>Unweighted N<sup>f</sup></i></b>	71	106	177

a Household characteristics as of the beginning of the certification period that ended in June 2000.

b Households can report more than one source of unearned income.

b Tabulations exclude households with missing data, ranging from 2 to 33 depending upon the item.

\*\*\*, ††† Statistically significant difference at the 1 percent level relative to the excluded category (t-test) or across all listed categories (chi-squared test), respectively.

\*\* , †† Statistically significant difference at the 5 percent level relative to the excluded category (t-test) or across all listed categories (chi-squared test), respectively.

\* , † Statistically significant difference at the 10 percent level relative to the excluded category (t-test) or across all listed categories (chi-squared test), respectively.

Numbers without asterisks (\*) or daggers (†) are not statistically significantly different at the 10 percent level relative to the excluded category or across all listed categories.

Standard errors shown in parentheses.

Totals may not add to 100.0% due to rounding.

**Table B.43—Characteristics of food stamp households, by FSP status**

Characteristics <sup>a</sup>	Food stamp case status	
	Continued in FSP	Left FSP
<b>Demographic characteristics of household head</b>		
Female (%)	77.4 (2.7)	79.7 (2.9)
Age (mean years)	41.9*** (0.8)	35.8 (1.0)
Black (%)	25.3 (4.4)	23.8 (4.3)
Hispanic (%)	13.7*** (2.5)	22.7 (4.1)
Non-English speaker (%)	7.5 (1.6)	6.7 (1.5)
Non-U.S. citizen (%)	5.1 (1.2)	4.2 (0.8)
<b>Household composition</b>		
One-person household (%)	42.0††† (4.4)	32.4 (3.8)
Multiple adults without children (%)	5.3 (0.9)	4.1 (1.5)
Single adult with children (%)	38.2 (3.1)	39.1 (3.3)
Multiple adults with children (%)	13.3 (1.3)	23.5 (3.1)
Child only (%)	1.2 (0.5)	1.0 (0.4)
Total	100.0%	100.0%
All adults elderly (%)	11.7*** (1.8)	3.8 (1.0)
All adults with disabilities (%)	37.8*** (4.0)	11.9 (1.8)
One-person household, not elderly, without disabilities, not child-only (%)	8.6*** (1.2)	17.4 (2.4)
<b>Unweighted N<sup>b</sup></b>	1865	479

a Household characteristics as of the beginning of the certification period that ended in June 2000.

b Tabulations exclude households with missing data, ranging from 2 to 594 depending upon the item.

\*\*\*, ††† Statistically significant difference at the 1 percent level relative to the excluded category (t-test) or across all listed categories (chi-squared test), respectively.

\*\* , †† Statistically significant difference at the 5 percent level relative to the excluded category (t-test) or across all listed categories (chi-squared test), respectively.

\* , † Statistically significant difference at the 10 percent level relative to the excluded category (t-test) or across all listed categories (chi-squared test), respectively.

Numbers without asterisks (\*) or daggers (†) are not statistically significantly different at the 10 percent level relative to the excluded category or across all listed categories.

Standard errors shown in parentheses.

Totals may not add to 100.0% due to rounding.



**Table B.44—Level of need of food stamp households, by FSP status**

Level of need <sup>a</sup>	Food stamp case status	
	Continued in FSP	Left FSP
<b><i>Economic characteristics of household</i></b>		
Earnings in previous month (%)	26.3*** (2.2)	45.2 (2.9)
Mean earnings of those with positive earnings	\$791*** (\$37)	\$1,004 (\$58)
<b><i>Unearned income (% receiving)<sup>b</sup></i></b>		
Cash assistance	23.0* (2.4)	18.1 (2.9)
Social Security/SSI	44.2*** (2.8)	23.3 (2.4)
Other	23.5 (2.4)	23.3 (3.4)
<b><i>Percent of poverty (%)</i></b>		
Less than 100%	88.3*** (1.7)	77.8 (2.4)
100% and greater	11.7*** (1.7)	22.2 (2.4)
<b><i>Assets</i></b>		
Bank accounts (%)	31.7 (3.4)	31.7 (3.3)
Other financial assets (%)	2.9* (1.1)	0.9 (0.6)
Mean amount in accounts	\$88 (\$24)	\$133 (\$38)
Mean (non-zero) amount in accounts	\$347 (\$84)	\$468 (\$121)
<b><i>Unweighted N<sup>c</sup></i></b>	1865	479

\*\*\*, ††† Statistically significant difference at the 1 percent level relative to the excluded category (t-test) or across all listed categories (chi-squared test), respectively.

\*\* , †† Statistically significant difference at the 5 percent level relative to the excluded category (t-test) or across all listed categories (chi-squared test), respectively.

\* , † Statistically significant difference at the 10 percent level relative to the excluded category (t-test) or across all listed categories (chi-squared test), respectively.

Numbers without asterisks (\*) or daggers (†) are not statistically significantly different at the 10 percent level relative to the excluded category or across all listed categories.

Standard errors shown in parentheses.

Totals may not add to 100.0% due to rounding.

**Table B.45—Characteristics of food stamp households, by status**

Characteristics <sup>a</sup>	Food stamp case status			
	Non-recertification month—continue	Non-recertification month—close	Recertification month—continue	Recertification month—close
<b>Demographic characteristics of household head</b>				
Female (%)	77.4 (2.6)	77.0 (4.5)	77.6 (3.4)	82.1 (2.6)
Age (mean years)	42.1 (0.8)	36.9 (1.6)	39.9* (0.8)	34.8*** (1.0)
Black (%)	25.1 (4.4)	18.5 (5.4)	27.2 (4.8)	28.3 (5.5)
Hispanic (%)	13.5 (2.5)	29.4*** (5.4)	15.4 (2.9)	17.0 (4.1)
Non-English speaker (%)	7.3 (1.6)	8.4 (2.6)	9.0* (2.2)	5.2 (1.7)
Non-U.S. citizen (%)	4.9 (1.1)	6.3 (1.6)	6.6* (1.8)	2.3** (0.9)
<b>Household composition</b>				
One-person household (%)	43.1 (4.5)	31.2†† (5.0)	31.7††† (3.9)	33.4††† (4.3)
Multiple adults without children (%)	5.3 (0.9)	3.5 (2.1)	5.6 (1.0)	4.7 (2.1)
Single adult with children (%)	37.5 (3.1)	44.4 (5.2)	44.4 (3.1)	34.3 (3.8)
Multiple adults with children (%)	12.9 (1.3)	19.8 (3.9)	17.1 (2.1)	26.8 (4.5)
Child only (%)	1.2 (0.5)	1.1 (0.6)	1.2 (0.5)	0.9 (0.5)
Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
All adults elderly (%)	12.1 (1.9)	4.2*** (1.5)	8.6*** (1.6)	3.3*** (1.3)
All adults with disabilities (%)	39.0 (4.1)	12.0*** (3.0)	27.1*** (3.1)	11.8*** (2.8)
<b>Unweighted N</b>	1865	215	753	264

a Household characteristics as of the beginning of the certification period that ended in June 2000.

b Tabulations exclude households with missing data, ranging from 2 to 355 depending upon the item.

\*\*\*, ††† Compared to non-recertification month continuation cases, statistically significant difference at the 1 percent level relative to the excluded category (t-test) or across all listed categories (chi-squared test), respectively.

\*\* , †† Compared to non-recertification month continuation cases, statistically significant difference at the 5 percent level relative to the excluded category (t-test) or across all listed categories (chi-squared test), respectively.

\* , † Compared to non-recertification month continuation cases, statistically significant difference at the 10 percent level relative to the excluded category (t-test) or across all listed categories (chi-squared test), respectively.

Numbers without asterisks (\*) or daggers (†) are not statistically significantly different at the 10 percent level relative to the excluded category or across all listed categories.

Standard errors shown in parentheses.

Totals may not add to 100.0% due to rounding.

**Table B.46—Level of need of food stamp households due for recertification, by status**

Level of need <sup>a</sup>	Food stamp case status		
	Continued in FSP	Closed due to incomplete recertification requirements <sup>b</sup>	Closed due to circumstantial ineligibility <sup>c</sup>
<b><i>Economic characteristics of household</i></b>			
Earnings in previous month (%)	35.0† (3.1)	47.9 (6.0)	47.7 (7.7)
Mean earnings of those with positive earnings	\$803††† (\$38)	\$930 (\$94)	\$1,362 (\$109)
<b><i>Unearned income (% receiving)<sup>d</sup></i></b>			
Cash assistance	24.3 (2.8)	18.4 (4.1)	21.1 (7.0)
Social Security/SSI	34.7†† (2.9)	19.6 (3.6)	30.1 (5.6)
Other	25.8† (3.0)	17.1 (3.7)	13.6 (5.0)
<b><i>Percent of poverty (%)</i></b>			
Less than 100%	91.0††† (1.3)	78.8 (4.4)	64.6 (8.7)
100% and greater	9.0††† (1.3)	21.2 (4.4)	35.4 (8.7)
<b><i>Assets</i></b>			
Bank accounts (%)	29.7 (3.3)	26.1 (5.8)	33.2 (7.5)
Other financial assets (%)	2.6 (0.9)	1.5 (1.1)	2.3 (2.4)
Mean amount in accounts	\$83 (\$45)	\$107 (\$47)	\$114 (\$30)
Mean (non-zero) amount in accounts	\$383 (\$184)	\$502 (\$168)	\$378 (\$83)
<b><i>Unweighted N<sup>e</sup></i></b>	753	177	87

a Household characteristics as of the beginning of the certification period that ended in June 2000.

b Includes households identified in case records as having not completed recertification requirements or having voluntarily withdrawn their recertification.

c Includes households identified in case records as denied for eligibility-related reasons or for reasons other than not completing recertification requirements and voluntary withdrawal.

d Households can report more than one source of unearned income.

e Tabulations exclude households with missing data, ranging from 0 to 227 depending upon the item.

††† Differences among the three groups of households statistically significant at the 1 percent level.

†† Differences among the three groups of households statistically significant at the 5 percent level.

† Differences among the three groups of households statistically significant at the 10 percent level.

Numbers without daggers (†) are not statistically significantly different at the 10 percent level.

Standard errors shown in parentheses.

Totals may not add to 100.0% due to rounding.

**Table B.47—Characteristics of food stamp households due for recertification, by status**

Characteristics <sup>a</sup>	Food stamp case status		
	Continued in FSP	Closed due to incomplete recertification requirements <sup>b</sup>	Closed due to circumstantial ineligibility <sup>c</sup>
<b>Demographic characteristics of household head</b>			
Female (%)	77.6 (3.4)	81.8 (3.9)	82.7 (4.4)
Age (mean years)	39.9††† (0.8)	33.6 (1.1)	37.3 (2.4)
Black (%)	27.2 (4.8)	30.2 (6.4)	24.6 (7.5)
Hispanic (%)	15.4†† (2.9)	22.6 (5.3)	6.4 (3.0)
Non-English speaker (%)	9.0†† (2.2)	3.8 (1.5)	8.0 (3.8)
Non-U.S. citizen (%)	6.6†† (1.8)	2.2 (1.0)	2.6 (2.0)
<b>Household composition</b>			
One-person household (%)	31.7† (3.9)	34.0 (4.8)	32.1 (8.1)
Multiple adults without children (%)	5.6 (1.0)	6.4 (3.2)	1.2 (1.0)
Single adult with children (%)	44.4 (3.1)	35.8 (4.9)	31.1 (9.1)
Multiple adults with children (%)	17.1 (2.1)	23.0 (4.7)	34.5 (8.7)
Child only (%)	1.2 (0.5)	0.8 (0.6)	1.0 (0.8)
Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
All adults elderly (%)	8.6†† (1.6)	3.9 (1.7)	2.2 (1.9)
All adults with disabilities (%)	27.2††† (3.1)	13.6 (3.2)	8.3 (4.9)
<b>Unweighted N<sup>d</sup></b>	<b>753</b>	<b>177</b>	<b>87</b>

a Household characteristics as of the beginning of the certification period that ended in June 2000.

b Includes households identified in case records as having not completed recertification requirements or having voluntarily withdrawn their recertification.

c Includes households identified in case records as denied for eligibility-related reasons or for reasons other than not completing recertification requirements and voluntary withdrawal.

d Tabulations exclude households with missing data, ranging from 0 to 288 depending upon the item.

††† Differences among the three groups of households statistically significant at the 1 percent level.

†† Differences among the three groups of households statistically significant at the 5 percent level.

† Differences among the three groups of households statistically significant at the 10 percent level.

Numbers without daggers (†) are not statistically significantly different at the 10 percent level.

Standard errors shown in parentheses.

Totals may not add to 100.0% due to rounding.

**Table B.48—Food security status households that did not complete the recertification process**

<b>Food security status<sup>a</sup></b>	<b>Percent</b>
Food secure	33.6 (7.1)
Food insecure without hunger	39.4 (7.4)
Food insecure with hunger	27.0 (6.3)
Total	100.0%
<b><i>Unweighted N<sup>b</sup></i></b>	71

a The food security questions reference the year preceding the survey.

b Tabulations exclude the 11 households with missing data.

Standard errors shown in parentheses.

Totals may not add to 100.0% due to rounding.

**Table B.49—Status of recertification application for households that did not complete the recertification process**

<b>Circumstance</b>	<b>Total sample</b>	<b>Survey sample</b>	<b>Excluding “not reported”</b>	
			<b>Total sample</b>	<b>Survey sample</b>
No application filed	33.0 (5.4)	63.3 (7.7)	44.5 (6.8)	65.7 (7.4)
Certification interview not completed	14.0 (4.5)	12.7 (5.8)	18.9 (6.4)	13.2 (6.0)
Verification not completed	8.0 (2.8)	14.1 (5.8)	10.7 (3.9)	14.6 (6.1)
Sanctioned	3.0 (2.7)	0.6 (0.4)	4.1 (3.6)	0.6 (0.4)
Voluntary withdrawal	7.9 (3.2)	0.2 (0.8)	10.6 (4.2)	0.2 (0.2)
Other	8.2 (3.6)	5.4 (3.6)	11.1 (4.5)	5.6 (3.7)
Not reported	25.9 (3.9)	3.7 (3.3)	—	—
Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
<b><i>Unweighted N</i></b>	177	71	128	67

Standard errors shown in parentheses.

Totals may not add to 100.0% due to rounding.

**Table B.50—Reasons apparently circumstantially eligible households did not complete the recertification process**

Stated reasons	Situation happened to respondent	Reason for not completing the certification process
<b><i>Perceived ineligibility</i></b>	<b>33.8</b>	<b>28.9</b>
	<b>(10.2)</b>	<b>(8.5)</b>
Due to income/assets	33.8%	28.9%
	(10.2)	(8.5)
Due to TANF diversion	0.0	0.0
	(—)	(—)
Due to TANF ineligibility	0.0	0.0
	(—)	(—)
Due to receipt of TANF	0.0	0.0
	(—)	(—)
<b><i>Difficulty of recertification process</i></b>	<b>25.1</b>	<b>16.9</b>
	<b>(8.8)</b>	<b>(5.7)</b>
Confusion about process	24.5	16.3
	(8.8)	(5.7)
Getting to food stamp office	4.2	3.1
	(2.7)	(2.5)
<b><i>Costs of recertification process</i></b>	<b>34.6</b>	<b>34.6</b>
	<b>(6.1)</b>	<b>(6.1)</b>
Verification requirements too difficult	26.6	23.4
	(7.3)	(7.5)
Miss work	11.6	6.5
	(6.7)	(4.3)
Treated badly by office staff	5.7	4.6
	(3.1)	(2.8)
Travel costs	3.6	0.0
	(2.7)	(—)
Pay child/elder care to apply	0.0	0.0
	(—)	(—)
<b><i>Costs of participation</i></b>	<b>17.8</b>	<b>11.0</b>
	<b>(6.2)</b>	<b>(4.9)</b>
Frequent recertifications	10.0	8.9
	(4.8)	(4.8)
Monthly reporting	5.9	3.7
	(3.0)	(2.6)
Stigma	5.7	0.0
	(4.2)	(—)
Job search requirements	0.0	0.0
	(—)	(—)
Child support/child immunization requirements	0.0	0.0
	(—)	(—)

—Continued

**Table B.50—Reasons apparently circumstantially eligible households did not complete the recertification process—Continued**

Stated reasons	Situation occurred	Reason for not completing the application process
<i>Situation improved</i>	<b>27.8</b> <b>(9.4)</b>	<b>18.3</b> <b>(8.3)</b>
<b>Type of reason<sup>a</sup></b>		
Only process-related reasons	29.7 (9.3)	23.9 (7.5)
Only other reasons	23.2 (7.5)	24.0 (8.6)
Mix of process-related and other reasons	29.3 (10.2)	14.1 (6.5)
No reason reported	17.8 (5.0)	38.0 (6.5)
Total	100.0%	100.0%
<b><i>Unweighted N<sup>b</sup></i></b>	<b>54</b>	<b>54</b>

a “Other reasons” include: perceived ineligibility due to income/assets and situation improved. Process reasons include all other reasons listed in table.

b The four households that were apparently circumstantially ineligible were not included. The tabulations also exclude 13 households with missing data.

Standard errors shown in parentheses.

Totals may not add to 100.0% due to rounding.

**Table B.51—Stigma, convenience, and satisfaction associated with FSP participation for eligible households that did not complete the recertification process**

<b>Stigma index</b>		
0	No stigma	60.9 (9.3)
1	Low stigma	13.2 (5.6)
2		16.0 (7.5)
3		5.6 (4.0)
4	High stigma	4.3 (4.1)
	Mean stigma	0.8 (0.2)
<b>Convenience</b>		
	Location convenient (%)	76.5 (5.5)
	Office hours convenient (%)	86.1 (5.4)
<b>Satisfaction</b>		
	Satisfied with FSP	59.0 (8.6)
	Treatment at food stamp office compared to other government offices	
	Treated better	15.4 (5.1)
	Treated same	57.8 (8.3)
	Treated worse	26.8 (8.5)
<b>Unweighted N<sup>a</sup></b>		67

a The four households that were apparently circumstantially ineligible are not included. The tabulations also exclude households with missing data, ranging from 1 to 13 depending upon the item.

Standard errors shown in parentheses.

Totals may not add to 100.0% due to rounding.



# Appendix C

## Statistical Methods for Multivariate Analyses

Multivariate models for two outcomes were presented in Chapter 8, and several additional models are presented in Appendix D. In this appendix we describe the statistical methods used.

### Analysis Samples

The unit of analysis is the household. The samples were constructed as follows.

**Model 1 (table 8.3): Apparently eligible non-participant household thinks it might be eligible.** Households in this model were all apparently eligible non-participants, including those who were just applying in that month. All *applicants* were deemed to think they might be eligible for food stamps (although we acknowledge that some applicants might have only come to think so after showing up at the welfare office to ask about cash assistance). Among *non-applicants* interviewed in the RDD survey, some thought they might be eligible and some did not think so.

**Model 2 (table 8.4): Household that contacts the local office completes the application process.** Households in this model were circumstantially eligible applicants, both completers and non-completers, and near applicants, those who contacted the office but had not filed a food stamp application some time during the past 12 months. To derive monthly estimates, near applicants received a weight of 1/12. An adjustment was made for households for whom near applicant status was known based only on the past 6 months.<sup>1</sup>

**Model 3 (table D.3): Household that is receiving benefits continues to do so in an interim or recertification month.** Households in this model comprised the expanded samples based on cases coming up for recertification and interim closures, the interim closures themselves, and approved and denied recertifications.

**Model 4 (table D.4): Household that is receiving benefits continues to do so in interim month.** This model used the *interim month sample* from Model 3.

**Model 5 (table D.4): Household that comes up for recertification completes the process.** This model used the *recertification month sample* from Model 3.

**Model 6 (table D.5): Household that thinks it might be eligible contacts the local office.** Households in this model were circumstantially eligible applicants, both completers and non-completers, plus non-applicants who thought they might be eligible. *Applicants* were known to have contacted the local office. Most non-applicants did not. A small number of these, however, were identified as *near applicants*, who had contacted the office (but not applied) sometime during the past 12 months. For the purposes of estimating contacts *within a month*, these households were given a weight of 1/12 as contactors, and 11/12 as non-contactors.

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<sup>1</sup> At the outset of the survey, we believed near-applicants to be much more prevalent than turned out to be the case. Hence the items about contacting the local food stamp office were expanded to cover 12 instead of 6 months part way into the survey.

## Policy Measures

Most of the policy measures used in the model were taken from the supervisor and caseworker surveys. The exceptions were availability of information in the reception area, office ambience, and child-friendliness, measures of which were based on unobtrusive observations; and certification period length, which was calculated from the FY 2000 Food Stamp Program Integrated Quality Control Database. The source for each policy measure is shown in table C.1, and the values used for certification period lengths are shown in table C.2. The instruments are designated by their section and question number. For example, SE4 is from the supervisor survey, section E, question 4.

Missing data were extremely rare. In the few cases in which a caseworker or supervisor “didn’t know” if a policy or practice was in effect (e.g., if the office practiced some type of outreach), the response was interpreted as a negative.

**Table C.1—Data sources for policy measures**

Policy	Source and item (S=supervisor survey, C=caseworker survey, O=unobtrusive observations)
Local office outreach	SE1
Community group outreach	SE2
Coordination with MA/SCHIP	SE5
Intensity of outreach	SE4, items a through i (articles in newspapers, public service announcements on radio/television, flyers/posters/brochures, billboards/advertisements on buses/taxis/trains, presentations to community groups, toll-free telephone number/hotline, direct mailings, telephone calls/home visits to clients who left the program, the Internet)
Targeted personal outreach	SE3, items for working families, elderly, former TANF recipients, immigrant/refugee populations, ABAWDs, disabled
Number of targeted groups	SE3
Limited hours of operation	SB1, SB2, SB3 used to construct indicator for office open only Monday to Friday, 8 AM to 5 PM
Child care available	SD2
Clients asked to leave children at home	SD1
Child-friendliness	OB8, OB9, OB11 (Toys available, space for children to play, diaper-changing area)
Public transportation	CD2 (public transportation available within ½ mile of office)
Transportation assistance	CD4
Drop-box for applications and documents	SB6

—Continued

**Table C.1—Policy measures—Continued**

<b>Policy</b>	<b>Source and item (S=supervisor survey, C=caseworker survey, O=unobtrusive observations)</b>
Negative ambience	OC2, OC4: Waiting time to see a receptionist greater than 5 minutes (average of 3 observations, occasionally 4 observations) and/or sometimes or always not enough seats in reception area
Positive supervisor attitudes	SP1, SP4, SP6: Supervisor disagrees or strongly disagrees that “being on food stamps encourages dependency,” “immigrants should not get food stamps until they become citizens”; agrees or strongly agrees that “people who leave TANF and are potentially eligible for food stamps should be actively encouraged to apply for food stamps”
Informational videotapes in reception area	OB5_3
Informational pamphlets and brochures in reception area	OB5_2, OB6_2, OB7_2
Fingerprinting	SI4, SI5
Third party forms: verification	CH1, CH3, CH5, CH7, CH8, CH10, CH12
Third-party verification: contacts	CH2, CH4, CH6, CH7, CH9, CH11, CH13
Medical deduction assistance	SJ2
Home visits	SI3
Extra trips, visits, meetings	CB5, SF1, SF3A for TANF applicants; CB8, SF9, SF11A for non-TANF applicants
TANF diversion: lump sum	SG5
TANF diversion: alternative resources	SG1
Job search requirement	SG11, SH1 for TANF and non-TANF applicants
Pre-scheduled interviews	CC1
Serious consequences for missing prescheduled interviews	CC2
Monthly reporting	SN1, SN2 (by case type: TANF with earnings, TANF without earnings, non-TANF with earnings)
Quarterly reporting	SN1, SN2 (by case type: TANF with earnings, TANF without earnings, non-TANF with earnings)
Employment and training services available for non-ABAWDS	SM2

*—Continued*

**Table C.1—Policy measures—Continued**

<b>Policy</b>	<b>Source and item (S=supervisor survey, C=caseworker survey, O=unobtrusive observations)</b>
Employment and training requirements	SM1, SM2, SM3 (for ABAWDs, non-ABAWDs)
TANF sanctions affect food stamp benefits	CJ1, CJ2
TANF closures require food stamp action	CJ6, CJ7, CK10, CK11, CK6, CK7, CK1, CK2, CK3
Time limits for ABAWDs	ABAWDWAV in supervisor survey
Certification period length	National QC data, FY 2000, by State, for 10 case profiles (see table C.2)
In-person recertification interviews	SO2, SO4, SO6, SO8, S10 (for elderly/disabled, ABAWDs subject to time limits, non-TANF, TANF without earnings, TANF with earnings)
Closure for missed recertification appointment	CN4

## Analysis Weights

Conceptually, the weights for the multivariate analyses are the same as for the descriptive analyses. (Note that it was essential to weight the sample because of our use of outcome-based sampling; we drew the same number of non-participants, closures, etc. in sites that had many such events as in sites that had few.) To increase the power of the multivariate analysis, we then scaled the weights to be proportional to the relative sample sizes of “successes” and “failures” in each model. For example, if 80 percent of all applications were completed, but our sample comprised equal numbers of completes and incompletes, then we multiplied the weights on the completes by 50/80, and the weights on the incompletes by 50/20 (see Scott and Wild, 2001).

## Model Estimation

The models are logistic. Office clustering was taken into account by using the SAS procedure GENMOD and SUDAAN-based logistic procedure, LOGISTIC, with exchangeable correlations, Liang-Zeger empirical standard errors, and observations nested by office.

**Table C.2—Mean certification lengths, by State and case type**

State	Child only	Elderly/ disabled with earnings	Elderly/ disabled without earnings	ABAWD- like, no children <sup>a</sup>	ABAWD- like, with children <sup>b</sup>	Other non- TANF with earnings	Other non- TANF with government benefits <sup>c</sup>	Other non- TANF	TANF with earnings	TANF without earnings
Alabama	10.9	12.0	11.8	8.7	11.6	11.6	9.9	9.3	9.3	7.7
Arizona	3.7	5.4	8.2	3.8	3.8	3.4	5.1	3.9	3.8	4.3
Arkansas	11.0	12.0	19.8	11.3	11.8	11.9	12.1	11.4	11.2	11.5
California	12.1	24.0	12.0	11.1	12.5	11.4	11.5	12.0	12.1	12.0
Colorado	4.5	9.6	11.8	6.8	4.4	4.6	6.8	3.9	7.1	8.0
Connecticut	11.4	13.1	21.2	10.3	11.4	11.2	8.4	10.9	12.2	10.7
District of Columbia	9.7	13.0	14.5	8.1	10.2	9.1	10.6	8.4	10.2	10.6
Florida	4.5	7.2	10.5	4.3	4.0	4.0	6.5	4.1	4.4	5.2
Georgia	4.1	6.0	11.0	4.2	3.5	3.3	5.7	4.7	4.6	5.4
Idaho	5.8	10.3	11.2	6.2	5.6	5.7	6.8	4.9	6.0	5.2
Illinois	10.8	17.7	18.1	8.1	11.4	10.7	12.0	9.8	9.6	7.7
Indiana	7.8	9.1	10.9	5.4	5.4	6.1	9.9	7.3	5.5	6.2
Kansas	11.6	13.0	13.8	11.2	11.7	11.8	12.6	11.4	11.8	11.8
Kentucky	4.4	13.4	20.2	4.3	4.4	4.3	6.7	4.5	7.2	9.3
Louisiana	6.0	9.4	17.3	4.2	4.3	3.8	5.7	4.2	8.9	9.3
Maine	4.6	8.3	11.1	4.6	3.6	3.6	6.4	3.9	3.0	5.6
Maryland	7.5	5.7	11.6	7.1	5.0	4.5	8.3	5.2	4.0	7.7
Massachusetts	8.2	8.0	13.9	8.2	6.8	3.4	9.4	4.1	9.3	11.4
Michigan	7.2	10.2	17.5	6.6	6.1	4.6	10.6	8.7	10.9	11.5
Minnesota	12.0	11.9	11.9	11.3	11.8	11.7	11.4	11.9	11.9	12.0

*—Continued*

**Table C.2—Mean certification lengths, by State and case type—Continued**

State	Child only	Elderly/ disabled with earnings	Elderly/ disabled without earnings	ABAWD- like, no children <sup>a</sup>	ABAWD- like, with children <sup>b</sup>	Other non- TANF with earnings	Other non- TANF with government benefits <sup>c</sup>	Other non- TANF	TANF with earnings	TANF without earnings
Mississippi	8.6	11.1	10.5	7.4	10.4	11.2	8.6	7.7	9.6	8.1
Missouri	3.8	9.6	14.9	3.9	3.1	3.2	5.6	3.3	4.6	4.4
Montana	11.8	11.9	11.7	11.6	11.7	11.7	9.7	11.3	11.9	11.8
Nebraska	5.4	11.7	12.9	4.9	4.2	4.9	9.3	4.7	4.4	4.9
New Jersey	6.8	9.7	12.6	6.0	7.5	6.3	6.3	6.0	7.7	9.0
New Mexico	4.1	8.0	11.3	4.7	3.5	3.5	5.1	4.0	3.4	4.2
North Carolina	3.6	8.4	11.5	4.0	3.6	3.4	8.0	3.9	6.2	6.4
Ohio	5.2	9.4	10.8	5.8	4.5	3.8	6.4	5.9	4.1	5.8
Oklahoma	4.5	9.8	15.6	4.0	3.4	3.3	4.8	3.0	12.2	14.9
Oregon	6.0	12.0	11.4	5.9	6.2	5.7	7.9	5.8	6.8	6.9
Pennsylvania	12.0	12.0	11.9	11.2	11.8	11.6	12.0	10.6	11.7	11.6
Rhode Island	11.2	12.0	11.9	8.0	11.3	8.9	9.1	9.1	11.9	11.8
South Carolina	12.0	12.0	15.2	11.4	11.8	11.9	12.0	11.9	11.3	11.9
Tennessee	3.8	5.9	10.4	4.0	3.6	3.2	5.6	3.7	3.8	4.2
Texas	4.4	7.2	9.4	3.7	4.0	3.9	4.7	3.5	5.4	5.8
Utah	4.5	9.2	10.8	5.7	4.0	4.2	7.6	5.0	3.9	6.5
Virginia	3.9	7.6	11.8	4.7	4.2	4.1	6.7	3.8	6.0	5.6
Washington	4.6	6.3	11.6	3.7	4.4	4.6	3.8	3.5	4.4	4.5
West Virginia	NA	12.8	16.1	6.1	5.4	3.7	9.6	6.5	8.7	11.5
Wisconsin	3.1	11.0	11.0	3.2	3.4	3.4	3.4	3.7	3.6	3.4

a Containing at least one adult aged 18 to 50, not disabled, and no children.

b Containing at least two adults aged 18 to 50, not disabled, and at least one child under age 18.

c Social Security, SSI, Veteran's benefits, General Assistance, "other" government benefits.

## **Appendix D**

### **Supplementary Models**

In this appendix, we present three sets of models supplementing those described in Chapter 8. First, we show expanded versions of models that appeared in more compact form Chapter 8. Second, we present models for continuation in recertification months and in interim months, which were of necessity estimated on samples in which circumstantially eligible and ineligible households could not be clearly distinguished. Finally, we describe our unsuccessful attempt to model the likelihood that a household that thought it might be eligible for food stamps contacted the local FSP office.

#### **Full Models of Perceived Eligibility and Application Completion**

The multivariate models presented in Chapter 8 were re-estimated with superfluous policy variables eliminated (those whose estimated coefficients were less than 0.75 times the corresponding standard errors), in order to show more clearly the effects of the more pertinent policies. This re-estimation did not qualitatively change the results, except that requesting visitors to leave their children at home, not previously statistically significant in the application completion model, became statistically significant at the 10 percent level.

The full models and the more focused models (corresponding to tables 8.3 and 8.4) are shown side by side for awareness of eligibility and application completion in tables D.1 and D.2, respectively. They are seen to be extremely similar.

**Table D.1—Logistic model of awareness of eligibility**

	Full model	Focused Model
	Coefficient (standard error)	Coefficient (standard error)
<b>Policy variables</b>		
Local food stamp office does any outreach	-0.013 (0.296)	
Local community groups do any outreach	-0.150 (0.329)	
<b>Number of modes of outreach, scaled 0-1</b>	<b>1.872** (0.756)</b>	<b>1.684*** (0.489)</b>
<b>Outreach coordinated with Medicaid/SCHIP</b>	<b>-0.644** (0.276)</b>	<b>-0.658** (0.277)</b>
Household targeted for outreach in this area	-0.022 (0.378)	
Number of categories targeted for outreach in this area	-0.003 (0.230)	
<b>Contextual variables</b>		
County unemployment rate in 1999	-0.027 (0.035)	-0.022 (0.033)
Office located in urban area	-0.216 (0.240)	-0.231 (0.229)
Office located in Northern State	-0.162 (0.492)	-0.172 (0.497)
Office located in Midwestern State	0.319 (0.272)	0.311 (0.262)
Office located in Western State	-0.169 (0.336)	-0.197 (0.295)
<b>Household characteristics</b>		
Male head of household	0.176 (0.219)	0.171 (0.218)
Black head of household	0.186 (0.265)	0.191 (0.263)
<b>Hispanic head of household</b>	<b>-0.391 (0.234)</b>	<b>-0.396* (0.227)</b>
Head of household never married	-0.002 (0.334)	-0.006 (0.332)
Current TANF receipt	-0.747 (0.890)	-0.753 (0.896)
Prior food stamp receipt	0.210 (0.203)	0.212 (0.202)

—Continued



**Table D.1—Logistic model of awareness of eligibility—Continued**

	Full model	Focused Model
	Coefficient (standard error)	Coefficient (standard error)
Household has children under 5	0.161 (0.345)	0.161 (0.345)
Household has children under 18	-0.145 (0.269)	-0.148 (0.269)
Head of household is elderly (≥ 60)	-0.161 (0.410)	-0.158 (0.419)
Household has earnings	-0.055 (0.212)	-0.048 (0.205)
<b>Household has some assets</b>	<b>0.411**</b> <b>(0.198)</b>	<b>-0.413**</b> <b>(0.199)</b>
<b>Household's income is below poverty level</b>	<b>1.079***</b> <b>(0.209)</b>	<b>1.075***</b> <b>(0.208)</b>
<b>Household is ABAWD-like</b>	<b>-0.595***</b> <b>(0.214)</b>	<b>-0.593***</b> <b>(0.213)</b>
<b>Additional potential targeting criteria for outreach</b>		
Household contains any non-citizens	0.180 (0.446)	0.163 (0.437)
<b>Household contains any elderly members</b>	<b>-0.658*</b> <b>(0.373)</b>	<b>-0.661*</b> <b>(0.376)</b>
Household contains any disabled members	0.042 (0.262)	0.040 (0.259)
Current or previous AFDC/TANF receipt	-0.088 (0.202)	-0.087 (0.207)
Intercept	1.226 (0.435)	1.229 (0.412)
Mean of dependent variable	0.490	0.490
Sample size	2079	2079

Policy measures and their effects shown in *italics*; variables with statistically significant effects ( $p < 0.10$ ) shown in **bold**.

\*\*\* Statistically significant at the 1 percent level.

\*\* Statistically significant at the 5 percent level.

\* Statistically significant at the 10 percent level.

**Table D.2—Logistic model of application completion**

	Full Model	Focused Model
	Coefficient (standard error)	Coefficient (standard error)
<b>Policy variables</b>		
<i>Office open only Monday to Friday, 8 to 5</i>	-0.434** (0.213)	-0.448** (0.206)
<i>Clients asked to leave children at home × household includes children under 5</i>	-0.856 (0.621)	-1.039* (0.567)
<i>Childcare provided to office visitors × household includes children under 5</i>	-0.404 (0.487)	-0.266 (0.470)
<i>Index of child friendliness of office × household includes children under 5</i>	-0.853 (0.649)	-0.877 (0.608)
<i>Public transportation goes near office</i>	0.268 (0.335)	0.393 (0.267)
<i>Transportation assistance to office offered</i>	0.406 (0.290)	0.433 (0.297)
<i>Drop-box available for applications and documentation</i>	-0.145 (0.276)	
<i>Long wait times or shortage of seats in reception area</i>	-0.508 (0.375)	-0.454 (0.355)
<i>Informational videotapes in reception area</i>	0.353 (0.325)	0.406 (0.314)
<i>Brochures and pamphlets in reception area</i>	0.065 (0.267)	
<b>Positive supervisor attitudes</b>	<b>1.518*</b> <b>(0.877)</b>	<b>1.522*</b> <b>(0.860)</b>
<i>Eligibility interviews must be prescheduled</i>	-0.129 (0.767)	
<i>Severe consequences for missed eligibility interview</i>	-0.531 (1.157)	
<i>Application forms not available until meet with caseworker</i>	-0.431 (0.598)	
<b>Fingerprint applicants of household type (TANF versus non-TANF)</b>	<b>-1.157***</b> <b>(0.333)</b>	<b>-1.270***</b> <b>(0.305)</b>
<i>Home visits for fraud investigation</i>	-0.112 (0.231)	
<i>Third party verification forms required, by household type (TANF versus non-TANF)</i>	0.320 (0.360)	0.306 (0.316)

—Continued

**Table D.2—Logistic model of application completion—Continued**

	Full Model	Focused Model
	Coefficient (standard error)	Coefficient (standard error)
<i>Third party verification contacts required, by household type (TANF versus non-TANF)</i>	-0.082 (0.578)	0.306 (0.316)
<i>More than one visit, visits to other building, or pre-interview meeting required to complete application, by household type (TANF versus non-TANF)</i>	0.614 (0.492)	0.348 (0.417)
<i>TANF diversion x potential TANF applicant: lump sum</i>	0.349 (0.400)	0.322 (0.376)
<i>TANF diversion x potential TANF applicant: alternative resources</i>	0.613 (0.688)	0.788 (0.686)
<i>Job search requirements (TANF versus non-TANF)</i>	0.084 (0.274)	
<i>Caseworkers assist elderly/disabled with medical deductions</i>	-0.154 (0.479)	
<b><i>ABAWDs subject to time limits x ABAWD-type household</i></b>	<b>-1.030** (0.441)</b>	<b>-0.990** (0.413)</b>
<i>Monthly reporting required, for household type</i>	-0.001 (0.378)	
<i>Quarterly reporting required, for household type</i>	-0.319 (0.328)	-0.308 (0.320)
<i>Expected certification length for household profile</i>	-0.030 (0.038)	
<b>Contextual variables</b>		
<b>County unemployment rate in 1999</b>	<b>0.237*** (0.072)</b>	<b>0.240*** (0.076)</b>
Office located in urban area	-0.311 (0.289)	-0.193 (0.251)
<b>Office located in Northern State</b>	<b>-0.645* (0.381)</b>	<b>-0.677* (0.347)</b>
Office located in Midwestern State	-0.310 (0.323)	-0.346 (0.309)
Office located in Western State	-0.338 (0.366)	-0.366 (0.310)
<b>Household characteristics</b>		
Male head of household	0.239 (0.297)	0.238 (0.294)
Black head of household	-0.380 (0.313)	-0.343 (0.301)

—Continued

**Table D.2—Logistic model of application completion—Continued**

	Full Model	Focused Model
	Coefficient (standard error)	Coefficient (standard error)
Hispanic head of household	−0.218 (0.469)	−0.193 (0.455)
Head of household never married	−0.186 (0.280)	−0.182 (0.269)
TANF recipient	0.430 (0.480)	0.430 (0.480)
Prior FSP recipient	0.263 (0.250)	0.271 (0.251)
<b>Household has children under 5</b>	<b>1.004**</b> <b>(0.500)</b>	<b>0.993**</b> <b>(0.481)</b>
Household has children under 18	−0.451 (0.441)	−0.348 (0.432)
Head of household is elderly (≥60)	0.159 (0.441)	0.193 (0.431)
<b>Household has earnings</b>	<b>−0.702**</b> <b>(0.279)</b>	<b>−0.660**</b> <b>(0.266)</b>
Household has some assets	0.103 (0.252)	0.070 (0.241)
<b>Household's income is below poverty level</b>	<b>0.909***</b> <b>(0.315)</b>	<b>0.903***</b> <b>(0.299)</b>
<b>Household is ABAWD-like</b>	<b>−0.749**</b> <b>(0.351)</b>	<b>−0.679**</b> <b>(0.335)</b>
Intercept	−0.359 (1.186)	−1.153 (1.111)
Mean of dependent variable	0.784	0.784
Sample size	976	976

Policy measures and their effects shown in *italics*; variables with statistically significant effects ( $p < 0.10$ ) shown in **bold**.

\*\*\* Statistically significant at the 1 percent level.

\*\* Statistically significant at the 5 percent level.

\* Statistically significant at the 10 percent level.

## Supplementary Models of Food Stamp Continuation

Overall, about 5 percent of active FSP recipients exit the Food Stamp Program per month. This percentage varies dramatically, however, between recipients that are in the middle and those that are at the end of a recertification period. Closure rates in interim months are around 2.4 percent; in recertification months, they are around 22 percent. These closure rates include cases that were closed because of circumstantial ineligibility as well as closures of circumstantially eligible households.<sup>1</sup>

Local office policies are hypothesized to affect closure rates for both circumstantially ineligible and circumstantially eligible households. For *circumstantially ineligible* households, more extensive or frequent income reporting and recertification might increase the likelihood that ineligible households would be identified and terminated quickly. Households who know they are ineligible might decide not to submit reports or appear for recertification, which would have the same effect. In addition, policies designed to increase self-sufficiency, such as employment and training requirements, might increase the likelihood that a household would become circumstantially ineligible.

For *circumstantially eligible* households, these same participation and reporting requirements might affect closure rates in two ways. First, these requirements determine the cost of participation, and higher participation costs are hypothesized to cause more participants to leave the program voluntarily. Such participants might notify the agency of their intention, or they might simply abandon contact with the program. Second, participation and reporting requirements may lead to sanctions – which can include termination of benefits – for households who fail to meet the requirements. In addition to the effect of participation and reporting requirements, ABAWD time limits may lead to the cessation of benefits for some circumstantially eligible households.

Because participation and reporting requirements are hypothesized to affect closure rates similarly for eligible and ineligible households, and because circumstantial eligibility is unknown for many households who left the program, the analyses presented here cannot definitively indicate the effect of the policies on circumstantially eligible households.

There are partial exceptions to this statement, however. Some recertification policies, such as the availability of public transportation or the child-friendliness of an office, could affect the participant's cost of participation but should not affect the nature or frequency of information collected at recertification. Similarly, a requirement that participants visit the food stamp office if their TANF case closes would be expected only to increase participation costs. Because these policies would not be expected to have any effect on the closure rate for circumstantially ineligible cases, any observed effect may be attributed to an effect on circumstantially eligible households.

Because the overall closure rate is much higher in recertification than non-recertification months, the most important policy determinant of continuation for a household is therefore expected to be whether it faces a recertification in a given month—and for groups of households of various types, the frequency with which they face recertification. Certification lengths for apparently similar cases vary considerably across and within States. For example, for cases in which all adults are elderly or disabled, and have no earnings, recorded certification lengths in the QC data for the 40 States in this

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<sup>1</sup> As discussed in Chapter 7, the available data do not indicate circumstantial eligibility for some groups of exiting households.

study run the gamut from 1 to 24 months. While most such cases (61 percent) have certification lengths of exactly 12 months, certification lengths of 6 months or shorter, and of 24 months, are each seen for 10 to 15 percent of this quite homogeneous group. Much greater variation is seen for other groups.

Local office policies can be expected to affect households differently depending on whether they are in a recertification month. Some policies apply primarily or exclusively to the recertification requirements per se: office hours, child friendliness of the office, in-person interview requirements, third party verification, and so on. Others apply directly to interim months: periodic reporting, E&T requirements, etc. Yet it can be anticipated that interim month requirements can affect continuation in recertification months as well, because participants will reconsider the net benefits of food stamp receipt when they are due for recertification. In the combined model presented below, policies have been interacted as appropriate with whether the participant household was observed in an interim or a recertification month. Separate models of continuation in interim and recertification months produced similar results, as discussed subsequently.

### **Combined Model of Continuation**

The following local office policies significantly affect the likelihood that food stamp recipients will continue to participate in the program (table D.3, second column):

- Being in a recertification month ( $p < 0.01$ )
- In recertification months,
  - provision of child care, for households with children under 5 ( $p < 0.10$ )
  - E&T requirements, by household type ( $p < 0.10$ )
- In interim months,
  - E&T requirements, by household type ( $p < 0.05$ )

The model used data from case record abstractions on approved recertifications and closed cases.

Over two dozen other local office policies were considered, but not found to have significant effects (table D.3, first column). Those that were dropped from the model because of large standard errors in the coefficient estimates were *recertification month* interacted with short office hours, with asking clients with young children to leave them at home, with availability of public transportation, with availability of a drop-box for completed forms and documentation, with shortage of seats and long waits to see the receptionist, with supervisor attitudes, with in-person interview requirements, with case closures for missed interviews, with third party verification contacts, with third party verification forms, with quarterly reporting requirements, and with food stamp requirements associated with TANF closures; and *interim month* interacted with monthly reporting requirements, with quarterly reporting requirements, and with E&T availability. Policy measures included in the model that did not have significant effects on participation were *recertification month* interacted with child friendliness, with transportation assistance, with monthly reporting, with time limits for ABAWD cases, with food stamp requirements associated with TANF sanctions, and certification length; and *interim month* interacted with food stamp requirements associated with TANF closures and with food stamp requirements associated with TANF sanctions.

**Table D.3—Logistic models of continuing to receive food stamps**

	Full Model	Focused Model
	Coefficient (standard error)	Coefficient (standard error)
<b>Policy variables</b>		
<b>Recertification month</b>	<b>−2.527***</b> <b>(0.147)</b>	<b>−2.532***</b> <b>(0.147)</b>
<i>Recertification month × office open only Monday to Friday, 8 to 5</i>	0.061 (0.244)	
<i>Recertification month × clients asked to leave children at home × household includes children under 5</i>	−0.006 (0.867)	
<b>Recertification month × childcare provided to office visitors × household includes children under 5</b>	<b>1.349*</b> <b>(0.719)</b>	<b>1.340*</b> <b>(0.676)</b>
<i>Recertification month × child friendliness index × household includes children under 5</i>	−0.132 (0.494)	−0.056 (0.469)
<i>Recertification month × public transportation goes near office</i>	−0.048 (0.238)	
<i>Recertification month × transportation assistance offered</i>	−0.273 (0.257)	−0.309 (0.247)
<i>Recertification month × drop-box available for applications and documentation</i>	−0.075 (0.292)	
<i>Recertification month × long wait times or shortage of seats in reception area</i>	−0.080 (0.414)	
<i>Recertification month × positive supervisor attitudes</i>	0.344 (0.797)	
<i>Recertification month × in-person interview required for household type</i>	0.116 (0.245)	
<i>Recertification month × office closes case for missed appointment</i>	0.315 (0.426)	
<i>Recertification month × third-party verification forms required</i>	−0.067 (0.314)	
<i>Recertification month × third party verification contacts required</i>	−0.315 (0.455)	
<i>Recertification month × monthly reporting required for household type</i>	−0.599 (0.392)	−0.500 (0.449)
<i>Recertification month × quarterly reporting required for household type</i>	−0.048 (0.395)	
<b>Recertification month × E&amp;T requirements for household type</b>	<b>−0.514*</b> <b>(0.293)</b>	<b>−0.558*</b> <b>(0.310)</b>
<i>Recertification month × ABAWDs subject to time limits × ABAWD-type household</i>	−0.409 (0.335)	−0.425 (0.324)
<i>Recertification month × TANF sanctions affect food stamp benefits × TANF recipient</i>	0.501 (0.506)	0.526 (0.407)

—Continued

**Table D.3—Logistic models of continuing to receive food stamps—Continued**

	Full Model	Focused Model
	Coefficient (standard error)	Coefficient (standard error)
<i>Recertification month x TANF closure requires food stamp office visit x TANF recipient</i>	-0.088 (0.460)	
<i>Recertification month x expected certification length for household profile</i>	0.036 (0.031)	0.024 (0.028)
<i>Interim month x positive supervisor attitudes</i>	-0.820 (0.746)	-0.973 (0.753)
<b><i>Interim month x required to participate in E&amp;T activities, by household type</i></b>	<b>-0.643**</b> <b>(0.309)</b>	<b>-0.650**</b> <b>(0.269)</b>
<i>Interim month x E&amp;T services available to non-ABAWDs</i>	-0.071 (0.279)	
<i>Interim month x monthly reporting requirement for household type</i>	-0.104 (0.381)	
<i>Interim month x quarterly reporting requirement for household type</i>	-0.042 (0.477)	
<i>Interim month x TANF sanctions affect food stamp benefits x TANF recipient</i>	0.352 (0.425)	0.359 (0.401)
<i>Interim month x TANF closure requires FS office visit x TANF recipient</i>	0.386 (0.345)	0.395 (0.372)
<b>Contextual variables</b>		
County unemployment rate in 1999	0.025 (0.027)	0.024 (0.027)
Office located in urban area	-0.099 (0.294)	-0.105 (0.297)
Office located in Northern State	-0.104 (0.320)	-0.105 (0.297)
<b>Office located in Midwestern State</b>	<b>0.734***</b> <b>(0.245)</b>	<b>0.747***</b> <b>(0.237)</b>
Office located in Western State	-0.053 (0.274)	-0.053 (0.274)
<b>Household characteristics</b>		
Male head of household	0.142 (0.165)	0.140 (0.165)
Black head of household	0.193 (0.207)	0.185 (0.198)
Hispanic head of household	-0.267 (0.254)	-0.266 (0.260)
Head of household never married	-0.055 (0.159)	-0.055 (0.161)

—Continued



**Table D.3—Logistic models of continuing to receive food stamps—Continued**

	Full Model	Focused Model
	Coefficient (standard error)	Coefficient (standard error)
TANF recipient	−0.271 (0.342)	−0.297 (0.306)
<b>Prior FSP recipient</b>	<b>0.526**</b> <b>(0.204)</b>	<b>0.526**</b> <b>(0.203)</b>
Household has children under 5	−0.169 (0.150)	−0.185 (0.140)
Household has children under 18	0.005 (0.177)	0.020 (0.275)
Head of household is elderly (≥60)	0.332 (0.276)	0.317 (0.268)
<b>Household has earnings</b>	<b>−0.334**</b> <b>(0.166)</b>	<b>−0.350**</b> <b>(0.166)</b>
Household has some assets	−0.076 (0.166)	−0.077 (0.163)
<b>Household’s income is below poverty level</b>	<b>0.272*</b> <b>(0.151)</b>	<b>0.278*</b> <b>(0.149)</b>
<b>ABAWD-type household</b>	<b>−0.504***</b> <b>(0.155)</b>	<b>−0.494***</b> <b>(0.152)</b>
Intercept	1.532 (0.456)	1.536 (0.432)
Mean of dependent variable	0.955	0.955
Sample size	2441	2441

Policy measures and their effects shown in *italics*; variables with statistically significant effects ( $p < 0.10$ ) shown in **bold**.

\*\*\* Statistically significant at the 1 percent level.  
\*\* Statistically significant at the 5 percent level.  
\* Statistically significant at the 10 percent level.

A key methodological feature of this model is that the policies specific to recertification and interim months were measured as *deviations from the mean*. Consequently, the coefficient on the certification month variable itself can be interpreted as the impact on continuation of being in a recertification month per se, at the mean values of all of the policies that have effects in recertification months. This effect is −20 percentage points. That is, other things equal, cases are 20 percentage points more likely to close in recertification months than in interim months. Changing a group of cases from a 3-month certification period to a 6-month certification period would change its likelihood of a recertification in a given month from 0.25 to 0.167, a drop of 8.3 percentage points. This would reduce the monthly closure rate for these cases by  $0.20 \times 0.083$ , or 1.7 percentage points.

Within recertification months, households with preschool children were more likely to continue if their offices provided child care, by 16 percentage points. An E&T requirement reduced continuation by 13 percentage points at recertification, and by 3.5 percentage points in interim months.

The effect of the availability of child care presumably represents an effect on circumstantially eligible households, as it would not be expected to influence the likelihood that an ineligible case would close. The employment and training result could represent an effect on either ineligible households (if it caused households' incomes to increase enough to make them ineligible) or circumstantially eligible households (if they failed to meet the requirement or abandoned contact with the program).

It is perhaps not surprising that other policies did not have significant effects on continuation. Interim closure rates are generally quite low for most groups, so any effects of policy would be expected to be small and difficult to measure. Ongoing recipients had already experienced and overcome potential barriers to recertification such as transportation and limited office hours at their initial application, and might be expected to do as well at recertification.

Continuation rates were significantly higher for former food stamp recipients and for households whose income was under the Federal poverty level at the prior certification. They were significantly lower for households with earnings and with ABAWDs at the prior certification. These demographic results again suggest the importance of alternative opportunities for needy households.

The descriptive analyses presented in Chapter 6 had likewise noted the lower likelihood for households to continue with the FSP if they had earnings, and the greater likelihood if their income was under the Federal poverty level. Neither the lower continuation rates for Hispanics, nor the higher rates for the elderly and for recipients of means-tested benefits, retained statistical significance in the multivariate analyses when other factors such as household income were taken into account.

### **Separate Models of Continuation in Recertification and Interim Months**

Similar but not identical results were obtained from models that analyzed continuation in recertification and interim months separately. The joint model presented in table D.3 is shown side by side with the two individual models in table D.4, all three with superfluous policy variables removed.

Regardless of whether the recertification and interim month continuation models are estimated jointly or separately, we find the same policy variables significant with the following exceptions, all relating to variables of marginal statistical significance:

- A monthly reporting requirement was found to significantly reduce the likelihood of completing recertification ( $p < 0.10$ ) in the separate recertification model only. Its effect in the combined model was negative, but not statistically significant at conventional levels. Given the dwindling importance of monthly reporting since these data were collected, the policy implications of a monthly reporting effect would not be great.
- Conversely, an E&T requirement was found to significantly reduce the likelihood of completing recertification ( $p < 0.10$ ) in the combined model only. Its effect in the separate recertification model was negative, but not statistically significant at conventional levels.
- Similarly, the provision of child care to office visitors significantly increased the likelihood of completing recertification ( $p < 0.10$ ) in the combined model only. Its effect in the separate recertification model was positive, but did not attain statistical significance.

**Table D.4—Logistic models of continuing to receive food stamps**

	Recertification and interim months	Recertification months only	Interim months only
	Coefficient (standard error)	Coefficient (standard error)	Coefficient (standard error)
<b>Policy variables</b>			
<b>Recertification month</b>	<b>-2.532***</b> (0.147)		
<i>Recertification month × clients asked not to bring children to office × household includes children under 5</i>		-0.373 (0.446)	
<b>Recertification month × child care provided to office visitors × household includes children under 5</b>	<b>1.340*</b> (0.676)	1.266 (0.580)	
<i>Recertification month × child friendliness index × household includes children under 5</i>	-0.056 (0.469)	-0.419 (0.486)	
<i>Recertification month × transportation assistance offered</i>	-0.309 (0.247)	-0.203 (0.224)	
<i>Recertification × in-person interview required</i>		0.192 (0.239)	
<i>Recertification × case closed for missed interview</i>		0.412 (0.405)	
<i>Recertification × third party verification contacts required</i>		-0.347 (0.445)	
<i>Recertification month × monthly reporting required for household type</i>	-0.500 (0.449)	<b>-0.510*</b> (0.291)	
<b>Recertification month × E&amp;T requirement for household type</b>	<b>-0.558*</b> (0.310)	-0.306 (0.273)	
<i>Recertification month × ABAWDs subject to time limits × ABAWD-type household</i>	-0.425 (0.324)		
<i>Recertification month × TANF sanctions affect food stamp benefits × TANF recipient</i>	0.526 (0.407)	0.770 (0.593)	
<i>Recertification month × expected certification length for household profile</i>	0.024 (0.028)		
<i>Interim month × positive supervisor attitudes</i>	-0.973 (0.753)		-0.935 (0.976)
<b>Interim month × required to participate in E&amp;T activities, by household type</b>	<b>-0.650**</b> (0.269)		<b>-0.665**</b> (0.288)
<i>Interim month × TANF sanctions affect food stamp benefits × TANF recipient</i>	0.359 (0.401)		0.416 (0.455)

—Continued

**Table D.4—Logistic models of continuing to receive food stamps—Continued**

	Recertification and interim months	Recertification months only	Interim months only
	Coefficient (standard error)	Coefficient (standard error)	Coefficient (standard error)
<i>Interim month × TANF closure requires FS office visit × TANF recipient</i>	0.395 (0.372)		
<b>Contextual variables</b>			
<b>County unemployment rate in 1999</b>	0.024 (0.027)	0.042 (0.032)	0.012 (0.039)
Office located in urban area	-0.105 (0.297)	<b>-0.455*</b> <b>(0.243)</b>	0.142 (0.396)
Office located in Northern State	-0.099 (0.309)	0.348 (0.267)	-0.498 (0.554)
<b>Office located in Midwestern State</b>	<b>0.747***</b> <b>(0.237)</b>	<b>1.275***</b> <b>(0.269)</b>	0.494 (0.334)
Office located in Western State	-0.053 (0.274)	0.424 (0.227)	-0.306 (0.371)
<b>Household characteristics</b>			
Male head of household	0.140 (0.165)	0.487 (0.297)	-0.059 (0.246)
Black head of household	0.185 (0.198)	0.297 (0.256)	0.154 (0.362)
Hispanic head of household	-0.266 (0.260)	0.223 (0.269)	-0.356 (0.307)
Head of household never married	-0.055 (0.161)	<b>-0.432**</b> <b>(0.202)</b>	0.146 (0.221)
TANF recipient	-0.297 (0.306)	-0.533 (0.514)	0.035 (0.397)
<b>Prior FSP recipient</b>	<b>0.526**</b> <b>(0.203)</b>	<b>0.408*</b> <b>(0.217)</b>	<b>0.603***</b> <b>(0.227)</b>
Household has children under 5	-0.185 (0.140)	-0.036 (0.305)	-0.185 (0.197)
Household has children under 18	0.020 (0.275)	0.349 (0.309)	-0.178 (0.244)
Head of household is elderly (≥60)	0.317 (0.268)	0.316 (0.594)	0.414 (0.395)
<b>Household has earnings</b>	<b>-0.350**</b> <b>(0.166)</b>	<b>-0.471**</b> <b>(0.279)</b>	<b>-0.381*</b> <b>(0.218)</b>
Household has some assets	-0.077 (0.163)	-0.024 (0.233)	-0.086 (0.211)

—Continued

**Table D.4—Logistic models of continuing to receive food stamps—Continued**

	Recertification and interim months	Recertification months only	Interim months only
	Coefficient (standard error)	Coefficient (standard error)	Coefficient (standard error)
<b>Household’s income is below poverty level</b>	<b>0.278*</b> (0.149)	<b>0.807***</b> (0.237)	0.106 (0.240)
<b>ABAWD-type household</b>	<b>-0.494***</b> (0.152)	<b>-1.039***</b> (0.240)	<b>-0.370*</b> (0.210)
Intercept	1.536 (0.432)	0.212 (0.407)	2.340 (0.947)
Mean of dependent variable	0.955	0.782	0.976
Sample size	2441	1016	1425

Policy measures and their effects shown in *italics*; variables with statistically significant effects ( $p < 0.10$ ) shown in **bold**.

\*\*\* Statistically significant at the 1 percent level.  
 \*\* Statistically significant at the 5 percent level.  
 \* Statistically significant at the 10 percent level.

## Supplementary Model of Likelihood of Contacting the Food Stamp Office

Contacting the food stamp office, conditional on perceived eligibility, was the “missing link” in the chain of food stamp participation decisions. Adding in this piece would ensure that all aspects of participation were covered, so that all possible effects of local office policies and practices could be detected. These pieces were:

- Perceived eligibility
- Contacting the office, conditional on perceived eligibility
- Completing the application process (and being approved for benefits), conditional on contacting the office
- Surviving an interim month
- Surviving a recertification month
- Likelihood of entering an interim *versus* a recertification month

This “missing link” differs qualitatively from the other links, however, in that the types of policies and practices that could affect it are unbounded. It was argued in Chapters 7 and 8 that perceived eligibility was affected by office outreach; application completion, primarily by the requirements of the application process; interim survival, by interim participation requirements; and recertification survival, primarily by the requirements of the recertification process. The decision to contact the office, in contrast, represents the outcome of a cost-benefit calculus which includes *all* aspects of FSP application and participation. A household could fail to contact the office because it was deterred by the time burden of application, by the intrusiveness of application requirements (e.g. fingerprinting, third party verification), by the costs of ongoing participation (e.g. monthly reporting, E&T

activities), by the frequency with which the certification process would have to be repeated, and so on. Sorting out these myriad possible influences, lacking detailed household information on values, attitudes, preferences, and knowledge, is a Herculean task.

An additional problem was due to the structure of the sample. The sample was designed to explore particular aspects of FSP participation. While it was possible to construct a representation of the entire eligible population from the various pieces of the sample, the quality of the data was far from uniform. A weak link in the construction was households that contacted the office but did not file an application (“near applicants”, identified roughly in the RDD survey of eligible nonparticipants). There were only 66 near applicants found in the 109 offices, so that many offices had no such households. In these offices it would misleadingly appear that *no* nonparticipant, non-applicant households that perceived themselves eligible ever contacted the food stamp office.

As suggested above, nonparticipant households could be influenced by virtually any aspect of the certification process and continuing requirements in deciding whether to contact the food stamp office. For practical purposes, the list of policies included in the model was limited to the most striking in each category.

Two versions of the model are presented below (table D.5), which differ in that they respectively include and exclude three problematic policy measures: outreach by community groups, a quarterly reporting requirement, and expected certification length. Both versions exclude superfluous variables (those whose estimated coefficients were less than 0.75 times their standard errors).<sup>2</sup>

It would be expected that outreach to households by community groups would increase the likelihood that those households would contact the local FSP office, but the model shows it to have a discouraging effect ( $p < 0.01$ ). Conversely, quarterly reporting should discourage households, but has a marginally significant positive effect ( $p < 0.10$ ). Finally, one would expect that households would be more likely to be interested in the Food Stamp Program if they could be certified for longer periods of time. The significant reverse finding ( $p < 0.01$ ) suggests that longer certification periods may be associated with other policies that make participation less attractive. But even when certification period length is the *only* policy variable allowed in the model, it has a strongly negative coefficient ( $p < 0.01$ ).

Omitting these three puzzling variables from the model leaves the rest of the inferences unchanged. Overall, 15.7 percent of households that thought they might be eligible contacted the local office. Two policies are seen to have effects on bringing households into contact with the FSP:

- positive supervisor attitudes ( $p < 0.01$ ) and
- time limits for ABAWDS ( $p < 0.05$ ).

In addition, households were significantly more likely to contact the food stamp office if the unemployment rate in their county was high. Households with male heads, TANF recipients, and

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<sup>2</sup> The policy measures that were dropped varied between the two versions of the model, because forcing some variables out brought other variables in. Every policy variable considered appeared in one or the other version, with the sole exception of job search requirements at application (specific to household type, and applied only to former food stamp recipients, as other potential applicants would be less likely to be aware of this feature).

households with income less than the federal poverty line were significantly more likely to contact the office; former FSP recipients, households with elderly heads, ABAWD-type households, and those with assets were less likely to do so.

Because of the three counterintuitive findings, this model is substantially less plausible than the two models presented in Chapter 8 and the other models presented in Appendix D. While some of the results are suggestive, we believe that the limitations imposed by the sample design are too great to be overcome. A design which directly sampled participants and nonparticipants and collected comparable data on each, including knowledge and attitudes, would be ideal for supporting this sort of analysis.

**Table D.5—Logistic model of contacting the food stamp office**

	<b>Model A: Coefficient (Standard Error)</b>	<b>Model B: Coefficient (Standard Error)</b>
<b>Policy variables</b>		
<i>Household is targeted for outreach</i>		0.283 (0.366)
<i>Number of personal communication modes (scaled 0–1) × household is targeted for outreach<sup>a</sup></i>		–0.828 (0.611)
<b>Community group outreach</b>	<b>–0.763*** (0.239)</b>	
<i>Public transportation goes near office × previous recipient</i>	0.250 (0.305)	
<i>Office open for eligibility interviews only Monday to Friday, 8 to 5</i>		–0.155 (0.250)
<b>Positive supervisor attitudes</b>	<b>2.836 (0.722)</b>	<b>2.013*** (0.630)</b>
<i>Fingerprint applicants of household type (TANF versus non-TANF)</i>	–0.273 (0.322)	
<i>Third party verification: required forms (TANF versus non-TANF)</i>		–0.357 (0.359)
<i>Third party verification: required contacts (TANF versus non-TANF)</i>		0.472 (0.353)
<i>Monthly reporting for household type</i>		–0.852 (0.357)
<b>Quarterly reporting for household type</b>	<b>0.473* (0.287)</b>	
<i>Required to participate in E&amp;T activities, by household type</i>	0.179 (0.233)	
<i>E&amp;T services available to non-ABAWDS</i>	–0.312 (0.269)	
<b>ABAWDs subject to time limits</b>	<b>–1.797*** (0.543)</b>	<b>–1.749*** (0.540)</b>
<b>Expected certification length for household profile</b>	<b>–0.186*** (0.028)</b>	
<b>Contextual variables</b>		
<b>County unemployment rate in 1999</b>	<b>0.127* (0.068)</b>	<b>0.100* (0.060)</b>
<b>Office located in urban area</b>	<b>–0.646** (0.294)</b>	<b>–0.725*** (0.256)</b>
Office located in Northern State	0.075 (0.359)	–0.022 (0.338)

—Continued



**Table D.5—Logistic model of contacting the food stamp office—Continued**

	<b>Model A: Coefficient (Standard Error)</b>	<b>Model B: Coefficient (Standard Error)</b>
Office located in Midwestern State	−0.391 (0.254)	−0.412 (0.252)
Office located in Western State	−0.263 (0.323)	−0.130 (0.271)
<b>Household Characteristics</b>		
<b>Male head of household</b>	<b>0.579** (0.261)</b>	<b>0.580** (0.258)</b>
Black head of household	−0.027 (0.243)	0.008 (0.219)
Hispanic head of household	0.370 (0.319)	0.294 (0.359)
Head of household never married	0.175 (0.342)	0.181 (0.304)
<b>Receiving TANF</b>	<b>2.044*** (0.561)</b>	<b>2.063*** (0.596)</b>
Prior food stamp receipt	−0.307 (0.251)	−0.241 (0.226)
Household has children under 5	−0.219 (0.281)	−0.171 (0.260)
Household has children under 18	−0.096 (0.309)	0.082 (0.321)
<b>Head of household is elderly (≥ 60)</b>	<b>−2.127*** (0.331)</b>	<b>−2.586*** (0.358)</b>
Household has earnings	−0.312 (0.259)	0.066 (0.229)
<b>Household has some assets</b>	<b>−0.405* (0.231)</b>	<b>−0.475** (0.213)</b>
<b>Household's income is below poverty level</b>	<b>1.920*** (0.219)</b>	<b>1.784*** (0.201)</b>
<b>ABAWD-like household</b>	<b>−1.072*** (0.403)</b>	<b>−0.785** (0.386)</b>
Intercept	0.579 (0.803)	−0.556 (0.729)
Mean of dependent variable	0.157	0.157
Sample size	1516	1516

a “Personal” communication modes for outreach are: presentations to community groups, direct mailings, and telephone calls to former recipients.

Policy measures and their effects shown in *italics*; variables with statistically significant effects ( $p < 0.10$ ) shown in **bold**.

\*\*\* Statistically significant at the 1 percent level.

\*\* Statistically significant at the 5 percent level.

\* Statistically significant at the 10 percent level.

# **Appendix E**

## **Data Collection Instruments Used in the Study**

# SURVEY OF FOOD STAMP PROGRAM PROCESSES

## SUPERVISOR SURVEY

Prepared for:

Economic Research Service  
U.S. Department of Agriculture  
Washington, DC

Prepared by:

Health Systems Research, Inc.  
Washington, DC  
Under Subcontract with Abt Associates

January 9, 2000

## INTRODUCTION

Thank you for participating in this survey of Food Stamp Program processes.

My name is \_\_\_\_\_ and I am with Health Systems Research in Washington, D.C. We are conducting this survey with local offices in 40 States around the country to find out about how people learn about the Food Stamp Program, the different ways they become food stamp participants, and what happens once they begin to participate in the program. This survey is being conducted as part of a larger study on the Food Stamp Program for the U.S. Department of Agriculture. We obtained a list of supervisors from the director of your office and selected you to be interviewed because of the types of workers you supervise and because of your experience.

Your answers during this interview will be kept confidential. Your name and office will not be identified with any answers you give. Your answers to the questions will be grouped with other offices around the country and no information will be published on responses that could identify particular individuals or particular offices.

The Office of Management and Budget Control number for this information collection is 0536-0053.

INTERVIEWER PROVIDE A DIFFERENT LENGTH OF INTERVIEW ESTIMATE IF YOU EXPECT IT TO BE DIFFERENT BECAUSE OF THE NUMBER OF QUESTIONS YOU NEED TO ASK.

The interview should take approximately one hour. Do you have any questions before we begin?



**A. SUPERVISOR EXPERIENCE AND WORKER RESPONSIBILITIES**

INTERVIEWER: A1 AND A2 WILL NEED TO HAVE BEEN FILLED OUT BEFORE YOU BEGIN AN INTERVIEW. (EXCEPT WHERE NOTED, MORE THAN ONE CHOICE CAN BE CHECKED).

I would like to begin by confirming information we obtained from your office director.

A1. Our information indicates that you supervise workers who serve the following types of clients:  
[READ CHECKED RESPONSES-- MORE THAN ONE CAN BE CHECKED]

- TANF food stamp cases                       Non-TANF food stamp cases
- Elderly food stamp cases                       Food stamp cases for disabled individuals
- Food stamp cases for Able-bodied Adults Without Dependents or ABAWDs
- Your workers serve all types of food stamp clients
- Workers who are the initial point of contact for TANF applicants regarding \_\_\_ lump sum payments or vouchers [and] \_\_\_ Applicant job search [IF ONLY THIS BOX IS CHECKED ASK A1a, IF THE ANSWER IS YES GO TO SECTION G]

A1a. Is this correct?

YES ..... 01 [GO TO A2]

NO ..... .00

A1b. What kind of food stamp clients do the workers you supervise serve?

- TANF food stamp cases                       Non-TANF food stamp cases
- Elderly food stamp cases                       Food stamp cases for disabled individuals
- Food stamp cases for able-bodied Adults Without Dependents or ABAWDs
- Your workers serve all types of food stamp clients

A2. Our information also indicates that your workers are responsible for the following parts of the food stamp process. [READ CHECKED RESPONSES- RESPONSES SHOULD BE CHECKED FOR ONLY ONE OF THE FOUR OPTIONS BELOW]

- 1. \_\_\_\_\_ Application or eligibility and ongoing or recertification for all the types of food stamp cases I just listed;
- 2. \_\_\_\_\_ Only application and eligibility for all the types of food stamp cases I've just listed;
- 3. \_\_\_\_\_ Only ongoing or recertification for all the types of food stamp cases I've just listed; or
- 4. \_\_\_\_\_ Application and Eligibility for \_\_\_ TANF food stamp cases, \_\_\_ Non-TANF food stamp cases, \_\_\_ Able-bodied Adults Without Dependents (ABAWDs) food stamp cases, \_\_\_ Elderly food stamp cases, \_\_\_ Food stamp cases for disabled individuals

(And) Ongoing or recertification for \_\_\_ TANF food stamp cases, \_\_\_ Non-TANF food stamp cases, \_\_\_ Able-bodied Adults Without Dependents or ABAWDs food stamp cases, \_\_\_ Elderly food stamp cases, \_\_\_ Food stamp cases for disabled individuals

A2a. Is this correct?

YES ..... 01  
 [IF RESPONSE TO A1a and A2a=YES, GO TO SUBSTANTIVE QUESTION INTRODUCTION BELOW A3; IF RESPONSE TO A1a=NO, GO TO A3]

NO ..... 00

A2b. What part of the Food Stamp Program process are your workers responsible for and for which types of clients?

- 1. \_\_\_\_\_ Application or eligibility and ongoing or recertification for all the types of food stamp cases I just listed;
- 2. \_\_\_\_\_ Only application and eligibility for all the types of food stamp cases I've just listed;
- 3. \_\_\_\_\_ Only ongoing or recertification for all the types of food stamp cases I've just listed; or
- 4. \_\_\_\_\_ Application and Eligibility for \_\_\_ TANF food stamp cases, \_\_\_ Non-TANF food stamp cases, \_\_\_ Able-bodied Adults Without Dependents (ABAWDs) food stamp cases, \_\_\_ Elderly food stamp cases, \_\_\_ Food stamp cases for disabled individuals

(And) Ongoing or recertification for \_\_\_ TANF food stamp cases, \_\_\_ Non-TANF food stamp cases, \_\_\_ Able-bodied Adults Without Dependents or ABAWDs food stamp cases, \_\_\_ Elderly food stamp cases, \_\_\_ Food stamp cases for disabled individuals

- A3. INTERVIEWER: IF THE SUPERVISOR HAS RESPONSIBILITY FOR MORE TYPES OF CASES OR PARTS OF CASES THAN CHECKED IN A1 AND A2, PROCEED TO SUBSTANTIVE Q INTRODUCTION AND CONTINUE THE INTERVIEW. IF THE WORKER INDICATES THEY ARE NOT RESPONSIBLE FOR THE TYPES OF CASES CHECKED THEN YOU WILL NEED TO READ THE STATEMENT BELOW.

We appear to have recorded incorrect information regarding your responsibilities. I apologize, but I will need to obtain the correct information and determine whether you are the person who should have been selected for this interview. I will either call you back and reschedule or make sure that you are informed that we will need to select another supervisor. When would be a good time to call you back?

---

**END SURVEY HERE FOR RESPONDENTS TO A3**

**SUBSTANTIVE Q INTRODUCTION.** Now, I am going to ask you about a variety of policies and practices in your office. There are no right or wrong answers on this survey. We want to learn about how the Food Stamp Program and related programs operate at the local office you work in. We are also interested in this office's practices as they are usually carried out by your workers, not what happens under every circumstance.

If you do not know the answer to any question, please feel free to say so.



**B. OFFICE HOURS**

The next set of questions asks about your office hours and how services are provided to clients. For this section, I will need you to turn to the “Office Hours” section of the Supervisor Survey Response Aid that was sent to you in advance. Please tell me when you are ready to begin.

B1. Can you tell me the normal hours your office is open to clients during the week and whether that varies by day. Please be sure to tell me if the office is usually closed at any time on any day for lunch, staff meetings, or other reasons.

What hours is your office open to clients for any food stamp related services on Mondays?  
(REPEAT QUESTION FOR EACH WEEK DAY)

WEEKDAY HOURS				
MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY

B2. Is your office open during any weekend hours?

YES ..... 01

NO ..... 00 [GO TO B4]

B3. What are those hours? (FILL IN FOR BOTH DAYS AND WRITE “NOT OPEN” IF NOT OPEN ON ONE DAY)

WEEKEND HOURS	
SATURDAY	SUNDAY

B4. The next set of questions asks about the hours that specific food stamp services are available during the time your office is open. The services are listed in Part II of the “Office Hours” section of your form. Please inform me of the specific times these services are available. If they are available during all the hours your office is open to clients you may tell me that. However, if they are unavailable at any time during the week because of lunch hours, training sessions, paperwork activities, or other reasons please inform me of this. For example, your office may be open beginning at 7:30 a.m. for clients to wait on line, but not be able to accept application forms for filing or for interviews until later in the morning; or you may not hold interviews during the lunch hour

Okay, let’s begin. Of the weekday days and hours that your office is open to clients, when are each of the following services available or able to be conducted?:

INTERVIEWER: IF THE ANSWER IS “ALL OPEN HOURS”, PLEASE WRITE THIS CLEARLY ACROSS THE ROW THAT IT APPLIES TO. PLEASE WRITE “SERVICE NOT AVAILABLE” FOR ANY DAY THE SERVICE IS NOT OFFERED. WRITE “NA” IF A SERVICE IS NOT OFFERED AT ALL AT THE OFFICE WHERE THE SUPERVISOR WORKS.

SERVICE	MON	TUES	WED	THURS	FRI
a. Accepting food stamp application forms for filing (just signing and dating before an eligibility interview is conducted)?					
b. Initial food stamp eligibility interviews?					
c. Food stamp recertification appointments?					
d. Telephone inquiries regarding how to apply for food stamps?					

INTERVIEWER: IF THERE ARE NO WEEKEND HOURS LISTED IN THE OFFICE HOURS TABLE (B3) ..... [GO TO B6]

B5. Of the weekend days and hours that your office is open to clients. When are each of the following services available?:

INTERVIEWER: IF THE ANSWER IS “ALL OPEN HOURS,” PLEASE WRITE THIS CLEARLY ACROSS THE ROW THAT IT APPLIES TO. PLEASE WRITE “SERVICE NOT AVAILABLE” IF THE OFFICE IS OPEN BUT THE SERVICE IS NOT OFFERED. WRITE “NA” IF A SERVICE IS NOT OFFERED AT ALL AT THE OFFICE WHERE THE SUPERVISOR WORKS.

SERVICE	SAT	SUN
a. For accepting food stamp applications for filing (just signing and dating before an eligibility interview is conducted)?		
b. For initial food stamp eligibility interviews?		
c. For food stamp recertification appointments?		
d. For telephone inquiries regarding how to apply for food stamps?		

B6. Do you have a secure after hours drop-box that people can use to deposit their completed food stamp applications or other information necessary to complete a food stamp application or recertification?

YES ..... 01  
 NO ..... 00  
 DON'T KNOW ..... 98

B7. Which of the following are requests or inquiries that can be made by telephone?

	<u>YES</u>	<u>NO</u>	<u>DK</u>
a. Can a client schedule an eligibility interview for initial application?	01	00	98
b. Can a client ask questions about how to apply for food stamps?	01	00	98
c. Can a client ask questions about what information they will need to bring with them when they come in to apply for food stamps?	01	00	98
d. Can a client change a previously scheduled interview?	01	00	98

B8. Do your workers have individual voice mail boxes or answering machines in which clients can leave messages?

YES .....	01
NO .....	00
DON'T KNOW .....	98
OTHER [SPECIFY] .....	96

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**C. THE FOOD STAMP APPLICATION (FORMS AND AVAILABILITY)**

I am now going to ask you some questions about food stamp applications.

C1. Can someone interested in applying for food stamps call to request that a food stamp application be mailed to them?

- YES ..... 01
- NO ..... 00 [GO TO C3]
- DON'T KNOW ..... 98 [GO TO C3]

C2. Can anyone do this or just people who staff determine are unable to come to the office?

- ANYONE ..... 01
- JUST PEOPLE UNABLE TO COME TO THE OFFICE ..... 02
- DON'T KNOW ..... 98

C3. Are food stamp applications available at other locations in your community in addition to food stamp offices?

- YES ..... 01
- NO ..... 00 [GO TO C5]
- DON'T KNOW ..... 98 [GO TO C5]

C4. At which of the following types of locations are food stamp applications available?

	<u>YES</u>	<u>NO</u>	<u>DK</u>
a. Food pantries?	01	00	98
b. Senior centers?	01	00	98
c. Community Action Agencies?	01	00	98
d. Schools ?	01	00	98
e. The public housing authority?	01	00	98
f. Hospitals?	01	00	98
g. Community health clinics?	01	00	98
h. Social security offices?	01	00	98
i. Agencies serving immigrants or refugees?	01	00	98
j. Agencies serving the homeless?	01	00	98
k. Job centers?	01	00	98
l. Unemployment offices?	01	00	98
m. Any other locations? [SPECIFY]	01	00	98

C5 Do you have large print food stamp forms available for individuals with limited vision?

YES .....	01
NO .....	02
DON'T KNOW .....	98

C6. At your office is the

Application form for food stamps provided to clients in the front waiting area, or .....	01
Do they have to wait to get the form later when they meet with an eligibility worker or other caseworker? .....	02
OTHER [SPECIFY] .....	96

DON'T KNOW .....	98
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**D. SERVICES AND PROCEDURES FOR PARTICULAR GROUPS OF CLIENTS**

I'm now going to ask you some questions about the procedures in your office regarding particular groups of clients. First, I have some questions about the children of clients.

D1. Are clients asked to leave their children at home or with a sitter when they come to your office for an appointment?

- YES ..... 01
- NO ..... 00
- DON'T KNOW ..... 98

D2. Is there on-site child care available for clients utilizing the services at your office?

- YES ..... 01
- NO ..... 00
- DON'T KNOW ..... 98

D3. Now I would like to ask you some questions about legal immigrants.  
In a typical month do you normally have people come to your office seeking services who are immigrants?

- YES ..... 01
- NO ..... 00 [GO TO D10]
- DON'T KNOW ..... 98

D4. Do your workers give clients written information describing food stamp eligibility rules for legal immigrants and their families?

- YES ..... 01
- NO ..... 00 [GO TO D6]
- OTHER [SPECIFY] ..... 96

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DON'T KNOW ..... 98 [GO TO D6]

D5.	Are these materials available in a language other than English?			
	YES .....			01
	NO .....			00
	DON'T KNOW .....			98
D6.	Do your workers give clients written information assuring them that accepting food stamps cannot affect an immigrant's ability to become a citizen?			
	YES .....			01
	NO .....			00 [GO TO D8]
	OTHER [SPECIFY] .....			96
<hr/>				
	DON'T KNOW .....			98 [GO TO D8]
D7	Are these written materials available in a language other than English?			
	YES .....			01
	NO .....			00
	DON'T KNOW .....			98
D8.	Are there any public information or outreach efforts in the community to inform legal immigrants that they or some of their family members may be eligible for food stamps?			
	YES .....			01
	NO .....			00
	DON'T KNOW .....			98
D9.	Have you used any of the following special methods to ensure your <u>workers</u> understand the current eligibility rules in the Food Stamp Program for immigrants? Have you			
		<u>YES</u>	<u>NO</u>	<u>DK</u>
	Held special training sessions for caseworkers	01	00	98
	Developed simplified written guides for workers	01	00	98
	Anything else? [SPECIFY]	01	00	98



- D10. The next set of questions asks about individuals seeking services at your office who may speak a language other than English.  
In a typical month, are there usually people who speak no or limited English who come in to your office to apply for food stamps?
- YES ..... 01
- NO ..... 00 [GO TO SECTION E]
- DON'T KNOW ..... 98
- D11. Are there caseworkers in your office who can provide services in the language of your non-English speaking clientele?
- YES ..... 01
- NO ..... 02
- DON'T KNOW ..... 98
- D12. Are translators available either in the office or by telephone when there are no staff who can speak the client's language?
- YES ..... 01
- NO ..... 02 [GO TO SECTION E]
- DON'T KNOW ..... 98 [GO TO SECTION E]
- D13. How often are translators available in the office or by telephone?
- During all office hours, ..... 01
- at least 3/4 of the time the office is open, ..... 02
- less than 3/4, but at least 1/2 of the time the office is open, or ..... 03
- less than half of the time the office is open? ..... 04
- DON'T KNOW ..... 98

**E. FOOD STAMP OUTREACH/PUBLIC INFORMATION EFFORTS**

The next set of questions are about food stamp outreach or public information efforts that may or may not be occurring in your community. For this section you will need to turn to the page of the Supervisor Survey Response Aid which is titled “Outreach.”

- E1. Is your agency conducting any type of outreach campaign designed to inform potentially eligible individuals about the Food Stamp Program?
    - YES ..... 01
    - NO ..... 00
    - DON'T KNOW ..... 98
  
  - E2. Is any other agency or organization conducting an outreach campaign designed to inform potentially eligible individuals in your locality about the Food Stamp Program?
    - YES ..... 01
    - NO ..... 00
    - DON'T KNOW ..... 98
- INTERVIEWER: IF BOTH E1 AND E2 = 00 OR DK ..... [GO TO E6]**

E3. To which populations are these campaigns targeted? You may want to review the groups listed in Part I of the outreach section of the Supervisor Survey Response Aid when answering this question. [CIRCLE ALL THAT APPLY]

WORKING FAMILIES .....	01
ELDERLY .....	02
RURAL .....	03
FORMER TANF RECIPIENTS .....	04
HOMELESS .....	05
IMMIGRANT/REFUGEE POPULATIONS .....	06
ABAWDS .....	07
DISABLED INDIVIDUALS .....	08
NO SPECIFIC GROUP IS TARGETED .....	09
OTHER [SPECIFY] .....	96
<hr/>	
DON'T KNOW .....	98

E4. I am now going to ask about the possible methods of communication used in outreach activities using the list in Part II of the outreach section of the supervisor survey response aid. Which of the following methods of communication are being used to provide the public with information on the Food Stamp Program?

	<u>YES</u>	<u>NO</u>	<u>DK</u>
a. Articles in newspapers?	01	00	98
b. Public service announcements (PSAs) on radio or TV?	01	00	98
c. Flyers, posters or brochures?	01	00	98
d. Billboards or advertisements on buses, taxis, or trains?	01	00	98
e. Presentations to community groups?	01	00	98
f. Toll free telephone number or hotline?	01	00	98
g. Direct mailing?	01	00	98

		<u>YES</u>	<u>NO</u>	<u>DK</u>
h.	Telephone calls or home visits to clients who have left the program?	01	00	98
h.	The internet?	01	00	98
i.	Any others? [SPECIFY]	01	00	98

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E5. Is some of this outreach being conducted in coordination with outreach for Medicaid or one of the new State Children's Health Insurance Programs (SCHIP) or [STATE'S NAME FOR SCHIP]?

YES .....	01
NO .....	00
DON'T KNOW .....	98

E6. What changes could be made to your office procedures and policies that would increase the number of eligible individuals who come in to initially apply for food stamps? [CIRCLE ALL THAT APPLY]  
 PROBE: Anything else?

EARLIER WEEKDAY OPENING TIMES .....	01
LATER WEEKDAY CLOSING TIMES .....	02
ADD WEEKEND HOURS .....	03
MORE STAFF .....	04
MORE OFFICE LOCATIONS .....	05
OUTSTATION STAFF IN OTHER AGENCIES .....	06
MORE CONVENIENT OFFICE LOCATION .....	07
MORE/BETTER OUTREACH EFFORTS .....	08
BETTER RECEPTION AREA .....	09
BETTER COORDINATION WITH OTHER AGENCIES .....	10
OTHER [SPECIFY] .....	96
_____	
_____	
_____	
_____	
_____	
_____	
NONE .....	00
DON'T KNOW .....	98

**F. THE APPLICATION PROCESS**

The next questions address the application and eligibility process for food stamps.

F1. Prior to the food stamp eligibility interview is someone applying for both TANF and food stamps usually required to participate in any orientation sessions, job counseling sessions, job search workshops, meetings with workers, or any similar activities?

YES ..... 01

NO ..... 00 [GO TO F8]

DON'T KNOW ..... 98 [GO TO F8]

F2. How many separate meetings or sessions are they required to attend?

\_\_\_\_\_ NUMBER OF MEETINGS OR SESSIONS

DON'T KNOW ..... 98

F3. What are the purposes of the meetings or sessions? [CIRCLE ALL THAT APPLY]

EMPLOYMENT ASSESSMENT/REFERRALS ..... 01

CHILD SUPPORT ..... 02

PROGRAM ORIENTATION/DESCRIPTION OF PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS ..... 03

DISCUSSION OF ALTERNATIVE RESOURCES AVAILABLE AS AN ALTERNATIVE TO TANF ..... 04

DISCUSSION OF CASH OR VOUCHERS AVAILABLE AS AN ALTERNATIVE TO TANF ..... 05

OVERVIEW OF APPLICANT JOB SEARCH REQUIREMENT ..... 06

DESCRIPTION OF AVAILABLE SUPPORT SERVICES ..... 07

EBT TRAINING ..... 08

OTHER [SPECIFY] ..... 96

\_\_\_\_\_

DON'T KNOW ..... 98

F3a. How many of these meetings or sessions are usually held in another building?  
 \_\_\_\_\_ NUMBER OF MEETINGS OR SESSIONS  
 DON'T KNOW ..... 98

F4. Do individuals sign and date their food stamp application  
 Before these sessions or meetings, ..... 01  
 During a session or meeting, or ..... 02  
 After completing the sessions or meetings ..... 03  
 OTHER [SPECIFY] ..... 96  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 DON'T KNOW ..... 98

F5. Were any of these meetings or sessions required before 1996 or whenever your office  
 implemented welfare reform if that was done before 1996?  
 YES ..... 01  
 NO ..... 00 [GO TO F8]  
 DON'T KNOW ..... 98 [GO TO F8]

F6. How many of these meetings or sessions were required prior to 1996 or welfare reform  
 implementation?  
 \_\_\_\_\_ NUMBER OF MEETINGS OR SESSIONS  
 DON'T KNOW ..... 98

F7. What were the purposes of the meetings or sessions required prior to 1996 or welfare reform implementation?  
[CIRCLE ALL THAT APPLY]

EMPLOYMENT ASSESSMENT/REFERRALS ..... 01

CHILD SUPPORT ..... 02

PROGRAM ORIENTATION ..... 03

DESCRIPTION OF PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS ..... 04

DISCUSSION OF ALTERNATIVE RESOURCES AVAILABLE AS AN ALTERNATIVE TO TANF ..... 05

DISCUSSION OF CASH OR VOUCHERS AS AN ALTERNATIVE TO TANF ..... 06

OVERVIEW OF APPLICANT JOB SEARCH REQUIREMENT ..... 07

DESCRIPTION OF AVAILABLE SUPPORT SERVICES ..... 08

OTHER [SPECIFY] ..... 96

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DON'T KNOW ..... 98

F8. Compared to before welfare reform, today does a person applying for TANF and food stamps usually have to make more visits now, less visits now, or the same number of office visits before all the required steps in the food stamp application process are completed?

MORE VISITS NOW ..... 01

LESS VISITS NOW ..... 02

THE SAME NUMBER OF VISITS ..... 03

DON'T KNOW ..... 98

F9. The next set of questions address the food stamp application and eligibility process for non-TANF clients. Prior to the food stamp eligibility interview is a non-TANF food stamp applicant usually required to participate in any orientation sessions, job counseling sessions, job search workshops, meetings with workers, or any similar activities?

YES ..... 01

NO ..... 00 [GO TO F16]

DON'T KNOW ..... 98 [GO TO F16]



F10.	How many separate meetings or sessions are they required to attend?	
	_____ NUMBER OF MEETINGS OR SESSIONS	
	DON'T KNOW .....	98
F11.	What are the purposes of the meetings or sessions? [CIRCLE ALL THAT APPLY]	
	EMPLOYMENT ASSESSMENT/REFERRALS .....	01
	CHILD SUPPORT .....	02
	PROGRAM ORIENTATION/DESCRIPTION OF PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS .....	03
	OVERVIEW OF APPLICANT JOB SEARCH REQUIREMENT .....	04
	DESCRIPTION OF AVAILABLE SUPPORT SERVICES .....	05
	EBT TRAINING .....	06
	OTHER [SPECIFY] .....	96
	_____	
	DON'T KNOW .....	98
F11a.	How many of these meetings or sessions are usually held in another building?	
	_____ NUMBER OF MEETINGS OR SESSIONS	
	DON'T KNOW .....	98
F12.	Do individuals sign and date their food stamp application	
	Before these sessions or meetings .....	01
	During a session or meeting, or .....	02
	After completing the sessions or meetings .....	03
	OTHER [SPECIFY] .....	96
	_____	
	DON'T KNOW .....	98

F13.	Were any of these meetings or sessions required prior to 1996 or whenever your office implemented welfare reform if that was done before 1996?	
	YES .....	01
	NO .....	00 [GO TO F16]
	DON'T KNOW .....	98 [GO TO F16]
F14.	How many meetings or sessions were required prior to 1996 or welfare reform implementation?	
	_____ NUMBER OF MEETINGS OR SESSIONS	
	DON'T KNOW .....	98
F15.	What was the purpose of the meetings or sessions required prior to 1996 or welfare reform implementation?	
	EMPLOYMENT ASSESSMENT/REFERRALS .....	01
	CHILD SUPPORT .....	02
	PROGRAM ORIENTATION .....	03
	DESCRIPTION OF PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS .....	04
	OVERVIEW OF APPLICANT JOB SEARCH REQUIREMENT .....	05
	DESCRIPTION OF AVAILABLE SUPPORT SERVICES .....	06
	OTHER [SPECIFY] .....	96
	_____	
	DON'T KNOW .....	98
F16.	Compared to before welfare reform, today does a non-TANF food stamp applicant usually have to make more, less or the same number of office visits before all the required steps in the food stamp application process are completed?	
	MORE VISITS .....	01
	LESS VISITS .....	02
	THE SAME NUMBER OF VISITS .....	03
	DON'T KNOW .....	98

**G. TANF APPLICANTS**

The next set of questions concerns individuals who may be eligible for or interested in applying for TANF and food stamp benefits.

G1. Does your office require that any individuals interested in applying for TANF explore alternative resources such as help from community agencies or other assistance programs before they are able to apply for TANF?

- YES ..... 01
- NO ..... 00 [GO TO G5]
- DON'T KNOW ..... 98 [GO TO G5]

G2. When does your staff usually encourage TANF applicants to seek alternative resources rather than apply for cash assistance?

- Before a client signs and dates the food stamp application, ..... 01
- During the interview in which a client signs and dates their food stamp application, or .... 02
- After a client has signed and dated the food stamp application? ..... 03
- OTHER [SPECIFY] ..... 96

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DON'T KNOW ..... 98

G3. When the workers encourage or require clients coming in for TANF to seek alternative resources, are they instructed to tell clients that they can apply for food stamps regardless of what other resources they are going to access?

- YES ..... 01
- NO ..... 00
- DON'T KNOW ..... 98

G4.	Among all clients who come in interested in applying for TANF, what proportion are required to explore alternative resources before applying for the program? Would you say:	
	All, .....	05
	At least three-quarters, but not all, .....	04
	At least one-half but less than three-quarters, .....	03
	At least one-quarter but less than one-half, or .....	02
	Less than one-quarter .....	01
	DON'T KNOW .....	98
G5.	Is there a policy to offer lump sum cash payments or expense vouchers to all or some TANF applicants as an alternative to applying for TANF?	
	YES .....	01
	NO .....	00 [GO TO TEXT ABOVE G10]
	DON'T KNOW .....	98 [GO TO TEXT ABOVE G10]
G5a.	Are all or only some TANF applicants offered these cash payments or expense vouchers?	
	ALL .....	01
	SOME .....	02
	DON'T KNOW .....	98
G6.	Can clients be required to accept the payments or vouchers instead of becoming a TANF recipient or do they choose whether to accept the payment?	
	CLIENTS CAN BE REQUIRED TO ACCEPT THE PAYMENT .....	01
	CLIENTS CHOOSE .....	02
	DON'T KNOW .....	98

G7.	When does your staff usually inform TANF applicants about the lump sum payment or vouchers as an alternative to getting on the cash welfare program?	
	Before a client signs and dates the food stamp application, . . . . .	01
	After a client has signed and dated the food stamp application, or . . . . .	02
	During an interview in which a client signs and dates the food stamp application? . . . . .	03
	OTHER [SPECIFY] . . . . .	96
<hr/>		
	DON'T KNOW . . . . .	98
G8.	When the workers offer a lump sum payment or expense vouchers, are they instructed to tell the client that they can apply for food stamps even if they receive a cash payment or voucher?	
	YES . . . . .	01
	NO . . . . .	00
	DON'T KNOW . . . . .	98
G9.	In a typical month, what proportion of clients who come in and are interested in applying for TANF <u>and</u> would likely be income eligible receive the lump sum cash payments or expense vouchers instead of becoming TANF recipients? Would you say	
	More than three-quarters, . . . . .	04
	At least one-half but less than three-quarters, . . . . .	03
	At least one-quarter but less than one-half, . . . . .	02
	At least one but less than one-quarter, or . . . . .	01
	None . . . . .	00
	DON'T KNOW . . . . .	98

IF OFFICE DOES NOT REQUIRE TANF APPLICANTS TO EXPLORE ALTERNATIVE RESOURCES AND DOES NOT OFFER A DIVERSION PAYMENT OR VOUCHER  
 [IF G1 AND G5=NO] ..... [GO TO G11]

G10. What changes could be made regarding how TANF applicants are told about [lump sum payments] [and] [about the requirement to explore alternative resources] that would result in more eligible clients receiving food stamp benefits?  
 PROBE: Anything else?

RESPONDENT IDENTIFIES CHANGES [SPECIFY] ..... 01

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NONE ..... 00

DON'T KNOW ..... 98

G11. Does your office require any TANF applicants to conduct a job search or engage in job search activities such as job clubs or job search workshops before their TANF application can be approved?

YES ..... 01

NO ..... 00 [GO TO SECTION H]

DON'T KNOW ..... 98 [GO TO SECTION H]

G12. In a typical month, what proportion of TANF applicants are required to conduct job search or engage in job search activities before their TANF application can be approved?

All, ..... 05

At least three-quarters, but not all, ..... 04

At least one-half but less than three-quarters, ..... 03

At least one-quarter but less than one-half, or ..... 02

Less than one-quarter ..... 01

DON'T KNOW ..... 98

G13.	When does your staff inform TANF applicants about this up-front job search requirement?	
	Before a client signs and dates the food stamp application, . . . . .	01
	After a client has signed and dated the food stamp application, or . . . . .	02
	During an interview in which a client signs and dates their food stamp application? . . . . .	03
	OTHER [SPECIFY] . . . . .	96
<hr/>		
	DON'T KNOW . . . . .	98
G14.	When the workers discuss the requirement with TANF applicants, are they instructed to inform them that they are not required to complete up-front job search to receive food stamps benefits?	
	YES . . . . .	01
	NO . . . . .	00
	SOME [SPECIFY] . . . . .	02
<hr/>		
	OTHER [SPECIFY] . . . . .	96
<hr/>		
	DON'T KNOW . . . . .	98
G15.	Are TANF applicants subject to up-front job search required	
	To make a minimum number of contacts with potential employers, or . . . . .	01
	Complete a certain number of hours of job search activities over a specific time period, or . . . . .	02 [GO TO G17]
	Both make a minimum number of contacts and complete a certain number of hours . . . . .	03
	THERE ARE NO SPECIFIC REQUIREMENTS REGARDING CONTACTS OR NUMBER OF HOURS . . . . .	04
	OTHER [SPECIFY] . . . . .	96
<hr/>		
	DON'T KNOW . . . . .	98 [GO TO G18]

G16. What is the minimum number of contacts TANF applicants must make with potential employers?

PROBE: In what period of time?

|\_|\_| CONTACTS IN |\_|\_|\_| DAYS

|\_|\_| CONTACTS IN |\_|\_|\_| WEEKS

OTHER [SPECIFY] ..... 96

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DON'T KNOW ..... 98

IF G15 = 01 (MINIMUM OF HOURS IS NOT REQUIRED) ..... [GO TO G18]

G17. What is the minimum number of hours they must participate in up-front job search activities?

PROBE: In what period of time?

|\_|\_| HOURS OF SEARCH ACTIVITIES PER WEEK

|\_|\_| HOURS OF SEARCH ACTIVITIES PER MONTH

OTHER [SPECIFY] ..... 96

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DON'T KNOW ..... 98

G18. To complete their job search requirement for TANF, does a TANF applicant have to meet with an employment counselor or specialist at another location other than your office, such as a department of labor, a workforce development office or a contractor's office.

YES ..... 01

NO ..... 00

DON'T KNOW ..... 98



G19. When TANF applicants fail to complete their required up-front job search requirement and are notified that they cannot receive TANF, are they formally notified by your office that they still may be eligible for food stamps?

YES .....	01
NO .....	00
OTHER [SPECIFY] .....	96
<hr/>	
DON'T KNOW .....	98

**H. NON-TANF FOOD STAMP APPLICANT JOB SEARCH REQUIREMENTS**

The next set of questions concerns application requirements for non-TANF clients.

H1. Are any non-TANF food stamp applicants required to conduct a job search or attend job search workshops before they can be eligible for food stamps?

- YES ..... 01
- NO ..... 00 [GO TO H8]
- DON'T KNOW ..... 98 [GO TO H8]

H2. Which non-TANF food stamp applicants are required to engage in job search or attend workshops before their eligibility for food stamps is determined?

	<u>YES</u>	<u>NO</u>	<u>DK</u>
All mandatory work registrants	01	00	98
Able-bodied adults without dependents between ages 18 and 50 (ABAWDS)	01	00	98
Another group of mandatory work registrants [SPECIFY]	01	00	98

H3. What proportion of non-elderly and non-disabled non-TANF applicants are required to conduct job search or engage in job search activities before their food stamp application can be approved?

- All, ..... 05
- At least three-quarters, but not all, ..... 04
- At least one-half but less than three-quarters, ..... 03
- At least one-quarter but less than one-half, or ..... 02
- Less than one-quarter ..... 01
- DON'T KNOW ..... 98

H4. For non-TANF food stamp applicants required to conduct job search or attend workshops as a condition of food stamp eligibility are they required

To make a minimum number of contacts with potential employers, or ..... 01

Complete a certain number of hours of job search activities over a specific time period, or ..... 02 [GO TO H6]

Both make a certain number of contacts and complete a certain number of hours of job search activity ..... 03

THERE ARE NO SPECIFIC REQUIREMENTS REGARDING CONTACTS OR NUMBER OF HOURS ..... 04

OTHER [SPECIFY] ..... 96

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DON'T KNOW ..... 98

H5. What is the requirement for the minimum number of contacts with potential employers?

PROBE: In what period of time?

|\_|\_| CONTACTS IN |\_|\_| DAYS ..... 01

|\_|\_| CONTACTS IN |\_|\_| WEEKS ..... 02

OTHER [SPECIFY] ..... 96

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DON'T KNOW ..... 98

IF H4=01 (MINIMUM NUMBER OF HOURS IS NOT REQUIRED) ..... [GO TO H7]

H6. What is the requirement for the minimum number of hours the non-TANF applicants must spend on job search activities?

PROBE: In what period of time?

|\_|\_| HOURS OF SEARCH IN |\_|\_| DAYS ..... 01

|\_|\_| HOURS OF SEARCH IN |\_|\_| WEEKS ..... 02

OTHER [SPECIFY] ..... 96

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DON'T KNOW ..... 98

H7. To complete their job search requirement, does a non-TANF applicant have to meet with an employment counselor or specialist at another location other than your office, such as a department of labor, a workforce development office or a contractor's office.

YES ..... 01  
NO ..... 00  
DON'T KNOW ..... 98

H8. Thinking about the overall process of applying for food stamps for all the types of cases your workers handle, what changes could be made to your office procedures and policies that would increase the number of eligible households who complete the food stamp application process?  
PROBE: Anything else?

RESPONDENT PROVIDES AN ANSWER [SPECIFY] ..... 01

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NONE ..... 00  
DON'T KNOW ..... 98

**I. HOME VISITS FOR FRONT-END FRAUD INVESTIGATIONS**

The next questions ask about fraud prevention activities.

11. Before determining eligibility for food stamps, does your office or a contractor ever conduct front-end fraud investigations using unscheduled home visits to the applicant’s residence?
- YES ..... 01
- NO ..... 00 [GO TO I4]
- DON’T KNOW ..... 98 [GO TO I4]
12. Do any of the following factors make it more likely that a household will receive a home visit as part of a front-end fraud investigation. Is it more likely if...
- |    |   | <u>YES</u> | <u>NO</u> | <u>DK</u>                 |
|----|---|------------|-----------|---------------------------|
| a. | A household has earned income?  | 01         | 00        | 98                        |
| b. | There is currently no earned income, but there is a history of work?            | 01         | 00        | 98                        |
| c. | There are non-citizens in the household?  | 01         | 00        | 98                        |
| d. | Are there other factors make it more likely an investigation will be conducted? | 01         | 00        | 98 [NO OR DK<br>GO TO I3] |
| e. | What are the other factors?   |            |           |                           |
- 
- 
- DON’T KNOW ..... 98
13. What is your best estimate for the proportion of front-end fraud investigations conducted among all food stamp applications submitted? Would you say these unscheduled home visits are conducted for:
- All, ..... 05
- At least one-half, but not all, ..... 04
- At least one-quarter but less than one-half of all applications, ..... 03
- At least 5 percent, but less than one-quarter of all applications, or ..... 02
- Less than 5 percent of all applications ..... 01
- DON’T KNOW ..... 98

I4.	Does your office fingerprint or finger image any food stamp applicants?	
	YES .....	01
	NO .....	00 [GO TO SECTION J]
	DON'T KNOW .....	98
I5.	For which group of clients do you fingerprint or finger image?	
	Only those also applying for TANF, .....	01
	All food stamp applicants, or .....	02
	Up to individual staff discretion .....	03
	OTHER GROUP [SPECIFY] .....	96
	<hr/>	
	DON'T KNOW .....	98

**J. MEDICAL EXPENSE DEDUCTION FOR THE ELDERLY OR DISABLED**

J1. Does your office usually provide assistance to elderly or disabled clients in documenting out-of-pocket medical expenses that they may be eligible to deduct?

YES ..... 01  
 NO ..... 00 [GO TO J3]  
 OTHER [SPECIFY] ..... 96

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DON'T KNOW ..... 98

J2. What type of assistance does your office provide? [CIRCLE ALL THAT APPLY]

SPECIAL WRITTEN INFORMATION PROVIDED AT THE OFFICE  
 WHEN ELDERLY OR DISABLED PERSONS APPLY ..... 01  
 CASEWORKERS REQUIRED TO PROVIDE SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONS ..... 02  
 REFERRALS TO OUTSIDE AGENCIES THAT HELP ELDERLY AND  
 DISABLED COMPILE NECESSARY DOCUMENTATION ..... 03  
 CASEWORKERS INSTRUCTED TO HELP THEM BY CONTACTING PROVIDERS  
 AND/OR PHARMACIES TO GET INFORMATION ON MEDICAL EXPENSES ..... 04  
 OTHER [SPECIFY] ..... 96

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DON'T KNOW ..... 98

J3. Have you used any of the following special methods to ensure your workers understand how to utilize the medical expense deduction? Have you:

	<u>YES</u>	<u>NO</u>	<u>DK</u>
Held any special training sessions for caseworkers within the last 3 years	01	00	98
Developed simplified written guides for workers	01	00	98
Anything else? [SPECIFY]	01	00	98

**K. SANCTIONS FOR VIOLATING TANF RULES**

The next set of questions is about food stamp benefit penalties that may be imposed on individuals participating in both the TANF and Food Stamp Programs. In these questions I will refer to these penalties as sanctions.

- K1. Does your office ever impose sanctions on food stamp benefits for violations of TANF work rules?
- YES ..... 01
- NO ..... 00 [GO TO K4]
- DON'T KNOW ..... 98 [GO TO K4]
- K2. If a head of household violates a TANF work requirement what is the maximum food stamp sanction that your office imposes? By maximum we mean the penalty you impose after repeated violations. Do you:
- Reduce food stamp benefits by a certain percentage ..... 01 [GO TO K3]
- Disqualify the noncompliant individual household member from receiving food stamps, or ..... 02
- Disqualify the whole household from receiving food stamps? ..... 03 [GO TO K2b]
- OTHER [SPECIFY] ..... 96
- 
- DON'T KNOW ..... 98 [GO TO K3]
- K2a. How long is the head of household removed from the food stamp unit?
- FOR A SET PERIOD OF TIME ..... 01 [GO TO K3]
- UNTIL SHE COMPLIES WITH THE TANF REQUIREMENT ..... 02 [GO TO K3]
- UNTIL SHE COMPLIES WITH THE TANF REQUIREMENT OR FORMALLY WITHDRAWS FROM TANF ..... 03 [GO TO K3]
- OTHER [SPECIFY] ..... 96
- 
- [GO TO K3]
- DON'T KNOW ..... 98 [GO TO K3]



K2b. Is the whole household disqualified

For the first violation of a TANF work requirement, ..... 01

For the second violation of a TANF work requirement, ..... 02

For a third or subsequent violation, or ..... 03

Under some other circumstance? [SPECIFY] ..... 96

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K3. Does your office ever impose a food stamp sanction (disqualification or reduction of benefits) for a violation of TANF work requirements if the household includes a child under age 6?

YES ..... 01

NO ..... 00

DON'T KNOW ..... 98

K4. Does your office impose sanctions on food stamp benefits for violations of TANF requirements other than TANF work requirements?  
 [NOTE TO INTERVIEWER IF THE RESPONDENT SAYS THE ONLY REASON THEY LOSE BENEFITS IS IF THEY DON'T COME IN FOR RECERTIFICATION OR REAPPLICATION THE ANSWER SHOULD BE CODED AS NO]

YES ..... 01

NO ..... 00 [GO TO K7]

DON'T KNOW ..... 98 [GO TO K7]

- K5. For which TANF rules? [CIRCLE ALL THAT APPLY]
- FAILURE TO COOPERATE WITH CHILD SUPPORT ..... 01
  - MINOR CHILD’S SCHOOL ATTENDANCE ..... 02
  - TEEN PARENT’S SCHOOL ATTENDANCE ..... 03
  - CHILD IMMUNIZATIONS ..... 04
  - FAILURE TO ATTEND SCHOOL CONFERENCES ..... 05
  - OTHER [SPECIFY] ..... 96
- 
- DON’T KNOW ..... 98

- K6. What is the maximum penalty imposed on households that have their food stamp benefits sanctioned due to noncompliance by head of household with TANF rules other than work requirements? By maximum we mean the penalty you impose after repeated violations. Do you:
- Reduce food stamp benefits by a certain percentage ..... 01 [GO TO K7]
  - Disqualify the noncompliant individual household member from receiving food stamps, or ..... 02
  - Disqualify the whole household from receiving food stamps ..... 03 [GO TO K6b]
  - OTHER [SPECIFY] ..... 96 [GO TO K7]
- 
- DON’T KNOW ..... 98 [GO TO K7]

- K6a. How long is the individual removed from the food stamp unit?
- FOR A SET PERIOD OF TIME ..... 01 [GO TO K7]
  - UNTIL SHE COMPLIES WITH THE TANF REQUIREMENT ..... 02 [GO TO K7]
  - UNTIL SHE COMPLIES WITH THE TANF REQUIREMENT OR FORMALLY WITHDRAWS FROM TANF ..... 03 [GO TO K7]
  - OTHER [SPECIFY] ..... 96
- 
- [GO TO K7]
- DON’T KNOW ..... 98 [GO TO K7]

K6b. Is the whole household disqualified

For the first occurrence of noncompliance, . . . . . 01

For the second occurrence of noncompliance, . . . . . 02

For a third or subsequent occurrence of noncompliance, or . . . . . 03

Under some other circumstance? [SPECIFY] . . . . . 96

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K7. The next set of questions asks about TANF cases where the cash assistance case is discontinued for violating TANF rules, but there is no comparable food stamp sanction.

Does your office ever close the TANF case for households not complying with TANF work requirements or other rules, not including periodic certification requirements?

YES . . . . . 01

NO . . . . . 00 [GO TO SECTION L]

DON'T KNOW . . . . . 98 [GO TO SECTION L]

K8. When a food stamp eligible household's TANF case is closed due to a sanction and it is during their food stamp certification period, which of following is office policy:

The household continues receiving food stamp benefits, adjusted if necessary, until their certification period ends, or . . . . . 01

The household's certification period is shortened . . . . . 02 [GO TO K10]

OTHER [SPECIFY] . . . . . 96

---

DON'T KNOW . . . . . 98 [GO TO K11]

K9. Does someone in the household

Have to come to the office to have their benefits recalculated or, ..... 01

Can the benefit levels usually be adjusted with information  
received by mail or over the phone, or ..... 02

Is no contact with the household usually necessary to recalculate  
the household's food stamp benefits ..... 03

OTHER [SPECIFY] ..... 96

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DON'T KNOW ..... 98

K10. Are there any special rules or procedures I have not covered that apply to the food stamp cases of  
households that have their TANF case closed for failure to comply with TANF rules?  
PROBE: Anything else?

YES [SPECIFY] ..... 01

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NO ..... 00

DON'T KNOW ..... 98

**L. TANF LEAVERS**

L1. The next set of questions asks what happens to food stamp cases when a household leaves TANF because an adult has gotten a job and your office is aware the client has become employed. If this household leaves TANF within its food stamp certification period which of the following usually occurs:

- Their food stamp case is kept open and you do not change the length of their food stamp certification period, ..... 01
- Their food stamp case is kept open, and you shorten their certification period to the one used for non-TANF households with earned income ..... 02 [GO TO L4]
- Their food stamp case is shortened to the end of the next month, or ..... 03 [GO TO L4]
- Their food stamp case is automatically closed ..... 04 [GO TO L4]
- OTHER [SPECIFY] ..... 96

---

DON'T KNOW ..... 98

L2. If no new information is in the case file on the household's changed income, does someone in the household usually

- Have to come to the office to have their benefits recalculated or, ..... 01
- Can the benefit levels usually be adjusted with information received by mail or over the phone ..... 02
- OTHER [SPECIFY] ..... 96

---

DON'T KNOW ..... 98

L3. If your office has information in the case file on the income being received as a result of the job

- Do they still have to come in, or ..... 01 [GO TO L5]
- Can you usually use the available information to redetermine their benefits ... 02 [GO TO L5]
- DON'T KNOW ..... 98 [GO TO L5]

L4. When these clients leave TANF, do you routinely notify them that they may still be eligible for food stamps and need to either recertify or reapply for food stamps?

YES ..... 01  
 NO ..... 00  
 DON'T KNOW ..... 98

L5. The next set of questions is about your office policies for processing the food stamp case of a household who voluntarily leaves TANF not due to employment. If this household leaves TANF within its food stamp certification period which of the following usually occurs:

Their food stamp case is kept open and you do not change the length of their food stamp certification period, ..... 01  
 Their food stamp certification period is shortened to the one for non-TANF households, ..... 02  
 Their food stamp certification period is shortened to the end of the next month, or ..... 03 [GO TO L7]  
 Their food stamp case is automatically closed, or ..... 04 [GO TO L7]  
 OTHER [SPECIFY] ..... 96

---

DON'T KNOW ..... 98

L6. Does someone in the household usually

Have to come to the office to have their benefits recalculated, ..... 01 [GO TO L8]  
 Can the benefit levels usually be adjusted with information received by mail or over the phone, or ..... 02 [GO TO L8]  
 Is no contact with the household usually necessary to recalculate the household's food stamp benefits ..... 03 [GO TO L8]  
 OTHER [SPECIFY] ..... 96 [GO TO L8]

---

DON'T KNOW ..... 98 [GO TO L8]

L7. When these clients leave TANF, do you routinely notify them that they may still be eligible for food stamps and need to either recertify or reapply for food stamps?

YES ..... 01

NO ..... 00

DON'T KNOW ..... 98

L8. The next set of questions is about your office policies for processing the food stamp case of a household who leaves TANF because of a State TANF time limit. If this household leaves TANF within its food stamp certification period which of the following usually occurs:

They continue receiving food stamp benefits until the food stamp certification period ends, ..... 01

Their food stamp certification period is shortened to the one for non-TANF households, ..... 02 [GO TO L10]

Their food stamp certification period is shortened to the end of the next month, or ..... 03 [GO TO L10]

Their food stamp case is closed ..... 04 [GO TO L10]

OTHER [SPECIFY] ..... 96

---

DON'T KNOW ..... 98

L9. Does someone in the household

Have to come to the office to have their benefits recalculated, ..... 01 [GO TO L11]

Can the benefit levels usually be adjusted with information received by mail or over the phone, or ..... 02 [GO TO L11]

Is no contact with the household usually necessary to recalculate the household's food stamp benefits ..... 03 [GO TO L11]

OTHER [SPECIFY] ..... 96 [GO TO L11]

---

DON'T KNOW ..... 98 [GO TO L11]

L10. When these clients leave TANF, do you routinely notify them that they may still be eligible for food stamps and need to either recertify or reapply for food stamps?

YES ..... 01

NO ..... 00

DON'T KNOW ..... 98

L11. What changes could be made to your office's procedures that would increase the number of food stamp eligible individuals who continue to receive food stamps after leaving the TANF Program?  
[CIRCLE ALL THAT APPLY]  
PROBE: Anything else?

NEED TO CHANGE COMPUTER SYSTEM SO FOOD STAMP CASE DOES NOT  
AUTOMATICALLY CLOSE WHEN CLIENT LEAVES TANF ..... 01

FOLLOW-UP FOR TANF LEAVERS TO INFORM THEM ABOUT THE DIFFERENCES IN  
ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS BETWEEN TANF AND FOOD STAMPS ..... 02

PROVIDE BETTER INFORMATION AT APPLICATION ABOUT THE DIFFERENCES  
IN THE TWO PROGRAMS ..... 03

ENCOURAGE CLIENTS TO FIND OUT IF THEY CAN STILL GET FOOD STAMPS  
IF THEY GET A JOB OR DECIDE THEY DON'T WANT TANF ANYMORE ..... 04

CHANGE COMPUTER SYSTEM SO THAT IT IS EASY TO MAINTAIN THE  
HOUSEHOLD ON THE FOOD STAMP PROGRAM ..... 05

OTHER CHANGES [SPECIFY] ..... 96

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

NONE ..... 00

DON'T KNOW ..... 98



**M. NON-TANF PARTICIPATION REQUIREMENTS**

The next set of questions asks about food stamp employment & training requirements that apply to clients who utilize your office.

- M1. Is there a Food Stamp Employment and Training Program available for your clients?
- YES ..... 01
- NO ..... 00 [GO TO M7]
- DON'T KNOW ..... 98 [GO TO M7]
- M2. Does this program serve
- Only able-bodied adults without dependents (ABAWDs) ages 18-50 ..... 01 [GO TO M5]
- Only non-ABAWDs, or ..... 02
- Both ABAWDs and non-ABAWDs ..... 03
- DON'T KNOW ..... 98 [GO TO M5]
- M3. Are any non-ABAWDs required to participate in an E&T component as a condition of eligibility?
- YES ..... 01
- NO ..... 00 [GO TO M5]
- DON'T KNOW ..... 98
- M4. Does the E&T requirement for non-ABAWDs involve activities other than job search or job search training?
- YES ..... 01
- NO ..... 02
- DON'T KNOW ..... 98
- M5. Where are the staff located who are responsible for placing your food stamp E&T clients in a particular component? Are they in the same building as you or at another location?
- SAME BUILDING ..... 01
- ANOTHER LOCATION ..... 02
- DON'T KNOW ..... 98
- M6. If the individual who is the head of a non-TANF household fails to comply with food stamp E&T requirements do you disqualify

	The individual, or .....	01	
	The whole household .....	02	
	DON'T KNOW .....	98	
M7.	Are non-TANF food stamp households <u>ever</u> sanctioned for failure to cooperate with the child support agency?		
	YES .....	01	
	NO .....	00	[GO TO SECTION N]
	DON'T KNOW .....	98	[GO TO SECTION N]
M8.	Which type of non-TANF parents are sanctioned for failure to cooperate with child support. Is it:		
	Custodial parents in food stamp households .....	01	
	Non-custodial parents in food stamp households, or .....	02	
	Both? .....	03	
	DON'T KNOW .....	98	



N2cc. How often are these participants required to submit periodic reports?

Monthly, or .....	01
Quarterly? .....	02
OTHER [SPECIFY] .....	96
<hr/>	
DON'T KNOW .....	98

	<u>YES</u>	<u>NO</u>	<u>DK</u>	
N2d. Any other households at caseworker's discretion? [SPECIFY]	01	00	98	[IF NO OR DK GO TO N3]

N2dd. How often are these participants required to submit periodic reports?

Monthly, or .....	01
Quarterly? .....	02
OTHER [SPECIFY] .....	96
<hr/>	
DON'T KNOW .....	98

N3. If a participant fails to submit a periodic report at the required deadline, is he or she

Sent a notice to submit report within set number of days, .....	01
given an extended deadline without notice, or .....	02
is the case automatically closed? .....	03
OTHER [SPECIFY] .....	96
<hr/>	
DON'T KNOW .....	98

N4.	If a participant sends in the periodic report by the required deadline, but it is incomplete, is he or she	
	Sent a notice to submit report within set number of days . . . . .	01
	given an extended deadline without notice, or . . . . .	02
	is the case automatically closed? . . . . .	03
	OTHER [SPECIFY] . . . . .	96
<hr/>		
	DON'T KNOW . . . . .	98
N5.	In a typical month, what percentage of your worker's clients who are required to submit periodic reports have their food stamp case closed because they fail to meet the reporting requirements?	
	At least three-quarters, . . . . .	05
	At least one-half, but less than three-quarters, . . . . .	04
	At least one-quarter, but less than one-half . . . . .	03
	At least 5 percent, but less than one-quarter, or . . . . .	02
	At least one, but less than 5 percent . . . . .	01
	None . . . . .	00
	DON'T KNOW . . . . .	98

**O. RECERTIFICATIONS**

The next series of questions asks about the food stamp certification periods and processes at your office for different groups of clients.

O1. How long is the usual food stamp certification period for households with only elderly and disabled adult recipients?

\_\_\_\_\_ NUMBER OF MONTHS

DON'T KNOW ..... 98

O2. For these households, are in-person interviews at the office (individual or group) required for every food stamp recertification?

YES ..... 01 [GO TO O3]

NO ..... 02

DON'T KNOW ..... 98 [GO TO O3]

O2a. How often is an in-person recertification interview at the office required?

EVERY \_\_\_\_\_ MONTHS

O2b. When an in-person interview is not required, do these clients only have to mail in forms or do they mail in forms and then have a follow-up telephone interview?

MAIL IN FORMS ONLY ..... 01

MAIL IN FORMS THEN A FOLLOW-UP TELEPHONE INTERVIEW ..... 02

DON'T KNOW ..... 98

O3. How long is the usual food stamp certification period for households that include an able-bodied adult without dependents, or ABAWD, subject to the time limit?

\_\_\_\_\_ NUMBER OF MONTHS

DON'T KNOW ..... 98

O4. Are in-person interviews (individual or group) at the office required for every food stamp recertification for ABAWDs subject to the time limit?

YES ..... 01 [GO TO O5]

NO ..... 02

DON'T KNOW ..... 98 [GO TO O5]

O4a.	How often is an in-person recertification interview at the office required?		
	EVERY _____ MONTHS		
	DON'T KNOW .....		98
O4b.	When an in-person interview is not required, do these clients only have to mail in forms or do they mail in forms and then have a follow-up telephone interview?		
	MAIL IN FORMS ONLY .....		01
	MAIL IN FORMS THEN A FOLLOW-UP TELEPHONE INTERVIEW .....		02
	DON'T KNOW .....		98
O5.	Now let's turn to non-TANF households with earned income. How long is the <u>usual</u> food stamp certification period for non-TANF households with earned income?		
	_____ NUMBER OF MONTHS		
	DON'T KNOW .....		98
O6.	Are <u>in-person</u> interviews (individual or group) at the office required for <u>every</u> food stamp recertification for non-TANF households with earned income?		
	YES .....	01	[GO TO O7]
	NO .....	02	
	DON'T KNOW .....	98	[GO TO O7]
O6a.	How often is an in-person recertification interview at the office required?		
	EVERY _____ MONTHS		
	DON'T KNOW .....		98
O6b.	When an in-person interview is not required, do these clients only have to mail in forms or do they mail in forms and then have a follow-up telephone interview?		
	MAIL IN FORMS ONLY .....		01
	MAIL IN FORMS THEN A FOLLOW-UP TELEPHONE INTERVIEW .....		02
	DON'T KNOW .....		98

- O7. How long is the usual food stamp certification period for TANF households without earned income?
- \_\_\_\_\_ NUMBER OF MONTHS
- DON'T KNOW ..... 98
- O8. Are in-person interviews (individual or group) at the office required for every food stamp recertification for TANF households without earned income?
- YES ..... 01 [GO TO O9]
- NO ..... 02
- DON'T KNOW ..... 98 [GO TO O9]
- O8a. How often is an in-person recertification interview at the office required?
- EVERY \_\_\_\_\_ MONTHS
- DON'T KNOW ..... 98
- O8b. When an in-person interview is not required, do these clients only have to mail in forms or do they mail in forms and then have a follow-up telephone interview?
- MAIL IN FORMS ONLY ..... 01
- MAIL IN FORMS THEN A FOLLOW-UP TELEPHONE INTERVIEW ..... 02
- O9. How long is the usual food stamp certification period for households receiving TANF who do have earned income?
- \_\_\_\_\_ NUMBER OF MONTHS
- DON'T KNOW ..... 98
- O10. Are in-person interviews (individual or group) at the office required for every food stamp recertification for TANF households with earned income?
- YES ..... 01 [GO TO O11]
- NO ..... 02
- DON'T KNOW ..... 98 [GO TO O11]



O10a. How often is an in-person recertification interview at the office required?

EVERY \_\_\_\_\_ MONTHS

DON'T KNOW ..... 98

O10b. When an in-person interview is not required, do these clients only have to mail in forms or do they mail in forms and then have a follow-up telephone interview?

MAIL IN FORMS ONLY ..... 01

MAIL IN FORMS THEN A FOLLOW-UP TELEPHONE INTERVIEW ..... 02

DON'T KNOW ..... 98

O11. When households are usually required to have an in-person recertification interview, do your staff routinely offer telephone interviews or home interviews to persons with hardships?

YES ..... 01

NO ..... 00 [GO TO O12]]

DON'T KNOW ..... 98 [GO TO O12]

O11a. For which groups are telephone interviews or in-home interviews routinely offered? [CIRCLE ALL THAT APPLY]

HOUSEHOLDS WITH ONLY ELDERLY INDIVIDUALS ..... 01

HOUSEHOLDS WITH ONLY DISABLED INDIVIDUALS ..... 02

TANF HOUSEHOLDS ..... 03

HOUSEHOLDS LACKING ACCESS TO TRANSPORTATION ..... 04

HOUSEHOLDS WITH EARNINGS OR OTHER WORK RELATED COMMITMENTS THAT POSE A BARRIER TO COMING INTO THE OFFICE ..... 05

OTHER [SPECIFY] ..... 96

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DON'T KNOW ..... 98

O12. How many days or weeks before a recertification period requiring an in-person interview is over are clients notified in writing that they must complete a recertification?

\_\_\_\_\_ NUMBER OF DAYS

\_\_\_\_\_ NUMBER OF WEEKS

DON'T KNOW ..... 98

O13. For TANF clients, are TANF redeterminations and food stamp recertifications usually completed during the same interview?

YES ..... 01

NO ..... 00

DON'T KNOW ..... 98

**P. ACCESS PERCEPTION QUESTIONS**

The next set of questions asks for your opinions on a variety of issues.

I am going to read a series of statements, please tell me whether you strongly agree, agree, disagree or strongly disagree with each one.

P1. Being on food stamps encourages dependency.

STRONGLY AGREE ..... 01

AGREE ..... 02

DISAGREE ..... 03

STRONGLY DISAGREE ..... 04

DON'T KNOW ..... 98

P2. The size of the caseloads for my workers are very large, making it difficult for them to help people as much as they should.

STRONGLY AGREE ..... 01

AGREE ..... 02

DISAGREE ..... 03

STRONGLY DISAGREE ..... 04

DON'T KNOW ..... 98

P3. People who leave the TANF rolls often leave the Food Stamp Program without us knowing whether they are still eligible for food stamps.

STRONGLY AGREE ..... 01

AGREE ..... 02

DISAGREE ..... 03

STRONGLY DISAGREE ..... 04

DON'T KNOW ..... 98

P4.	People who leave TANF and are potentially eligible for food stamps should be actively encouraged to apply for food stamps.	
	STRONGLY AGREE .....	01
	AGREE .....	02
	DISAGREE .....	03
	STRONGLY DISAGREE .....	04
	DON'T KNOW .....	98
P5.	The food stamp eligibility rules for legal immigrants are difficult for my staff to implement.	
	STRONGLY AGREE .....	01
	AGREE .....	02
	DISAGREE .....	03
	STRONGLY DISAGREE .....	04
	DON'T KNOW .....	98
P6.	Immigrants should not get food stamps until they become citizens.	
	STRONGLY AGREE .....	01
	AGREE .....	02
	DISAGREE .....	03
	STRONGLY DISAGREE .....	04
	DON'T KNOW .....	98
P7.	The set-up of our computer generated notices sometimes results in people losing food stamp benefits they are eligible for.	
	STRONGLY AGREE .....	01
	AGREE .....	02
	DISAGREE .....	03
	STRONGLY DISAGREE .....	04
	DON'T KNOW .....	98

P8.	Our office actively discourages clients from becoming TANF recipients.		
	STRONGLY AGREE .....	01	
	AGREE .....	02	
	DISAGREE .....	03	
	STRONGLY DISAGREE .....	04	
	DON'T KNOW .....	98	
P9.	It is hard for clients who work to do what needs to be done <u>to apply</u> for food stamps.		
	STRONGLY AGREE .....	01	
	AGREE .....	02	
	DISAGREE .....	03	
	STRONGLY DISAGREE .....	04	
	DON'T KNOW .....	98	
P10.	It is hard for working food stamp clients to do what is required <u>to stay</u> on the Food Stamp Program.		
	STRONGLY AGREE .....	01	
	AGREE .....	02	
	DISAGREE .....	03	
	STRONGLY DISAGREE .....	04	
	DON'T KNOW .....	98	
P11.	In the past few years it has become more difficult for eligible people to get on the Food Stamp Program.		
	STRONGLY AGREE .....	01	
	AGREE .....	02	
	DISAGREE .....	03	[GO TO P14]
	STRONGLY DISAGREE .....	04	[GO TO P14]
	DON'T KNOW .....	98	[GO TO P14]

P12. For which groups of people do you think it has become more difficult to get food stamps in recent years? [CIRCLE ALL THAT APPLY]

ALL GROUPS ..... 01

THE WORKING POOR ..... 02

FAMILIES WITH CHILDREN ..... 03

THE ELDERLY ..... 04

ADULTS WITHOUT CHILDREN ..... 05

OTHER [SPECIFY] ..... 96

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DON'T KNOW ..... 98

P13. What do you think are the most important reasons that it has become more difficult for people to get food stamps in recent years?

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P14. Is there any policy or procedure that your office has implemented, that we have not already covered in our survey, to improve access to the Food Stamp Program for any specific groups or for the eligible population in general?

YES ..... 01

NO ..... 02 [ GO TO SECTION Q]

DON'T KNOW ..... 98

P15. Please briefly describe this policy and its purpose.

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**Q. RESPONDENT DEMOGRAPHICS**

Finally I have a few questions about you. These questions will just be used to group your responses with people with similar characteristics.

- Q1. [RECORD WITHOUT ASKING] RESPONDENT IS
- FEMALE ..... 01
- MALE ..... 02
- Q2. How old are you? \_\_\_\_\_ YEARS
- Q3. What is the highest level of education you have completed?
- GED ..... 01
- HIGH SCHOOL DIPLOMA ..... 02
- SOME COLLEGE ..... 03
- ASSOCIATE’S DEGREE ..... 04
- BACHELOR’S DEGREE ..... 05
- GRADUATE DEGREE ..... 06
- VOCATIONAL SCHOOL ..... 07
- Q4. What year did you begin working in this office as a caseworker or supervisor responsible for food stamp cases? .....
- Q5. Have you worked in another office as a caseworker or supervisor responsible for food stamp cases?
- YES ..... 01
- NO ..... 00 [GO TO CLOSING]
- Q6. What year did you first work as a caseworker or supervisor responsible for food stamp cases? .....

**CLOSING**

Thank you for participating in the survey. We appreciate that you took time out from your schedule to answer our questions.

TIME INTERVIEW COMPLETED:

|\_|\_|\_|:|\_|\_|\_|

AM...01  
PM....02

# SURVEY OF FOOD STAMP PROGRAM PROCESSES

## CASEWORKER SURVEY

Prepared for:

Economic Research Service  
U.S. Department of Agriculture  
Washington, DC

Prepared by:

Health Systems Research, Inc.  
Washington, DC  
Under Subcontract with Abt Associates

January 9, 2000



## INTRODUCTION

Thank you for taking time out of your busy schedule to participate in this survey of Food Stamp Program processes.

My name is \_\_\_\_\_ and I am with Health Systems Research in Washington, D.C. We are conducting this survey with local offices in 40 States around the country to find out about how people learn about the Food Stamp Program, the different ways they become food stamp participants, and what happens once they begin to participate in the program. The results of this survey will be included in a study for the U.S. Department of Agriculture, with Abt Associates as the lead research organization.

We received your name and general job description from a list provided by your office director. You were randomly selected from this list based on your responsibilities for particular types of food stamp cases. We are interested in how you do your job and what you think.

Your responses to this survey will be kept completely confidential. Your name and office will not be identified with any answers you give. Your answers to the questions will be grouped with other offices around the country and no information will be published on responses that could identify particular individuals or particular offices.

The Office of Management and Budget control number for this information collection is 0536-0053.

INTERVIEWER PROVIDE A DIFFERENT LENGTH OF INTERVIEW ESTIMATE IF YOU EXPECT IT TO BE DIFFERENT BECAUSE OF THE NUMBER OF QUESTIONS YOU NEED TO ASK.

This survey will take about 45 minutes to complete. Do you have any questions before we begin?



**A. CASEWORKER RESPONSIBILITIES**

INTERVIEWER: A1 AND A2 WILL NEED TO HAVE BEEN FILLED OUT BEFORE YOU BEGIN AN INTERVIEW. (EXCEPT WHERE NOTED, MORE THAN ONE CHOICE CAN BE CHECKED).

I would like to begin by confirming information we obtained from your office director.

A1. Our information indicates that you serve the following types of clients: [READ CHECKED RESPONSES]

- TANF food stamp cases
- Non-TANF food stamp cases
- Elderly food stamp cases
- Food stamp cases for disabled individuals
- Food stamp cases for Able-bodied Adults Without Dependents or ABAWDs
- You are responsible for all types of food stamp clients

A1a. Is this correct?

- YES ..... 01 [GO TO A2]
- NO ..... 00

A1b. What kind of food stamp clients do you serve?

- TANF food stamp cases
- Non-TANF food stamp cases
- Elderly food stamp cases
- Food stamp cases for disabled individuals
- Food stamp cases for able-bodied Adults Without Dependents or ABAWDs
- I serve all types of food stamp clients

A2. Our information also indicates that you are responsible for the following parts of the food stamp process. [READ CHECKED RESPONSES- RESPONSES SHOULD BE CHECKED FOR ONLY ONE OF THE FOUR OPTIONS BELOW]

- 1. \_\_\_\_\_ Application and eligibility, and ongoing and recertification for all the types of cases I just listed
- 2. \_\_\_\_\_ Only application and eligibility for the types of cases I've just listed
- 3. \_\_\_\_\_ Only ongoing and recertification for the types of cases I've just listed
- 4. \_\_\_\_\_ Application and eligibility for \_\_\_ TANF food stamp cases, \_\_\_ Non-TANF food stamp cases, \_\_\_ Food stamp cases for able-bodied adults without dependents (ABAWDs), \_\_\_ Elderly food stamp cases, \_\_\_ Disabled food stamp cases

(And) Ongoing and recertification for \_\_\_ TANF food stamp cases, \_\_\_ Non-TANF food stamp cases, \_\_\_ Food stamp cases for able-bodied adults without dependents (ABAWDs), \_\_\_ Elderly food stamp cases, \_\_\_ Disabled food stamp cases

A2a. Is this correct?

YES ..... 01  
[IF RESPONSE TO A1a and A2a=YES, GO TO A4, IF A1a=NO, GO TO A3 AND FOLLOW INSTRUCTIONS]

NO ..... 00

A2b. What part of the Food Stamp Program process are you responsible for and for which types of clients?

- 1. \_\_\_\_\_ Application or eligibility and ongoing or recertification for all the types of food stamp cases I just listed;
- 2. \_\_\_\_\_ Only application and eligibility for all the types of food stamp cases I've just listed;
- 3. \_\_\_\_\_ Only ongoing or recertification for all the types of food stamp cases I've just listed; or
- 4. \_\_\_\_\_ Application and Eligibility for \_\_\_ TANF food stamp cases, \_\_\_ Non-TANF food stamp cases, \_\_\_ Able-bodied Adults Without Dependents (ABAWDs) food stamp cases, \_\_\_ Elderly food stamp cases, \_\_\_ Food stamp cases for disabled individuals

(And) Ongoing or recertification for \_\_\_ TANF food stamp cases, \_\_\_ Non-TANF food stamp cases, \_\_\_ Able-bodied Adults Without Dependents or ABAWDs food stamp cases, \_\_\_ Elderly food stamp cases, \_\_\_ Food stamp cases for disabled individuals

- A3. INTERVIEWER: IF THE INFORMATION ON RESPONSIBILITIES WAS RECORDED CORRECTLY OR IF THE CASEWORKER HAS RESPONSIBILITY FOR MORE TYPES OF CASES OR PARTS OF CASES THAN CHECKED IN A1 AND A2 PROCEED TO A4 AND CONTINUE THE INTERVIEW.  
 IF THE WORKER INDICATES THEY ARE NOT RESPONSIBLE FOR THE TYPES OF CASES CHECKED THAN YOU WILL NEED TO READ THE STATEMENT BELOW.

We appear to have recorded incorrect information regarding your responsibilities. I apologize, but I will need to obtain the correct information and determine whether you are the person who should have been selected for this interview. I will either call you back and reschedule or make sure that you are informed that we will need to select another caseworker. When would be a good time to call you back?

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**END SURVEY HERE FOR RESPONDENTS TO A3**

- A4. What other programs, in addition to food stamps, do you personally provide services for?
- |                                |    |
|--------------------------------|----|
| NONE .....                     | 00 |
| TANF .....                     | 01 |
| MEDICAID .....                 | 02 |
| SCHIP .....                    | 03 |
| CHILD CARE .....               | 04 |
| GENERAL ASSISTANCE .....       | 05 |
| ASSISTANCE FOR REFUGEES .....  | 06 |
| STATE MEDICAL ASSISTANCE ..... | 07 |
| OTHER [SPECIFY] .....          | 96 |

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Now, I am going to ask you about a variety of policies and practices in your office. There are no right or wrong answers on this survey. We want to know how you do your job. When I ask the questions, I am trying to find out what you usually do, in most cases, not what you do with all clients.

If you do not know the answer to any question, please feel free to say so.

**B. THE APPLICATION PROCESS**

The next set of questions concerns the application process and eligibility determination.

B1. Is the form used for food stamp applications a combined application form for people who are applying for multiple programs?

- YES ..... 01
- NO ..... 00 [GO TO B3]
- DON'T KNOW ..... 98 [GO TO B3]

B2. Which other programs use the same form? [CIRCLE ALL THAT APPLY]

- TANF ..... 01
- MEDICAID ..... 02
- SCHIP ..... 03
- GENERAL ASSISTANCE ..... 04
- CHILD CARE ASSISTANCE ..... 05
- OTHER [SPECIFY] ..... 96

---

DON'T KNOW ..... 98

B3. Does an applicant for TANF and food stamps usually receive the food stamp application to sign and date before they see you for an eligibility interview or sign and date it during the interview with you?

- BEFORE THEY HAVE THE ELIGIBILITY INTERVIEW ..... 01
- DURING THE ELIGIBILITY INTERVIEW ..... 02
- OTHER [SPECIFY] ..... 96

---

DON'T KNOW ..... 98

- B4. On the first day that they come into your office to apply, do applicants for both food stamps and TANF usually complete all the required steps for food stamps and have the food stamp eligibility interview that day?
- YES ..... 01 [GO TO B6]
- NO ..... 00
- DON'T KNOW ..... 98
- B5. How many visits does a person applying for TANF and food stamps usually make to the office before they complete all the steps in the food stamp eligibility process, not including any visits they make just to drop off verification paperwork?
- \_\_\_\_\_ NUMBER OF VISITS
- DON'T KNOW ..... 98
- B6. Does a client coming in asking for food stamps and not TANF usually receive the food stamp application to sign and date before they see you for an eligibility interview or sign and date it during the interview with you?
- BEFORE THEY HAVE THE ELIGIBILITY INTERVIEW ..... 01
- DURING THE ELIGIBILITY INTERVIEW ..... 02
- OTHER [SPECIFY] ..... 96
- 
- DON'T KNOW ..... 98
- B7. On the first day that they come into your office to apply, do applicants for food stamps, who are not also applying for TANF, usually complete all the required steps for food stamps and have the food stamp eligibility interview that day?
- YES ..... 01 [GO TO B9]
- NO ..... 00
- DON'T KNOW ..... 98
- B8. How many visits does a non-TANF food stamp applicant usually make to the office before they complete all the steps in the food stamp eligibility process, not including any visits they make just to drop off verification paperwork?
- \_\_\_\_\_ NUMBER OF VISITS
- DON'T KNOW ..... 98

B9. When a person has a food stamp eligibility interview (whether in person or otherwise), is this same interview also used for determining eligibility for other programs or for food stamps only?

USED FOR DETERMINING ELIG. FOR OTHER PROGRAMS . . . 01

USED FOR FOOD STAMP ELIGIBILITY DETERMINATION ONLY. . . . . 02 [GO TO SECTION C]

OTHER [SPECIFY] . . . . . 96

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DON'T KNOW . . . . . 98 [GO TO SECTION C]

B10. Which other programs? [CIRCLE ALL THAT APPLY]

TANF . . . . . 01

MEDICAID . . . . . 02

SCHIP . . . . . 03

GENERAL ASSISTANCE . . . . . 04

OTHER [SPECIFY] . . . . . 96

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DON'T KNOW . . . . . 98



**C. IN-PERSON, TELEPHONE AND AT HOME INTERVIEWS**

The next series of questions asks about the scheduling of eligibility interviews for food stamp applicants and about alternatives to in-person interviews.

C1. Do applicants usually:

Have appointments scheduled in advance for in person eligibility interviews, or .....	01
Do they need to come into the office and line up for an appointment .....	02 [GO TO C4]
OTHER [SPECIFY] .....	96

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DON'T KNOW ..... 98

C2. What do you usually do when an applicant has an appointment with you for an eligibility interview scheduled in advance and does not come in for that first appointment. Do you usually:

Automatically reschedule them for another interview appointment another day, .....	01
Notify them that they must schedule another interview, .....	02
Keep their case pending for a specific number of days to give them time to contact the office to reschedule an interview, or .....	03
Automatically deny the application? .....	04
OTHER [SPECIFY] .....	96

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DON'T KNOW ..... 98

C3. If someone comes in at least 30 minutes late for their food stamp appointment with you, do you usually

Rescheduled their appointment for that same day, or .....	01
Reschedule the appointment for another day .....	02
Automatically deny the application .....	03
DON'T KNOW .....	98

C4. Do you routinely offer telephone interviews or home interviews for persons with hardships?

YES ..... 01

NO ..... 00 [GO TO C6]

DON'T KNOW ..... 98

C5. For which groups are telephone interviews or in-home interviews routinely offered? [CIRCLE ALL THAT APPLY]  
 PROBE: ANYONE ELSE?

HOUSEHOLDS WITH ONLY ELDERLY INDIVIDUALS ..... 01

HOUSEHOLDS WITH ONLY DISABLED INDIVIDUALS ..... 02

TANF HOUSEHOLDS ..... 03

HOUSEHOLDS LACKING ACCESS TO TRANSPORTATION ..... 04

HOUSEHOLDS WITH EARNINGS OR OTHER WORK RELATED  
 COMMITMENTS THAT POSE A BARRIER TO COMING INTO THE OFFICE ..... 05

OTHER [SPECIFY] ..... 96

---

DON'T KNOW ..... 98

C6. What changes could be made to your office procedures and policies that would increase the number of eligible individuals who come in to initially apply for food stamps? [CIRCLE ALL THAT APPLY]  
 PROBE: Anything Else?

EARLIER WEEKDAY OPENING TIMES .....	01
LATER WEEKDAY CLOSING TIMES .....	02
ADD WEEKEND HOURS .....	03
MORE STAFF .....	04
MORE OFFICE LOCATIONS .....	05
OUTSTATION STAFF IN OTHER AGENCIES .....	06
MORE CONVENIENT OFFICE LOCATION .....	07
MORE/BETTER OUTREACH EFFORTS .....	08
BETTER RECEPTION AREA .....	09
BETTER COORDINATION WITH OTHER AGENCIES .....	10
OTHER [SPECIFY] .....	96

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NONE .....	00
DON'T KNOW .....	98

**D. TRANSPORTATION ISSUES**

This next set of questions are about the availability of public transportation to your office and the distance that clients have to travel.

D1. What would you say is the furthest any of your clients have to travel from their homes to your office?

- Less than one mile, ..... 01
- At least one, but less than five miles, ..... 02
- At least five, but less than ten miles, ..... 03
- At least ten, but less than twenty miles, or ..... 04
- more than twenty miles ..... 05
- DON'T KNOW ..... 98

D2. Is there public transportation available within ½ mile of your office?

- YES ..... 01
- NO ..... 00 [GO TO D4]
- DON'T KNOW ..... 98

D3. What would you estimate is the proportion of your clients who live in neighborhoods served by public transit routes that reach your office?

- All, ..... 05
- At least three-fourths but not all, ..... 04
- At least one-half but less than three-fourths, ..... 03
- At least one-fourth but less than one-half, ..... 02
- Less than one-fourth ..... 01
- DON'T KNOW ..... 98

D4. Does your agency offer transportation assistance to help individuals come to your office for applications or recertifications?

YES ..... 01

NO ..... 00 [GO TO SECTION E]

DON'T KNOW ..... 98 [GO TO SECTION E]

D5. For which clients is transportation assistance offered? [CIRCLE ALL THAT APPLY]

THE ELDERLY ..... 01

THE DISABLED ..... 02

HOMELESS CLIENTS ..... 03

CLIENTS IN RURAL OR OUTLYING AREAS ..... 04

TANF PARTICIPANTS ..... 05

ANYONE WHO REQUESTS IT ..... 06

OTHER [SPECIFY] ..... 96

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

DON'T KNOW ..... 98

D6. What type of transportation assistance is available?

CASH, VOUCHERS, OR TOKENS FOR PUBLIC TRANSIT ..... 01

FREE CAB RIDES ..... 02

VAN SERVICE ..... 03

OTHER [SPECIFY] ..... 96

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

DON'T KNOW ..... 98

**E. SERVICES AND PROCEDURES FOR PARTICULAR GROUPS OF CLIENTS**

Now I would like to ask you some questions about immigrant households who come in to apply for food stamps.

- E1. In a typical month do you normally see individuals seeking food stamp services who are immigrants?
- YES ..... 01
- NO ..... 00 [GO TO E6]
- DON'T KNOW ..... 98
- E2. Would you say that food stamp eligibility rules for immigrants are
- Very difficult to apply, ..... 01
- Somewhat difficult to apply, or ..... 02
- Not at all difficult to apply ..... 03
- DON'T KNOW ..... 98
- E3. Have you received any special training on how to conduct the food stamp eligibility determination for households where one or more of the applicants is not a U.S. citizen?
- YES ..... 01
- NO ..... 02
- DON'T KNOW ..... 98
- E4. Is it routine for you to tell adult immigrant clients who apply for food stamps and are not eligible that they may be able to receive food stamps for their children?
- YES ..... 01
- NO ..... 00
- DON'T KNOW ..... 98

E5.	If a legal immigrant appears ineligible because of when they entered the country do you	
	Tell them to complete an application, or .....	01
	Tell them not to bother applying .....	02
	OTHER [SPECIFY] .....	96
	_____	
	_____	
	DON'T KNOW .....	98
E6.	Now I want to ask you a few questions about Non-English speaking people who come to your office. In a typical month, do people who speak no or limited English come in to apply for food stamps?	
	YES .....	01
	NO .....	00 [GO TO SECTION F]
	DON'T KNOW .....	98
E7.	Are translators or bilingual caseworkers available in person or by telephone— to help such clients complete the application process?	
	YES .....	01
	NO .....	00
	DON'T KNOW .....	98

**F. TANF APPLICANTS**

The next set of questions concerns food stamp applicants who may also be eligible for or interested in applying for TANF benefits.

F1. Do you tell any individuals interested in applying for TANF that they must explore alternative resources such as help from community agencies or other assistance programs before they apply for TANF?

YES .....	01	
NO .....	00	[GO TO F5]
OTHER [SPECIFY] .....	96	

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DON'T KNOW .....	98	
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F2. Among all clients you see who come in interested in applying for TANF what portion are required to explore alternative resources before applying for the program? Would you say:

All, .....	05
At least than three-quarters but less than all of them, .....	04
At least one-half but less than three-quarters, .....	03
At least one-quarter but less than one-half, or .....	02
Less than one-quarter .....	01
DON'T KNOW .....	98

F3. When you talk to them about exploring alternative resources before applying for TANF, do you usually encourage them to apply for food stamps that day, discourage them from applying for food stamps, or not mention food stamps at all?

ENCOURAGE FOOD STAMP APPLICATION THAT DAY .....	01
DISCOURAGE FOOD STAMP APPLICATION .....	02
NOT MENTION FOOD STAMPS AT ALL .....	03
OTHER [SPECIFY] .....	96

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DON'T KNOW .....	98
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F4. What proportion of your clients who came in interested in applying for TANF and did not apply for TANF at that time because they were required to explore alternative resources, completed the food stamp application process and had their food stamp eligibility determined? Would you say:

More than three-quarters . . . . . 05

At least one-half but less than three-quarters, . . . . . 04

At least one-quarter but less than one-half, . . . . . 03

At least 5 percent, but less than one-quarter, or . . . . . 02

Less than 5 percent . . . . . 01

OTHER [SPECIFY] . . . . . 96

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DON'T KNOW . . . . . 98

F5. Do you offer lump sum cash payments, expense vouchers, or other payments to certain clients in return for them agreeing not to become TANF recipients?

YES . . . . . 01

NO . . . . . 00 [IF APPLICANT MUST EXPLORE ALTERNATIVE RESOURCES  
(F1 EQ 01) GO TO F9, ELSE GO TO F10]

DON'T KNOW . . . . . 98 [IF APPLICANT MUST EXPLORE ALTERNATIVE RESOURCES  
(F1 EQ 01) GO TO F9, ELSE GO TO F10]

F6. When you tell them about the rules for these available payments, do you usually encourage them to apply for food stamps, discourage them from applying for food stamps, or not mention food stamps at all?

ENCOURAGE FOOD STAMP APPLICATION . . . . . 01

DISCOURAGE FOOD STAMP APPLICATION . . . . . 02

NOT MENTION FOOD STAMPS AT ALL . . . . . 03

OTHER [SPECIFY] . . . . . 96

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DON'T KNOW . . . . . 98

- F7. In a typical month, what proportion of your clients who are interested in applying and would likely be income eligible for TANF, receive these payments instead of becoming TANF recipients?
- More than three-quarters, ..... 04
- At least one-half but less than three-quarters ..... 03
- At least one-quarter but less than one-half ..... 02
- At least one client, but less than one-quarter ..... 01
- None ..... 00 [GO TO F9]
- F8. Among your clients who accept this payment, what proportion would you estimate complete the food stamp application process and have their food stamp eligibility determined?
- More than three-quarters, ..... 05
- At least one-half but less than three-quarters, ..... 04
- At least one-quarter, but less than one-half, ..... 03
- At least 5 percent but less than one-quarter, or ..... 02
- Less than 5 percent ..... 01
- DON'T KNOW ..... 98
- F9. What changes could be made regarding how TANF applicants are told about [lump sum payments] [and] [about the requirement to explore alternative resources] that would result in more eligible clients receiving food stamp benefits?  
 PROBE: Anything Else?
- RESPONDENTS SUGGESTS CHANGES [SPECIFY] ..... 01
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- NONE ..... 00
- DON'T KNOW ..... 98

F10. Now I would like to ask you about job search requirements for TANF applicants. Do you require any TANF applicants to conduct a job search before their TANF application is approved?

- YES ..... 01
- NO ..... 00 [GO TO SECTION G]
- OTHER [SPECIFY] ..... 96

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DON'T KNOW ..... 98 [GO TO SECTION G]

F11. When you explain the job search requirement to them, do you encourage them to complete their food stamp application, discourage them from applying for food stamps, or not mention food stamps at all?

- ENCOURAGE THEM TO COMPLETE THEIR FOOD STAMP APPLICATION ..... 01
- DISCOURAGE FOOD STAMP APPLICATION ..... 02
- NOT MENTION FOOD STAMPS AT ALL ..... 03
- OTHER [SPECIFY] ..... 96

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DON'T KNOW ..... 98

F12. In a typical month, what proportion of TANF applicants are required to conduct job search before their TANF application can be approved?

- All ..... 05
- At least three-quarters, but not all ..... 04
- At least one-half, but less than three-quarters ..... 03
- At least one-quarter, but less than one-half ..... 02
- Less than one-quarter ..... 01
- DON'T KNOW ..... 98

F13. For your clients who are required to conduct a job search do you routinely verify their job contacts by getting in touch with the employers they say they contacted?

YES ..... 01

NO ..... 00

OTHER [SPECIFY] ..... 96

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DON'T KNOW ..... 98

F14. What proportion of those who you require to conduct an applicant job search for TANF would you estimate complete the food stamp application process and have their food stamp eligibility determined?

More than three-quarters, ..... 05

At least one-half but less than three-quarters ..... 04

At least one-quarter but less than one-half ..... 03

At least 5 percent, but less than one-quarter, or ..... 02

Less than 5 percent ..... 01

DON'T KNOW ..... 98

**G. NON-TANF FOOD STAMP JOB SEARCH REQUIREMENTS**

The next set of questions is about requirements for non-TANF food stamp clients.

- G1. Do you and your office require any non-TANF food stamp applicants to conduct a job search or attend job search classes or workshops before their eligibility for food stamps can be determined?
- YES ..... 01
- NO ..... 00 [GO TO G4]
- DON'T KNOW ..... 98 [GO TO G4]
- G2. For clients required to conduct job search, do you usually verify their job contacts by getting in touch with the employers they say they contacted?
- YES ..... 01
- NO ..... 00
- OTHER [SPECIFY] ..... 96
- 
- DON'T KNOW ..... 98
- G3. Among your cases required to conduct job search activities before being approved for food stamps what proportion would you say come back, complete the food stamp application process and have their food stamp eligibility determined?
- More than three-quarters, ..... 04
- At least one-half but less than three-quarters, ..... 03
- At least one-quarter but less than one-half, ..... 02
- At least one but less than one-quarter, or ..... 01
- None ..... 00
- DON'T KNOW ..... 98

G4. Thinking about the overall process of applying for food stamps, for all the types of cases you handle, what changes could be made to your office procedures and policies that would increase the number of eligible households who complete the food stamp application process?  
PROBE: Anything Else?

RESPONDENT PROVIDED AN ANSWER [SPECIFY] ..... 01

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NONE ..... 00

DON'T KNOW ..... 98

**H. VERIFICATION REQUIREMENTS**

H1. The next set of questions concerns verification requirements for information provided during the food stamp application process for your food stamp applicants who are also applying for TANF.

In order to verify household income, do you usually require food stamp applicants to have a special form completed by their employer or past employer?

- YES ..... 01
- NO ..... 00
- DON'T KNOW ..... 98

H2. As a routine practice, do you usually directly contact a food stamp applicant's employer to verify earned income?

- YES ..... 01
- NO ..... 00
- DON'T KNOW ..... 98

H3. In order to verify household circumstances, such as an address or the number of people in the household, do you usually require food stamp applicants to have a special form completed by a third party ?

- YES ..... 01
- NO ..... 02
- DON'T KNOW ..... 98

H4. As a routine practice, do you usually directly contact a third party to verify an applicant's household circumstances?

- YES ..... 01
- NO ..... 02
- DON'T KNOW ..... 98

H5. To verify shelter costs, do you usually require food stamp applicants to have a special form completed by their landlord and/or another third party?

- YES ..... 01
- NO ..... 02
- DON'T KNOW ..... 98

H6.	As a routine practice, do you usually <u>directly contact</u> a food stamp applicant’s landlord or another third party to verify their shelter costs?	
	YES .....	01
	NO .....	00
	DON’T KNOW .....	98
H7.	Do your non-TANF food stamp applicants have the same verification requirements as those just described for TANF food stamp applicants or are they different?	
	THE SAME .....	01 [GO TO H14]
	DIFFERENT .....	02
H8.	The next set of questions concerns verification requirements for information provided during the food stamp application process for your non-TANF food stamp applicants. In order to verify household income, do you usually require food stamp applicants <u>to have a special form completed by their employer or past employer?</u>	
	YES .....	01
	NO .....	00
	DON’T KNOW .....	98
H9.	As a routine practice, do you usually <u>directly contact</u> a food stamp applicant’s employer to verify earned income?	
	YES .....	01
	NO .....	00
	DON’T KNOW .....	98
H10.	In order to verify household circumstances, such as an address or the number of people in the household, do you usually require food stamp applicants <u>to have a special form completed by a third party ?</u>	
	YES .....	01
	NO .....	02
	DON’T KNOW .....	98



H11.	As a routine practice, do you usually <u>directly contact</u> a third party to verify an applicant’s household circumstances?		
	YES .....	01	
	NO .....	02	
	DON’T KNOW .....	98	
H12.	To verify shelter costs, do you usually require food stamp applicants <u>to have a special form completed</u> by their landlord and/or another third party?		
	YES .....	01	
	NO .....	02	
	DON’T KNOW .....	98	
H13.	As a routine practice, do you usually <u>directly contact</u> a food stamp applicant’s landlord or another third party to verify their shelter costs?		
	YES .....	01	
	NO .....	00	
	DON’T KNOW .....	98	
H14.	Are there items in addition to those required for food stamps that a TANF applicant has to verify through third-party contacts before <u>TANF eligibility</u> can be determined?		
	YES .....	01	
	NO .....	00	[GO TO H16]
	DON’T KNOW .....	98	[GO TO H16]
H15.	What items are these? [CIRCLE ALL THAT APPLY]		
	COMPLIANCE WITH CHILD SUPPORT .....	01	
	CHILD IMMUNIZATIONS .....	02	
	CHILD’S SCHOOL ATTENDANCE .....	03	
	OWN SCHOOL ATTENDANCE IF A TEEN PARENT .....	04	
	OTHER [SPECIFY] .....	96	
	DON’T KNOW .....	98	

H16.	Do you routinely provide applicants with written instructions about the verification documentation they need?	
	YES .....	01
	NO .....	02
	DON'T KNOW .....	98
H17.	If one of your applicants has provided some of the needed documentation for determining food stamp eligibility but is still missing some items by the end of the 30 day processing period are they:	
	Notified that items are missing before their application is denied, or .....	01
	Is their application denied without notice .....	02
	DON'T KNOW .....	98

H18. What changes could be made to your office’s requirements and practices for verification requirements for the Food Stamp Program that would result in more eligible food stamp clients completing the application process? [CIRCLE ALL THAT APPLY]  
 PROBE: Anything Else?

VERIFY FEWER ITEMS .....	01
PROVIDE MORE ASSISTANCE TO CLIENTS IN OBTAINING VERIFICATION .....	02
PROVIDE CLEARER INFORMATION ON WHAT IS REQUIRED OF CLIENTS .....	03
PROVIDE ACCESS TO A COPIER .....	04
ACCEPT A WIDER RANGE OF DOCUMENTS OR MATERIAL FOR VERIFICATION PURPOSES .....	05
OTHER [SPECIFY] .....	96
_____	
_____	
_____	
_____	
_____	
_____	
NONE .....	00
DON’T KNOW .....	98

**I. MEDICAL EXPENSE DEDUCTION FOR THE ELDERLY OR DISABLED**

11. Do you provide elderly clients with written information or detailed verbal instructions describing what they need to do to claim the medical expense deduction for food stamps?

- YES ..... 01
- NO ..... 00
- DON'T KNOW ..... 98

12. Do you routinely provide any special additional assistance to elderly or disabled clients to help them compile the documentation needed to claim a medical expense deduction they may be eligible for?

- YES ..... 01
- NO ..... 00 [GO TO I3]
- DON'T KNOW ..... 98 [GO TO I3]

12a. What type of assistance do you provide? [CIRCLE ALL THAT APPLY]

- REFERRALS TO OUTSIDE AGENCIES THAT HELP ELDERLY AND  
DISABLED COMPILE NECESSARY DOCUMENTATION ..... 01
- REVIEW MEDICAL RECEIPTS ..... 02
- CALL MEDICAL PROVIDERS/PHARMACISTS DIRECTLY TO GET  
INFORMATION ON EXPENSES ..... 03
- OTHER [SPECIFY] ..... 96

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- DON'T KNOW ..... 98

13. Among all elderly or disabled applicants you see in a typical month, what percentage would you estimate claim the excess medical expense deduction?

More than 90 percent, .....	04
At least 50 percent but less than 90 percent, .....	03
At least 10 percent but less than 50 percent, .....	02
Less than 10 percent, but at least some, or .....	01
None .....	00
DON'T KNOW .....	98

**J. SANCTIONS FOR VIOLATING TANF RULES**

The next set of questions asks about cases where there might be food stamp penalties or “sanctions” for individuals participating in both the TANF and Food Stamp Programs.

J1. Do you ever impose any sanctions on food stamp benefits for violations of TANF work requirements? Here we do not mean freezing the food stamp benefit level, but rather additional cuts or disqualifications applied to the food stamp benefits.

YES ..... 01

NO ..... 00

DON'T KNOW ..... 98

J2. Do you ever impose sanctions on food stamp benefits for violations of TANF requirements other than TANF work requirements? [NOTE TO INTERVIEWER IF THE RESPONDENT SAYS THE ONLY REASON THEY LOSE FOOD STAMPS BENEFITS IS IF THEY DON'T COME IN FOR RECERTIFICATION OR REAPPLICATION THE ANSWER SHOULD BE CODED AS NO]

YES ..... 01

NO ..... 00 [IF J1 EQ YES (01) GO TO J4 ELSE GO TO J5]

DON'T KNOW ..... 98 [IF J1 EQ YES (01) GO TO J4 ELSE GO TO J5]

J3. For which TANF rules?

FAILURE TO COOPERATE WITH CHILD SUPPORT ..... 01

MINOR CHILD'S SCHOOL ATTENDANCE ..... 02

TEEN PARENT'S SCHOOL ATTENDANCE ..... 03

CHILD IMMUNIZATIONS ..... 04

FAILURE TO ATTEND SCHOOL CONFERENCES ..... 05

OTHER [SPECIFY] ..... 96

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DON'T KNOW ..... 98

- J4. In a typical month, what proportion of your TANF clients have their food stamps sanctioned for violations of TANF work or other behavioral rules, excluding periodic recertification requirements?
- Less than 10 percent, but at least one client . . . . . 01
- At least 10 percent, but less than 50 percent . . . . . 02
- At least 50 percent, but less than 90 percent . . . . . 03
- More than 90 percent . . . . . 04
- DON'T KNOW . . . . . 98
- J5. The next set of questions asks about TANF cases where the cash assistance case is closed for violating TANF rules.  
Have you ever closed a TANF case for not complying with TANF work requirements or other rules, not including periodic recertification requirements.
- YES . . . . . 01
- NO . . . . . 00 [GO TO SECTION K]
- DON'T KNOW . . . . . 98
- J6. When a food stamp eligible household's TANF case is closed because of a sanction during their food stamp certification period. Do you usually:
- Continue the household on food stamps until their certification period ends, . . . . . 01
- Shorten the household's food stamp certification period to the one used for non-TANF households, . . . . . 02
- Shorten the households's food stamp certification period to the end of next month, or do you . . . . . 03 [GO TO J9]
- Close the food stamp case . . . . . 04 [GO TO J8]
- OTHER [SPECIFY] . . . . . 96
- 
- DON'T KNOW . . . . . 98

- J7. Does someone in the household usually
- Have to come to the office to have their benefits recalculated, or . . . . . 01 [GO TO J9]
  - Can the benefit levels be adjusted with information received by mail or over the phone . . . . . 02 [GO TO J9]
  - DON'T KNOW . . . . . 98 [GO TO J9]
- J8. When a client's food stamp case is closed due to a TANF sanction, do you usually notify them that they may still be eligible for food stamps?
- YES . . . . . 01
  - NO . . . . . 00
  - DON'T KNOW . . . . . 98
- J9. Among the households you serve whose case is closed due to a sanction, what proportion would you estimate continue to receive food stamp benefits?
- More than three-quarters, . . . . . 04
  - At least one-half but less than three-quarters, . . . . . 03
  - At least one-quarter but less than one-half, or . . . . . 02
  - Less than one-quarter . . . . . 01
  - DON'T KNOW . . . . . 98
- J10. Are there any special procedures, that I have not already mentioned, that you apply to the food stamp cases of households that have their TANF case closed for failure to comply with TANF rules?
- YES [SPECIFY] . . . . . 01
  - \_\_\_\_\_
  - \_\_\_\_\_
  - \_\_\_\_\_
  - \_\_\_\_\_
  - NO . . . . . 00
  - DON'T KNOW . . . . . 98



**K. TANF LEAVERS**

The next set of questions asks what happens to food stamp cases when a household leaves TANF because an adult has gotten a job and your office is aware the client has become employed.

K1. If this household leaves TANF within its food stamp certification period, do you usually:

- Keep the food stamp case open and not change the length of the certification period, . . . . . 01
- Shorten the household’s certification period to the one used for non-TANF households with earned income, . . . . . 02
- Shorten the certification period to the end of next month, or . . . . . 03 [GO TO K4]
- Close the food stamp case . . . . . 04 [GO TO K4]
- OTHER [SPECIFY] . . . . . 96

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DON’T KNOW . . . . . 98

K2. If no new information is in the case file on the household’s changed income, does someone in the household usually

- Have to come to the office to have their benefits recalculated or, . . . . . 01
- Can the benefit levels usually be adjusted with information received by mail or over the phone . . . . . 02
- OTHER [SPECIFY] . . . . . 96

---

DON’T KNOW . . . . . 98

K3. If your office has information in the case file on the income being received as a result of the job

- Do they still have to come in, or . . . . . 01 [GO TO K5]
- Can you usually use the available information to redetermine their benefits . . . 02 [GO TO K5]
- DON’T KNOW . . . . . 98 [GO TO K5]

K4. When these clients leave TANF, do you routinely notify them that they may still be eligible for food stamps and need to either recertify or reapply for food stamps?

YES ..... 01

NO ..... 00

DON'T KNOW ..... 98

K5. What proportion of your clients who have left TANF because they have found employment would you estimate continue to receive food stamps?

More than three-quarters, ..... 04

At least one-half but less than three-quarters, ..... 03

At least one-quarter but less than one-half, ..... 02

At least one but less than one-quarter, ..... 01

None ..... 00

DON'T KNOW ..... 98

The next set of questions is about how you process the food stamp case of a household who voluntarily leaves TANF not due to employment.

K6. Which of the following actions do you usually take when a household voluntarily leaves TANF? Do you...

Keep the food stamp case open and not change the length of the food stamp certification period ..... 01

Keep the food stamp case open and shorten the certification period to the one used for non-TANF households ..... 02

Keep the food stamp case open and shorten the certification period to the end of the next month, or ..... 03 [GO TO K8]

Close the food stamp case ..... 04 [GO TO K8]

OTHER [SPECIFY] ..... 96

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DON'T KNOW ..... 98

K7.	Does someone in the household usually		
	Have to come to the office to have their benefits recalculated, . . . . .	01	[GO TO K9]
	Can you adjust the benefits with information received by mail or over the phone, or . . . . .	02	[GO TO K9]
	Is no contact with the household usually necessary to recalculate the household's food stamp benefits . . . . .	03	[GO TO K9]
	DON'T KNOW . . . . .	98	[GO TO K9]
K8.	When these clients leave TANF, do you routinely notify them that they may still be eligible for food stamps and need to either recertify or reapply for food stamps?		
	YES . . . . .	01	
	NO . . . . .	00	[GO TO K9]
	OTHER [SPECIFY] . . . . .	96	
<hr/>			
	DON'T KNOW . . . . .	98	[GO TO K9]
K9.	What proportion of your clients who have left TANF voluntarily would you estimate continue to receive food stamps?		
	More than three-quarters, . . . . .	04	
	At least one-half but less than three-quarters, . . . . .	03	
	At least one-quarter but less than one-half, . . . . .	02	
	At least one but less than one-quarter, or . . . . .	01	
	None . . . . .	00	
	DON'T KNOW . . . . .	98	

K10. The next set of questions is about how you process the food stamp case of a household whose cash assistance case is closed because of a State TANF time limit. When a case is closed because of a TANF time limit do you

Continue the household as eligible for food stamps, until the food stamp certification period ends, . . . . .	01
Shorten its food stamp certification period to the one for non-TANF households, . . . . .	02
Shorten its food stamp certification period to the end of the next month, or . . .	03 [GO TO K12]
Close the food stamp case . . . . .	04 [GO TO K12]
WORKER HAS NEVER CLOSED A CASE BECAUSE OF THE TIME LIMIT . . . . .	00 [GO TO K14]
OTHER [SPECIFY] . . . . .	96

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DON'T KNOW . . . . . 98

K11. Does someone in the household

Have to come to the office to have their benefits recalculated, . . . . .	01 [GO TO K13]
Can you adjust the benefits with information received by mail or over the phone, or . . . . .	02 [GO TO K13]
Is no contact with the household usually necessary to recalculate the household's food stamp benefits . . . . .	03 [GO TO K13]
DON'T KNOW . . . . .	98

K12. When these clients leave TANF, do you usually notify them that they may still be eligible for food stamps if they reapply?

YES . . . . .	01
NO . . . . .	00
DON'T KNOW . . . . .	98

K13. What proportion of your clients who have hit the TANF time limit would you estimate continued to receive food stamps after their TANF case was closed because of the time limit?

- More than three-quarters, ..... 04
- At least one-half but less than three-quarters, ..... 03
- At least one-quarter but less than one-half, ..... 02
- At least one but less than one-quarter, or ..... 01
- None ..... 00
- DON'T KNOW ..... 98

K14. What changes could be made to your office's procedures that would increase the number of food stamp eligible individuals who continue to receive food stamps after leaving the TANF Program, either due to a job, voluntarily or after hitting the time limit? [CIRCLE ALL THAT APPLY]  
PROBE: Anything Else?

- NEED TO CHANGE COMPUTER SYSTEM SO FOOD STAMP CASE DOES NOT AUTOMATICALLY CLOSE WHEN CLIENT LEAVES TANF ..... 01
- FOLLOW-UP FOR TANF LEAVERS TO INFORM THEM ABOUT THE DIFFERENCES IN ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS BETWEEN TANF AND FOOD STAMPS ..... 02
- PROVIDE BETTER INFORMATION AT APPLICATION ABOUT THE DIFFERENCES IN THE TWO PROGRAMS ..... 03
- ENCOURAGE CLIENTS TO FIND OUT IF THEY CAN STILL GET FOOD STAMPS IF THEY GET A JOB OR DECIDE THEY DON'T WANT TANF ANYMORE ..... 04
- OTHER CHANGES [SPECIFY] ..... 96

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- NONE ..... 00
- DON'T KNOW ..... 98

**L. NON-TANF PARTICIPATION REQUIREMENTS**

The next set of questions is about sanctions for non-TANF food stamp households.

L1. Do you sanction the food stamp benefits of non-TANF single-parent food stamp households for failure to cooperate with the child support agency?

- YES ..... 01
- NO ..... 00 [GO TO L3]
- DON'T KNOW ..... 98 [GO TO L3]

L2. Of your non-TANF households who have this requirement to cooperate with child support as a condition of their food stamp eligibility, for what proportion have you imposed a food stamp sanction for failing to cooperate with child support?

- More than three-quarters, ..... 04
- At least one-half but less than three-quarters, ..... 03
- At least one-quarter but less than one-half, ..... 02
- At least one but less than one-quarter, or ..... 01
- None ..... 00
- DON'T KNOW ..... 98

L3. The next question asks about food stamp employment & training requirements that apply to clients who utilize your office. Is there a Food Stamp Employment and Training Program available for clients who utilize your office?

- YES ..... 01
- NO ..... 00 [GO TO SECTION M]
- DON'T KNOW ..... 98 [GO TO SECTION M]

L4. In a typical month what proportion of your non-TANF clients who are required to participate in the Food Stamp E&T Program have their food stamp benefits sanctioned due to noncompliance with the food stamp E&T requirements?

More than three-quarters, .....	01
At least one-half but less than three-quarters, .....	02
At least one-quarter but less than one-half, .....	03
At least one but less than one-quarter, or .....	04
None .....	00
OTHER .....	96
<hr/>	
DON'T KNOW .....	98

**M. ABAWDs**

The next set of questions asks about able-bodied adults without dependents who may be subject to a food stamp time limit.

- M1. Do you usually follow-up with ABAWDs who have lost food stamp benefits due to the time limit to inform them of how to regain food stamp eligibility?
- YES ..... 01
- NO ..... 00 [GO TO M3]
- DON'T KNOW ..... 98 [GO TO M3]
- M2. How do you follow-up with these ABAWDs? [ CIRCLE ALL THATAPPLY]
- A WRITTEN NOTICE IS SENT THEM ..... 01
- TELEPHONE CONTACT ..... 02
- OTHER [SPECIFY] ..... 96
- 
- DON'T KNOW ..... 98
- M3. Thinking of those ABAWDs you have had in your caseload who have left the program due to the time limit, what proportion would you estimate have come back and regained eligibility through employment or participation in a qualifying E&T activity?
- More than three-quarters, ..... 04
- At least one-half but less than three-quarters, ..... 03
- At least one-quarter but less than one-half, ..... 02
- At least one but less than one-quarter, or ..... 01
- None ..... 00
- DON'T KNOW ..... 98



**N. RECERTIFICATIONS**

The next few questions are about the length of the certification period and the recertification process for food stamps.

N1. Do you have any discretion in the length of the food stamp certification period or is the length of the certification period set by office policy for each type of food stamp client you serve?

HAVE DISCRETION . . . . . 01

SET BY OFFICE POLICY . . . . . 02 [GO TO N3]

DON'T KNOW . . . . . 98

N2. For what types of clients do you set a shorter certification period than the standard at your office?

CLIENTS WITH FLUCTUATING INCOME . . . . . 01

CLIENTS I ASSUME TO BE ERROR PRONE . . . . . 02

OTHER CRITERIA [SPECIFY] . . . . . 96

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DON'T KNOW . . . . . 98

N3. Are clients

Assigned a time and date for recertification, . . . . . 01

Can they schedule an appointment, or . . . . . 02

Are they assigned a time and date but can reschedule . . . . . 03

OTHER [SPECIFY] . . . . . 96

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DON'T KNOW . . . . . 98

N4.	If one of your clients misses their recertification appointment do you	
	Automatically schedule a 2 <sup>nd</sup> appointment, . . . . .	01
	Notify them that they must reschedule, . . . . .	02
	Notify them that their food stamp benefits are being discontinued and they will have to reapply if they want to get food stamps again, or . . . . .	03
	Close the case when the certification period ends without any additional notice to the client . . . . .	04
	OTHER [SPECIFY] . . . . .	96
<hr/>		
	DON'T KNOW . . . . .	98
N5.	If a client comes in at least 30 minutes late for their recertification appointment do you <u>usually</u>	
	Reschedule their appointment for that same day, or . . . . .	01
	Have them come back to have their appointment another day . . . . .	00
	DON'T KNOW . . . . .	98
N6.	If your client does not respond to a recertification notice do you normally contact them by telephone to inform them of their need to recertify?	
	YES . . . . .	01
	NO . . . . .	00
	DON'T KNOW . . . . .	98
N7.	When households are usually required to have an in-person recertification interview, do you routinely offer telephone interviews or home interviews to persons with hardships?	
	YES . . . . .	01
	NO . . . . .	00 [GO TO N9]
	DON'T KNOW . . . . .	98 [GO TO N9]

N8. For which groups do you routinely offer telephone interviews or in-home interviews? [CIRCLE ALL THAT APPLY]

HOUSEHOLDS WITH ONLY ELDERLY INDIVIDUALS .....	01
HOUSEHOLDS WITH ONLY DISABLED INDIVIDUALS .....	02
TANF HOUSEHOLDS .....	03
HOUSEHOLDS LACKING ACCESS TO TRANSPORTATION .....	04
HOUSEHOLDS WITH EARNINGS OR OTHER WORK RELATED COMMITMENTS THAT POSE A BARRIER TO COMING INTO THE OFFICE .....	05
OTHER [SPECIFY] .....	96

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DON'T KNOW .....

N9. What changes could be made to your office's recertification procedures that would decrease the number of food stamp eligible individuals who drop out of the Food Stamp Program because they do not complete recertification? [CIRCLE ALL THAT APPLY]

LENGTHEN CERTIFICATION PERIODS .....	01
REQUIRE CLIENTS TO COME INTO THE OFFICE FOR RECERTIFICATION LESS OFTEN .....	02
OTHER [SPECIFY] .....	96

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DON'T KNOW .....

NONE .....

**O. ACCESS PERCEPTION QUESTIONS**

The next set of questions asks for your opinions on a variety of issues.

I am going to read a series of statements, please tell me whether you strongly agree, agree, disagree or strongly disagree with each one.

O1. Being on food stamps encourages dependency.

STRONGLY AGREE .....	01
AGREE .....	02
DISAGREE .....	03
STRONGLY DISAGREE .....	04
DON'T KNOW .....	98

O2. The size of my caseload makes it difficult for me to help people as much as I would like to.

STRONGLY AGREE .....	01
AGREE .....	02
DISAGREE .....	03
STRONGLY DISAGREE .....	04
DON'T KNOW .....	98

O3. People who stop receiving TANF often also leave the Food Stamp Program without us knowing whether they are still eligible for food stamps.

STRONGLY AGREE .....	01
AGREE .....	02
DISAGREE .....	03
STRONGLY DISAGREE .....	04
DON'T KNOW .....	98

O4.	People who leave TANF and are potentially eligible for food stamps should be actively encouraged to apply for food stamps.	
	STRONGLY AGREE .....	01
	AGREE .....	02
	DISAGREE .....	03
	STRONGLY DISAGREE .....	04
	DON'T KNOW .....	98
O5.	Immigrants should not get food stamps until they become citizens.	
	STRONGLY AGREE .....	01
	AGREE .....	02
	DISAGREE .....	03
	STRONGLY DISAGREE .....	04
	DON'T KNOW .....	98
O6.	The set-up of our computer generated notices sometimes results in people losing food stamp benefits they are eligible for.	
	STRONGLY AGREE .....	01
	AGREE .....	02
	DISAGREE .....	03
	STRONGLY DISAGREE .....	04
	DON'T KNOW .....	98
O7.	Our office actively discourages clients from becoming TANF recipients.	
	STRONGLY AGREE .....	01
	AGREE .....	02
	DISAGREE .....	03
	STRONGLY DISAGREE .....	04
	DON'T KNOW .....	98

O8.	It is hard for clients who work to do what needs to be done to apply for food stamps.		
	STRONGLY AGREE .....	01	
	AGREE .....	02	
	DISAGREE .....	03	
	STRONGLY DISAGREE .....	04	
	DON'T KNOW .....	98	
O9.	It is hard for eligible working clients to do what is required to stay on the Food Stamp Program once they are participating.		
	STRONGLY AGREE .....	01	
	AGREE .....	02	
	DISAGREE .....	03	
	STRONGLY DISAGREE .....	04	
	DON'T KNOW .....	98	
O10.	In the past few years it has become more difficult for eligible people to get on the Food Stamp Program.		
	STRONGLY AGREE .....	01	
	AGREE .....	02	
	DISAGREE .....	03	[GO TO O13]
	STRONGLY DISAGREE .....	04	[GO TO O13]
	DON'T KNOW .....	98	[GO TO O13]

O11. For which groups of people do you think it has become more difficult to get food stamps in recent years? [CIRCLE ALL THAT APPLY]

- ALL GROUPS ..... 01
- THE WORKING POOR ..... 02
- FAMILIES WITH CHILDREN ..... 03
- THE ELDERLY ..... 04
- SINGLE ADULTS WITHOUT CHILDREN ..... 05
- OTHER [SPECIFY] \_\_\_\_\_ 96

\_\_\_\_\_  
DON'T KNOW ..... 98

O12. What do you think are the most important reasons that it has become more difficult for people to get food stamps in recent years?

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

DON'T KNOW ..... 98

O13. Is there any policy or procedure that your office has implemented, that we have not already covered in our survey, to improve access to the Food Stamp Program for any specific groups or for the eligible population in general?

- YES ..... 01
- NO ..... 02 [GO TO SECTION P]
- DON'T KNOW ..... 98 [GO TO SECTION P]

O14. Please briefly describe this policy and its purpose.

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

DON'T KNOW ..... 98





## Food Stamp Office Observation Record

### A. Office Location and Accessibility

A1. Are there street signs on all the intersections surrounding the building?

- Yes, on all intersections
- Yes, on some intersections
- No, not on any intersections

A2a. Does the building have a sign outside indicating the name of the office?

- Yes
- No

A2b. Is the street number on the outside of the building?

- Yes
- No

A3. What type of neighborhood is the building located in?

- Business district or mainly business/retail
- Combination business/residential (some business, some residential)
- Mainly residential
- Not sure

A4. Is there a parking lot for applicants who drive to the office?

- Yes
- No

A5. Is the parking free?

- Yes
- No

A6. Is handicapped parking available?

- Yes
- No

A7. Is the building accessible for wheelchairs (ramp, elevators, etc.)?

- Yes
- No

A8. Additional notable comments about the building location and accessibility:

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**B. Reception Area for Food Stamp Applicants**

B1. Is there **one** reception area in the building where applicants for **all** programs go?

- Yes (Go to B1a)
- No (Go to B2)

B1a. Are there signs at the entrance to the building directing applicants to the reception area?

- Yes (Go to B5)
- No (Go to B5)

B2. Which programs share a reception area?

Put a "1" in all boxes for programs that share the first reception area. Put a "2" in all boxes for programs that share a second reception area, etc.

- Food stamps
- TANF (insert name of state program)
- Medicaid
- SCHIP (insert name of state program)
- General Assistance (insert name of state program)
- SSI
- Child support enforcement
- Other (Specify:) \_\_\_\_\_
- Other (Specify:) \_\_\_\_\_
- Other (Specify:) \_\_\_\_\_

B3. Are the different reception areas in the same building?

- Yes
- No (Go to B4)

B3a. Are they on the same floor?

- Yes
- No

B4. Are there signs at the entrance to the building directing applicants to the different reception areas?

- Yes
- No (Go to B5)

B4a. Do the signs indicate which area different types of applicants should go to?

- Yes
- No

B5. Is general information about the Food Stamp Program available in the reception area (posters, pamphlets, videotapes, etc.)? (Check yes or no in matrix below)

B5a. Are these items available in other languages?

Material(s)	Available In Reception Area?	Available in Other Languages?
Posters	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Pamphlets/brochures	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Videotapes	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Other (Specify: _____ _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No

B6. Is there information (posters, pamphlets, etc.) in the food stamp office reception area or in other parts of the building which indicates that households that do not receive TANF may still qualify for food stamps? (Check yes or no in matrix below)

B6a. Are these materials (posters, pamphlets, etc.) displayed/available in languages other than English?

Material(s)	In Reception Area?	Other Parts of Building?	In languages other than English?
Posters	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Pamphlets/brochures	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Other (Specify: _____ _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No

B7. Is there information (posters, pamphlets, etc.) in the food stamp office reception area describing the food stamp eligibility rules for legal immigrants? *(Check yes or no in the matrix below.)*

B7a. Are these materials available in languages other than English?

B7b. Is there information describing the food stamp eligibility rules for children of immigrants whose parents are not eligible for food stamps?

B7c. Are these materials available in languages other than English?

Material(s)	Legal Immigrants		Children of Ineligible Immigrants	
	B7. In Reception Area?	B7a. In languages other than English?	B7b. In Reception Area?	B7c. In languages other than English?
Posters	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Pamphlets/brochures	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Other <i>(Specify:)</i> _____ _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No

B8. Are there toys or materials for children to play with?

- Yes
- Yes, but not enough or not in good condition
- Yes, but only books/magazines (no toys)
- No

B9. Is there a space for children to play?

- Yes, dedicated play area within the reception area
- Yes, but floor space only
- Space for children to play is quite limited

B10. Are restrooms handicapped accessible?

- Yes
- No

B11. Do restrooms have a diaper changing area?

- Yes
- No

**C. Reception Area Waiting Times**

Complete for three separate observation periods in each reception area.

**Observation Period #1:**

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_ /20\_\_\_\_\_ Time: \_\_\_\_:\_\_\_\_ am / pm to \_\_\_\_:\_\_\_\_ am / pm

C1. How many Food Stamp office workers manage the reception area responsibilities?

- There is only one worker and a relief worker to cover breaks.
- There are generally \_\_\_\_\_ (number of workers) managing the reception area.
- There is one main worker and an assistant for busy periods
- Other (Specify): \_\_\_\_\_

C2. Is there a waiting line at the food stamp reception area?

- Yes, always
- Yes, at certain times: \_\_\_\_\_
- No lines (Skip to C4)

C3. About how long does a person wait to speak to a receptionist? *Time ten people and calculate average.*

\_\_\_\_\_ (Minutes)

C4. Are there a sufficient number of seats in the reception area?

- Yes, seats always available
- No, there are always some people standing
- It varies. People standing at:

\_\_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_\_ am / pm to \_\_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_\_ am / pm  
 \_\_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_\_ am / pm to \_\_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_\_ am / pm  
 \_\_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_\_ am / pm to \_\_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_\_ am / pm  
 \_\_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_\_ am / pm to \_\_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_\_ am / pm

**Observation Period #2:**

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_ /20\_\_\_\_\_ Time: \_\_\_\_:\_\_\_\_ am / pm to \_\_\_\_:\_\_\_\_ am / pm

C1. How many Food Stamp office workers manage the reception area responsibilities?

- There is only one worker and a relief worker to cover breaks.
- There are generally \_\_\_\_\_ (number of workers) managing the reception area.
- There is one main worker and an assistant for busy periods
- Other (Specify): \_\_\_\_\_

C2. Is there a waiting line at the food stamp reception area?)

- Yes, always
- Yes, at certain times: \_\_\_\_\_
- No lines (Skip to C4)

C3. About how long does a person wait to speak to a receptionist? *Time ten people and calculate average.*

\_\_\_\_\_ (Minutes)

C4. Are there a sufficient number of seats in the reception area?

- Yes, seats always available
- No, there are always some people standing
- It varies. People standing at:

\_\_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_\_ am / pm to \_\_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_\_ am / pm  
 \_\_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_\_ am / pm to \_\_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_\_ am / pm  
 \_\_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_\_ am / pm to \_\_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_\_ am / pm  
 \_\_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_\_ am / pm to \_\_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_\_ am / pm

**Observation Period #3:**

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_ /20\_\_\_\_\_ Time: \_\_\_\_:\_\_\_\_ am / pm to \_\_\_\_:\_\_\_\_ am / pm

C1. How many Food Stamp office workers manage the reception area responsibilities?

- There is only one worker and a relief worker to cover breaks.
- There are generally \_\_\_\_\_ (number of workers) managing the reception area.
- There is one main worker and an assistant for busy periods
- Other (Specify): \_\_\_\_\_

C2. Is there a waiting line at the food stamp reception area?

- Yes, always
- Yes, at certain times: \_\_\_\_\_
- No lines (*Skip to C4*)

C3. About how long does a person wait to speak to a receptionist? *Time ten people and calculate average.*

\_\_\_\_\_ (Minutes)

C4. Are there a sufficient number of seats in the reception area?

- Yes, seats always available
- No, there are always some people standing
- It varies. People standing at:

\_\_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_\_ am / pm to \_\_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_\_ am / pm  
 \_\_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_\_ am / pm to \_\_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_\_ am / pm  
 \_\_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_\_ am / pm to \_\_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_\_ am / pm  
 \_\_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_\_ am / pm to \_\_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_\_ am / pm

**D. Reception Area Activities**

D1. Are applications for food stamps and TANF (*insert name of state program*) available in the reception area?

	Combined Food Stamp and TANF application	Food Stamp-only Application	TANF-only Application
Yes, passed out by receptionist	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Yes, applicants may pick up from counter/walls	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
No, not available in reception area	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other ( <i>Specify:</i> _____ _____)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

D2. Are the people completing applications provided with a writing surface (clipboard, table, etc.)?

- Yes
- No

D3. Are pens available for people completing their application?

- Yes
- No

# Study of Program Access and Declining Food Stamp Participation

## Case Record Review Form

Abt ID:	Site ID:												
Food Stamp Case Number:	Date of Record Abstraction:												
Case Sampled as:	<table style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="padding: 2px 5px;">Applicant Approved .....</td> <td style="text-align: right; padding: 2px 5px;">1</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="padding: 2px 5px;">Applicant Denied .....</td> <td style="text-align: right; padding: 2px 5px;">2</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="padding: 2px 5px;">Recertification Approved .....</td> <td style="text-align: right; padding: 2px 5px;">3</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="padding: 2px 5px;">Closed Case .....</td> <td style="text-align: right; padding: 2px 5px;">4</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="padding: 2px 5px;">TANF Diverted .....</td> <td style="text-align: right; padding: 2px 5px;">5</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="padding: 2px 5px;">Status Unknown .....</td> <td style="text-align: right; padding: 2px 5px;">6</td> </tr> </table>	Applicant Approved .....	1	Applicant Denied .....	2	Recertification Approved .....	3	Closed Case .....	4	TANF Diverted .....	5	Status Unknown .....	6
Applicant Approved .....	1												
Applicant Denied .....	2												
Recertification Approved .....	3												
Closed Case .....	4												
TANF Diverted .....	5												
Status Unknown .....	6												

### SECTION A: SCREENING INFORMATION

A1. Is the case number the same as the applicant's Social Security number?

Yes (SKIP TO A2) ..... 1  
 No ..... 2

A1a. Social Security number: \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_

A2. Head of household's name:

---

Last
First
Middle Initial

A3. Is the case under the jurisdiction of this office?

Yes ..... 1  
 No (REJECT CASE) ..... 2

A4a. Is there an initial certification in the case file for June 2000?

Yes, approved application ..... 1  
 Yes, denied application ..... 2  
 No ..... 3  
 Don't know ..... 8



A4b. Did client's certification period end in June 2000?

- Yes, approved recertification ..... 1
- Yes, denied recertification, did not complete recertification process .. 2
- Yes, denied for eligibility-related reason ..... 3
- Yes, voluntarily withdrew ..... 4
- Yes, other denial (SPECIFY: \_\_\_\_\_) 5
- No ..... 6
- Don't know ..... 8

A4c. Is there a case closure in June 2000 in the middle of a certification period (i.e., certification period did not end in June)?

- Yes ..... 1
- No ..... 2
- Don't know ..... 8

A5. Case type:

- Initial certification, approved ..... 1
- Initial certification, denied ..... 2
- Recertification, approved ..... 3
- Recertification, denied, did not complete process ..... 4
- Recertification, other denial ..... 5
- Closed case ..... 6
- Other (REJECT CASE) 7

**SECTION B: CONTACT INFORMATION**

(RECORD ONLY FOR INITIAL CERTIFICATIONS AND RECERTIFICATIONS DENIED FOR NOT COMPLETING PROCESS: A5 = 1, 2, OR 4)

B1. Address:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Street

\_\_\_\_\_  
City State Zip

B1a. Mailing address (if different):

\_\_\_\_\_  
Street

\_\_\_\_\_  
City State Zip

B2. Telephone numbers:

Home: (\_\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_  
(Area Code)

Work: (\_\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_  
(Area Code)

B3. Is there an authorized representative?

- Yes ..... 1
- No (SKIP TO 4) ..... 2

B3a. Name of authorized representative: \_\_\_\_\_

B3b. Address of authorized representative:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Street

\_\_\_\_\_  
City State Zip

B3c. Telephone numbers of authorized representative:

Home: (\_\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_  
(Area Code)

Work: (\_\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_  
(Area Code)

B4. Other contact person?

Yes ..... 1  
No (GO TO SECTION C) ..... 2

B4a. Name of other contact person: \_\_\_\_\_

B4b. Address of other contact person:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Street

\_\_\_\_\_  
City State Zip

B4c. Telephone numbers of other contact person:

Home: (\_\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_  
(Area Code)

Work: (\_\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_  
(Area Code)

**SECTION C: HEAD OF HOUSEHOLD CHARACTERISTICS**

**ITEMS C1-C4:**

INITIAL CERTIFICATIONS: INFORMATION FROM JUNE 2000 FSP APPLICATION.  
RECERTIFICATIONS AND CLOSED CASES: INFORMATION FROM INITIAL OR RECERTIFICATION APPLICATION  
FILED PRIOR TO JUNE 2000 (I.E., APPLICATION FOR CERTIFICATION THAT ENDED OR CLOSED IN JUNE  
2000.)

C1. Sex:

Male ..... 1  
Female ..... 2  
Don't know ..... 8

C2a. Is Head Hispanic or Latino?

Yes ..... 1  
No ..... 2  
Don't know ..... 8

C2b. Race (CODE ALL THAT APPLY)

White ..... 1  
Black or African-American ..... 2  
Asian ..... 3  
American Indian or Alaska Native ..... 4  
Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander ..... 5  
Don't know ..... 8

C3. Marital status:

Never married ..... 1  
Married ..... 2  
Separated ..... 3  
Divorced ..... 4  
Widowed ..... 5  
Don't know ..... 8

C4. Employment status:

Employed (SKIP TO C5) ..... 1  
Not employed ..... 2  
Don't know (SKIP TO C5) ..... 8

C4a. Reason not employed:

- Unemployed ..... 1
- Not in labor force ..... 2
- Don't know ..... 8

C5. Has case been on food stamps before current application (INITIAL CERTIFICATIONS) or current, uninterrupted spell (RECERTIFICATIONS AND CLOSED CASES)?

- Yes ..... 1
- No (SKIP TO C6) ..... 2
- Don't know (SKIP TO C6) ..... 8

C5a. End date of most recent spell (INITIAL CERTIFICATIONS) or most recent prior spell (RECERTIFICATIONS AND CLOSED CASES)?

\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_  
Month Day Year

C6. Receiving TANF benefits at time of food stamp application (INITIAL CERTIFICATIONS) or some time during the certification period ending or closed June 2000 (RECERTIFICATIONS AND CLOSED CASES)?

- Yes (SKIP TO C6b) ..... 1
- No ..... 2
- Don't know ..... 8

C6a. Previous receipt of TANF or AFDC?

- Yes (SKIP TO C6c) ..... 1
- No (SKIP TO C7) ..... 2
- Don't know (SKIP TO C7) ..... 8

C6b. Number of children living in household who were not counted in the TANF grant as of June 2000:

- \_\_\_\_  
All children included in TANF grant ..... 0
- Don't know ..... 8
- Not applicable, local agency does not  
have family size cap policy ..... 9

C6c. End date of (current/most recent) TANF/AFDC spell:

\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_  
Month Day Year

C6d. TANF case ID (current/most recent spell): \_\_\_\_\_

C7. Receiving Medicaid benefits at time of food stamp application (INITIAL CERTIFICATIONS) or some time during the certification period ending or closed June 2000 (RECERTIFICATIONS AND CLOSED CASES)?

Yes .....	1
No .....	2
Don't know .....	8

C7a. Previous receipt of Medicaid benefits?

Yes .....	1
No .....	2
Don't know .....	8

ITEMS C8 AND C9:

RECERTIFICATIONS: INFORMATION FROM JUNE RECERTIFICATION APPLICATION.

INITIAL CERTIFICATIONS AND CLOSED CASES: SKIP TO SECTION D.

C8. Marital status:

Never married .....	1
Married .....	2
Separated .....	3
Divorced .....	4
Widowed .....	5
No June recertification application .....	7
Don't know .....	8

C9. Employment status:

Employed (SKIP TO SECTION D) .....	1
Not employed .....	2
No June recertification application .....	7
Don't know (SKIP TO SECTION D) .....	8

C9a. Reason not employed:

Unemployed .....	1
Not in labor force .....	2
Don't know .....	8

**SECTION D: DWELLING UNIT COMPOSITION**

ITEMS D1-d7:  
 INITIAL CERTIFICATIONS: INFORMATION FROM JUNE 2000 FSP APPLICATION.  
 RECERTIFICATIONS AND CLOSED CASES: INFORMATION FROM INITIAL OR RECERTIFICATION APPLICATION FILED PRIOR TO JUNE 2000 (I.E., APPLICATION FOR CERTIFICATION THAT ENDED OR CLOSED IN JUNE 2000.)

D1a. Relationship to head: spouse, child, grandchild, parent, other relative, non-relative	D1b. Included in Food Stamp household?		D1c. Date of Birth			D1d. Disabled?		D1e. U.S. Citizen?		D1f. Dif. ABAWD?	
	Yes	No	Month	Day	Year	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
	HEAD OF HOUSEHOLD	1	2				1	2	1	2	1
A.	1	2				1	2	1	2	1	2
B.	1	2				1	2	1	2	1	2
C.	1	2				1	2	1	2	1	2
D.	1	2				1	2	1	2	1	2
E.	1	2				1	2	1	2	1	2
F.	1	2				1	2	1	2	1	2

D2a. Number in dwelling unit: \_\_\_\_\_ D2b. Number included in food stamp household: \_\_\_\_\_

D3. IF SOME HOUSEHOLD MEMBERS NOT INCLUDED IN FOOD STAMP HOUSEHOLD (D1b = NO): Why is member not included?

D3a. Member Number	D3b. Reason Code	D3c. Date Member Removed			D3d. If sanctioned: End Date		
		Month	Day	Year	Month	Day	Year

**Reason Code:**  
 1 = Food Stamp sanction only  
 2 = TANF and Food Stamp sanction  
 3 = Alien status  
 4 = Prepares food separately  
 7 = Other (SPECIFY:) [D3e]





D4. Type of household:

Single parent with child(ren) . . . . .	1
Grandparent with grandchild(ren) . . . . .	2
Married couple/parents with child(ren) . . . . .	3
Grandparents with grandchild(ren) . . . . .	4
Married couple without children . . . . .	5
Single person, no children . . . . .	6
Multiple adults, with child(ren) . . . . .	7
Multiple adults, without children . . . . .	8
Child-only household . . . . .	9
Other (SPECIFY: _____) . . . . .	10

D5. Anyone in food stamp household a destitute migrant or seasonal farmworker?

Yes . . . . .	1
No . . . . .	2
Don't know . . . . .	8

D6. Homeless household?

Yes . . . . .	1
No . . . . .	2
Don't know . . . . .	8

D7. Language spoken by household head:

English . . . . .	1
Spanish . . . . .	2
Chinese . . . . .	3
Portugese . . . . .	4
French . . . . .	5
Arabic . . . . .	6
Italian . . . . .	7
Vietnamese . . . . .	8
Laotian . . . . .	9
Cambodian . . . . .	10
Hmong . . . . .	11
Other (SPECIFY: _____) . . . . .	12

ITEMS D8-D11:  
 INITIAL CERTIFICATIONS AND CLOSED CASES: SKIP TO SECTION E.  
 RECERTIFICATIONS: INFORMATION FROM JUNE RECERTIFICATION APPLICATION.

D8. Status of June recertifications and dwelling unit composition:  
 No June recertification application (SKIP TO SECTION E) ..... 1  
 June recertification application, all dwelling unit composition same as D1 to D7 (SKIP TO SECTION E) ..... 2  
 June recertification application, some dwelling unit composition changed from prior application ..... 3

D9a. Relationship to head: spouse, child, grandchild, parent, other relative, non-relative	D9b. Included in Food Stamp household?		D9c. Date of Birth			D9d. Disabled?		D9e. U.S. Citizen?		D9f. ABAWD?	
	Yes	No	Month	Day	Year	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
	HEAD OF HOUSEHOLD	1	2				1	2	1	2	1
A.	1	2				1	2	1	2	1	2
B.	1	2				1	2	1	2	1	2
C.	1	2				1	2	1	2	1	2
D.	1	2				1	2	1	2	1	2
E.	1	2				1	2	1	2	1	2
F.	1	2				1	2	1	2	1	2

D10a. Number in dwelling unit: \_\_\_\_\_ D10b. Number included in food stamp household: \_\_\_\_\_

D11. IF SOME HOUSEHOLD MEMBERS NOT INCLUDED IN FOOD STAMP HOUSEHOLD (D9b = NO): Why is member not included?

D11a. Member Number	D11b. Reason Code	D11c. Date Member Removed			D11d. If sanctioned: End Date			Reason Code: 1 = Food Stamp sanction only 2 = TANF and Food Stamp sanction 3 = Alien status 4 = Prepares food separately 7 = Other (SPECIFY:) [D3e]
		Month	Day	Year	Month	Day	Year	

D12. Type of household:

Single parent with child(ren) . . . . .	1
Grandparent with grandchild(ren) . . . . .	2
Married couple/parents with child(ren) . . . . .	3
Grandparents with grandchild(ren) . . . . .	4
Married couple without children . . . . .	5
Single person, no children . . . . .	6
Multiple adults, with child(ren) . . . . .	7
Multiple adults, without children . . . . .	8
Child-only household . . . . .	9
Other (SPECIFY: _____) . . . . .	10

D13. Anyone in food stamp household a destitute migrant or seasonal farmworker?

Yes . . . . .	1
No . . . . .	2
Don't know . . . . .	8

D14. Homeless household?

Yes . . . . .	1
No . . . . .	2
Don't know . . . . .	8

**SECTION E: COUNTABLE INCOME, ASSETS, AND EXPENSES FOR HOUSEHOLD**

ITEMS E1-E5:

INITIAL CERTIFICATIONS: INFORMATION FROM JUNE 2000 FSP APPLICATION.

RECERTIFICATIONS AND CLOSED CASES: INFORMATION FROM INITIAL OR RECERTIFICATION APPLICATION FILED PRIOR TO JUNE 2000 (I.E., APPLICATION FOR CERTIFICATION THAT ENDED OR CLOSED IN JUNE 2000.)

<b>E1. Monthly Income [IF NONE, ENTER 0.]</b>	
E1a. Earnings	\$
E1b. TANF	
E1c. General Assistance	
E1d. Social Security	
E1e. SSI	
E1f. Unemployment Compensation	
E1g. Other (SPECIFY)	
E1h. Other (SPECIFY)	
E1i. Other (SPECIFY)	
E1j. Other (SPECIFY)	
E1k. TOTAL MONTHLY GROSS INCOME:	\$
<b>E2. Assets</b>	
E2a. Cash	\$
E2b. Bank accounts (checking and savings)	
E2c. Other liquid resources	
E2d. Vehicle (countable portion)	
E2e. Other non-liquid resources	
E2f. TOTAL ASSETS	\$

E3. Shelter expenses:

E3a. Rent/mortgage (including shelter insurance): \$ \_\_\_\_\_

E3b. Are any or all utility expense amounts for this case standard allowances?

- Yes ..... 1
- No (SKIP TO E3e) ..... 2
- Don't know (SKIP TO E3e) ..... 8

E3c. Is there one standard allowance that includes all utility components?

- Yes ..... 1
- No (SKIP TO E3e) ..... 2
- Don't know (SKIP TO E3e) ..... 8

E3d. Total utilities: standard allowance: \$\_\_\_\_\_ (SKIP TO E4)

Item	Amount	Standard Allowance?		
		Yes	No	DK
E3e. Telephone	\$	1	2	8
E3f. Gas/fuel	\$	1	2	8
E3g. Electric	\$	1	2	8
E3h. Water/sewer	\$	1	2	8
E3i. Other (garbage and trash, installation fee, etc.)	\$	1	2	8
E3j: Total utilities — actual	\$			
E3k. Total utilities — Standard allowance:	\$			
E3l. Total monthly expenses	\$			
E3m. Shelter expense deduction	\$			

E4. Other expenses and deductions:

Type of Expense	E4a. Total Expenses	E4b. Deduction
Medical expenses	\$	\$
Child care expenses	\$	\$
Child support payments	\$	\$
Earned income	\$	\$

E5. Total monthly net income: \$\_\_\_\_\_

ITEMS E6-E11:

INITIAL CERTIFICATIONS AND CLOSED CASES: SKIP TO SECTION F.

RECERTIFICATIONS: INFORMATION FROM JUNE RECERTIFICATION APPLICATION.

E6. Status June recertification application:

- No June recertification application (SKIP TO SECTION F) . . . . . 1
- June recertification application on file . . . . . 2

<b>E7. Monthly Income</b>	
E7a. Earnings	\$
E7b. TANF	
E7c. General Assistance	
E7d. Social Security	
E7e. SSI	
E7f. Unemployment Compensation	
E7g. Other (SPECIFY)	
E7h. Other (SPECIFY)	
E7i. Other (SPECIFY)	
E7j. Other (SPECIFY)	
E7k. TOTAL MONTHLY GROSS INCOME:	\$
<b>E8. Assets</b>	
E8a. Cash	\$
E8b. Bank accounts (checking and savings)	
E8c. Other liquid resources	
E8d. Vehicle (countable portion)	
E8e. Other non-liquid resources	
E8f. TOTAL ASSETS	\$

E9. Shelter expenses:

E9a. Rent/mortgage (including shelter insurance): \$ \_\_\_\_\_

E9b. Are any or all utility expense amounts for this case standard allowances?

- Yes . . . . . 1
- No (SKIP TO E9e) . . . . . 2
- Don't know (SKIP TO E9e) . . . . . 8

E9c. Is there one standard allowance that includes all utility components?

Yes ..... 1  
 No (SKIP TO E9e) ..... 2  
 Don't know (SKIP TO E9e) ..... 8

E9d. Total utilities: standard allowance: \$\_\_\_\_\_ (SKIP TO E10)

Item	Amount	Standard Allowance?		
		Ye s	No	DK
E9e. Telephone	\$	1	2	8
E9f. Gas/fuel	\$	1	2	8
E9g. Electric	\$	1	2	8
E9h. Water/sewer	\$	1	2	8
E9i. Other (garbage and trash, installation fee, etc.)	\$	1	2	8
E9j: Total utilities — actual	\$			
E9k. Total utilities — Standard allowance:	\$			
E9l. Total monthly expenses	\$			
E9m. Shelter expense deduction	\$			

E10. Other expenses and deductions:

Type of Expense	E4a. Total Expenses	E4b. Deduction
Medical expenses	\$	\$
Child care expenses	\$	\$
Child support payments	\$	\$
Earned income	\$	\$

E11. Total monthly net income: \$\_\_\_\_\_

**SECTION F: FOOD STAMP APPLICATION PROCESS FOR INITIAL CERTIFICATION CASES**

F1. Application date:

\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_  
 Month Day Year

F2. Certification interview date:

\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_  
 Month Day Year

No certification interview (SKIP TO F10) . . . 1

F3. Expedited service status (after certification interview):

Expedited services . . . . . 1  
 Regular (SKIP TO F5) . . . . . 2  
 Don't know . . . . . 8

F4. Expedited services criteria:

	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>DK</b>
F4a. Monthly income/assets below guidelines	1	2	8
F4b. Destitute migrant/seasonal worker	1	2	8



Verification Items	Supplied at Interview <sup>a</sup>			Required after Interview <sup>b</sup>			Date Supplied	
	Yes	No	DK	Yes	No	DK	Month/Day/Year	DK
<b>F5. Personal</b>								
F5a. Identity	1	2	8	1	2	8	___/___/___	8
F5b. Household composition	1	2	8	1	2	8	___/___/___	8
F5c. Residence	1	2	8	1	2	8	___/___/___	8
F5d. Alien status	1	2	8	1	2	8	___/___/___	8
F5e. SSN card/number	1	2	8	1	2	8	___/___/___	8
<b>F6. Financial</b>								
F6a. Income (earned)	1	2	8	1	2	8	___/___/___	8
F6b. Income (unearned)	1	2	8	1	2	8	___/___/___	8
F6c. Vehicle	1	2	8	1	2	8	___/___/___	8
F6d. Bank statement	1	2	8	1	2	8	___/___/___	8
F6e. Other resources/assets	1	2	8	1	2	8	___/___/___	8
<b>F7. Expenses</b>								
F7a. Rent/mortgage	1	2	8	1	2	8	___/___/___	8
F7b. Shelter insurance/taxes	1	2	8	1	2	8	___/___/___	8
F7c. Gas/fuel	1	2	8	1	2	8	___/___/___	8
F7d. Electric	1	2	8	1	2	8	___/___/___	8
F7e. Water/sewage	1	2	8	1	2	8	___/___/___	8
F7f. Telephone	1	2	8	1	2	8	___/___/___	8
F7g. Dependent care	1	2	8	1	2	8	___/___/___	8
F7h. Medical	1	2	8	1	2	8	___/___/___	8
F7i. Child support	1	2	8	1	2	8	___/___/___	8
<b>F8. Other Requirements</b>								
F8a. Job termination	1	2	8	1	2	8	___/___/___	8
F8b. Citizenship statement	1	2	8	1	2	8	___/___/___	8
F8c. Work registration	1	2	8	1	2	8	___/___/___	8
<b>F9. Other</b>								
F9a. Specify: _____	1	2	8	1	2	8	___/___/___	8
F9b. Specify: _____	1	2	8	1	2	8	___/___/___	8

<sup>a</sup> If more than one piece of documentation needed to verify an item, record "yes" only if all supplied.

<sup>b</sup> If more than one piece of documentation needed to verify an item, record date last documentation supplied.

F10. Date of case disposition:

\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_  
Month Day Year

F11. Disposition of case:

Approved (SKIP TO F12) . . . . . 1  
Denied . . . . . 2

F11a. Reason for denial:

Circumstantially ineligible . . . . . 1  
Did not complete all application procedures (SKIP TO F11c) . . . . . 2  
Voluntary withdrawal (SKIP TO SECTION G) . . . . . 3  
Other (SPECIFY: \_\_\_\_\_) (SKIP TO SECTION G) . . . . . 4  
Don't know (SKIP TO SECTION G) . . . . . 8

F11b. Reason for ineligibility:

Excess gross income . . . . . 1  
Excess net income . . . . . 2  
Excess assets . . . . . 3  
Immigrant status . . . . . 4  
Not available . . . . . 8

SKIP TO SECTION G.

F11c. Application procedures not completed:

No certification interview . . . . . 1  
Incomplete verification . . . . . 2  
Did not complete some other part of application process (SPECIFY:  
\_\_\_\_\_) . . . . . 3  
Not available . . . . . 8

SKIP TO SECTION G.

F12. Initial certification period:

From: \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_  
Month Day Year

To: \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_  
Month Day Year

F13. Monthly allotment amount: \$\_\_\_\_\_.

F14. Were initial month's benefits issued with postponed verification?

Yes ..... 1  
 No ..... 2  
 Don't know ..... 8

F15. Was any out-of-state verification required?

Yes ..... 1  
 No ..... 2  
 Don't know ..... 8

F16. Verification complete?

Yes (ASK F16a) ..... 1  
 No ..... 2  
 Don't know ..... 8

F16a. Date verification completed:

\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_  
 Month Day Year

F17. Case received second month's benefits?

Yes (includes cases that received combined first and second month's payments) 1  
 No, verification not complete ..... 2  
 No, had one month certification period and did not reapply ..... 3  
 No, verification complete and determined ineligible; should not have  
 received first month's benefits ..... 4  
 No, verification complete and determined ineligible in second month due to  
 changes in circumstances since first month ..... 5

F18. Method of benefit delivery (after initial issuance):

EBT ..... 1  
 Coupons mailed ..... 2  
 Coupons picked up (with or without ATP card) ..... 3  
 Don't know ..... 8

**SECTION G: APPLICATIONS FOR OTHER ASSISTANCE FOR INITIAL CERTIFICATION OR RECERTIFICATION CASES**

QUESTIONS G1-G7: ASK ONLY FOR CASES NOT RECEIVING TANF AT APPLICATION/RECERTIFICATION: QC6 = NO):

G1. Did case receive a TANF lump sum payment?

- Yes ..... 1
- No (SKIP TO G2) ..... 2
- Don't know (SKIP TO G2) ..... 8

G1a. Amount of lump sum payment: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

G1b. Date payment made:

\_\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_\_  
Month Day Year

G1c. How long was household precluded from applying for or receiving additional TANF benefits?

\_\_\_\_ MONTHS or \_\_\_\_ YEARS

DON' T KNOW ..... 88

G2. Was household required to do job search before applying for TANF or before receiving TANF benefits or as a condition of receiving a lump sum payment??

- Yes ..... 1
- No (SKIP TO G4) ..... 2
- Don't know (SKIP TO G4) ..... 8

G2a. Date requirement put in place:

\_\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_\_  
Month Day Year

G2b. Job search requirements:

Requirement	Required?			Number of times required	Completed?		
	Yes	No	DK		Yes	No	DK
a. Visit employment office	1	2	8	_____	1	2	8
b. Make phone calls to potential employers	1	2	8	_____	1	2	8
c. Attend job interviews	1	2	8	_____	1	2	8
d. Attend job readiness classes	1	2	8	_____	1	2	8
e. Accept placement in public sector job (workfare)	1	2	8		1	2	8
f. Other (SPECIFY: _____)	1	2	8	_____	1	2	8

G3. Date all requirements completed:

\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_  
 Month Day Year  
 NEVER COMPLETED ..... [ ]

G4. Case referred to other sources of assistance?

Yes ..... 1  
 No (SKIP TO G5) ..... 2  
 Don't know (SKIP TO G5) ..... 8

G4a. Type of assistance referred to:

G4a. Type of Assistance	G4b. Source of assistance			
	Community Organization	Religious Organization	Government or Other Public Source	Other Private Non-profit Organization
Food	1	2	3	4
Shelter	1	2	3	4
Money	1	2	3	4
Child care or help paying ` for child care	1	2	3	4
Transportation or help paying for transportation	1	2	3	4
Helping paying utilities, like electricity, gas, or water	1	2	3	4
Help paying phone bill or enabling to use a phone	1	2	3	4
Help paying rent	1	2	3	4
Legal aid or help paying for legal aid	1	2	3	4
Any other kind of help (SPECIFY: _____)	1	2	3	4

G4c. Household precluded from applying for TANF?

- Yes (SKIP TO G4e) . . . . . 1
- Yes, in certain situations . . . . . 2
- No (SKIP TO G5) . . . . . 3
- Don't know (SKIP TO G5) . . . . . 8

G4d. In what situations?

---

G4e. How long was household precluded from applying for TANF?

- \_\_\_ MONTHS OR \_\_\_ YEARS
- DON'T KNOW . . . . . 88

G5. Applied for TANF in June 2000?

- Yes . . . . . 1
- No (SKIP TO G8) . . . . . 2

G5a. Application date:

\_\_\_ / \_\_\_ / \_\_\_  
Month Day Year

G5b. TANF case number: \_\_\_\_\_

G5c. Application disposition date:

\_\_\_ / \_\_\_ / \_\_\_  
Month Day Year

G6a. Disposition of TANF application:

- Approved (SKIP TO G7) . . . . . 1
- Denied . . . . . 2

G6b. Reason for denial

- Over income . . . . . 1
- Other circumstances . . . . . 2
- Did not provide all documents . . . . . 3
- Did not complete all other application requirements . . 4

GO TO G8.

G7. TANF monthly benefit: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

G7a. TANF benefit period:

From                         /      /       
                                  Month    Day    Year

To                             /      /       
                                  Month    Day    Year

QUESTIONS G8-G10: ASK ONLY FOR CASES NOT RECEIVING MEDICAID AT TIME OF APPLICATION/RECERTIFICATION: C7 = NO):

G8. Applied for Medicaid in June 2000?

Yes ..... 1  
No (SKIP TO SECTION H) ..... 2

G8a. Application date:

     /      /       
Month    Day    Year

G9. Disposition of Medicaid application:

Approved ..... 1  
Denied ..... 2

G9a. Reason for denial:

Over income ..... 1  
Other circumstances ..... 2  
Did not complete all application process ..... 3

**SECTION H: FOOD STAMP RECERTIFICATION PROCESS FOR RECERTIFICATION CASES**

H1. Date notice sent regarding recertification:

\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_  
Month Day Year

H2. Recertification application date:

\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_  
Month Day Year

No recertification application ..... 1

H3. Recertification interview date:

\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_  
Month Day Year

Interview not required ..... 1  
Interview required but did not occur ..... 2



Verification Items	Supplied at Interview <sup>a</sup>			Required after Interview <sup>b</sup>			Date Supplied	
	Yes	No	DK	Yes	No	DK	Month/Day/Year	DK
<b>H4. Personal</b>								
H4a. Household composition	1	2	8	1	2	8	___/___/___	8
H4b. Residence	1	2	8	1	2	8	___/___/___	8
H4c. Alien status	1	2	8	1	2	8	___/___/___	8
H4d. SSN card/number	1	2	8	1	2	8	___/___/___	8
<b>H5. Financial</b>								
H5a. Income (earned)	1	2	8	1	2	8	___/___/___	8
H5b. Income (unearned)	1	2	8	1	2	8	___/___/___	8
H5c. Vehicle	1	2	8	1	2	8	___/___/___	8
H5d. Bank statement	1	2	8	1	2	8	___/___/___	8
H5e. Other resources/assets	1	2	8	1	2	8	___/___/___	8
<b>H6. Expenses</b>								
H6a. Rent/mortgage	1	2	8	1	2	8	___/___/___	8
H6b. Shelter insurance/taxes								
H6c. Gas/fuel	1	2	8	1	2	8	___/___/___	8
H6d. Electric	1	2	8	1	2	8	___/___/___	8
H6e. Water/sewage	1	2	8	1	2	8	___/___/___	8
H6f. Telephone	1	2	8	1	2	8	___/___/___	8
H6g. Dependent care	1	2	8	1	2	8	___/___/___	8
H6h. Medical	1	2	8	1	2	8	___/___/___	8
H6i. Child support	1	2	8	1	2	8	___/___/___	8
<b>H7. Other Requirements</b>								
H7a. Job termination	1	2	8	1	2	8	___/___/___	8
H7b. Citizenship statement	1	2	8	1	2	8	___/___/___	8
H7c. Work registration	1	2	8	1	2	8	___/___/___	8
<b>H8. Other</b>								
H8a. Specify: _____	1	2	8	1	2	8	___/___/___	8
H8b. Specify: _____	1	2	8	1	2	8	___/___/___	8

<sup>a</sup> If more than one piece of documentation needed to verify an item, record "yes" only if all supplied.

<sup>b</sup> If more than one piece of documentation needed to verify an item, record date last documentation supplied.

H9. Date of case disposition:

\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_  
Month Day Year

H10. Disposition of case:

Approved (SKIP TO H11) ..... 1  
Denied ..... 2  
DON'T KNOW (SKIP TO SECTION I) ..... 8

H10a. Reason for denial:

Circumstantially ineligible ..... 1  
Did not complete all recertification procedures (SKIP TO H10c) ..... 2  
Sanctioned (SKIP TO H10d) ..... 3  
Voluntary withdrawal (SKIP TO SECTION I) ..... 4  
Other (SPECIFY: \_\_\_\_\_) (SKIP TO SECTION I) ..... 5  
Don't know (SKIP TO SECTION I) ..... 8

H10b. Reason for ineligibility:

Excess gross income ..... 1  
Excess net income ..... 2  
Excess assets ..... 3  
Immigrant status ..... 4  
Not available ..... 8

SKIP TO SECTION I.

H10c. Recertification procedures not completed:

No recertification application ..... 1  
No recertification interview ..... 2  
Incomplete verification ..... 3  
Did not complete some other part of recertification process ..... 4  
Not available ..... 8

SKIP TO SECTION I.

H10d. Sanctioned:

Food stamps only ..... 1  
TANF and food stamps ..... 2  
Not available ..... 8

SKIP TO SECTION I.

H11. Certification period:

From:      /      /       
Month Day Year

To:      /      /       
Month Day Year

H12. Monthly allotment amount: \$

**SECTION I: FOOD STAMP PARTICIPATION REQUIREMENTS FOR RECERTIFICATION AND CLOSED CASES**

11. Start date for certification period (ending June 2000/that closed June 2000):

\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_  
 Month Day Year

12. Monthly benefit amount at start of certification period (ending June 2000/that closed June 2000):

\$ \_\_\_\_\_

13. Method of benefit delivery in (June 2000/most recent month received benefits):

- EBT ..... 1
- Coupons mailed ..... 2
- Coupons picked up (with or without ATP card) ..... 3
- Don't know ..... 8

14. Food stamp participation reporting requirements status in (June 2000/most recent month received benefits):

Item	I4a. Required?			I4b. Frequency		If change in status	Other	DK	I4c. Fulfilled requirement for most recent month received benefits?		
	Yes	No	DK	Monthly	Quarterly				Yes	No	DK
Income reporting	1	2	8	1	2	3	4	8	1	2	8
Employment Verification	1	2	8	1	2	3	4	8	1	2	8
Other, specify: _____	1	2	8	1	2	3	4	8	1	2	8

15. IF DID NOT FULFILL SOME REPORTING REQUIREMENTS IN I4: Is the food stamp case...

- Closed (SKIP TO I9) ..... 1
- Sanctioned ..... 2
- No change (SKIP TO I10) ..... 3
- Other (SPECIFY: \_\_\_\_\_) (SKIP TO I10) ..... 7
- Don't know (SKIP TO I10) ..... 8

15b. Date of most recent sanction:

\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_  
 Month Day Year

I6. Household members sanctioned:

- Entire food stamp household ..... 1
- Head of household only ..... 2
- Other adult members ..... 3
- Other (SPECIFY: \_\_\_\_\_) ..... 7
- Don't know ..... 8

I7. Amount of sanction:

- Entire food stamp benefit ..... 1
- Other amount (SPECIFY: \_\_\_\_\_) ..... 2

I8. End date of sanction:

\_\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_\_  
Month Day Year

- End date not specified ..... 1

I9. Recoupment requirements?

- Yes ..... 1
- No (SKIP TO I10) ..... 2
- Don't know (SKIP TO I10) ..... 8

I9a. Recoupment amount: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

I10. Employment and training requirement: Status in (June 2000/most recent month received benefits):

- Registrant (SKIP TO I13) ..... 1
- Exempt ..... 2
- Don't know (SKIP TO I13) ..... 8

I11. Reason for exemption:

- Employed ..... 1
- Disability ..... 2
- Pregnancy ..... 3
- Age (<16 or >59) ..... 4
- Care of child/spouse ..... 5
- Complying with work registration requirements  
in another program ..... 6
- Less than 30 days in FSP ..... 7
- Other (SPECIFY: \_\_\_\_\_) ..... 8
- Don't know ..... 98

I12. End date of exemption:

\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_  
Month Day Year

EXEMPTION HAS NO END DATE . . . . . [ ]

SKIP TO SECTION J

I13. Employment and training activities in which engaged:

- Job search . . . . . 1
- Job search training . . . . . 2
- Workfare . . . . . 3
- Work experience . . . . . 4
- Education . . . . . 5
- Training . . . . . 6
- Other (SPECIFY: \_\_\_\_\_) 7

I14. Complied with food stamp employment and training requirements for most recent month received benefits?

- Yes (SKIP TO SECTION J) . . . . . 1
- No . . . . . 2
- Don't know . . . . . 8

I15. Food stamp case is:

- Closed (SKIP TO SECTION J) . . . . . 1
- Sanctioned . . . . . 2
- Don't know . . . . . 8

I15a. Date sanctioned for noncompliance with food stamp employment and training requirements:

\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_  
Month Day Year

I16. Household members sanctioned:

- Entire food stamp household . . . . . 1
- Head of household only . . . . . 2
- Other adult members . . . . . 3
- Other (SPECIFY: \_\_\_\_\_) . . . . . 7
- Don't know . . . . . 8

Amount of sanction:

- Entire food stamp benefit . . . . . 1
- Other amount (SPECIFY: \$\_\_\_\_\_) . . . . . 2

I18. End date of sanction:

\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_  
Month Day Year

End date not specified ..... 1

I19. Recoupment requirements?

Yes ..... 1  
No (SKIP TO SECTION J) ..... 2  
Don't know (SKIP TO SECTION J) ..... 3

I19a. Recoupment amount: \$\_\_\_\_\_

**SECTION J: TANF PARTICIPATION REQUIREMENTS FOR RECERTIFICATION OR CLOSED CASES**

**ASK SECTION J ONLY FOR CASES THAT RECEIVED TANF SOMETIME DURING CERTIFICATION PERIOD ENDING IN/CLOSED JUNE 2000 (Q.C6 = YES)**

J1. TANF monthly benefit amount during food stamp certification period (ending/closed) June 2000:

\$ \_\_\_\_\_

J2. Reached TANF time limit during food stamp certification period (ending/closed) June 2000?

Yes ..... 1  
 No (SKIP TO J3) ..... 2  
 Don't know (SKIP TO J3) ..... 8

J2a. Date reached TANF time limit:

\_\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_\_  
 Month Day Year

J3. TANF participation requirements:

Requirement	J3a. Required?			J3b. Complied?			J3c. Sanctioned?			J3d. Date Sanctioned			
	Y	N	DK	Y	N	DK	Y	N	DK	Month	Day	Year	DK
Job search	1	2	8	1	2	8	1	2	8	___	___	_____	8
Work/training	1	2	8	1	2	8	1	2	8	___	___	_____	8
Child immunizations	1	2	8	1	2	8	1	2	8	___	___	_____	8
Child school attendance	1	2	8	1	2	8	1	2	8	___	___	_____	8
Child support enforcement	1	2	8	1	2	8	1	2	8	___	___	_____	8
Personal responsibility statement	1	2	8	1	2	8	1	2	8	___	___	_____	8
Finger imaging	1	2	8	1	2	8	1	2	8	___	___	_____	8
Other (SPECIFY: _____)	1	2	8	1	2	8	1	2	8	___	___	_____	8
Other (SPECIFY: _____)	1	2	8	1	2	8	1	2	8	___	___	_____	8



J4. IF SANCTIONED FOR ANY REQUIREMENTS IN J3:

J4a. Household members sanctioned:

- Entire TANF household ..... 1
- TANF household head only ..... 2
- Other (SPECIFY: \_\_\_\_\_) ..... 7
- Don't know ..... 8

J4c. Amount of sanction:

- Entire TANF monthly benefit ..... 1
- [J4d] Other amount (SPECIFY: \$ \_\_\_\_\_) ..... 2

J4e. End date of sanction:

\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_  
Month Day Year

- End date not specified ..... 1

J4f. Recoupment or repayment requirements?

- Yes ..... 1
- No (SKIP TO J5) ..... 2
- Don't know (SKIP TO J5) ..... 8

J4g. Recoupment or repayment amount: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

J5. IF SANCTIONED FOR ANY REQUIREMENTS IN J3: Food stamp sanction imposed?

- Yes ..... 1
- No (GO TO END) ..... 2
- Don't know (GO TO END) ..... 8

J5a. Date of food stamp sanction:

\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_  
Month Day Year

J5b. Food stamp household members sanctioned:

- Entire food stamp household ..... 1
- Head of food stamp household only ..... 2
- Other adult members ..... 3
- [J5c] Other (SPECIFY: \_\_\_\_\_) ..... 7
- Don't know ..... 8

J5d. Amount of sanction:

Entire food stamp benefit ..... 1  
Other amount (SPECIFY: \$ \_\_\_\_\_) ..... 2

J5f. End date of food stamp sanction:

\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_  
Month Day Year

End date not specified ..... 1

J5g. Recoupment requirements?

Yes ..... 1  
No (GO TO END) ..... 2  
Don't know (GO TO END) ..... 8

J5h. Recoupment amount: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**SECTION K: REASONS FOR CASE CLOSURE FOR CLOSED CASES**

K1. Date case closed:

\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_  
 Month Day Year

K2. Reason case closed:

- Ineligible (over income or assets) ..... 1
- Noncompliance with income reporting ..... 2
- Noncompliance with food stamp employment and training requirements ..... 3
- Noncompliance with TANF employment and training requirements ..... 4
- Did not appear for food stamp redetermination after TANF time limit ..... 5
- Intentional program violation ..... 6
- Voluntary termination ..... 7
- Household moved ..... 8
- Other (SPECIFY: \_\_\_\_\_) ..... 9
- Don't know ..... 88

K3. Notices sent prior to closure?

- Yes ..... 1
- No ..... 2
- Don't know ..... 8

K4. Date(s) notice(s) sent:

K4a. \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_  
 Month Day Year

K4b. \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_  
 Month Day Year

K4c. \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_  
 Month Day Year

**A Study of Program Access and Declining Food Stamp Participation  
Applicant Survey**

**Introduction:**

Hello, my name is \_\_\_\_\_. May I speak with RESPONDENT?

I'm calling from Abt Associates in Amherst, Massachusetts. We were hired by the United States Department of Agriculture in Washington, DC to conduct a study of the Food Stamp Program and the experiences of people who apply for food stamps. We got your name from the food stamp office where you went to apply for assistance in June.

The officials at the USDA are interested in knowing what happens when people apply for food stamps and what their experiences are as they go through the application process, as well as their circumstances for needing assistance. They are particularly interested in why some people contact the office, or submit an application, but then decide not to complete the application process.

I would like to talk with you about your experiences with the food stamp office you went to for assistance. Your answers will be kept confidential and your name will not be identified with any answers you give. Also, your interview with me cannot affect your status with any agency now or in the future.

According to the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, an agency may not conduct or sponsor, and a person is not required to respond to, a collection of information unless it displays a valid OMB control number. The valid OMB control number for this information collection is \_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_. The time required to complete this information collection is estimated to average 30 minutes per response, including the time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information.

**A. Household Composition/Characteristics**

My first few questions are about the characteristics of your household. Your answers to these questions will tell me which questions I need to ask. Remember, all the information you tell me is for research purposes only and will remain confidential. Please tell me about your household situation in June, when you visited the food stamp office.

A1. How many people live in your household? By household I mean yourself and the people who live with you and share food with you. PROBE: Include any persons who live with you more than half of the time.

\_\_\_\_\_ PEOPLE IN HOUSEHOLD (IF ONE-PERSON  
HOUSEHOLD, SKIP TO A3)  
REFUSED ..... 97  
DON'T KNOW ..... 98

A2. How many household members are. . . (MAKE SURE TOTAL MATCHES A1)

Under 5 years old? ..... \_\_\_\_\_  
Five to 17 years old? ..... \_\_\_\_\_  
18-59 years of age? ..... \_\_\_\_\_  
60 years of age or older? ..... \_\_\_\_\_  
TOTAL ..... \_\_\_\_\_

A3. Is English the primary language spoken in your household?

YES (SKIP TO Q. A5) ..... 1  
NO ..... 2

A4. What language do you and your family most often speak at home?

SPANISH ..... 1  
CHINESE ..... 2  
PORTUGUESE ..... 3  
FRENCH ..... 4  
ARABIC ..... 5  
ITALIAN ..... 6  
VIETNAMESE ..... 7  
LAOTIAN ..... 8  
CAMBODIAN ..... 9  
HMONG ..... 10  
OTHER (SPECIFY) \_\_\_\_\_ ..... 11

A5. What is your date of birth?

\_\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_\_  
MONTH DAY YEAR

**B. Circumstances and events potentially triggering an application**

B1. Thinking back to June, when you or inquired about food stamps or other assistance at the welfare office or began the application process for food stamps, what happened in your life that made you decide to ask about the Food Stamp Program or other assistance? I'm going to read a list of some things that might have happened in your life around that time. For each one, please tell me whether this happened to you.

B1a. A household member, or some other person, who had been contributing income or paying bills died.

YES ..... 1  
NO ..... 2

B1b. A household member who had been contributing income or paying bills moved out of the household or is no longer part of your household.

YES (ASK B1b1) ..... 1  
NO ..... 2

B1b1. Was this due to a marital breakup?

YES ..... 1  
NO ..... 2

B1c. The number of household members increased.

YES (ASK B1c1) ..... 1  
NO (GO TO B1d) ..... 2

B1c1. Was it a:

New baby (GO TO B1d) ..... 1  
Not a new baby, but another child, or (GO TO B1d) ..... 2  
Adult (ASK B1c2) ..... 3

B1c2. Does the new adult member contribute income or help pay bills?

YES ..... 1  
NO ..... 2

B1d. You or another household member started earning less.

YES (ASK B1d1) ..... 1  
NO (GO TO B1e) ..... 2

B1d1. Was it because: (CIRCLE ALL THAT APPLY)

Someone stopped working? ..... 1  
Someone is working fewer hours? ..... 2  
Someone's pay rate was reduced? ..... 3

B1e. Your household lost some other type of income, such as TANF (INSERT NAME OF STATE PROGRAM), unemployment compensation, SSI, or child support.

YES (ASK B1e1) ..... 1  
NO (GO TO B1f) ..... 2

B1e1. Was it: (CIRCLE ALL THAT APPLY)

TANF (INSERT NAME OF STATE PROGRAM) ..... 1  
Unemployment compensation ..... 2  
SSI ..... 3  
Child support ..... 4  
OTHER (SPECIFY) \_\_\_\_\_ ..... 5

B1f. You or another household member had recently become sick or disabled.

YES (ASK B1f1-2) ..... 1  
NO (GO TO B1g) ..... 2

B1f1. Was it:

You, or ..... 1  
Another household member ..... 2

B1f2. (Were you/Was this person) working at the time (you/he/she) became ill or disabled?

YES ..... 1  
NO ..... 2

B1g. You moved.

YES (ASK B1g1-2) ..... 1  
NO (GO TO B1h) ..... 2

B1g1. Did you move from another state or county?

YES ..... 1  
NO ..... 2

B1g2. Did everyone in your household move or just some of you?

EVERYONE (GO TO B1h) ..... 1  
SOME (ASK B1g3) ..... 2

B1g3. Had the people who stayed behind been contributing income or paying bills?

YES ..... 1  
NO ..... 2

B1h. Your rent, mortgage, or utilities payments went up.

YES ..... 1  
 NO ..... 2

B1i. Financial help from a relative or friend stopped coming in.

YES ..... 1  
 NO/NOT APPLICABLE ..... 2

B1j. You were released from an institution, such as jail, a hospital, or a treatment center.

YES (ASK B1j1) ..... 1  
 NO (GO TO B1k) ..... 2

B1j1. Which one?

Jail ..... 1  
 Hospital ..... 2  
 Treatment center ..... 3  
 OTHER (SPECIFY) \_\_\_\_\_ ..... 4

B1k. It was getting harder and harder to make ends meet.

YES ..... 1  
 NO ..... 2

B1l. You just found out about the Food Stamp Program

YES ..... 1  
 NO ..... 2

B1m. Were there any other reasons? (PROGRAMMER: THERE MUST BE AT LEAST ONE)

YES (SPECIFY:) \_\_\_\_\_ ..... 1  
 NO ..... 2

B2. IF MORE THAN ONE "YES" IN QUESTION B1, ASK B2. OTHERWISE SKIP TO B3.  
 Of all the reasons you mentioned, (READ FROM B1 IF NECESSARY), what was the most important reason that you applied or inquired about food stamps or other assistance?

RECORD LETTER FROM B1: \_\_\_\_\_



B3. How long had you been affected by (this event/these events) or situation(s) before you checked about getting food stamps or other assistance?

- # \_\_\_\_\_ days
- OR
- # \_\_\_\_\_ weeks
- OR
- # \_\_\_\_\_ months
- OR
- # \_\_\_\_\_ years

B4. When you contacted the welfare office in June, did you know which specific programs you were interested in?

- YES ..... 1
- NO (SKIP TO B5) ..... 2
- SOME IDEA ..... 3
- REFUSED (SKIP TO B5) ..... 7
- DON'T KNOW (SKIP TO B5) ..... 8

B4a. Which programs were you interested in?

PROGRAM:	YES	NO	RF	DK
Food Stamps	1	2	7	8
TANF (INSERT STATE NAME)	1	2	7	8
Medicaid	1	2	7	8
SCHIP (INSERT STATE NAME)	1	2	7	8
SSI	1	2	7	8
General Assistance (INSERT STATE NAME)	1	2	7	8
OTHER (SPECIFY: _____)	1	2	7	8

B5. In June, did you apply for [PROGRAM name from grid]? (IF YES, ASK B5a.)

B5a. Were you approved for [PROGRAM name from grid] when you applied in June?

PROGRAM	B5. APPLIED?				B5a. APPROVED?			
	YES	NO	RF	DK	YES	NO	RF	DK
Food Stamps	1	2	7	8	1	2	7	8
TANF (INSERT NAME OF STATE PROGRAM)	1	2	7	8	1	2	7	8
Medicaid	1	2	7	8	1	2	7	8
SCHIP (INSERT STATE NAME)	1	2	7	8	1	2	7	8

PROGRAM	B5. APPLIED?				B5a. APPROVED?			
	YES	NO	RF	DK	YES	NO	RF	DK
SSI	1	2	7	8	1	2	7	8
General Assistance (INSERT STATE NAME)	1	2	7	8	1	2	7	8
OTHER (SPECIFY) _____	1	2	7	8	1	2	7	8

B6. After hearing about your situation, did the caseworker or other office worker arrange for you to be provided with a single “lump sum” payment because it was determined that your needs were short-term?

YES ..... 1  
NO ..... 2

B7. Did the worker suggest that you pursue community agencies for assistance instead of applying for assistance at the welfare office?

YES ..... 1  
NO ..... 2

B8. Did the worker assign you job search activities, to be conducted before you could receive benefits?

YES ..... 1  
NO ..... 2

IF B6 OR B7 OR B8 = “YES” THEN ASK B9. OTHERWISE SKIP TO B10.

B9. Did the caseworker ...

Suggest you apply for food stamps ..... 1  
Tell you that you weren't eligible for food stamps ..... 2  
Suggest you not apply for food stamp at this time ..... 3  
Not mention the food stamp program ..... 4

**INTERVIEWER:** SEE THE GRID IN B5. IF RESPONDENT WAS APPROVED FOR **FOOD STAMPS** (“YES” TO B5a), SKIP TO SECTION C. OTHERWISE, CONTINUE.

B10. Did you pick up or did they mail you a food stamp application?

YES (SKIP TO B12) ..... 1  
NO ..... 2

B11. What was the main reason you were not provided with a food stamp application? Was it because... (READ LIST. CIRCLE ONE.)

- You did not want to apply (SKIP TO B15) ..... 1
- You did not ask for an application (SKIP TO B15) ..... 2
- No one suggested that you complete one, so you didn't think you'd  
be eligible (SKIP TO B15) ..... 3
- You could not wait for an application (SKIP TO B15) ..... 4
- The caseworker said you probably wouldn't be eligible (SKIP TO B15) ..... 5
- DON'T KNOW ..... 8
- B12. Did you file an application, that is, did you sign and return an application to the office either in person or through the mail?
- YES ..... 1
- NO (SKIP TO B15) ..... 2
- B13. Did you have a full food stamp interview where the caseworker asked for the details of your situation or circumstances?
- YES ..... 1
- NO (SKIP TO B15) ..... 2
- B14. Did you provide all the documents or proof of your statements the caseworker requested?
- YES (SKIP TO B16) ..... 1
- NO ..... 2
- B15. Did you decide at this point not to apply or not to complete the food stamps application process?
- YES (SKIP TO B17) ..... 1
- NO ..... 2
- B16. Did you get a letter from the food stamp office saying you were not eligible because you have too much income or resources?
- YES (GO TO SECTION C) ..... 1
- NO (GO TO B17) ..... 2
- B17. Please tell us the main reason why you did not get food stamps or did not complete the application process for food stamps? RECORD VERBATIM
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- B18. I'm going to read a list of some *general* issues other people have given for not completing the application process for food stamps. As I read the list, please indicate whether any of these were general issues you had with the application process.

	YES	NO
a. Situation changed - no longer needed food stamps	1	2
b. Thought you weren't eligible	1	2
c. Difficulty with application form	1	2
d. Inconvenience or cost associated with applying	1	2
e. Confusion about what to do	1	2
f. Too much hassle or not worth the effort	1	2
g. The process took too long	1	2
h. Difficulty providing required documentation	1	2
i. Concerns about privacy	1	2
j. Too many rules to comply with	1	2
k. Citizenship issues	1	2
l. Embarrassment	1	2
m. A personal situation prevented you from completing the application	1	2

FOR ANY GENERAL ISSUE R INDICATED AS Y (YES), READ THE FOLLOWING:

B19. For each general issue you indicated as having with the food stamp application process, I am now going to read some *more specific* reasons other people have provided for deciding not to complete the application process for food stamps. Please listen to each statement, and tell me whether:

B19a. This **happened**. IF YES, ASK B19b.

B19b. If it happened, was it a **reason** you decided not to apply or not to complete the application for food stamps?

STATEMENT	B19a. HAPPENED?				B19b. REASON?			
	YES	NO	RF	DK	YES	NO	RF	DK
IF ANSWERED YES TO B18a, CONFIRM QUESTION 1:								
1. Your situation changed and you no longer needed food stamps.	1	2	7	8	1	2	7	8
IF ANSWERED YES TO B18b, READ QUESTIONS 2-6:								
2. Staff at the food stamp office told you or at least made you think you would not be eligible.	1	2	7	8	1	2	7	8
3. Once you heard the eligibility requirements, you knew or thought you would not be eligible.	1	2	7	8	1	2	7	8
3a. Was this because... (CIRCLE ALL THAT APPLY)								
You work and earn too much money to be eligible for food stamps ..... 1								
You get other government benefits and are not eligible for food stamps ..... 2								
You have too much in savings or assets to be eligible for food stamps ..... 3								
Your car is worth too much to be eligible for food stamps ..... 4								
4. You didn't think you'd be eligible since you received a lump sum payment.	1	2	7	8	1	2	7	8
5. You didn't think you'd be eligible since you did not complete the job search or assessment activities.	1	2	7	8	1	2	7	8
6. You didn't think you were eligible because you were referred to other sources of assistance.	1	2	7	8	1	2	7	8
IF ANSWERED YES TO B18c, READ QUESTIONS 7-8:								
7. The application form was too difficult for you to complete.	1	2	7	8	1	2	7	8
8. The application form was not in your native language so was hard to understand	1	2	7	8	1	2	7	8
IF ANSWERED YES TO B18d, READ QUESTIONS 9-12:								

STATEMENT	B19a. HAPPENED?				B19b. REASON?			
	YES	NO	RF	DK	YES	NO	RF	DK
9. You had no way or it was too hard to get to the food stamp office.	1	2	7	8	1	2	7	8
10. It cost too much to go to the food stamp office.	1	2	7	8	1	2	7	8
11. You would have to take time off work to apply and receritfy so you could get there during the hours the office is open.	1	2	7	8	1	2	7	8
12. You would have to pay for child or elder care while you go to apply.	1	2	7	8	1	2	7	8
IF ANSWERED YES TO B18e, READ QUESTIONS 13-14:								
13. You never heard from the food stamp office to tell you what to do.	1	2	7	8	1	2	7	8
14. You were confused about what you were supposed to do to apply.	1	2	7	8	1	2	7	8
IF ANSWERED YES TO B18f, READ QUESTIONS 15-16:								
15. Since you weren't eligible for cash assistance, the food stamp benefit alone wouldn't be worth the effort and cost of applying.	1	2	7	8	1	2	7	8
16. The amount of benefits you would have received was a very small amount.	1	2	7	8	1	2	7	8
IF ANSWERED YES TO B18g, READ QUESTIONS 17-18:								
17. You found out it would take a long time before you could receive any food stamps.	1	2	7	8	1	2	7	8
18. You had to wait too long when you visited the food stamp office	1	2	7	8	1	2	7	8
IF ANSWERED YES TO B18h READ QUESTIONS 19-22:								
19. They asked you to provide a number of documents and you were not able to provide all of them.	1	2	7	8	1	2	7	8
20. They asked you to provide a number of documents and you were not willing to provide all of them.	1	2	7	8	1	2	7	8
21. They asked you to give them a social security number for everyone in your household and you were not able to do that	1	2	7	8	1	2	7	8

STATEMENT	B19a. HAPPENED?				B19b. REASON?			
	YES	NO	RF	DK	YES	NO	RF	DK
22. They asked you to give them a social security number for everyone in your household and you were not willing to do that.	1	2	7	8	1	2	7	8
IF ANSWERED YES TO B18i READ QUESTIONS 23-27:								
23. The application form asked too many personal questions.	1	2	7	8	1	2	7	8
24. You did not want to be fingerprinted..	1	2	7	8	1	2	7	8
25. You did not want the welfare office to contact your employer	1	2	7	8	1	2	7	8
26. You did not want the welfare office to contact your landlord	1	2	7	8	1	2	7	8
27. You did not want a caseworker to visit your home	1	2	7	8	1	2	7	8
READ Q.28 ONLY IF CHILDREN IN HOUSEHOLD (ANY HOUSEHOLD MEMBERS UNDER AGE 18 FROM A2)	1	2	7	8	1	2	7	8
28. You did not want the welfare office to contact your child(ren)'s schools.								
IF ANSWERED YES TO B18j READ QUESTIONS 29-35:								
29. You did not want to complete a form reporting on your circumstances every month and mail it to the office.	1	2	7	8	1	2	7	8
30. You would have to recertify too frequently.	1	2	7	8	1	2	7	8
31. IF R IS ELDERLY (A5: YEAR LESS THAN OR EQUAL TO 1940), SKIP TO ITEM 32. You would be required to work or at least actively search for a job to be eligible and have to search to remain eligible.	1	2	7	8	1	2	7	8
32. You did not want to sign a form saying you could be fined or arrested if any of the information on the form was not correct.	1	2	7	8	1	2	7	8
33. You did not want to sign a personal responsibility contract.	1	2	7	8	1	2	7	8

STATEMENT	B19a. HAPPENED?				B19b. REASON?			
	YES	NO	RF	DK	YES	NO	RF	DK
READ Q.34-35 ONLY IF CHILDREN IN HOUSEHOLD (ANY HOUSEHOLD MEMBERS UNDER AGE 18 FROM A2)	1	2	7	8	1	2	7	8
34. You did not want to do child support enforcement.	1	2	7	8	1	2	7	8
35. You did not want to have your children immunized.	1	2	7	8	1	2	7	8
IF ANSWERED YES TO B18k READ QUESTIONS 36-37:								
36. You didn't think you'd be eligible because of your alien status.	1	2	7	8	1	2	7	8
37. You were afraid it would have a negative impact on your citizenship application.	1	2	7	8	1	2	7	8
IF ANSWERED YES TO B18l READ QUESTIONS 38-39:								
38. You did not want to be seen going into the food stamp office.	1	2	7	8	1	2	7	8
39. You did not want to be seen using food stamps at the grocery store.	1	2	7	8	1	2	7	8
IF ANSWERED YES TO B18m CONFIRM QUESTION 40:								
40. A family emergency occurred that prevented you from completing the application process.	1	2	7	8	1	2	7	8



**C. Knowledge of FSP and Expected Benefits/Requirements**

Now I'd like to ask you some questions about your previous experiences with food stamps, cash assistance, or other benefit programs *before* you inquired about assistance in June.

C1. Before June, had you or anyone in your household ever received (BENEFIT) before?

IF YES TO C1, ASK C1a AND C1b:

C1a. How long ago did you last receive (BENEFIT)?

C1b. How much do or did you receive each month from (BENEFIT)?

IF NO TO C1 ASK C1c.

C1c. Did you or anyone in your household ever apply for (BENEFIT) before?

BENEFIT	C1. RECEIVED?				C1a. LAST RECEIPT	C1b. AMOUNT RECEIVED	C1c. APPLIED?			
	YES	NO	RF	DK			YES	NO	RF	DK
Food stamps	1	2	7	8	Still receiving ..... 1 Within the last year .. 2 1-4 years ago ..... 3 More than 4 years ago 4 DK ..... 8	\$ _____ DK ..... 8	1	2	7	8
Welfare or cash assistance	1	2	7	8	Still receiving ..... 1 Within the last year .. 2 1-4 years ago ..... 3 More than 4 years ago 4 DK ..... 8	\$ _____ DK ..... 8	1	2	7	8
Medical Assistance	1	2	7	8	Still receiving ..... 1 Within the last year .. 2 1-4 years ago ..... 3 More than 4 years ago 4 DK ..... 8		1	2	7	8
WIC	1	2	7	8	Still receiving ..... 1 Within the last year .. 2 1-4 years ago ..... 3 More than 4 years ago 4 DK ..... 8		1	2	7	8

IF C1 OR C1c = "YES" FOR FOOD STAMPS, SKIP TO C3.

C2. Before June, had you heard of food stamps or the Food Stamp Program?

- YES ..... 1
- NO (SKIP TO C5) ..... 2
- REFUSED (SKIP TO C5) ..... 7
- DON'T KNOW (SKIP TO C5) ..... 8

C3. As far as you know, did your family ever receive food stamp benefits when you were a child?

- YES ..... 1
- NO ..... 2
- REFUSED ..... 7
- DON'T KNOW ..... 8

C4. As far as you know, were any of your relatives, friends, neighbors, or co-workers receiving food stamp benefits in June when you went to inquire about assistance?

- YES ..... 1
- NO ..... 2
- REFUSED ..... 7
- DON'T KNOW ..... 8

C5. In June, when you were first thinking about applying for assistance, did you know where you had to go to apply for food stamps or other assistance?

- YES ..... 1
- NO ..... 2
- REFUSED ..... 7
- DON'T KNOW ..... 8

C6. In June, before you went to apply for food stamp benefits, had you seen or heard about the Food Stamp Program in any of the following places? Had you...

	YES	NO
Read any articles about the Program in the newspaper? .....	1	2
Heard any announcements or advertisements on the radio or TV? .....	1	2
Seen any posters, flyers, or brochures? .....	1	2
Seen any billboards or advertisements on buses, taxis, or trains? .....	1	2
Heard any presentations by community groups? .....	1	2
Received any mail or telephone calls about food stamps? .....	1	2
Any thing else (SPECIFY: _____)? .....	1	2

C7. In June, before you contacted the food stamp or welfare office, did you think that you would be eligible for food stamp benefits?

- YES ..... 1
- NO (SKIP TO C8) ..... 2
- WASN'T SURE ..... 3
- REFUSED (SKIP TO C8) ..... 7
- DON'T KNOW (SKIP TO C8) ..... 8

C7a. How much per month did you think you would be eligible to receive in benefits?  
PROBE: Your best guess is fine.

- \$10 or less ..... 1
- Between \$11 and \$25 ..... 2
- Between \$26 and \$50 ..... 3
- Between \$51 and \$100 ..... 4

Between \$101 and \$150 .....	5
Between \$151 and \$200 .....	6
Between \$201 and \$300 .....	7
Over \$300 .....	8
DON'T KNOW .....	98

C8. In June, before you went to apply for assistance, how much did you know about what you would have to do in order to get food stamp benefits? Would you say you ...

Were well informed about the process .....	1
Had some idea about the process .....	2
Did not have any idea what was involved .....	3
REFUSED .....	7
DON'T KNOW .....	8

C9. Was there anything about the food stamp application process that *almost* prevented you from applying?

YES .....	1
NO (SKIP TO SECTION D) .....	2
REFUSED (SKIP TO SECTION D) .....	7
DON'T KNOW (SKIP TO SECTION D) .....	8

C9a. What was it that almost prevented you from applying? CIRCLE ALL THAT APPLY

Filling out the application form .....	1
Providing all required documents .....	2
The time it would take to complete the application process ...	3
Work or job search requirements .....	4
OTHER (SPECIFY: _____) .....	6
REFUSED .....	7
DON'T KNOW .....	8

**D. Time/Cost of Application**

My next several questions are about how much time and how much cost was associated with your visits to the food stamp office to find out about or apply for food stamps. When I refer to the food stamp office, I mean the office you visited to apply for food stamp benefits.

D1. Starting in June, when you first went to apply for or to see about assistance, how many trips did you make to the Food Stamps office *in all* to apply for food stamps?

# \_\_\_\_\_ trips  
REFUSED ..... 7  
DON'T KNOW ..... 8

IF ZERO TRIPS, SKIP TO SECTION E.

D2. Did you make any additional trips to this office in order to apply for TANF (INSERT NAME OF STATE PROGRAM) or Medicaid benefits?

YES ..... 1  
NO (SKIP TO D3) ..... 2  
REFUSED (SKIP TO D3) ..... 7  
DON'T KNOW (SKIP TO D3) ..... 8

D2a. How many additional trips did you make to apply for TANF (INSERT NAME OF STATE PROGRAM) or Medicaid?

# \_\_\_\_\_ trips  
REFUSED ..... 7  
DON'T KNOW ..... 8

D3. How many trips did *you think* you'd have to make to the food stamp office before you received food stamps or were denied benefits?

# \_\_\_\_\_ trips  
REFUSED ..... 7  
DON'T KNOW ..... 8

D4. How did you **usually** get to the food stamp office? (READ ITEM IF NECESSARY.)

- Drive your own car ..... 1
- Take a bus or other public transportation (SKIP TO D5) ..... 2
- Take a taxicab ..... 3
- Have someone drive you ..... 4
- Borrow a car ..... 5
- Walk ..... 6
- OTHER (SPECIFY) \_\_\_\_\_ ..... 7

D4a. Is public transportation available to the food stamp office?

- YES ..... 1
- NO ..... 2
- REFUSED ..... 7
- DON'T KNOW ..... 8

D5. Approximately how many miles is it from your house to the food stamp office? IF LESS THAN 1/2 MILE, ENTER 0. IF 1/2 TO 1, ENTER 1.

- \_\_\_\_\_ MILES
- REFUSED ..... 7
- DON'T KNOW ..... 8

D6. IF D4 IS PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION OR TAXICAB, ASK: What was the cost of a one-way trip to the food stamp office?

- \$ \_\_\_\_\_
- REFUSED ..... 7
- DON'T KNOW ..... 8

D7. IF D4 IS HAVING SOMEONE DRIVE YOU, BORROW A CAR, DRIVE OWN CAR, ASK: What was the average cost of a one-way trip, including tolls, parking while at the food stamp office, and money you may have paid a driver?

- \$ \_\_\_\_\_
- None/Nothing ..... 1
- N/A ..... 2
- REFUSED ..... 7
- DON'T KNOW ..... 8

D8. How much time on average did it take for you to *get to* the food stamp office, for a one-way trip?

- \_\_\_\_\_ total hours
- OR
- \_\_\_\_\_ total minutes
- REFUSED ..... 7
- DON'T KNOW ..... 8

D9. Counting *all* the visits you made to the food stamp office to apply for or see about food stamps or other assistance, how much time did you spend at the office, including waiting, filling out paperwork, meeting with program staff, etc.?

\_\_\_\_\_ total hours  
OR  
\_\_\_\_\_ total minutes

D10. How many total trips did you or a family member make to other offices such as utility companies or employers to collect the required documentation for the food stamp application?

# \_\_\_\_\_ trips  
REFUSED ..... 7  
DON'T KNOW ..... 8

D11. Did you have to miss any work in order to apply for food stamps?

YES ..... 1  
NO (GO TO D12) ..... 2  
REFUSED (GO TO D12) ..... 7  
DON'T KNOW (GO TO D12) ..... 8

D11a. How much in wages did you lose applying for food stamp benefits?

\$ \_\_\_\_\_  
NO LOST WAGES ..... 1  
REFUSED ..... 7  
DON'T KNOW ..... 8

D12. Did you need to pay for child care or elder care at any time when you went to apply for food stamps or when you went to collect documentation for the application?

YES ..... 1  
NO (GO TO D13) ..... 2  
REFUSED (GO TO D13) ..... 7  
DON'T KNOW (GO TO D13) ..... 8

D12a. How much money in total did you pay for child or elder care?

\$ \_\_\_\_\_  
REFUSED ..... 7  
DON'T KNOW ..... 8

D13. IF R APPLIED FOR TANF OR MEDICAID (SEE B5), ASK D13. OTHERWISE SKIP TO SECTION E.

Did you have to go to a different office to apply for TANF (INSERT NAME OF STATE PROGRAM) or Medicaid benefits?

YES ..... 1  
NO (GO TO SECTION E) ..... 2

D13a. How many trips did you make *in all* to apply for TANF (INSERT NAME OF STATE PROGRAM) or Medicaid benefits?

<u>          </u>	# OF TRIPS	
REFUSED	.....	7
DON'T KNOW	.....	8

**E. Convenience of Hours and Location/Other Factors in the Participation Decision**

My next set of questions are about your experiences at the Food Stamp or TANF (INSERT NAME OF STATE PROGRAM) offices when you first went to find out about or apply for food stamps in June.

E1. How convenient is the office location for you? Do you consider the location ...

- Very convenient (SKIP TO E3) ..... 1
- Somewhat convenient (SKIP TO E3) ..... 2
- Somewhat inconvenient ..... 3
- Very inconvenient ..... 4
- REFUSED ..... 7
- DON'T KNOW ..... 8

E2. What, if anything, is wrong with the location of the office? (CIRCLE ALL THAT APPLY)

- It is too far from home ..... 1
- It is in a congested area with lots of traffic ..... 2
- It was difficult to find the building ..... 3
- It is difficult to find parking ..... 4
- It is in an unsafe neighborhood ..... 5
- It is not easily accessible by public transportation ..... 6
- It costs too much to get there ..... 8
- The building is depressing ..... 8
- OTHER (SPECIFY) \_\_\_\_\_ ..... 96
- REFUSED ..... 97
- DON'T KNOW ..... 98

E3. How convenient for you were the hours the office was open? Would you say they were ...

- Very convenient (SKIP TO E5) ..... 1
- Somewhat convenient (SKIP TO E5) ..... 2
- Somewhat inconvenient ..... 3
- Very inconvenient ..... 4
- REFUSED ..... 7
- DON'T KNOW ..... 8

E4. What was the problem with the office hours at the Food Stamp Office? (CIRCLE ALL THAT APPLY)

- It is open only during normal business hours ..... 1
- You would have to take time off from work to get there ..... 2
- It is difficult to schedule meetings with a caseworker at convenient times ..... 3
- It is not open evenings or weekends ..... 4
- There are few workers available at lunchtime when I could get there ..... 5
- Other problems (SPECIFY) \_\_\_\_\_ ..... 6
- REFUSED ..... 7
- DON'T KNOW ..... 8



- E5. Do you have a disability that makes it hard for you to visit the Food Stamp Office?
- YES ..... 1  
 NO ..... 2  
 REFUSED ..... 7  
 DON'T KNOW ..... 8
- E6. In June when you first visited the food stamp office, was there a receptionist or someone like that available to greet you and help you know what to do next?
- YES ..... 1  
 NO (SKIP TO E8) ..... 2  
 REFUSED (SKIP TO E8) ..... 7  
 DON'T KNOW (SKIP TO E8) ..... 8
- E7. How satisfied were you with the services provided by this person? Would you say ...
- Very satisfied ..... 1  
 Somewhat satisfied ..... 2  
 Somewhat dissatisfied ..... 3  
 Very dissatisfied ..... 4  
 REFUSED ..... 7  
 DON'T KNOW ..... 8
- E8. Did you speak with a caseworker on that visit?
- YES ..... 1  
 NO (GO TO E9) ..... 2  
 REFUSED (GO TO E9) ..... 7  
 DON'T KNOW (GO TO E9) ..... 8
- E8a. How long did you wait to speak with a welfare caseworker or food stamp caseworker about your case?
- # \_\_\_\_\_ minutes
- E9. Were you informed about the requirements for applying and participating in the Food Stamp Program?
- YES ..... 1  
 NO (SKIP TO E10) ..... 2  
 REFUSED (SKIP TO E10) ..... 7  
 DON'T KNOW (SKIP TO E10) ..... 8

E9A. How were you informed? (CIRCLE ALL THAT APPLY. READ LIST IF NECESSARY.)

- CASEWORKER TOLD YOU ABOUT THEM ..... 1
- CASEWORKER OR OTHER OFFICE STAFF GAVE YOU WRITTEN MATERIALS LIKE PAMPHLETS OR BROCHURES ..... 2
- PICKED UP WRITTEN MATERIALS YOURSELF ..... 3
- RECEIVED MATERIALS IN THE MAIL AFTER YOUR VISIT ..... 4
- ATTENDED A GROUP MEETING WHERE BENEFITS AND GUIDELINES WERE EXPLAINED ..... 5
- WATCHED A VIDEO ON BENEFITS AND GUIDELINES ..... 6
- REFUSED ..... 7
- DON'T KNOW ..... 8

E10. Were you informed about the requirements for the TANF (INSERT NAME OF STATE PROGRAM)?

- YES ..... 1
- NO (SKIP TO E11) ..... 2
- REFUSED (SKIP TO E11) ..... 7
- DON'T KNOW (SKIP TO E11) ..... 8

E10a. How were you informed? (CIRCLE ALL THAT APPLY. READ LIST IF NECESSARY.)

- CASEWORKER TOLD YOU ABOUT THEM ..... 1
- CASEWORKER OR OTHER OFFICE STAFF GAVE YOU WRITTEN MATERIALS LIKE PAMPHLETS OR BROCHURES ..... 2
- PICKED UP WRITTEN MATERIALS YOURSELF ..... 3
- RECEIVED MATERIALS IN THE MAIL AFTER YOUR VISIT ..... 4
- ATTENDED A GROUP MEETING WHERE BENEFITS AND GUIDELINES WERE EXPLAINED ..... 5
- WATCHED A VIDEO ON BENEFITS AND GUIDELINES ..... 6
- REFUSED ..... 7
- DON'T KNOW ..... 8

E11. In June, did you receive any assistance... (READ TASK)? IF YES, ASK E11a.

E11a. Who provided the assistance?

TASK	E11. RECEIVED ASSISTANCE?				E11a. ASSISTANCE PROVIDED BY:		
	YES	NO	RF	DK	FOOD STAMP STAFF	VOLUNTEERS	STAFF AT ANOTHER ORGANIZATION
Completing the application form	1	2	7	8	1	2	3
Obtaining necessary documents	1	2	7	8	1	2	3

**IF ANSWERED NO TO A3 ASK QUESTIONS E12-E15. OTHERWISE, SKIP TO E16.**

E12. Do you feel comfortable speaking and reading English

- YES (SKIP TO E16) ..... 1
- NO ..... 2

E13. When you went to the Food Stamp office, did you take someone with you to translate?

- YES ..... 1
- NO ..... 2

E14. Was there someone in the office who spoke (LANGUAGE IN A4)

- YES ..... 1
- NO ..... 2

E15. Were you given any written materials about food stamps in (LANGUAGE IN A4)?

- YES ..... 1
- NO ..... 2
- DON'T KNOW ..... 8

E16. After meeting with the food stamp worker, did you feel that you really understood what you'd need to do to get food stamps, were you somewhat unsure, or had you no idea at all of what was required of you?

- Really understood ..... 1
- Somewhat unsure ..... 2
- No idea at all ..... 3

E17. In general, do you feel that the Food Stamp Program requirements are reasonable or unreasonable?

REASONABLE .....	1
UNREASONABLE .....	2
REFUSED .....	7
DON'T KNOW .....	8

E18. Overall, how successful was your visit to the office? Did you...

Accomplish everything you expected to during that visit, or did you (GO TO E19) .....	1
Accomplish some, but not all that you expected to accomplish .....	2
Or did you not accomplish anything .....	3
REFUSED (GO TO E19) .....	7
DON'T KNOW (GO TO E19) .....	8

E18a. Can you tell me what you were not able to do during this visit? (CODE ALL THAT APPLY)

FIND OUT IF ELIGIBLE .....	1
FIND OUT AMOUNT OF BENEFIT .....	2
GET LIST OF ALL REQUIREMENTS .....	3
COMPLETE AN APPLICATION .....	4
OTHER (SPECIFY) _____ .....	5
REFUSED .....	7
DON'T KNOW .....	8

E19. Did you feel embarrassed having to apply for food stamps or other assistance?

YES .....	1
NO .....	2
REFUSED .....	7
DON'T KNOW .....	8

IF R APPROVED FOR FOOD STAMPS ("YES" TO B5a) OR R RECEIVED FOOD STAMPS IN PAST ("YES" TO C1), THEN ASK E20. OTHERWISE, SKIP TO E26.

E20. My next questions are about how people feel about using food stamps. Have you ever done anything to hide that you got food stamps?

YES .....	1
NO .....	2
REFUSED .....	7
DON'T KNOW .....	8

E21. Have you ever avoided telling people you got food stamps?

YES .....	1
NO .....	2
REFUSED .....	7
DON'T KNOW .....	8

E22. Did you ever go out of your way to shop at a store where no one knows you?

YES ..... 1  
 NO ..... 2  
 REFUSED ..... 7  
 DON'T KNOW ..... 8

E23. Have you ever been treated disrespectfully when using food stamp in a store?

YES ..... 1  
 NO ..... 2  
 REFUSED ..... 7  
 DON'T KNOW ..... 8

E24. Were you ever treated disrespectfully when you told people that you received food stamps?

YES ..... 1  
 NO ..... 2  
 REFUSED ..... 7  
 DON'T KNOW ..... 8

E25. Have you ever given your food stamps to someone else because you were embarrassed to use them?

YES ..... 1  
 NO ..... 2  
 REFUSED ..... 7  
 DON'T KNOW ..... 8

SKIP TO E30.

E26. The next questions are about how you might feel if you received food stamp benefits. Please answer yes or no. "If I got food stamps, I might go out of my way so people would not find out."

YES ..... 1  
 NO ..... 2  
 REFUSED ..... 7  
 DON'T KNOW ..... 8

E27. "I might not shop in certain stores because I don't want people there to know I use food stamps."

YES ..... 1  
 NO ..... 2  
 REFUSED ..... 7  
 DON'T KNOW ..... 8

E28. "People in stores would treat me disrespectfully when I use food stamps."

YES ..... 1  
 NO ..... 2  
 REFUSED ..... 7  
 DON'T KNOW ..... 8

E29. "People would treat me disrespectfully if they found out that I got food stamps."

- YES ..... 1
- NO ..... 2
- REFUSED ..... 7
- DON'T KNOW ..... 8

E30. Now, please tell me your opinions about the caseworker assigned to you at the food stamp office. As I read each statement, please tell me if you agree or disagree. FOR EACH ANSWER TO E30, ASK E30a.

E30a. Do you strongly (agree/disagree) or somewhat (agree/disagree)?

	E30. AGREE/DISAGREE				E30a. STRONGLY/SOMEWHAT			
	YES	NO	RF	DK	STRONGLY	SOMEWHAT	RF	DK
a. The kinds of services I received were suitable because of my needs	1	2	7	8	1	2	7	8
b. I agreed with my caseworker's decisions.	1	2	7	8	1	2	7	8
c. Overall, my caseworker kept me well informed.	1	2	7	8	1	2	7	8
d. I felt that my caseworker was doing his or her part to help solve my problems.	1	2	7	8	1	2	7	8
e. My caseworker was knowledgeable about food stamp benefits and procedures.	1	2	7	8	1	2	7	8
f. My caseworker treats clients respectfully.	1	2	7	8	1	2	7	8

E31. Compared to other public offices with which you have contact, how would you rate the treatment you received at the food stamp office? Would you say you were treated better, the same, or worse than you were treated at other places such as the Division of Motor Vehicles, voter registration, WIC, the post office, or the unemployment office?

- BETTER ..... 1
- THE SAME ..... 2
- WORSE ..... 3
- REFUSED ..... 7
- DON'T KNOW ..... 8

E32. Overall, how satisfied are you with the food stamp application process? Are you...

- Satisfied ..... 1
- Somewhat satisfied ..... 2

Somewhat dissatisfied .....	3
Dissatisfied .....	4
REFUSED .....	7
DON'T KNOW .....	8

**F. Housing/Community**

My next questions are about your housing situation as it was in June when you went to the food stamp office to ask about food stamps or other assistance.

F1. What best describes your living arrangement in June when you inquired about assistance at the food stamp office?... Did you:

- Own or were you buying your own home (SKIP TO F4) . . . . . 1
- Rent your home or apartment . . . . . 2
- Live with family or friends and **not** pay rent . . . . . 3
- Live with family or friends and pay **part** of the rent . . . . . 4
- Live in a group shelter (SKIP TO F6) . . . . . 5
- Live in a homeless shelter or shelter for domestic violence (SKIP TO F6) . . . . . 6
- Live on the street, or (SKIP TO F6) . . . . . 7
- Live in some other arrangement? (SPECIFY) \_\_\_\_\_ . . . . . 8

F2. Did you live in public housing?

- YES (SKIP TO INSTRUCTION BEFORE F4) . . . . . 1
- NO . . . . . 2
- REFUSED . . . . . 7
- DON'T KNOW . . . . . 8

F3. Did you pay less rent because the government paid for part of it through a Section 8 housing subsidy?

- YES . . . . . 1
- NO . . . . . 2
- REFUSED . . . . . 7
- DON'T KNOW . . . . . 8

IF R APPROVED FOR FOOD STAMP BENEFITS (“YES” TO B5a), SKIP TO F7. OTHERWISE, CONTINUE.

F4. For the month of June, what did your household spend on housing? (Please include rent or mortgage, and if applicable, home insurance, property taxes and water usage).

PROMPT: Your best estimate is fine.

- \$ \_\_\_\_\_ .00
- REFUSED . . . . . 97
- DON'T KNOW . . . . . 98

F5. Did that amount (in June) include any utilities, such as gas, heat or air conditioning, electricity, and water?

- YES (GO TO F7) . . . . . 1
- SOME, BUT NOT ALL (ASK F5A) . . . . . 2
- NO (ASK F5A) . . . . . 3
- REFUSED (GO TO F7) . . . . . 7
- DON'T KNOW (GO TO F7) . . . . . 8



F5a. How much did your household pay for utilities in June? Please include all utilities such as gas, heat or air conditioning, electricity, and water that are not included in your housing costs. (PROMPT: Your best estimate is fine.)

\$ \_\_\_\_\_ Total utilities (GO TO F7)  
 REFUSED (GO TO F7) ..... 7  
 DON'T KNOW (GO TO F7) ..... 8

F6. In June, how long had you been living in a group home, a shelter or on the street?

\_\_\_\_\_ days  
 \_\_\_\_\_ weeks  
 \_\_\_\_\_ months  
 \_\_\_\_\_ years  
 REFUSED ..... 97  
 DON'T KNOW ..... 98

F6a. Are you still living in a group home, a shelter, or on the street?

YES ..... 1  
 NO ..... 2  
 REFUSED ..... 7  
 DON'T KNOW ..... 8

F7. In the past 12 months, since (CURRENT MONTH, 1999), have you (or your children) received any of the following types of help from community organizations, neighborhood centers or religious organizations, other than friends or family?

	YES	NO	REF	DK
Shelter from an emergency shelter	1	2	7	8
Clothing or clothing vouchers	1	2	7	8
Money	1	2	7	8
Child care or help paying for child care	1	2	7	8
Transportation or help paying for transportation	1	2	7	8
Free medical services	1	2	7	8
Help paying your utilities, like electricity, gas or water	1	2	7	8
Help paying your phone bill or enabling you to use a telephone	1	2	7	8
Help paying for your rent	1	2	7	8
Legal aid or help paying for legal aid	1	2	7	8
Any other kind of help? (SPECIFY) _____	1	2	7	8

F8. In the past 12 months, since (CURRENT MONTH, 1999), did you (or any other adults in your household) ever get emergency food from a ...

	YES	NO	RF	DK
Church	1	2	7	8
Food pantry	1	2	7	8
Food bank	1	2	7	8

**IF "YES" TO ANY IN F8, ASK F9. OTHERWISE SKIP TO F10.**

F9. How often did this happen - almost every month, some months but not every month, or in only 1 or 2 months?

- Almost every month ..... 1
- Some months but not every month ..... 2
- Only 1 or 2 months ..... 3
- REFUSED ..... 7
- DON'T KNOW ..... 8

F10. In the past 12 months, since (CURRENT MONTH, 1999), did you (or other members of your household) ever eat any meals at a soup kitchen?

- YES ..... 1
- NO ..... 2
- REFUSED ..... 7
- DON'T KNOW ..... 8

**G. Employment Status**

Many working families still qualify for food stamp benefits. My next several questions ask about your job status in June when you applied for or inquired about food stamps or other assistance. Again, I would like to remind you that your answers will remain strictly confidential.

G1. In June, when you contacted the welfare office for assistance, were you earning money from a job? Include any self-employment.

YES ..... 1  
 NO (SKIP TO G5) ..... 2

G2. As of June, how long had you been working for this employer or organization or had been self-employed?

# \_\_\_\_\_ months (if less than one year)  
 OR  
 # \_\_\_\_\_ years  
 REFUSED ..... 7  
 DON'T KNOW ..... 8

G3. Back in June, how many hours did you usually work per week on this job?

\_\_\_\_\_ HOURS  
 REFUSED ..... 97  
 DON'T KNOW ..... 98

IF R APPROVED FOR FOOD STAMP BENEFITS ("YES" TO B5a), SKIP TO G5.

G4. Thinking back to June, about how much money did you earn per hour, week or month from your job(s) before taxes and any other deductions?

\$ \_\_\_\_\_ per hour  
 OR  
 \$ \_\_\_\_\_ per week  
 OR  
 \$ \_\_\_\_\_ per month

IF ONE PERSON IN HOUSEHOLD, SKIP TO SECTION H.

G5. Thinking back to June, did anyone else in your household work at a job for pay, not including schoolchildren aged 17 or under?

YES ..... 1  
 NO (SKIP TO SECTION H) ..... 2  
 REFUSED (SKIP TO SECTION H) ..... 7  
 DON'T KNOW (SKIP TO SECTION H) ..... 8

G6. IF YES: How many people in your household, besides yourself, worked at a job for pay in June?

\_\_\_\_\_ NUMBER OF PEOPLE WHO WORKED  
 REFUSED ..... 97  
 DON'T KNOW ..... 98

G7a. ASK G7a FOLLOWED BY G7b FOR EACH OTHER WORKING HOUSEHOLD MEMBER:  
 Back in June, how many hours per week did each person usually work?

PERSON 1	PERSON 2	PERSON 3	PERSON 4
_____ HOURS	_____ HOURS	_____ HOURS	_____ HOURS
REFUSED ..... 97	REFUSED ..... 97	REFUSED ..... 97	REFUSED ..... 97
DON'T KNOW . 98	DON'T KNOW . 98	DON'T KNOW . 98	DON'T KNOW . 98

IF R APPROVED FOR FOOD STAMP BENEFITS (“YES” TO B5a), SKIP TO SECTION H.

G7b. In June, about how much money did this person earn per hour, week or month from their job(s) before taxes and any other deductions? PROBE: Your best estimate is fine.

PERSON 1	PERSON 2	PERSON 3	PERSON 4
\$ _____ PER HOUR	\$ _____ PER HOUR	\$ _____ PER HOUR	\$ _____ PER HOUR
\$ _____ PER WEEK	\$ _____ PER WEEK	\$ _____ PER WEEK	\$ _____ PER WEEK
\$ _____ PER MONTH	\$ _____ PER MONTH	\$ _____ PER MONTH	\$ _____ PER MONTH
REFUSED ..... 97	REFUSED ..... 97	REFUSED ..... 97	REFUSED ..... 97
DON'T KNOW ..... 98	DON'T KNOW ..... 98	DON'T KNOW ..... 98	DON'T KNOW ..... 98

**H. Income/Sources of Income**

**IF R APPROVED FOR FS BENEFITS (SEE B5a), SKIP TO H8.**

Now I'm going to ask you some questions about your household income during the month of June when you applied or inquired about food stamps or other assistance. I want to assure you that none of the answers you give me will be discussed with anyone.

Thinking back to June, did you or anyone else in your household, including children, receive (INCOME SOURCE)? FOR EACH INCOME SOURCE RECEIVED, ASK a.

- a. How much money did you and other household members receive in June from (INCOME SOURCE)?

INCOME SOURCE	RECEIVED IN JUNE?				a. AMOUNT RECEIVED IN JUNE
	YES	NO	RF	DK	
H1. Cash from a cash assistance program like TANF (INSERT NAME OF STATE PROGRAM) or General Assistance (INSERT NAME OF STATE PROGRAM)?	1	2	7	8	\$ _____
H2. Income from child support either directly from your child's other parent or through a government agency?	1	2	7	8	\$ _____
H3. Disability income through Supplemental Security Income—that is, SSI social security, aid for the disabled, or from some other source?	1	2	7	8	\$ _____
H4. Regular income from friends or relatives outside the household?	1	2	7	8	\$ _____
H5. Social Security checks from the government or Veteran's benefits?	1	2	7	8	\$ _____
H6. Any other retirement or pension, public or private?	1	2	7	8	\$ _____
H7. Money from any other source? This might include unemployment insurance, worker's compensation, alimony, foster child payments, rent from tenant or boarder, and so on.	1	2	7	8	\$ _____

H8. In June, did you or anyone in your household receive WIC, Women, Infants and Children Program, benefits such as food packages or vouchers for purchasing food?

YES ..... 1  
NO ..... 2  
REFUSED ..... 7  
DON'T KNOW ..... 8

H9. SEE A2. IF CHILD/REN OF AGES 5-17 IN HOUSEHOLD, ASK: In June (OR MAY IF SCHOOL YEAR ENDED IN MAY), did any school-aged child in your household receive free or reduced-price breakfasts or lunches at school?

YES ..... 1  
NO ..... 2  
REFUSED ..... 7  
DON'T KNOW ..... 8

**I. Assets**

**IF R APPROVED FOR FS BENEFITS (SEE B5A), SKIP TO SECTION J.**

My next several questions ask about your household assets at the time you first went to the food stamp office to ask about assistance in June. Please remember that these questions are for research purposes only and will not be shared with anyone. Your responses to these questions will not affect your eligibility for benefits now or in the future.

11. In June, did you (or did anyone in your household) own a motor vehicle such as a car, truck, van or motorcycle? Please include any vehicles that you may be making payments on.

- YES ..... 1
- NO (SKIP TO I4) ..... 2
- REFUSED (SKIP TO I4) ..... 3
- DON'T KNOW (SKIP TO I4) ..... 4

11a. If yes, how many vehicles?

\_\_\_\_ VEHICLES

12. What is the year, make, and model of each vehicle?

	MAKE	MODEL	YEAR
VEHICLE 1	REFUSED ..... 97 DON'T KNOW ... 98	REFUSED ..... 97 DON'T KNOW ... 98	REFUSED ..... 97 DON'T KNOW ... 98
VEHICLE 2	REFUSED ..... 97 DON'T KNOW ... 98	REFUSED ..... 97 DON'T KNOW ... 98	REFUSED ..... 97 DON'T KNOW ... 98
VEHICLE 3	REFUSED ..... 97 DON'T KNOW ... 98	REFUSED ..... 97 DON'T KNOW ... 98	REFUSED ..... 97 DON'T KNOW ... 98

IF MAKE OR MODEL UNKNOWN, ASK I3a. IF YEAR UNKNOWN, ASK I3b. OTHERWISE SKIP TO I4.

PROGRAMMER: ASK I3a AND I3b AFTER MAKE AND MODEL AND YEAR FOR A VEHICLE BEFORE GOING TO NEXT VEHICLE.

13a. What is the approximate value of this vehicle?

Vehicle 1 \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Vehicle 2 \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Vehicle 3 \$ \_\_\_\_\_

I3b. (Is the vehicle/Are any of the vehicles) less than five years old?

YES ..... 1  
 NO ..... 2  
 REFUSED ..... 7  
 DON'T KNOW ..... 8

I4. In June, did you have a checking account?

YES ..... 1  
 NO (GO TO I6) ..... 2  
 REFUSED (GO TO I6) ..... 7  
 DON'T KNOW (GO TO I6) ..... 8

I5. As of June, how much money on average do you estimate was in your checking account?  
 BALANCE MAY BE NEGATIVE.

\$ \_\_\_\_\_  
 REFUSED ..... 7  
 DON'T KNOW ..... 8

I6. In June, did you have a savings account?

YES ..... 1  
 NO (GO TO I8) ..... 2  
 REFUSED (GO TO I8) ..... 7  
 DON'T KNOW (GO TO I8) ..... 8

I7. As of June, how much money did you have in savings accounts?

\$ \_\_\_\_\_  
 REFUSED ..... 7  
 DON'T KNOW ..... 8

I8. In June, did you have any other bank accounts or financial investments?

YES ..... 1  
 NO (GO TO SECTION J) ..... 2  
 REFUSED (GO TO SECTION J) ..... 7  
 DON'T KNOW (GO TO SECTION J) ..... 8

I9. As of June, what was the approximate value **in total** of these other bank account and financial investments? Please include amounts in individual retirement accounts (IRAs), stocks, mutual funds, certificates of deposit (CDs), money market accounts, 401k accounts and elsewhere.

\$ \_\_\_\_\_  
 REFUSED ..... 7  
 DON'T KNOW ..... 8



**J. Food Security**

My next set of questions are about the food eaten in your household. Over the past several years, USDA has been developing a set of questions to tell us about the food needs of adults and children.

J1. Which of these statements best describes the food eaten in your household in the last 12 months:

- (I/We) have enough to eat and the kinds of food (I/we) want ..... 1
- (I/We) have enough to eat but not always the kinds of food (I/we) want ..... 2
- Sometimes (I/we) don't have enough to eat, or ..... 3
- Often (I/we) don't have enough to eat ..... 4
- REFUSED ..... 7
- DON'T KNOW ..... 8

Now I'm going to read you several statements that people have made about their food situation. For these statements, please tell me whether the statement was OFTEN, SOMETIMES, or NEVER true for (you/your household) in the last 12 months.

J2. The first statement is, "(I/We) worried whether (my/our) food would run out before (I/we) got money to buy more." Was that often, sometimes, or never true for (you/your household) in the last 12 months?

- Often true ..... 1
- Sometimes true ..... 2
- Never true ..... 3
- REFUSED ..... 7
- DON'T KNOW ..... 8

J3. "The food that (I/we) bought just didn't last, and (I/we) didn't have money to get more." Was that often, sometimes, or never true for (you/your household) in the last 12 months?

- Often true ..... 1
- Sometimes true ..... 2
- Never true ..... 3
- REFUSED ..... 7
- DON'T KNOW ..... 8

J4. "(I/we) couldn't afford to eat balanced meals." Was that often, sometimes, or never true for (you/your household) in the last 12 months?

- Often true ..... 1
- Sometimes true ..... 2
- Never true ..... 3
- REFUSED ..... 7
- DON'T KNOW ..... 8

**IF CHILDREN UNDER 18 IN THE HOUSEHOLD (SEE A2), ASK QUESTIONS J5 -J7. IF NO CHILDREN SKIP TO J8 :**

J5. (I/we) relied on only a few kinds of low-cost food to feed (my/our) child(ren) because (I was/we were) running out of money to buy food.” Was that often, sometimes, or never true for (you/your household) in the last 12 months?

- Often true ..... 1
- Sometimes true ..... 2
- Never true ..... 3
- REFUSED ..... 7
- DON'T KNOW ..... 8

J6. “(I/We) couldn’t feed (my/our) child(ren) a balanced meal, because (I/we) couldn’t afford that.” Was that often, sometimes, or never true for (you/your household) in the last 12 months?

- Often true ..... 1
- Sometimes true ..... 2
- Never true ..... 3
- REFUSED ..... 7
- DON'T KNOW ..... 8

J7. My/Our child was/The children were not eating enough because (I/we) just couldn’t afford enough food.” Was that often, sometimes, or never true for (you/your household) in the last 12 months?

- Often true ..... 1
- Sometimes true ..... 2
- Never true ..... 3
- REFUSED ..... 7
- DON'T KNOW ..... 8

IF J2, J3 AND J4 EQUAL “NEVER” (3), AND J5 AND J6 EQUAL “NEVER” (3) OR BLANK, THEN SKIP TO SECTION K. OTHERWISE CONTINUE.

J8. In the last 12 months, did you (you/you or other adults in your household) ever cut the size of your meals or skip meals because there wasn’t enough money for food?

- YES (ASK J8a) ..... 1
- NO (SKIP TO J9) ..... 2
- REFUSED (SKIP TO J9) ..... 7
- DON'T KNOW (SKIP TO J9) ..... 8

J8a. How often did this happen—almost every month, some months but not every month, or in only 1 or 2 months?

- Almost every month ..... 1
- Some months but not every month ..... 2
- Only 1 or 2 months ..... 3
- REFUSED ..... 7
- DON'T KNOW ..... 8

J9. In the last 12 months, did you ever eat less than you felt you should because there wasn't enough money to buy food?

- YES ..... 1
- NO ..... 2
- REFUSED ..... 7
- DON'T KNOW ..... 8

J10. In the last 12 months, were you ever hungry but didn't eat because you couldn't afford enough food?

- YES ..... 1
- NO ..... 2
- REFUSED ..... 7
- DON'T KNOW ..... 8

J11. In the last 12 months, did you lose weight because you didn't have enough money for food?

- YES ..... 1
- NO ..... 2
- REFUSED ..... 7
- DON'T KNOW ..... 8

J12. In the last 12 months, did (you/you or other adults in your household) ever not eat for a whole day because there wasn't enough money for food?

- YES (ASK J12a) ..... 1
- NO ..... 2
- REFUSED ..... 7
- DON'T KNOW ..... 8

J12a. How often did this happen—almost every month, some months but not every month, or in only 1 or 2 months?

- Almost every month ..... 1
- Some months but not every month ..... 2
- Only 1 or 2 months ..... 3
- REFUSED ..... 7
- DON'T KNOW ..... 8

**IF CHILDREN UNDER 18 IN HOUSEHOLD (SEE A2), ASK J13-16, OTHERWISE SKIP TO SECTION K.**

The next questions are about the children living in the household who are under 18 years old. You may find some of the following questions sensitive. I want to remind you that all of the information you give will remain confidential and in answering these questions you will help the food stamp program better understand the needs of families and children it seeks to serve.

J13. In the last 12 months did you ever cut the size of (your child's/any of your children's) meals because there wasn't enough money for food?

- YES ..... 1
- NO ..... 2
- REFUSED ..... 7
- DON'T KNOW ..... 8

J14. In the last 12 months did (your child/any of your children) ever skip a meal because there wasn't enough money for food?

- YES ..... 1
- NO (GO TO J15) ..... 2
- REFUSED (GO TO J15) ..... 7
- DON'T KNOW (GO TO J15) ..... 8

J14a. How often did this happen—almost every month, some months but not every month, or in only 1 or 2 months?

- Almost every month ..... 1
- Some months but not every month ..... 2
- Only 1 or 2 months ..... 3
- REFUSED ..... 7
- DON'T KNOW ..... 8

J15. In the last 12 months, (was your child/were the children) ever hungry but you just couldn't afford more food?

- YES ..... 1
- NO ..... 2
- REFUSED ..... 7
- DON'T KNOW ..... 8

J16. In the last 12 months, did (your child/any of the children) ever not eat for a whole day because there wasn't enough money for food?

- YES ..... 1
- NO ..... 2
- REFUSED ..... 7
- DON'T KNOW ..... 8

**K. Demographics**

My last few questions are about the characteristics of your household. Remember, all information will remain confidential. Please tell me about your household situation in June, when you visited the food stamp office.

K1. In June, were you ...

Married and living with your (husband/wife) (GO TO K3) .....	1
Separated or living apart from your (husband/wife)? .....	2
Divorced, .....	3
Widowed, or .....	4
Never married? .....	5
REFUSED .....	7
DON'T KNOW .....	8

K2. **IF NOT LIVING WITH SPOUSE:** Were you living with a partner in June?

YES .....	1
NO .....	2
REFUSED .....	7
DON'T KNOW .....	8

K3. **CODE GENDER WITHOUT ASKING. IF UNCLEAR, ASK:** Are you male or female?

MALE .....	1
FEMALE .....	2

K4. What was the last grade or year of school you completed?

SOME ELEMENTARY SCHOOL (GRADES 1-8) .....	1
COMPLETED ELEMENTARY SCHOOL .....	2
SOME HIGH SCHOOL .....	3
COMPLETED HIGH SCHOOL OR RECEIVED GED .....	4
TECHNICAL OR VOCATIONAL SCHOOL .....	5
SOME COLLEGE .....	6
ASSOCIATE'S DEGREE .....	7
BACHELOR'S DEGREE .....	8
ADVANCED DEGREE .....	9
NO FORMAL SCHOOLING .....	0
OTHER (SPECIFY: _____) .....	96
REFUSED .....	97
DON'T KNOW .....	98

K5. Which of the following do you consider yourself to be? (READ LIST AND CODE ONE)

Hispanic or Latino .....	1
Not Hispanic or Latino .....	2

K6. Which of the following do you consider yourself to be? You may choose more than one. (READ LIST AND CODE ALL RESPONSES)

- White ..... 1
- Black or African American ..... 2
- Asian ..... 3
- American Indian or Alaska Native ..... 4
- Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander ..... 5
- REFUSED ..... 7
- DON'T KNOW ..... 8

K7. Were you born in the United States?

- YES (SKIP TO K8) ..... 1
- NO ..... 2
- REFUSED ..... 7
- DON'T KNOW ..... 8

K7a. Are you a United States citizen?

- YES ..... 1
- NO ..... 2
- REFUSED ..... 7
- DON'T KNOW ..... 8

K8. SEE A2. IF THERE ARE CHILDREN UNDER 18 IN HOUSEHOLD, ASK: Were *all* the children in your household born in the United States?

- YES (SKIP TO K9) ..... 1
- NO ..... 2
- REFUSED ..... 7
- DON'T KNOW ..... 8

K8a. Are the children in your household ... (READ LIST)

- All US citizens ..... 1
- Are some, but not all US citizens, or are ..... 2
- None of the children in the household US citizens ..... 3
- REFUSED ..... 7
- DON'T KNOW ..... 8

K9. Is anyone in your household disabled? By disabled, I mean unable to work or limited in the amount of work a person is able to do because of a mental or physical condition.

- YES ..... 1
- NO ..... 2
- REFUSED ..... 7
- DON'T KNOW ..... 8

These are all the questions I had for you. Thank you for your participation in this survey.

# A Study of Program Access and Declining Food Stamp Participation Incomplete Recertification Household Survey

## Introduction:

Hello, my name is \_\_\_\_\_. May I speak with RESPONDENT?

I'm calling from Abt Associates in Amherst, Massachusetts. We were hired by the United States Department of Agriculture in Washington, DC to conduct a study of the Food Stamp Program and the experiences of people who participate in the Program. We got your name from the food stamp office where you received benefits last June.

The officials at the USDA are interested in knowing why some people who are participating in the Program do not complete the required recertification process. They are particularly interested in people's experiences with the Food Stamp Program and the reasons they no longer receive benefits, as well as changes in their circumstances.

I would like to talk with you about your experiences with the food stamp office where you received assistance. Your answers will be kept confidential and your name will not be identified with any answers you give. Also, your interview with me cannot affect your status with any agency now or in the future.

### Help Screen:

According to the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, an agency may not conduct or sponsor, and a person is not required to respond to, a collection of information unless it displays a valid OMB control number. The valid OMB control number for this information collection is 0536-0053. The time required to complete this information collection is estimated to average 30 minutes per response, including the time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information.

## A. Household Composition/Characteristics

My first few questions are about the characteristics of your household. Your answers to these questions will tell me which questions I need to ask. Remember, all the information you tell me is for research purposes only and will remain confidential. Please tell me about your household situation in June, when you received food stamp benefits.

A1. How many people live in your household? By household I mean yourself and the people who live with you and share food with you. PROBE: Include any persons who live with you more than half of the time.

\_\_\_\_\_ PEOPLE IN HOUSEHOLD (IF ONE-PERSON  
HOUSEHOLD, SKIP TO A3)  
REFUSED ..... 97  
DON'T KNOW ..... 98

A2. How many household members are. . . (MAKE SURE TOTAL MATCHES A1)

Under 5 years old? ..... \_\_\_\_\_  
Five to 17 years old? ..... \_\_\_\_\_  
18-59 years of age? ..... \_\_\_\_\_  
60 years of age or older? ..... \_\_\_\_\_  
TOTAL ..... \_\_\_\_\_

A3. Is English the primary language spoken in your household?

YES (SKIP TO Q. A5) ..... 1  
NO ..... 2

A4. What language do you and your family most often speak at home?

SPANISH ..... 1  
CHINESE ..... 2  
PORTUGUESE ..... 3  
FRENCH ..... 4  
ARABIC ..... 5  
ITALIAN ..... 6  
VIETNAMESE ..... 7  
LAOTIAN ..... 8  
CAMBODIAN ..... 9  
HMONG ..... 10  
OTHER (SPECIFY) \_\_\_\_\_ ..... 11

A5. What is your date of birth?

\_\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_\_  
MONTH DAY YEAR



**L. Reasons for not completing the recertification process**

According to the food stamp office where you received benefits in June 2000, your certification period ended in June and you needed to reapply or recertify to continue receiving food stamp benefits. My next set of questions concern your experiences with the recertification process.

L1. Did you get a letter from the food stamp office saying you had to recertify or reapply for food stamps some time in June?

- YES (SKIP TO L4) ..... 1
- NO ..... 2
- REFUSED ..... 7
- DON'T KNOW ..... 8

L2. Were you aware that you needed to reapply in order to continue receiving food stamp benefits?

- YES ..... 1
- NO ..... 2
- REFUSED ..... 7
- DON'T KNOW ..... 8

L3. Thinking back to June, had you moved since your last contact with the food stamp office or since you last received coupons or an ATP card in the mail?

- YES ..... 1
- NO (SKIP TO L4) ..... 2
- REFUSED (SKIP TO L4) ..... 7
- DON'T KNOW (SKIP TO L4) ..... 8

L3a. In what month and year did you move?

\_\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_\_  
MONTH YEAR

L4. Did you complete a recertification application and return it to the office either in person or through the mail?

- YES ..... 1
- NO (SKIP TO L7) ..... 2
- REFUSED ..... 7
- DON'T KNOW ..... 8

L5. Did you have an interview where the caseworker updated the details of your current situation or circumstances?

- YES ..... 1
- NO (SKIP TO L7) ..... 2
- REFUSED ..... 7
- DON'T KNOW ..... 8

L6. Did you provide all the documents or proof of your statements the caseworker requested?

YES (SKIP TO L8) .....	1
NO .....	2
REFUSED .....	7
DON'T KNOW .....	8

L7. Did you decide at this point not to complete the reapplication process for food stamps?

YES .....	1
NO .....	2
REFUSED .....	7
DON'T KNOW .....	8

L8. Please tell us the main reason why you did not get complete the recertification process for food stamps. RECORD VERBATIM

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L9. I'm going to read a list of some *general* reasons other people have given for not completing the recertification or reapplication process for food stamps. As I read the list, please indicate whether any of these were reasons that affected you.

	YES	NO
a. Situation changed - no longer needed or wanted food stamps	1	2
b. Thought you weren't eligible	1	2
c. Confusion about what to do	1	2
d. Recertification process would take too much time, or be too difficult, or be too costly.	1	2
e. Too many rules to comply with or too difficult to participate	1	2
f. Embarrassment about participating in the Food Stamp Program	1	2

FOR ANY GENERAL ISSUE R INDICATED AS Y (YES), READ THE FOLLOWING:

L10. For each general issue you indicated as having with the food stamp recertification or reapplication process, I am now going to read some *more specific* reasons other people have provided for deciding not to complete the process. Please listen to each statement, and tell me whether:

L10a. This **happened**. IF YES, ASK L10b.

L10b. If it happened, was it a **reason** you decided not to complete the recertification reapplication for food stamps?

STATEMENT	L10a. HAPPENED?				L10b. REASON?			
	YES	NO	RF	DK	YES	NO	RF	DK
IF ANSWERED YES TO L9, READ QUESTIONS 1-2:								
1. Your TANF [INSERT NAME OF STATE PROGRAM] benefit was decreased or discontinued and it was no longer worth participating in the Food Stamp Program.	1	2	7	8	1	2	7	8
2. Your situation improved and you no longer needed food stamps.	1	2	7	8	1	2	7	8
IF ANSWERED YES TO L9b, READ QUESTIONS 3-11:								
3. You thought you were no longer eligible because you (or someone else in your household) now earns too much money from a job.	1	2	7	8	1	2	7	8
IF ANSWERED YES TO L10a, ASK 3a:								
3a. Did you household's earnings increase because (CIRCLE ALL THAT APPLY):  You (or someone in your household) got a new job ..... 1 The hours you (or someone in your household) worked increased ..... 2 Your hourly pay (or the pay of someone in your household) increased ..... 3								
4. You thought you weren't eligible because the number of adults in your household increased and the new member(s) (is/are) contributing income.	1	2	7	8	1	2	7	8
5. You thought you weren't eligible because your household's income increased for some other reason. (SPECIFY REASON: _____ _____	1	2	7	8	1	2	7	8
6. You thought you weren't eligible because the number of members in your household decreased.	1	2	7	8	1	2	7	8

STATEMENT	L10a. HAPPENED?				L10b. REASON?			
	YES	NO	RF	DK	YES	NO	RF	DK
7. You thought you weren't eligible because you no longer receive TANF [INSERT NAME OF STATE PROGRAM] benefits.	1	2	7	8	1	2	7	8
IF ANSWERED YES TO L10a, ASK L7a:								
7a. You no longer receive TANF [INSERT NAME OF STATE PROGRAM] benefits because you...  Reached the time limit ..... 1 Were sanctioned ..... 2 Some other reason (SPECIFY: _____) ..... 3								
8. You thought you weren't eligible because you started to receive TANF [INSERT NAME OF STATE PROGRAM] benefits.	1	2	7	8	1	2	7	8
9. You didn't think you'd be eligible since you received a lump sum payment.	1	2	7	8	1	2	7	8
10. You didn't think you'd be eligible since you did not complete the job search or assessment activities.	1	2	7	8	1	2	7	8
11. You didn't think you were eligible because you were referred to other sources of assistance.	1	2	7	8	1	2	7	8
IF ANSWERED YES TO L9c, READ QUESTIONS 12-13:								
12. You never heard from the food stamp office to tell you to recertify or reapply.	1	2	7	8	1	2	7	8
13. You were confused about what you were supposed to do to recertify or reapply.	1	2	7	8	1	2	7	8
IF ANSWERED YES TO L9d, READ QUESTIONS 14-21:								
14. You had no way or it was too hard to get to the food stamp office.	1	2	7	8	1	2	7	8
15. It cost too much to go to the food stamp office.	1	2	7	8	1	2	7	8
16. You would have to take time off work to recertify so you could get there during the hours the office is open.	1	2	7	8	1	2	7	8
17. You would have to pay for child or elder care while you go to the office.	1	2	7	8	1	2	7	8

STATEMENT	L10a. HAPPENED?				L10b. REASON?			
	YES	NO	RF	DK	YES	NO	RF	DK
18. They asked you to provide a number of documents and you were not able to provide all of them.	1	2	7	8	1	2	7	8
19. It required too much time to complete the recertification or reapplication process.	1	2	7	8	1	2	7	8
20. You would have to answer too many personal questions.	1	2	7	8	1	2	7	8
21. You were not treated well by food stamp office staff.	1	2	7	8	1	2	7	8
IF ANSWERED YES TO L9e, READ QUESTIONS 22-30:								
22. You had to recertify too frequently.	1	2	7	8	1	2	7	8
23. You did not want to complete a form reporting on your circumstances every month and mail it to the office.	1	2	7	8	1	2	7	8
24. IF R IS ELDERLY (A5: YEAR LESS THAN OR EQUAL TO 1940), SKIP TO ITEM 25. The job search or work requirements were too difficult to comply with.	1	2	7	8	1	2	7	8
READ Q.25 ONLY IF CHILDREN IN HOUSEHOLD (ANY HOUSEHOLD MEMBERS UNDER AGE 18 FROM A2)	1	2	7	8	1	2	7	8
25. You did not want the welfare office to contact your child(ren)'s schools.	1	2	7	8	1	2	7	8
26. You did not want to do child support enforcement.	1	2	7	8	1	2	7	8
27. You did not want to have your children immunized.	1	2	7	8	1	2	7	8
28. It was too difficult to pick up your food stamp benefits.	1	2	7	8	1	2	7	8
29. It was too difficult to find a store that accepted food stamp benefits.	1	2	7	8	1	2	7	8
30. You did not like to shop at the stores that accepted food stamp benefits.	1	2	7	8	1	2	7	8
IF ANSWERED YES TO L9f READ QUESTIONS 31-33:								
31. You did not want to be seen going into the food stamp office.	1	2	7	8	1	2	7	8

STATEMENT	L10a. HAPPENED?				L10b. REASON?			
	YES	NO	RF	DK	YES	NO	RF	DK
32. You did not want to be seen using food stamps at the grocery store.	1	2	7	8	1	2	7	8
33. You do not like to rely on government assistance.	1	2	7	8	1	2	7	8

**E. Convenience of Hours and Location, Stigma, and Satisfaction**

My next set of questions are about the convenience of the Food Stamp office where you received benefits in June.

E1. How convenient is the office location for you? Do you consider the location ...

- Very convenient (SKIP TO E3) ..... 1
- Somewhat convenient (SKIP TO E3) ..... 2
- Somewhat inconvenient ..... 3
- Very inconvenient ..... 4
- REFUSED ..... 7
- DON'T KNOW ..... 8

E2. What, if anything, is wrong with the location of the office? (CIRCLE ALL THAT APPLY)

- It is too far from home ..... 1
- It is in a congested area with lots of traffic ..... 2
- It was difficult to find the building ..... 3
- It is difficult to find parking ..... 4
- It is in an unsafe neighborhood ..... 5
- It is not easily accessible by public transportation ..... 6
- It costs too much to get there ..... 8
- The building is depressing ..... 8
- OTHER (SPECIFY) \_\_\_\_\_ ..... 96
- REFUSED ..... 97
- DON'T KNOW ..... 98

E3. How convenient for you were the hours the office was open? Would you say they were ...

- Very convenient (SKIP TO E20) ..... 1
- Somewhat convenient (SKIP TO E20) ..... 2
- Somewhat inconvenient ..... 3
- Very inconvenient ..... 4
- REFUSED ..... 7
- DON'T KNOW ..... 8

E4. What was the problem with the office hours at the Food Stamp Office? (CIRCLE ALL THAT APPLY)

- It is open only during normal business hours ..... 1
- You would have to take time off from work to get there ..... 2
- It is difficult to schedule meetings with a caseworker at convenient times ..... 3
- It is not open evenings or weekends ..... 4
- There are few workers available at lunchtime when I could get there ..... 5
- Other problems (SPECIFY) \_\_\_\_\_ ..... 6
- REFUSED ..... 7
- DON'T KNOW ..... 8

E20. My next questions are about how people feel about using food stamps. Have you ever done anything to hide that you got food stamps?

YES .....	1
NO .....	2
REFUSED .....	7
DON'T KNOW .....	8

E21. Have you ever avoided telling people you got food stamps?

YES .....	1
NO .....	2
REFUSED .....	7
DON'T KNOW .....	8

E22. Did you ever go out of your way to shop at a store where no one knows you?

YES .....	1
NO .....	2
REFUSED .....	7
DON'T KNOW .....	8

E23. Have you ever been treated disrespectfully when using food stamp in a store?

YES .....	1
NO .....	2
REFUSED .....	7
DON'T KNOW .....	8

E24. Were you ever treated disrespectfully when you told people that you received food stamps?

YES .....	1
NO .....	2
REFUSED .....	7
DON'T KNOW .....	8

E25. Have you ever given your food stamps to someone else because you were embarrassed to use them?

YES .....	1
NO .....	2
REFUSED .....	7
DON'T KNOW .....	8



E30. Now, please tell me your opinions about the caseworker assigned to you at the food stamp office. As I read each statement, please tell me if you agree or disagree. FOR EACH ANSWER TO E30, ASK E30a.

E30a. Do you strongly (agree/disagree) or somewhat (agree/disagree)?

	E30. AGREE/DISAGREE				E30a. STRONGLY/SOMEWHAT			
	AGREE	DIS- AGREE	RF	DK	STRONGLY	SOMEWHAT	RF	DK
a. The kinds of services I received were suitable because of my needs	1	2	7	8	1	2	7	8
b. I agreed with my caseworker's decisions.	1	2	7	8	1	2	7	8
c. Overall, my caseworker kept me well informed.	1	2	7	8	1	2	7	8
d. I felt that my caseworker was doing his or her part to help solve my problems.	1	2	7	8	1	2	7	8
e. My caseworker was knowledgeable about food stamp benefits and procedures.	1	2	7	8	1	2	7	8
f. My caseworker treats clients respectfully.	1	2	7	8	1	2	7	8

E31. Compared to other public offices with which you have contact, how would you rate the treatment you received at the food stamp office? Would you say you were treated better, the same, or worse than you were treated at other places such as the Division of Motor Vehicles, voter registration, WIC, the post office, or the unemployment office?

- BETTER ..... 1
- THE SAME ..... 2
- WORSE ..... 3
- REFUSED ..... 7
- DON'T KNOW ..... 8

E32. Overall, how satisfied are you with the Food Stamp Program? Are you...

- Satisfied ..... 1
- Somewhat satisfied ..... 2
- Somewhat dissatisfied ..... 3
- Dissatisfied ..... 4
- REFUSED ..... 7
- DON'T KNOW ..... 8

**F. Housing/Community**

My next questions are about your housing situation as it was in June when you received food stamp benefits.

F1. What best describes your living arrangement in June? Did you:

- Own or were you buying your own home (SKIP TO F4) ..... 1
- Rent your home or apartment ..... 2
- Live with family or friends and *not* pay rent ..... 3
- Live with family or friends and pay *part* of the rent ..... 4
- Live in a group shelter (SKIP TO F6) ..... 5
- Live in a homeless shelter or shelter for domestic violence (SKIP TO F6) ..... 6
- Live on the street, or (SKIP TO F6) ..... 7
- Live in some other arrangement? (SPECIFY) \_\_\_\_\_ ..... 8

F2. Did you live in public housing?

- YES (SKIP TO F4) ..... 1
- NO ..... 2
- REFUSED ..... 7
- DON'T KNOW ..... 8

F3. Did you pay less rent because the government paid for part of it through a Section 8 housing subsidy?

- YES ..... 1
- NO ..... 2
- REFUSED ..... 7
- DON'T KNOW ..... 8

F4. For the month of June, what did your household spend on housing? (Please include rent or mortgage, and if applicable, home insurance, property taxes and water usage).  
PROMPT: Your best estimate is fine.

- \$ \_\_\_\_\_ .00
- REFUSED ..... 97
- DON'T KNOW ..... 98

F5. Did that amount (in June) include any utilities, such as gas, heat or air conditioning, electricity, and water?

- YES (GO TO F6b) ..... 1
- SOME, BUT NOT ALL (ASK F5A) ..... 2
- NO (ASK F5A) ..... 3
- REFUSED (GO TO F6b) ..... 7
- DON'T KNOW (GO TO F6b) ..... 8

F5a. How much did your household pay for utilities in June? Please include all utilities such as gas, heat or air conditioning, electricity, and water that are not included in your housing costs. (PROMPT: Your best estimate is fine.)

\$ \_\_\_\_\_ Total utilities (GO TO F6b)  
 REFUSED (GO TO F6b) ..... 7  
 DON'T KNOW (GO TO F6b) ..... 8

F6. In June, how long had you been living in a group home, a shelter or on the street?

\_\_\_\_\_ days  
 \_\_\_\_\_ weeks  
 \_\_\_\_\_ months  
 \_\_\_\_\_ years  
 REFUSED ..... 97  
 DON'T KNOW ..... 98

F6a. Are you still living in a group home, a shelter, or on the street?

YES ..... 1  
 NO ..... 2  
 REFUSED ..... 7  
 DON'T KNOW ..... 8

F6b. Had anything about your living arrangements changed during the time between your most recent food stamp application or recertification and June 2000?

YES ..... 1  
 NO (SKIP TO F7) ..... 2  
 REFUSED (SKIP TO F7) ..... 7  
 DON'T KNOW (SKIP TO F7) ..... 8

F6c. What best describes your living arrangement at the time of your food stamp application or recertification prior to June 2000?... Did you:

Own or were you buying your own home (SKIP TO F7) ..... 1  
 Rent your home or apartment ..... 2  
 Live with family or friends and *not* pay rent ..... 3  
 Live with family or friends and pay *part* of the rent ..... 4  
 Live in a group shelter (SKIP TO F7) ..... 5  
 Live in a homeless shelter or shelter for domestic violence (SKIP TO F7) ..... 6  
 Live on the street, or (SKIP TO F7) ..... 7  
 Live in some other arrangement? (SPECIFY) \_\_\_\_\_ ..... 8

F6d. Did you live in public housing?

YES (SKIP TO F7) ..... 1  
 NO ..... 2  
 REFUSED ..... 7  
 DON'T KNOW ..... 8

F6e. Did you pay less rent because the government paid for part of it through a Section 8 housing subsidy?

- YES ..... 1
- NO ..... 2
- REFUSED ..... 7
- DON'T KNOW ..... 8

F7. In the past 12 months, since (CURRENT MONTH, 2000), have you (or your children) received any of the following types of help from community organizations, neighborhood centers or religious organizations, other than friends or family?

	YES	NO	REF	DK
Shelter from an emergency shelter	1	2	7	8
Clothing or clothing vouchers	1	2	7	8
Money	1	2	7	8
Child care or help paying for child care	1	2	7	8
Transportation or help paying for transportation	1	2	7	8
Free medical services	1	2	7	8
Help paying your utilities, like electricity, gas or water	1	2	7	8
Help paying your phone bill or enabling you to use a telephone	1	2	7	8
Help paying for your rent	1	2	7	8
Legal aid or help paying for legal aid	1	2	7	8
Any other kind of help? (SPECIFY) _____	1	2	7	8

F8. In the past 12 months, since (CURRENT MONTH, 2000), did you (or any other adults in your household) ever get emergency food from a ...

	YES	NO	RF	DK
Church	1	2	7	8
Food pantry	1	2	7	8
Food bank	1	2	7	8

**IF "YES" TO ANY IN F8, ASK F9. OTHERWISE SKIP TO F10.**

F9. How often did this happen - almost every month, some months but not every month, or in only 1 or 2 months?

- Almost every month ..... 1
- Some months but not every month ..... 2
- Only 1 or 2 months ..... 3
- REFUSED ..... 7
- DON'T KNOW ..... 8

F10. In the past 12 months, since (CURRENT MONTH, 2000), did you (or other members of your household) ever eat any meals at a soup kitchen?

- YES ..... 1
- NO ..... 2
- REFUSED ..... 7
- DON'T KNOW ..... 8

**G. Employment Status**

My next several questions ask about your job status in June when you received food stamp benefits. Again, I would like to remind you that your answers will remain strictly confidential.

G1. In June, were you earning money from a job? Include any self-employment.

- YES ..... 1
- NO (SKIP TO G5) ..... 2

G2. As of June, how long had you been working for this employer or organization or had been self-employed?

- # \_\_\_\_\_ months (if less than one year)
- OR
- # \_\_\_\_\_ years
- REFUSED ..... 7
- DON'T KNOW ..... 8

G3. Back in June, how many hours did you usually work per week on this job?

- \_\_\_\_\_ HOURS
- REFUSED ..... 97
- DON'T KNOW ..... 98

G4. Thinking back to June, about how much money did you earn per hour, week or month from your job(s) before taxes and any other deductions?

- \$ \_\_\_\_\_ per hour
- OR
- \$ \_\_\_\_\_ per week
- OR
- \$ \_\_\_\_\_ per month

IF ONE PERSON IN HOUSEHOLD, SKIP TO SECTION H.

G5. Thinking back to June, did anyone else in your household work at a job for pay, not including schoolchildren aged 17 or under?

- YES ..... 1
- NO (SKIP TO SECTION H) ..... 2
- REFUSED (SKIP TO SECTION H) ..... 7
- DON'T KNOW (SKIP TO SECTION H) ..... 8

G6. IF YES: How many people in your household, besides yourself, worked at a job for pay in June?

\_\_\_\_\_ NUMBER OF PEOPLE WHO WORKED  
 REFUSED ..... 97  
 DON'T KNOW ..... 98

G7a. ASK G7a FOLLOWED BY G7b FOR EACH OTHER WORKING HOUSEHOLD MEMBER:  
 Back in June, how many hours per week did each person usually work?

PERSON 1	PERSON 2	PERSON 3	PERSON 4
_____ HOURS	_____ HOURS	_____ HOURS	_____ HOURS
REFUSED ..... 97	REFUSED ..... 97	REFUSED ..... 97	REFUSED ..... 97
DON'T KNOW . 98	DON'T KNOW . 98	DON'T KNOW . 98	DON'T KNOW . 98

G7b. In June, about how much money did this person earn per hour, week or month from their job(s) before taxes and any other deductions? PROBE: Your best estimate is fine.

PERSON 1	PERSON 2	PERSON 3	PERSON 4
\$ _____ PER HOUR	\$ _____ PER HOUR	\$ _____ PER HOUR	\$ _____ PER HOUR
\$ _____ PER WEEK	\$ _____ PER WEEK	\$ _____ PER WEEK	\$ _____ PER WEEK
\$ _____ PER MONTH	\$ _____ PER MONTH	\$ _____ PER MONTH	\$ _____ PER MONTH
REFUSED ..... 97	REFUSED ..... 97	REFUSED ..... 97	REFUSED ..... 97
DON'T KNOW ..... 98	DON'T KNOW ..... 98	DON'T KNOW ..... 98	DON'T KNOW ..... 98

**H. Income/Sources of Income**

Now I'm going to ask you some questions about your household income during the month of June when you received food stamp benefits. I want to assure you that none of the answers you give me will be discussed with anyone.

Thinking back to June, did you or anyone else in your household, including children, receive (INCOME SOURCE)? FOR EACH INCOME SOURCE RECEIVED, ASK a.

- a. How much money did you and other household members receive in June from (INCOME SOURCE)?

INCOME SOURCE	RECEIVED IN JUNE?				a. AMOUNT RECEIVED IN JUNE
	YES	NO	RF	DK	
H1. Cash from a cash assistance program like TANF (INSERT NAME OF STATE PROGRAM) or General Assistance (INSERT NAME OF STATE PROGRAM)?	1	2	7	8	\$ _____
H2. Income from child support either directly from your child's other parent or through a government agency?	1	2	7	8	\$ _____
H3. Disability income through Supplemental Security Income—that is, SSI social security, aid for the disabled, or from some other source?	1	2	7	8	\$ _____
H4. Regular income from friends or relatives outside the household?	1	2	7	8	\$ _____
H5. Social Security checks from the government or Veteran's benefits?	1	2	7	8	\$ _____
H6. Any other retirement or pension, public or private?	1	2	7	8	\$ _____
H7. Money from any other source? This might include unemployment insurance, worker's compensation, alimony, foster child payments, rent from tenant or boarder, and so on.	1	2	7	8	\$ _____



H8. In June, did you or anyone in your household receive WIC, Women, Infants and Children Program, benefits such as food packages or vouchers for purchasing food?

YES ..... 1  
NO ..... 2  
REFUSED ..... 7  
DON'T KNOW ..... 8

H9. SEE A2. IF CHILD/REN OF AGES 5-17 IN HOUSEHOLD, ASK: In June (OR MAY IF SCHOOL YEAR ENDED IN MAY), did any school-aged child in your household receive free or reduced-price breakfasts or lunches at school?

YES ..... 1  
NO ..... 2  
REFUSED ..... 7  
DON'T KNOW ..... 8

**I. Assets**

My next several questions ask about your household assets in June 2000, when you received food stamp benefits. Please remember that these questions are for research purposes only and will not be shared with anyone. Your responses to these questions will not affect your eligibility for benefits in the future.

I1. In June, did you (or did anyone in your household) own a motor vehicle such as a car, truck, van or motorcycle? Please include any vehicles that you were making payments on.

- YES ..... 1
- NO (SKIP TO I4) ..... 2
- REFUSED (SKIP TO I4) ..... 3
- DON'T KNOW (SKIP TO I4) ..... 4

I1a. If yes, how many vehicles?

\_\_\_\_ VEHICLES

I2. What is the year, make, and model of each vehicle?

	MAKE	MODEL	YEAR
VEHICLE 1	REFUSED ..... 97 DON'T KNOW ... 98	REFUSED ..... 97 DON'T KNOW ... 98	REFUSED ..... 97 DON'T KNOW ... 98
VEHICLE 2	REFUSED ..... 97 DON'T KNOW ... 98	REFUSED ..... 97 DON'T KNOW ... 98	REFUSED ..... 97 DON'T KNOW ... 98
VEHICLE 3	REFUSED ..... 97 DON'T KNOW ... 98	REFUSED ..... 97 DON'T KNOW ... 98	REFUSED ..... 97 DON'T KNOW ... 98

IF MAKE OR MODEL UNKNOWN, ASK I3a. IF YEAR UNKNOWN, ASK I3b. OTHERWISE SKIP TO I4.

PROGRAMMER: ASK I3a AND I3b AFTER MAKE AND MODEL AND YEAR FOR A VEHICLE BEFORE GOING TO NEXT VEHICLE.

I3a. What is the approximate value of this vehicle?

Vehicle 1 \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Vehicle 2 \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Vehicle 3 \$ \_\_\_\_\_

I3b. (Is the vehicle/Are any of the vehicles) less than five years old?

YES ..... 1  
 NO ..... 2  
 REFUSED ..... 7  
 DON'T KNOW ..... 8

I4. In June, did you have a checking account?

YES ..... 1  
 NO (GO TO I6) ..... 2  
 REFUSED (GO TO I6) ..... 7  
 DON'T KNOW (GO TO I6) ..... 8

I5. As of June, how much money on average do you estimate was in your checking account?  
 BALANCE MAY BE NEGATIVE.

\$ \_\_\_\_\_  
 REFUSED ..... 7  
 DON'T KNOW ..... 8

I6. In June, did you have a savings account?

YES ..... 1  
 NO (GO TO I8) ..... 2  
 REFUSED (GO TO I8) ..... 7  
 DON'T KNOW (GO TO I8) ..... 8

I7. As of June, how much money did you have in savings accounts?

\$ \_\_\_\_\_  
 REFUSED ..... 7  
 DON'T KNOW ..... 8

I8. In June, did you have any other bank accounts or financial investments?

YES ..... 1  
 NO (GO TO SECTION J) ..... 2  
 REFUSED (GO TO SECTION J) ..... 7  
 DON'T KNOW (GO TO SECTION J) ..... 8

I9. As of June, what was the approximate value **in total** of these other bank account and financial investments? Please include amounts in individual retirement accounts (IRAs), stocks, mutual funds, certificates of deposit (CDs), money market accounts, 401k accounts and elsewhere.

\$ \_\_\_\_\_  
 REFUSED ..... 7  
 DON'T KNOW ..... 8

**J. Food Security**

My next set of questions are about the food eaten in your household. Over the past several years, USDA has been developing a set of questions to tell us about the food needs of adults and children.

J1. Which of these statements best describes the food eaten in your household in the last 12 months:

- (I/We) have enough to eat and the kinds of food (I/we) want ..... 1
- (I/We) have enough to eat but not always the kinds of food (I/we) want ..... 2
- Sometimes (I/we) don't have enough to eat, or ..... 3
- Often (I/we) don't have enough to eat ..... 4
- REFUSED ..... 7
- DON'T KNOW ..... 8

Now I'm going to read you several statements that people have made about their food situation. For these statements, please tell me whether the statement was OFTEN, SOMETIMES, or NEVER true for (you/your household) in the last 12 months.

J2. The first statement is, "(I/We) worried whether (my/our) food would run out before (I/we) got money to buy more." Was that often, sometimes, or never true for (you/your household) in the last 12 months?

- Often true ..... 1
- Sometimes true ..... 2
- Never true ..... 3
- REFUSED ..... 7
- DON'T KNOW ..... 8

J3. "The food that (I/we) bought just didn't last, and (I/we) didn't have money to get more." Was that often, sometimes, or never true for (you/your household) in the last 12 months?

- Often true ..... 1
- Sometimes true ..... 2
- Never true ..... 3
- REFUSED ..... 7
- DON'T KNOW ..... 8

J4. "(I/we) couldn't afford to eat balanced meals." Was that often, sometimes, or never true for (you/your household) in the last 12 months?

- Often true ..... 1
- Sometimes true ..... 2
- Never true ..... 3
- REFUSED ..... 7
- DON'T KNOW ..... 8

**IF CHILDREN UNDER 18 IN THE HOUSEHOLD (SEE A2), ASK QUESTIONS J5 -J7. IF NO CHILDREN SKIP TO J8 :**

J5. (I/we) relied on only a few kinds of low-cost food to feed (my/our) child(ren) because (I was/we were) running out of money to buy food.” Was that often, sometimes, or never true for (you/your household) in the last 12 months?

- Often true ..... 1
- Sometimes true ..... 2
- Never true ..... 3
- REFUSED ..... 7
- DON'T KNOW ..... 8

J6. “(I/We) couldn’t feed (my/our) child(ren) a balanced meal, because (I/we) couldn’t afford that.” Was that often, sometimes, or never true for (you/your household) in the last 12 months?

- Often true ..... 1
- Sometimes true ..... 2
- Never true ..... 3
- REFUSED ..... 7
- DON'T KNOW ..... 8

J7. My/Our child was/The children were not eating enough because (I/we) just couldn’t afford enough food.” Was that often, sometimes, or never true for (you/your household) in the last 12 months?

- Often true ..... 1
- Sometimes true ..... 2
- Never true ..... 3
- REFUSED ..... 7
- DON'T KNOW ..... 8

IF J2, J3 AND J4 EQUAL “NEVER” (3), AND J5 AND J6 EQUAL “NEVER” (3) OR BLANK, THEN SKIP TO SECTION K. OTHERWISE CONTINUE.

J8. In the last 12 months, did you (you/you or other adults in your household) ever cut the size of your meals or skip meals because there wasn’t enough money for food?

- YES (ASK J8a) ..... 1
- NO (SKIP TO J9) ..... 2
- REFUSED (SKIP TO J9) ..... 7
- DON'T KNOW (SKIP TO J9) ..... 8

J8a. How often did this happen—almost every month, some months but not every month, or in only 1 or 2 months?

- Almost every month ..... 1
- Some months but not every month ..... 2
- Only 1 or 2 months ..... 3
- REFUSED ..... 7
- DON'T KNOW ..... 8

J9. In the last 12 months, did you ever eat less than you felt you should because there wasn't enough money to buy food?

YES ..... 1  
NO ..... 2  
REFUSED ..... 7  
DON'T KNOW ..... 8

J10. In the last 12 months, were you ever hungry but didn't eat because you couldn't afford enough food?

YES ..... 1  
NO ..... 2  
REFUSED ..... 7  
DON'T KNOW ..... 8

J11. In the last 12 months, did you lose weight because you didn't have enough money for food?

YES ..... 1  
NO ..... 2  
REFUSED ..... 7  
DON'T KNOW ..... 8

J12. In the last 12 months, did (you/you or other adults in your household) ever not eat for a whole day because there wasn't enough money for food?

YES (ASK J12a) ..... 1  
NO ..... 2  
REFUSED ..... 7  
DON'T KNOW ..... 8

J12a. How often did this happen—almost every month, some months but not every month, or in only 1 or 2 months?

Almost every month ..... 1  
Some months but not every month ..... 2  
Only 1 or 2 months ..... 3  
REFUSED ..... 7  
DON'T KNOW ..... 8

**IF CHILDREN UNDER 18 IN HOUSEHOLD (SEE A2), ASK J13-16, OTHERWISE SKIP TO SECTION K.**

The next questions are about the children living in the household who are under 18 years old. You may find some of the following questions sensitive. I want to remind you that all of the information you give will remain confidential and in answering these questions you will help the food stamp program better understand the needs of families and children it seeks to serve.

J13. In the last 12 months did you ever cut the size of (your child's/any of your children's) meals because there wasn't enough money for food?

- YES ..... 1
- NO ..... 2
- REFUSED ..... 7
- DON'T KNOW ..... 8

J14. In the last 12 months did (your child/any of your children) ever skip a meal because there wasn't enough money for food?

- YES ..... 1
- NO (GO TO J15) ..... 2
- REFUSED (GO TO J15) ..... 7
- DON'T KNOW (GO TO J15) ..... 8

J14a. How often did this happen—almost every month, some months but not every month, or in only 1 or 2 months?

- Almost every month ..... 1
- Some months but not every month ..... 2
- Only 1 or 2 months ..... 3
- REFUSED ..... 7
- DON'T KNOW ..... 8

J15. In the last 12 months, (was your child/were the children) ever hungry but you just couldn't afford more food?

- YES ..... 1
- NO ..... 2
- REFUSED ..... 7
- DON'T KNOW ..... 8

J16. In the last 12 months, did (your child/any of the children) ever not eat for a whole day because there wasn't enough money for food?

- YES ..... 1
- NO ..... 2
- REFUSED ..... 7
- DON'T KNOW ..... 8

**K. Demographics**

My last few questions are about the characteristics of your household. Remember, all information will remain confidential. Please tell me about your household situation in June, when you received food stamps.

K1. In June, were you ...

Married and living with your (husband/wife) (GO TO K3)	1
Separated or living apart from your (husband/wife)?	2
Divorced,	3
Widowed, or	4
Never married?	5
REFUSED	7
DON'T KNOW	8

K2. **IF NOT LIVING WITH SPOUSE:** Were you living with a partner in June?

YES	1
NO	2
REFUSED	7
DON'T KNOW	8

K3. CODE GENDER WITHOUT ASKING. **IF UNCLEAR, ASK:** Are you male or female?

MALE	1
FEMALE	2

K4. What was the last grade or year of school you completed?

SOME ELEMENTARY SCHOOL (GRADES 1-8)	1
COMPLETED ELEMENTARY SCHOOL	2
SOME HIGH SCHOOL	3
COMPLETED HIGH SCHOOL OR RECEIVED GED	4
TECHNICAL OR VOCATIONAL SCHOOL	5
SOME COLLEGE	6
ASSOCIATE'S DEGREE	7
BACHELOR'S DEGREE	8
ADVANCED DEGREE	9
NO FORMAL SCHOOLING	0
OTHER (SPECIFY: _____)	96
REFUSED	97
DON'T KNOW	98



K5. Which of the following do you consider yourself to be? (READ LIST AND CODE ONE)

- Hispanic or Latino . . . . . 1
- Not Hispanic or Latino . . . . . 2

K6. Which of the following do you consider yourself to be? You may choose more than one. (READ LIST AND CODE ALL RESPONSES)

- White . . . . . 1
- Black or African American . . . . . 2
- Asian . . . . . 3
- American Indian or Alaska Native . . . . . 4
- Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander . . . . . 5
- REFUSED . . . . . 7
- DON'T KNOW . . . . . 8

K7. Were you born in the United States?

- YES (SKIP TO K8) . . . . . 1
- NO . . . . . 2
- REFUSED . . . . . 7
- DON'T KNOW . . . . . 8

K7a. Are you a United States citizen?

- YES . . . . . 1
- NO . . . . . 2
- REFUSED . . . . . 7
- DON'T KNOW . . . . . 8

K8. SEE A2. IF THERE ARE CHILDREN UNDER 18 IN HOUSEHOLD, ASK: Were **all** the children in your household born in the United States?

- YES (SKIP TO K9) . . . . . 1
- NO . . . . . 2
- REFUSED . . . . . 7
- DON'T KNOW . . . . . 8

K8a. Are the children in your household ... (READ LIST)

- All US citizens . . . . . 1
- Are some, but not all US citizens, or are . . . . . 2
- None of the children in the household US citizens . . . . . 3
- REFUSED . . . . . 7
- DON'T KNOW . . . . . 8

K9. Is anyone in your household disabled? By disabled, I mean unable to work or limited in the amount of work a person is able to do because of a mental or physical condition.

YES .....	1
NO .....	2
REFUSED .....	7
DON'T KNOW .....	8

These are all the questions I had for you. Thank you for your participation in this survey.

**A Study of Program Access and Declining Food Stamp Participation  
Eligible Non-Participant Survey (RDD)**

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**I. SCREENING INTERVIEW**

**Introduction**

Hello, my name is \_\_\_\_\_ and I am calling from Abt Associates in Amherst, Massachusetts on behalf of the United States Department of Agriculture. We are conducting a nationwide study about people’s knowledge of the Food Stamp Program, and we are interested in talking with you even if you do not receive food stamps. May I please speak with a member of this household who is at least 18 years old?

The purpose of the study is to learn about people’s knowledge of the Food Stamp Program and any experiences they may have had with it. Also, why some people do not participate, even though they might be eligible for food stamp benefits. Your telephone number was randomly selected by a computer program so that I might ask you a few questions to determine if you qualify for our study. My questions should only take a couple of minutes of your time right now. Depending on your situation, I might ask you to complete a longer interview.

According to the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, an agency may not conduct or sponsor, and a person is not required to respond to, a collection of information unless it displays a valid OMB control number. The valid OMB control number for this information collection is 0536-0053. The time required to complete this information collection is estimated to average 5 minutes per response, including the time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information.

S1. Did you or anyone in your household receive food stamps or food stamp benefits last month?

- YES (END INTERVIEW)..... 1
- NO .....2
- REFUSED (END INTERVIEW)..... 7
- DON’T KNOW (END INTERVIEW) ..... 8

S2. Did you or anyone in your household file a signed food stamp application last month?

- YES (END INTERVIEW)..... 1
- NO .....2
- REFUSED (END INTERVIEW)..... 7
- DON’T KNOW (END INTERVIEW) ..... 8

S3. Last month, did everyone in your household receive TANF (INSERT NAME OF STATE PROGRAM), SSI, or General Assistance (INSERT NAME OF STATE PROGRAM) benefits or had you been approved to receive benefits?

- YES ..... 1
- NO .....2
- REFUSED ..... 7
- DON’T KNOW ..... 8

S4. How many people live in your household? By household I mean yourself and the people who live with you and share food with you. PROBE: Include any persons who live with you more than half of the time, even if they are not related to you.

\_\_\_\_\_ NUMBER OF PEOPLE IN HOUSEHOLD

LIVE ALONE..... 1  
 REFUSED (TERMINATE) ..... 7  
 DON'T KNOW (TERMINATE) ..... 8

S5. Do you live in a group home, such as a dormitory or nursing home?

YES (END INTERVIEW)..... 1  
 NO ..... 2  
 REFUSED (TERMINATE) ..... 7  
 DON'T KNOW (TERMINATE)..... 8

S6. Are you (or anyone else in your household) 60 years of age or older?

YES ..... 1  
 NO ..... 2  
 REFUSED (TERMINATE) ..... 7  
 DON'T KNOW (TERMINATE)..... 8

S7. Last month, was your total household income before taxes more or less than \$X,XXX per month? (CATI: FILL IN \$ AMOUNT HERE BASED ON # OF HOUSEHOLD MEMBERS FROM S4). PROBE: Income from all sources. Your best estimate is fine.

MORE THAN \$X,XXX PER MONTH (END INTERVIEW) ..... 1  
 LESS THAN OR EQUAL TO \$X,XXX PER MONTH..... 2  
 REFUSED (END INTERVIEW) ..... 7  
 DON'T KNOW (END INTERVIEW) ..... 8

<u>People in Household</u>	<u>Income</u>
1	\$ 905.00
2	1,219.00
3	1,533.00
4	1,848.00
5	2,162.00
6	2,476.00
7	2,790.00
8	3,104.00
Each additional person:	+ \$ 315.00

S8. Do you (or anyone in your household) own a motor vehicle such as a car, truck, van or motorcycle? Please include any vehicles that you may be making payments on.

YES ..... 1  
 NO (SKIP TO S10) ..... 2  
 REFUSED (SKIP TO S10) ..... 7  
 DON'T KNOW (SKIP TO S10)..... 8

S8a. If yes, how many vehicles? \_\_\_\_\_ VEHICLES

S9. What is the year, make, and model of each vehicle?

Please tell me for each vehicle whether the vehicle is used primarily for either business or to transport a disabled person.

	YEAR	MAKE	MODEL	BUSINESS OR DISABLED TRANSPORT
VEHICLE 1	_____ REFUSED.....97 DON'T KNOW .....98	_____ REFUSED .....97 DON'T KNOW .....98	_____ REFUSED .....97 DON'T KNOW .....98	YES ..... 1 NO ..... 2 REFUSED ..... 7 DON'T KNOW ..... 8
VEHICLE 2	_____ REFUSED.....97 DON'T KNOW .....98	_____ REFUSED .....97 DON'T KNOW .....98	_____ REFUSED .....97 DON'T KNOW .....98	YES ..... 1 NO ..... 2 REFUSED ..... 7 DON'T KNOW ..... 8
VEHICLE 3	_____ REFUSED ..... 97 DON'T KNOW ... 98	_____ REFUSED..... 97 DON'T KNOW .. 98	_____ REFUSED ..... 97 DON'T KNOW... 98	YES ..... 1 NO..... 2 REFUSED..... 7 DON'T KNOW... 8

IF MAKE OR MODEL UNKNOWN, ASK S9a. IF YEAR UNKNOWN, ASK S9b. OTHERWISE SKIP TO S10.

ASK S9a FOR A VEHICLE BEFORE GOING ON TO THE NEXT VEHICLE.

S9a. What is the approximate value of each vehicle owned?

Vehicle 1 \$\_\_\_\_\_

Vehicle 2 \$\_\_\_\_\_

Vehicle 3 \$\_\_\_\_\_

ASK S9b FOR A VEHICLE BEFORE GOING ON TO THE NEXT VEHICLE.

S9b. (Is the vehicle/Are any of the vehicles) less than five years old? PROBE: That would be model year 1995 or earlier.

YES ..... 1  
NO ..... 2  
REFUSED ..... 7  
DON'T KNOW ..... 8

**IF NO HOUSEHOLD MEMBERS ARE AGED, 60+ (SEE S6) READ S10. IF HOUSEHOLD INCLUDES ONE OR MORE MEMBERS AGED 60+ READ S11 INSTEAD.**

S10. Last month, did your household assets exceed \$2000? This would include any cash on hand and money in checking and savings accounts, savings certificates, stocks and bonds, individual retirement accounts (IRAs) and Keogh accounts.

- YES (END INTERVIEW)..... 1
- NO ..... 2
- REFUSED (TERMINATE) ..... 7
- DON'T KNOW (TERMINATE)..... 8

S11. Last month, did your household assets exceed \$3000? This would include any cash on hand and money in checking and savings accounts, savings certificates, stocks and bonds, individual retirement accounts (IRAs) and Keogh accounts.

- YES (END INTERVIEW)..... 1
- NO ..... 2
- REFUSED (TERMINATE) ..... 7
- DON'T KNOW (TERMINATE)..... 8

**END INTERVIEW FOR THOSE NOT ELIGIBLE: (IF ELIGIBLE, CONTINUE WITH S12).**

That is all the questions I have for you. On behalf of the United States Department of Agriculture, I want to thank you for participating in this interview.

**CONTINUE IF RESPONDENT IS ELIGIBLE:**

S12. If someone from your household were to apply for food stamp benefits, who would be the most likely person to go to the office and complete the application? PROBE: would it be you or someone else? NOTE: IF RESPONDENT SAYS MIGHT EQUALLY BE HIM/HER OR SOMEONE ELSE, CODE AS RESPONDENT.

- RESPONDENT ..... 1
- SOMEONE ELSE (SKIP TO S14)..... 2
- REFUSED ..... 7

S13. I would like to continue with the second portion of this interview. Your participation in the second portion of the interview is very important. It will help the Food Stamp Program officials understand how to better serve eligible families. Anything you tell us will be used for research purposes only and will be kept completely confidential. Your participation will not affect any benefits you are receiving now or at any time in the future. None of the information you provide will be given to the local food stamp office. The interview will take approximately 30 minutes.

- CONTINUE (SKIP TO SECTION II)..... 1
- SCHEDULE CALLBACK ..... 2
- REFUSED (TERMINATE) ..... 7

S14. Can I speak to that person?

- YES - ANSWERS PHONE (GO TO S15)..... 1
- NOT AVAILABLE..... 2
- REFUSED (TERMINATE) ..... 7
- DON'T KNOW (SCHEDULE CALLBACK) ..... 8

S14a. I would like to complete the interview with this person. When is a good time to call back and who should I ask for? (SCHEDULE CALLBACK)

S15. Hello, my name is \_\_\_\_\_ and I am calling from Abt Associates in Amherst, Massachusetts on behalf of the United States Department of Agriculture. We are conducting a nationwide study about Food Stamp Program participation. The purpose of the study is to learn about people's knowledge of the Food Stamp Program and any experiences they may have had with it. Also, why some eligible people do not participate. Your participation in the study is very important, even though you do not get food stamps.

According to the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, an agency may not conduct or sponsor, and a person is not required to respond to, a collection of information unless it displays a valid OMB control number. The valid OMB control number for this information collection is \_\_\_\_-\_\_\_\_. The time required to complete this information collection is estimated to average 30 minutes per response, including the time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information.



**II. INTERVIEW FOR ELIGIBLE NON-PARTICIPANTS**

**A. Knowledge of Food Stamp Program and Reasons for Nonparticipation**

First, I'd like to ask you some questions about your experiences with food stamps, cash assistance, or other benefit programs.

A1. Have you or anyone in your household ever received (BENEFIT)?

IF YES TO A1, ASK A1a AND A1b:

A1a. How long ago did you last receive (BENEFIT)?

A1b. How much did you receive each month from (BENEFIT)?

IF NO TO A1, ASK A1c.

A1c. Have you or anyone in your household ever applied for (BENEFIT)?

BENEFIT	A1. RECEIVED?				A1a. LAST RECEIPT	A1b. AMOUNT RECEIVED	A1c. APPLIED?			
	YE S	NO	RF	DK			YE S	NO	RF	DK
Food stamps	1	2	7	8	Still receiving..... 1 Within the last year..... 2 1-4 years ago ..... 3 More than 4 years ago 4 DK ..... 8	\$ _____  DK .....8	1	2	7	8
Welfare or cash assistance	1	2	7	8	Still receiving..... 1 Within the last year..... 2 1-4 years ago ..... 3 More than 4 years ago 4 DK ..... 8	\$ _____  DK .....8	1	2	7	8
Medical Assistance	1	2	7	8	Still receiving..... 1 Within the last year..... 2 1-4 years ago ..... 3 More than 4 years ago 4 DK ..... 8	\$ _____  DK .....8	1	2	7	8
WIC	1	2	7	8	Still receiving..... 1 Within the last year..... 2 1-4 years ago ..... 3 More than 4 years ago 4 DK ..... 8	\$ _____  DK .....8	1	2	7	8

A1d. IF APPLIED FOR FOOD STAMPS AND WAS NOT APPROVED: When was the last time you applied for food stamps?

\_\_\_\_\_ (SKIP TO A3)  
YEAR  
REFUSED ..... 7  
DON'T KNOW ..... 8

A1e. Was it more than 4 years ago?

YES ..... 1  
NO ..... 2  
REFUSED ..... 7  
DON'T KNOW ..... 8

IF A1 = YES OR A1c = YES FOR FOOD STAMPS, SKIP TO A3.

A2. Had you heard of food stamps or the Food Stamp Program before today's interview?

YES ..... 1  
NO (SKIP TO SECTION B) ..... 2  
REFUSED (SKIP TO A5)..... 7  
DON'T KNOW (SKIP TO A5) ..... 8

A3. As far as you know, did your family ever receive food stamp benefits when you were a child?

YES ..... 1  
NO ..... 2  
REFUSED ..... 7  
DON'T KNOW ..... 8

A4. As far as you know, do any of your relatives, friends, neighbors, or co-workers currently receive food stamp benefits?

YES ..... 1  
NO ..... 2  
REFUSED ..... 7  
DON'T KNOW ..... 8

A5. Do you know where you would have to go to apply for food stamps or other assistance?

YES ..... 1  
NO ..... 2  
REFUSED ..... 7  
DON'T KNOW ..... 8

A6. Did you or someone else in your household contact the local welfare office to inquire about food stamps or welfare benefits within the last six months, that is, any time since (MONTH)?

YES (SKIP TO A6a)..... 1  
 NO ..... 2  
 REFUSED ..... 7  
 DON'T KNOW ..... 8

A6y. Did you or someone else in your household contact the local welfare office in the last twelve months, that is, any time since (MONTH)?

YES ..... 1  
 NO (SKIP TO A7)..... 2  
 REFUSED (SKIP TO A7)..... 7  
 DON'T KNOW (SKIP TO A7)..... 8

A6a. Did you apply for food stamp benefits at the time you contacted the welfare office?

YES ..... 1  
 NO (DEFINED AS NEAR APPLICANT) ..... 2  
 REFUSED ..... 7  
 DON'T KNOW ..... 8

A7. Do you think you may be eligible to receive food stamp benefits?

YES (SKIP TO A9) ..... 1  
 NO ..... 2  
 REFUSED (SKIP TO A9)..... 7  
 DON'T KNOW ..... 8

A8. Why do you think you (may not be eligible/are unsure if you are eligible) for food stamps? Is it because?

	YES	NO	REF	DK
a. You have a job and think you are not eligible.	1	2	7	8
b. You earn too much money to be eligible.	1	2	7	8
c. You get other government benefits and are not eligible.	1	2	7	8
d. You have too much in savings to be eligible.	1	2	7	8
e. Your car is worth too much to be eligible.	1	2	7	8
f. You received a lump sum payment and think you are not eligible.	1	2	7	8
g. You reached the time limit on cash assistance.	1	2	7	8
h. You think you are not eligible because of your citizenship status.	1	2	7	8
i. A worker at the food stamp office told you that you were probably not eligible.	1	2	7	8

	YES	NO	REF	DK
j. Someone else told you that you were not eligible.	1	2	7	8
k. You applied previously and were told you were not eligible.	1	2	7	8
l. Is there some other reason? (SPECIFY: _____)	1	2	7	8

IF "YES" TO ITEM i OR j, ASK A8a.

A8a. You said a worker or someone else told you that you were not eligible for food stamp. Was this within the...

- Last month ..... 1
- Last six months ..... 2
- Last year ..... 3
- More than one year ago..... 4
- REFUSED ..... 7
- DON'T KNOW ..... 8

A9. If you found out you were eligible for food stamp benefits, would you apply?

- YES (SKIP TO SECTION B) ..... 1
- NO (SKIP TO A10)..... 2
- REFUSED (SKIP TO A10)..... 7
- DON'T KNOW (SKIP TO A10)..... 8

A10. If you were to apply for food stamps, how much per month do you think you are eligible to receive in benefits? PROBE: Your best guess is fine.

- \$10 or less ..... 1
- Between \$11 and \$25 ..... 2
- Between \$26 and \$50 ..... 3
- Between \$51 and \$100 ..... 4
- Between \$101 and \$150 ..... 5
- Between \$151 and \$200 ..... 6
- Between \$201 and \$300 ..... 7
- Over \$300 ..... 8
- DON'T KNOW ..... 98

A11. Why (haven't you applied/wouldn't you apply) for food stamp benefits? I am going to read you a list of reasons people have provided for deciding not to apply for food stamps. Please listen to each statement and tell me whether it is a reason you (decided not to/would not) apply for food stamp benefits.

	YES	NO	RF	DK
a. You do not know how to apply.	1	2	7	8
b. The benefits are too small.	1	2	7	8
c. You are not eligible for cash assistance so it is not worth the effort.	1	2	7	8
d. You can get by on your own without food stamp benefits.	1	2	7	8
e. You do not like to rely on government assistance.	1	2	7	8
f. You do not want to be seen shopping with food stamps.	1	2	7	8
g. You do not want people to know you need financial assistance.	1	2	7	8
h. You do not want to go to the welfare office.	1	2	7	8
i. You would have to answer questions that are too personal.	1	2	7	8

	YES	NO	RF	DK
j. The application process requires too much paperwork.	1	2	7	8
k. It would require too much time away from work.	1	2	7	8
l. It would require too much time away from home and child care or elder care responsibilities.	1	2	7	8
m. It is too difficult to get to the food stamp office.	1	2	7	8
n. You had a previous bad experience with the Food Stamp Program	1	2	7	8
o. You had a previous bad experience with another government program	1	2	7	8
p. The work requirements are too difficult.	1	2	7	8
q. The requirements to participate in the program are too difficult.	1	2	7	8

A12. ASK ONLY IF R IS NEAR APPLICANT (A6a = 2):

	YES	NO	RF	DK
a. Your situation changed and you no longer needed food stamps.	1	2	7	8
b. A family emergency occurred which prevented you from completing the application process.	1	2	7	8
c. The application form was too difficult for you to complete.	1	2	7	8
d. You never heard from the food stamp office to tell you what to do.	1	2	7	8
e. You found out it would take a long time before you could receive any food stamps.	1	2	7	8
f. You had to wait too long when you visited the food stamp office	1	2	7	8
g. The other adults in your household would not cooperate with the application process.	1	2	7	8
h. You did not want the welfare office to contact your landlord or employer.	1	2	7	8

A13. Do you think there is a limit on the amount of time eligible households can receive food stamp benefits?

YES ..... 1  
NO (SKIP TO A14)..... 2  
REFUSED (SKIP TO A14)..... 7  
DON'T KNOW (SKIP TO A14)..... 8

A13a. How many years do you think eligible households can receive food stamp benefits?

\_\_\_\_\_ YEARS

AS LONG AS THEY NEED THEM ..... 96  
 REFUSED ..... 97  
 DON'T KNOW ..... 98

A14. What about TANF (INSERT NAME OF STATE PROGRAM) or welfare benefits? Do you think there is a limit on the amount of time eligible households can receive benefits?

YES ..... 1  
 NO (SKIP TO A15)..... 2  
 REFUSED (SKIP TO A15)..... 7  
 DON'T KNOW (SKIP TO A15)..... 8

A14a. How many years do you think eligible households can receive benefits?

\_\_\_\_\_ YEARS

AS LONG AS THEY NEED THEM ..... 96  
 REFUSED ..... 97  
 DON'T KNOW ..... 98

A15. Have you seen or heard about the Food Stamp Program in any of the following places? Have you...

	YES	NO	REF	DK
Read any articles about the Program in the newspaper?.....	1	2	7	8
Hear any announcements or advertisements on the radio or TV?..	1	2	7	8
Seen any posters, flyers, or brochures?.....	1	2	7	8
Seen any billboards or advertisements on buses, taxis, or trains?.	1	2	7	8
Heard any presentations by community groups?.....	1	2	7	8
Received any mail or telephone calls about food stamps?.....	1	2	7	8
Any thing else (SPECIFY: _____)?.....	1	2	7	8

A16. How much do you know about what you would have to do in order to get food stamp benefits? Would you say you ...

Are well informed about the process..... 1  
 Have some idea about the process ..... 2  
 Do not have any idea what is involved..... 3  
 REFUSED ..... 7  
 DON'T KNOW ..... 8

**B. Household Composition/Characteristics**

My next several questions are about the characteristics of your household. Your answers to these questions will tell me which questions I need to ask. Remember, all the information you tell me is for research purposes only and will remain confidential. Please tell me about your household situation.

B1. How many household members are. . . (MAKE SURE TOTAL MATCHES S4)

Under five years old? ..... \_\_\_\_\_  
Five to 17 years old?..... \_\_\_\_\_  
18-59 years of age? ..... \_\_\_\_\_  
60 years of age or older?..... \_\_\_\_\_  
TOTAL ..... \_\_\_\_\_

B2. Is English the primary language spoken in your household?

YES (SKIP TO Q. B4) ..... 1  
NO ..... 2

B3. What language do you and your family most often speak at home?

SPANISH..... 1  
CHINESE..... 2  
PORTUGUESE ..... 3  
FRENCH ..... 4  
ARABIC..... 5  
ITALIAN..... 6  
VIETNAMESE..... 7  
LAOTIAN ..... 8  
CAMBODIAN ..... 9  
HMONG..... 10  
OTHER (SPECIFY) ..... 11

B4. What is your date of birth?

\_\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_\_  
MONTH DAY YEAR

DON'T KNOW ..... 8

**NO SECTION C.**



**D. Time/Cost of Application**

My next several questions are about how much time it would take you and how much it would cost you to go to the food stamp office to find out about or apply for food stamps.

IF DON'T KNOW WHERE FOOD STAMP OFFICE IS LOCATED (A5 = NO), THEN SKIP TO D5.

D1. Approximately how many miles is it from your house to the food stamp office?

\_\_\_\_\_ MILES  
REFUSED ..... 7  
DON'T KNOW ..... 8

D1a. Approximately how much time would it take you to get to the food stamp office?

\_\_\_\_\_ TOTAL HOURS  
  
OR  
  
\_\_\_\_\_ TOTAL MINUTES  
REFUSED ..... 97  
DON'T KNOW ..... 98

D2. If you were going to the food stamp office, how would you get there? (READ ITEM IF NECESSARY)

Drive your own car ..... 1  
Take a bus or other public transportation (SKIP TO D3)..... 2  
Take a taxicab..... 3  
Have someone drive you..... 4  
Borrow a car..... 5  
Walk ..... 6  
OTHER (SPECIFY) \_\_\_\_\_ ..... 7

D2a. Is public transportation available to the food stamp office?

YES ..... 1  
NO ..... 2  
REFUSED ..... 7  
DON'T KNOW ..... 8

D3. How convenient is the office location for you? Do you consider the location ...

Very convenient (SKIP TO D5) ..... 1  
Somewhat convenient (SKIP TO D5)..... 2  
Somewhat inconvenient..... 3  
Very inconvenient..... 4  
REFUSED ..... 7  
DON'T KNOW ..... 8

D4. What, if anything, is wrong with the location of the office? (CIRCLE ALL THAT APPLY)

- It is too far from home..... 1
- It is in a congested area with lots of traffic ..... 2
- It is difficult to find parking ..... 3
- It is in an unsafe neighborhood..... 4
- It is not easily accessible by public transportation..... 5
- It costs too much to get there..... 6
- The building is depressing..... 7
- OTHER (SPECIFY) \_\_\_\_\_..... 96
- REFUSED ..... 97
- DON'T KNOW ..... 98

D5. How many trips do you **think** you'd have to make to the food stamp office before you received food stamps or other assistance or were denied benefits?

- \_\_\_\_\_ NUMBER OF TRIPS
- REFUSED ..... 7
- DON'T KNOW ..... 8

D6. Counting **all** the visits you think you would have to make to the food stamp office to apply for or see about food stamps or other assistance, how much time do you think you would have to spend? Count time traveling there and back as well as time spent waiting, filling out paperwork, meeting with program staff, etc.

- \_\_\_\_\_ total hours
- OR
- \_\_\_\_\_ total minutes
- REFUSED ..... 7
- DON'T KNOW ..... 8

D7. Would you have to miss any work to apply for food stamps or other assistance?

- YES ..... 1
- NO ..... 2
- REFUSED ..... 7
- DON'T KNOW ..... 8

D8. Would you need child care or elder care when you went to apply for food stamps or other assistance?

- YES ..... 1
- NO (GO TO SECTION E) ..... 2
- REFUSED (GO TO SECTION E) ..... 7
- DON'T KNOW (GO TO SECTION E)..... 8

D8a. How easy would it be for you to arrange for child care or elder care?

Very easy .....	1
Somewhat easy .....	2
Somewhat difficult .....	3
Very difficult.....	4
REFUSED .....	7
DON'T KNOW .....	8

D8b. Would you need to pay for the care?

YES .....	1
NO .....	2
REFUSED .....	7
DON'T KNOW .....	8

**E Stigma**

IF R HAS RECEIVED FOOD STAMPS (A1 = YES), ASK QUESTIONS E1 THROUGH E6. OTHERWISE ASK QUESTIONS E7 THROUGH E10.

E1. My next questions are about how people feel about using food stamps. Have you ever done anything to hide that you got food stamps?

- YES ..... 1
- NO ..... 2
- REFUSED ..... 7
- DON'T KNOW ..... 8

E2. Have you ever avoided telling people you got food stamps?

- YES ..... 1
- NO ..... 2
- REFUSED ..... 7
- DON'T KNOW ..... 8

E3. Did you ever go out of your way to shop at a store where no one knew you?

- YES ..... 1
- NO ..... 2
- REFUSED ..... 7
- DON'T KNOW ..... 8

E4. Have you ever been treated disrespectfully when using food stamps in a store?

- YES ..... 1
- NO (SKIP TO E5)..... 2
- REFUSED ..... 7
- DON'T KNOW ..... 8

E5. Were you ever treated disrespectfully when you told people that you received food stamps?

- YES ..... 1
- NO ..... 2
- REFUSED ..... 7
- DON'T KNOW ..... 8

E6. Have you ever given your food stamps to someone else because you were embarrassed to use them?

- YES ..... 1
- NO ..... 2
- REFUSED ..... 7
- DON'T KNOW ..... 8

**SKIP TO SECTION F.**

E7. The next questions are about how you might feel if you received food stamp benefits. Please answer “yes” or “no”. If I got food stamps, I might go out of my way so people would not find out.”

YES ..... 1  
 NO ..... 2  
 REFUSED ..... 7  
 DON'T KNOW ..... 8

E8. "I might not shop in certain stores because I don't want people there to know I use food stamps."

YES ..... 1  
 NO ..... 2  
 REFUSED ..... 7  
 DON'T KNOW ..... 8

E9. "People in stores would treat me disrespectfully when I use food stamps."

YES ..... 1  
 NO ..... 2  
 REFUSED ..... 7  
 DON'T KNOW ..... 8

E10. "People would treat me disrespectfully if they found out that I got food stamps."

YES ..... 1  
 NO ..... 2  
 REFUSED ..... 7  
 DON'T KNOW ..... 8

**F. Prior Experience and Satisfaction with Food Stamp Office**

IF R IS NEAR APPLICANT, A6 = 1 AND A6a = 2: My next set of questions are about your experiences at the Food Stamp or welfare office the last time you contacted the office to inquire about benefits. GO TO F1.

IF R RECEIVED FOOD STAMPS WITHIN THE LAST FOUR YEARS (A1 = YES AND A1a = 2 OR 3), OR R APPLIED FOR FOOD STAMPS WITHIN THE LAST 4 YEARS, A1d = 1996 OR AFTER, OR A1e = 2: My next set of questions are about your experiences at the Food Stamp or welfare office the last time you contacted the food stamp office. (SKIP TO F13.)

IF R NEVER APPLIED FOR FOOD STAMPS (A1c = NO) OR APPLIED MORE THAN 4 YEARS AGO (A1d LT 9/96 OR A1e = A, 7, OR 8), SKIP TO SECTION G.

F1. When you last contacted the food stamp or welfare office, did you know which specific programs you were interested in?

- YES ..... 1
- NO (SKIP TO F2)..... 2
- SOME IDEA..... 3
- REFUSED (SKIP TO F2)..... 7
- DON'T KNOW (SKIP TO F2)..... 8

F1a. Which programs were you interested in?

PROGRAM:	YES	NO	RF	DK
Food Stamps	1	2	7	8
TANF (INSERT STATE NAME)	1	2	7	8
Medicaid	1	2	7	8
SCHIP (INSERT STATE NAME)	1	2	7	8
SSI	1	2	7	8
General Assistance (INSERT STATE NAME)	1	2	7	8
OTHER (SPECIFY: _____)	1	2	7	8

F2. When you last contacted the food stamp or welfare office, did you apply for (PROGRAM NAME FROM GRID)? (IF YES, ASK F2a.)

F2a. Were you approved for (PROGRAM NAME FROM GRID) when you last applied?

PROGRAM	F2. APPLIED?				F2a. APPROVED?			
	YES	NO	RF	DK	YES	NO	RF	DK
TANF (INSERT NAME OF STATE PROGRAM)	1	2	7	8	1	2	7	8
Medicaid	1	2	7	8	1	2	7	8
SCHIP (INSERT STATE NAME)	1	2	7	8	1	2	7	8
SSI	1	2	7	8	1	2	7	8
General Assistance (INSERT STATE NAME)	1	2	7	8	1	2	7	8
OTHER (SPECIFY) _____	1	2	7	8	1	2	7	8

F3. Did you pick up or did they mail you a food stamp application?

YES (SKIP TO F5)..... 1  
NO ..... 2

F4. What was the main reason you were not provided with a food stamp application? Was it because... (READ LIST. CIRCLE ONE.)

You did not want to apply..... 1  
You did not ask for an application..... 2  
No one suggested that you complete one, so you didn't think you'd be eligible ..... 3  
You could not wait for an appointment..... 4  
The caseworker said you probably wouldn't be eligible..... 5  
DON'T KNOW 8

F5. How convenient for you were the hours the office was open? Would you say they were ...

Very convenient (SKIP TO F7)..... 1  
Somewhat convenient (SKIP TO F7)..... 2  
Somewhat inconvenient..... 3  
Very inconvenient..... 4  
REFUSED (SKIP TO F7)..... 7  
DON'T KNOW (SKIP TO F7) ..... 8

F6. What was the problem with the office hours at the Food Stamp Office? (CIRCLE ALL THAT APPLY)

- It is open only during normal business hours ..... 1
- You would have to take time off from work to get there..... 2
- It is difficult to schedule meetings with a caseworker at convenient times ..... 3
- It is not open evenings or weekends ..... 4
- There are few workers available at lunchtime when I could get there..... 5
- Other problems (SPECIFY) \_\_\_\_\_..... 6
- REFUSED ..... 7
- DON'T KNOW 8

F7. When you last contacted the food stamp office, how satisfied were you with the services provided by the receptionist or telephone operator in letting you know about what to do next? Would you say...

- Very satisfied ..... 1
- Somewhat satisfied..... 2
- Somewhat dissatisfied..... 3
- Very dissatisfied ..... 4
- REFUSED ..... 7
- DON'T KNOW ..... 8

F8. Did you speak with a caseworker?

- YES ..... 1
- NO (GO TO F9) ..... 2
- REFUSED (GO TO F9) ..... 7
- DON'T KNOW (GO TO F9)..... 8

F8a. How long did you wait to speak with a welfare caseworker or food stamp caseworker about your case?

# \_\_\_\_\_ minutes

F9. Were you informed about the requirements for applying and participating in the Food Stamp Program?

- YES ..... 1
- NO (SKIP TO F10) ..... 2
- REFUSED (SKIP TO F10) ..... 7
- DON'T KNOW (SKIP TO F10) ..... 8



F9a. How were you informed? (CIRCLE ALL THAT APPLY. READ LIST IF NECESSARY.)

- CASEWORKER TOLD ME ABOUT THEM ..... 1
- CASEWORKER OR OTHER OFFICE STAFF GAVE YOU WRITTEN MATERIALS LIKE PAMPHLETS OR BROCHURES ..... 2
- PICKED UP WRITTEN MATERIALS YOURSELF..... 3
- RECEIVED MATERIALS IN THE MAIL AFTER YOUR VISIT..... 4
- ATTENDED A GROUP MEETING WHERE BENEFITS AND GUIDELINES WERE EXPLAINED..... 5
- WATCHED A VIDEO ON BENEFITS AND GUIDELINES ..... 6
- TOLD TO COME IN TO OFFICE..... 7
- REFUSED ..... 97
- DON'T KNOW 98

F10. After meeting or talking with the worker, did you feel that you really understood what you'd need to do to get food stamps, were you somewhat unsure, or had you no idea at all of what was required of you?

- Really understood ..... 1
- Somewhat unsure..... 2
- No idea at all ..... 3

F11. In general, do you feel that the Food Stamp Program requirements are reasonable or unreasonable?

- REASONABLE..... 1
- UNREASONABLE..... 2
- REFUSED ..... 7
- DON'T KNOW ..... 8

F12. Overall, how successful was your contact with the office? Did you...

- Accomplish everything you expected to during that visit or telephone call, or did you (GO TO F13)..... 1
- Accomplish some, but not all things that you expected to accomplish? ..... 2
- Or did you not accomplish anything..... 3
- REFUSED (GO TO F13)..... 7
- DON'T KNOW (GO TO F13)..... 8

F12a. Can you tell me what you were not able to do during this contact? (CODE ALL THAT APPLY)

- FIND OUT IF ELIGIBLE..... 1
- FIND OUT AMOUNT OF BENEFIT..... 2
- GET LIST OF ALL REQUIREMENTS ..... 3
- COMPLETE AN APPLICATION ..... 4
- OTHER (SPECIFY) \_\_\_\_\_ ..... 5
- REFUSED ..... 7
- DON'T KNOW ..... 8

F13. Now, please tell me your opinions about the caseworker assigned to you at the food stamp office. As I read each statement, please tell me if you agree or disagree. FOR EACH ANSWER TO F13, ASK F13a.

F13a. Do you strongly (agree/disagree) or somewhat (agree/disagree)?

	F13. AGREE/DISAGREE				F13a. STRONGLY/SOMEWHAT			
	YES	NO	RF	DK	STRONGLY	SOMEWHAT	RF	DK
a. The kinds of services I received were suitable because of my needs	1	2	7	8	1	2	7	8
b. I agreed with my caseworker's decisions.	1	2	7	8	1	2	7	8
c. Overall, my caseworker kept me well informed.	1	2	7	8	1	2	7	8
d. I felt that my caseworker was doing his or her part to help solve my problems.	1	2	7	8	1	2	7	8
e. My caseworker was knowledgeable about food stamp benefits and procedures.	1	2	7	8	1	2	7	8
f. My caseworker treats clients respectfully.	1	2	7	8	1	2	7	8

F14. Compared to other public offices with which you have had contact, how would you rate the treatment you received at the food stamp office? Would you say you were treated better, the same, or worse than you were treated at other places such as the Division of Motor Vehicles, voter registration, WIC, the post office, or the unemployment office?

- BETTER..... 1
- THE SAME..... 2
- WORSE ..... 3
- REFUSED ..... 7
- DON'T KNOW ..... 8

**G. Housing/Community**

My next questions are about your housing situation.

G1. What best describes your living arrangement? Do you:

- Own or are you buying your own home (SKIP TO G4)..... 1
- Rent your home or apartment..... 2
- Live with family or friends and *not* pay rent ..... 3
- Live with family or friends and pay *part* of the rent ..... 4
- Live in a homeless shelter or shelter for domestic violence (SKIP TO G6) ..... 5
- Live on the street, or (SKIP TO G6)..... 6
- Live in some other arrangement? (SPECIFY) \_\_\_\_\_ ..... 7

G2. Do you live in public housing?

- YES (SKIP TO G4) ..... 1
- NO ..... 2
- REFUSED ..... 7
- DON'T KNOW ..... 8

G3. Do you pay less rent because the government pays for part of it through a Section 8 housing subsidy?

- YES ..... 1
- NO ..... 2
- REFUSED ..... 7
- DON'T KNOW ..... 8

G4. Last month, what did your household spend on housing? (Please include rent or mortgage, and if applicable, home insurance, property taxes and water usage).

PROMPT: Your best estimate is fine.

- \$ \_\_\_\_\_ .00
- REFUSED ..... 97
- DON'T KNOW ..... 98

G5. Did that amount include any utilities, such as gas, heat or air conditioning, electricity, and water?

- YES (GO TO G7)..... 1
- SOME, BUT NOT ALL (ASK G5A) ..... 2
- NO (ASK G5A) ..... 3
- REFUSED (GO TO G7)..... 7
- DON'T KNOW (GO TO G7) ..... 8

G5a. How much did your household pay for utilities last month? Please include all utilities such as gas, heat or air conditioning, electricity, and water that are not included in your housing costs. (PROMPT: Your best estimate is fine.)

- \$ \_\_\_\_\_ Total utilities (GO TO G7)
- REFUSED (GO TO G7)..... 7
- DON'T KNOW (GO TO G7) ..... 8

G6. What length of time have you been living in a shelter or on the street?

\_\_\_\_\_ days  
 \_\_\_\_\_ weeks  
 \_\_\_\_\_ months  
 \_\_\_\_\_ years  
 REFUSED ..... 97  
 DON'T KNOW ..... 98

G7. In the past 12 months, since (CURRENT MONTH, 1999), have you (or your children) received any of the following types of help from community organizations, neighborhood centers or religious organizations, other than friends or family?

	YES	NO	RF	DK
Shelter from an emergency shelter	1	2	7	8
Clothing or clothing vouchers	1	2	7	8
Money	1	2	7	8
Child care or help paying for child care	1	2	7	8
Transportation or help paying for transportation	1	2	7	8
Free medical services	1	2	7	8
Help paying your utilities, like electricity, gas or water	1	2	7	8
Help paying your phone bill or enabling you to use a telephone	1	2	7	8
Help paying for your rent	1	2	7	8
Legal aid or help paying for legal aid	1	2	7	8
Any other kind of help? (SPECIFY) _____	1	2	7	8

G8. In the past 12 months, since (CURRENT MONTH, 1999), did you or any other adults in your household ever get emergency food from a...

	YES	NO	RF	DK
Church	1	2	7	8
Food pantry	1	2	7	8
Food bank	1	2	7	8

**IF "YES" TO ANY IN G8, ASK G9. OTHERWISE SKIP TO G10.**

G9. How often did this happen — almost every month, some months but not every month, or in only 1 or 2 months?

- Almost every month..... 1
- Some months but not every month ..... 2
- Only 1 or 2 months..... 3
- REFUSED ..... 7
- DON'T KNOW ..... 8

G10. In the past 12 months, since (CURRENT MONTH, 1999), did you or other members of your household ever eat any meals at a soup kitchen?

- YES ..... 1
- NO ..... 2
- REFUSED ..... 7
- DON'T KNOW ..... 8

**H. Employment Status**

Many working families still qualify for food stamp benefits. My next several questions are about your job status last month. Again, I would like to remind you that your answers will remain strictly confidential.

H1. Last month, were you earning money from a job? Include any self-employment.

YES ..... 1  
NO (SKIP TO H5)..... 2

H2. Last month, how many hours did you usually work per week? Include all jobs.

\_\_\_\_\_ HOURS  
REFUSED ..... 97  
DON'T KNOW ..... 98

H3. OMITTED

H4. How much money did you earn per hour, week or month from your job(s) before taxes and any other deductions?

\$ \_\_\_\_\_ per hour  
OR  
\$ \_\_\_\_\_ per week  
OR  
\$ \_\_\_\_\_ per month

IF ONE PERSON IN HOUSEHOLD, SKIP TO SECTION I.

H5. Last month, did anyone else in your household work at a job for pay, not including schoolchildren aged 17 or under?

YES ..... 1  
NO (SKIP TO SECTION I)..... 2  
REFUSED (SKIP TO SECTION I)..... 7  
DON'T KNOW (SKIP TO SECTION I)..... 8

H6. IF YES: How many people in your household, besides yourself, worked at a job for pay last month?

\_\_\_\_\_ NUMBER OF PEOPLE WHO WORKED  
REFUSED (SKIP TO SECTION I)..... 97  
DON'T KNOW (SKIP TO SECTION I)..... 98

ASK H7a FOLLOWED BY H7b FOR EACH OTHER WORKING HOUSEHOLD MEMBER.

H7a. Last month, how many hours per week did each person usually work?

H7b. Last month, about how much money did this person earn per hour, week or month from their job(s) before taxes and any other deductions?

PERSON 1	PERSON 2	PERSON 3	PERSON 4
_____ HOURS REFUSED.....97 DON'T KNOW .....98	_____ HOURS REFUSED ..... 97 DON'T KNOW..... 98	_____ HOURS REFUSED ..... 97 DON'T KNOW ..... 98	_____ HOURS REFUSED.....97 DON'T KNOW .....98
\$ _____ PER HOUR \$ _____ PER WEEK \$ _____ PER MONTH REFUSED ..... 97 DON'T KNOW..... 98	\$ _____ PER HOUR \$ _____ PER WEEK \$ _____ PER MONTH REFUSED ..... 97 DON'T KNOW..... 98	\$ _____ PER HOUR \$ _____ PER WEEK \$ _____ PER MONTH REFUSED ..... 97 DON'T KNOW..... 98	\$ _____ PER HOUR \$ _____ PER WEEK \$ _____ PER MONTH REFUSED ..... 97 DON'T KNOW..... 98

**I. Income/Sources of Income**

Now I'm going to ask you some questions about your household income last month. I want to assure you that none of the answers you give me will be discussed with anyone.

Last month, did you or anyone else in your household, including children, receive (INCOME SOURCE)? FOR EACH INCOME SOURCE RECEIVED, ASK a.

a. How much money did you and other household members receive last month from (INCOME SOURCE)?

INCOME SOURCE	RECEIVED?				a. AMOUNT RECEIVED
	YES	NO	RF	DK	
I1. Cash from a cash assistance program like TANF (INSERT NAME OF STATE PROGRAM) or General Assistance (INSERT NAME OF STATE PROGRAM)?	1	2	7	8	\$ _____
I2. Income from child support either directly from your child's other parent or through a government agency?	1	2	7	8	\$ _____
I3. Disability income through Supplemental Security Income--that is, SSI--or from some other source?	1	2	7	8	\$ _____
I4. Regular income from friends or relatives outside the household?	1	2	7	8	\$ _____
I5. Social Security checks from the government or Veteran's benefits?	1	2	7	8	\$ _____
I6. Any other retirement or pension, public or private?	1	2	7	8	\$ _____
I7. Money from any other source? This might include unemployment insurance, worker's compensation, alimony, foster child payments, rent from tenant or boarder and so on.	1	2	7	8	\$ _____

I8. Last month, did you or anyone in your household receive WIC, Women, Infants and Children Program, benefits such as food packages or vouchers for purchasing food?

- YES ..... 1
- NO ..... 2
- REFUSED ..... 3
- DON'T KNOW ..... 4



I9. SEE B1. IF CHILD/REN OF AGES 5-17 IN HOUSEHOLD, ASK: Last month, did any school-aged child in your household receive free or reduced-price breakfasts or lunches at school?

YES ..... 1  
NO ..... 2  
REFUSED ..... 7  
DON'T KNOW ..... 8

**J. Assets**

My next several questions ask about your household assets. Please remember that these questions are for research purposes only and will not be shared with anyone. Your responses to these questions will not affect your eligibility for benefits now or in the future.

J1. Do you have a checking account?

- YES ..... 1
- NO (GO TO J3)..... 2
- REFUSED (GO TO J3)..... 7
- DON'T KNOW (GO TO J3) ..... 8

J2. How much money, on average, do you estimate is in your checking account?

- \$ \_\_\_\_\_
- REFUSED ..... 7
- DON'T KNOW ..... 8

J3. Do you have a savings account?

- YES ..... 1
- NO (GO TO J5)..... 2
- REFUSED (GO TO J5)..... 7
- DON'T KNOW (GO TO J5) ..... 8

J4. How much money do you have in savings accounts?

- \$ \_\_\_\_\_
- REFUSED ..... 7
- DON'T KNOW ..... 8

J5. Do you have any other bank accounts or financial investments?

- YES ..... 1
- NO (GO TO SECTION K) ..... 2
- REFUSED (GO TO SECTION K) ..... 7
- DON'T KNOW (GO TO SECTION K)..... 8

J6. What is the approximate value **in total** of these other bank account and financial investments? Please include amounts in individual retirement accounts (IRAs), stocks, mutual funds, certificates of deposit (CDs), money market accounts, 401k accounts and elsewhere.

- \$ \_\_\_\_\_
- REFUSED ..... 7
- DON'T KNOW ..... 8

**K. Food Security**

My next set of questions are about the food eaten in your household. Over the past several years, USDA has been developing a set of questions to tell us about the food needs of adults and children. You may find some of these questions sensitive.

K1. Which of these statements best describes the food eaten in your household in the last 12 months:

- (I/We) have enough to eat and the kinds of food (I/we) want ..... 1
- (I/We) have enough to eat but not always the kinds of food (I/we) want ..... 2
- Sometimes (I/we) don't have enough to eat, or..... 3
- Often (I/we) don't have enough to eat ..... 4
- REFUSED ..... 7
- DON'T KNOW 8

Now I'm going to read you several statements that people have made about their food situation. For these statements, please tell me whether the statement was **often** true, **sometimes** true, or **never** true for (you/your household) in the last 12 months.

K2. The first statement is, "(I/We) worried whether (my/our) food would run out before (I/we) got money to buy more." Was that often true, sometimes true, or never true for (you/your household) in the last 12 months?

- Often true..... 1
- Sometimes true ..... 2
- Never true ..... 3
- REFUSED ..... 7
- DON'T KNOW ..... 8

K3. "The food that (I/we) bought just didn't last, and (I/we) didn't have money to get more." Was that often, sometimes, or never true for (you/your household) in the last 12 months?

- Often true..... 1
- Sometimes true ..... 2
- Never true ..... 3
- REFUSED ..... 7
- DON'T KNOW ..... 8

K4. "(I/we) couldn't afford to eat balanced meals." Was that often, sometimes, or never true for (you/your household) in the last 12 months?

- Often true..... 1
- Sometimes true ..... 2
- Never true ..... 3
- REFUSED ..... 7
- DON'T KNOW ..... 8

**IF CHILDREN UNDER 18 IN THE HOUSEHOLD (SEE B1), ASK QUESTIONS K5 -K7. IF NO CHILDREN SKIP TO K8 :**

K5. (I/we) relied on only a few kinds of low-cost food to feed (my/our) child(ren) because (I was/we were) running out of money to buy food.” Was that often, sometimes, or never true for (you/your household) in the last 12 months?

- Often true..... 1
- Sometimes true ..... 2
- Never true ..... 3
- REFUSED ..... 7
- DON'T KNOW ..... 8

K6. “(I/We) couldn’t feed (my/our) child(ren) a balanced meal, because (I/we) couldn’t afford that.” Was that often, sometimes, or never true for (you/your household) in the last 12 months?

- Often true..... 1
- Sometimes true ..... 2
- Never true ..... 3
- REFUSED ..... 7
- DON'T KNOW ..... 8

IF K2, K3 AND K4 EQUAL “NEVER” (3), AND K5 AND K6 EQUAL “NEVER” (3) OR BLANK, THEN SKIP TO SECTION L. OTHERWISE CONTINUE.

K7. My/Our child was/The children were not eating enough because (I/we) just couldn’t afford enough food.” Was that often, sometimes, or never true for (you/your household) in the last 12 months?

- Often true..... 1
- Sometimes true ..... 2
- Never true ..... 3
- REFUSED ..... 7
- DON'T KNOW ..... 8

K8. In the last 12 months, did you (you/you or other adults in your household) ever cut the size of your meals or skip meals because there wasn’t enough money for food?

- YES (ASK K8a)..... 1
- NO ..... 2
- REFUSED ..... 7
- DON'T KNOW ..... 8

K8a. How often did this happen—almost every month, some months but not every month, or in only 1 or 2 months?

- Almost every month..... 1
- Some months but not every month ..... 2
- Only 1 or 2 months..... 3
- REFUSED ..... 7
- DON'T KNOW ..... 8

K9. In the last 12 months, did you ever eat less than you felt you should because there wasn't enough money to buy food?

- YES ..... 1
- NO ..... 2
- REFUSED ..... 7
- DON'T KNOW ..... 8

K10. In the last 12 months, were you ever hungry but didn't eat because you couldn't afford enough food?

- YES ..... 1
- NO ..... 2
- REFUSED ..... 7
- DON'T KNOW ..... 8

K11. In the last 12 months, did you lose weight because you didn't have enough money for food?

- YES ..... 1
- NO ..... 2
- REFUSED ..... 7
- DON'T KNOW ..... 8

IF NO TO K7, K8, K9, K10, AND K11, SKIP TO SECTION L.

K12. In the last 12 months, did (you/you or other adults in your household) ever not eat for a whole day because there wasn't enough money for food?

- YES (ASK K12a) ..... 1
- NO ..... 2
- REFUSED ..... 7
- DON'T KNOW ..... 8

K12a. How often did this happen—almost every month, some months but not every month, or in only 1 or 2 months?

- Almost every month..... 1
- Some months but not every month ..... 2
- Only 1 or 2 months..... 3
- REFUSED ..... 7
- DON'T KNOW ..... 8

**IF CHILDREN UNDER 18 IN HOUSEHOLD (SEE B1), ASK K13-16, OTHERWISE SKIP TO SECTION L.**

The next questions are about the children living in the household who are under 18 years old. You may find some of the following questions sensitive. I want to remind you that all of the information you give will remain confidential and in answering these questions you will help the food stamp program better understand the needs of families and children it seeks to serve.

K13. In the last 12 months, since (NAME OF CURRENT MONTH) last year, did you ever cut the size of (your child's/any of your children's) meals because there wasn't enough money for food?

YES ..... 1  
NO ..... 2  
REFUSED ..... 7  
DON'T KNOW ..... 8

K14. In the last 12 months did (your child/any of your children) ever skip a meal because there wasn't enough money for food?

YES ..... 1  
NO (GO TO K15) ..... 2  
REFUSED (GO TO K15) ..... 7  
DON'T KNOW (GO TO K15)..... 8

K14a. How often did this happen—almost every month, some months but not every month, or in only 1 or 2 months?

Almost every month..... 1  
Some months but not every month ..... 2  
Only 1 or 2 months ..... 3  
REFUSED ..... 7  
DON'T KNOW ..... 8

K15. In the last 12 months, (was your child/were the children) ever hungry but you just couldn't afford more food?

YES ..... 1  
NO ..... 2  
REFUSED ..... 7  
DON'T KNOW ..... 8

K16. In the last 12 months, did (your child/any of the children) ever not eat for a whole day because there wasn't enough money for food?

YES ..... 1  
NO ..... 2  
REFUSED ..... 7  
DON'T KNOW ..... 8

**L. Demographics**

My last few questions are about the characteristics of your household. Remember, all information will remain confidential. Please tell me about your household situation.

L1. Are you...

- Married and living with your (husband/wife) (GO TO L3)..... 1
- Separated or living apart from your (husband/wife)?..... 2
- Divorced, ..... 3
- Widowed, or..... 4
- Never married?..... 5
- REFUSED ..... 7
- DON'T KNOW ..... 8

L2. **IF NOT LIVING WITH SPOUSE:** Are you living with a partner?

- YES ..... 1
- NO ..... 2
- REFUSED ..... 7
- DON'T KNOW ..... 8

L3. CODE GENDER WITHOUT ASKING. **IF UNCLEAR, ASK:** Are you male or female?

- MALE ..... 1
- FEMALE ..... 2

L4. What was the last grade or year of school you completed?

- SOME ELEMENTARY SCHOOL (GRADES 1-8) ..... 1
- COMPLETED ELEMENTARY SCHOOL..... 2
- SOME HIGH SCHOOL ..... 3
- COMPLETED HIGH SCHOOL OR RECEIVED GED..... 4
- TECHNICAL OR VOCATIONAL SCHOOL ..... 5
- SOME COLLEGE..... 6
- ASSOCIATE'S DEGREE..... 7
- BACHELOR'S DEGREE..... 8
- ADVANCED DEGREE..... 9
- NO FORMAL SCHOOLING..... 0
- OTHER (SPECIFY: \_\_\_\_\_)..... 96
- REFUSED ..... 97
- DON'T KNOW ..... 98

L5. Which of the following do you consider yourself to be? (READ LIST AND CODE ONE)

- Hispanic or Latino..... 1
- Not Hispanic or Latino ..... 2

L6. Which of the following do you consider yourself to be? You may choose more than one. (READ LIST AND CODE ALL RESPONSES)

- White ..... 1
- Black or African American..... 2
- Asian..... 3
- American Indian or Alaska Native..... 4
- Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander..... 5
- REFUSED ..... 7
- DON'T KNOW ..... 8

L7. Were you born in the United States?

- YES (SKIP TO L8)..... 1
- NO ..... 2
- REFUSED ..... 7
- DON'T KNOW ..... 8

L7a. Are you a United States citizen?

- YES ..... 1
- NO ..... 2
- REFUSED ..... 7
- DON'T KNOW ..... 8

L8. SEE B1. IF THERE ARE CHILDREN UNDER 18 IN HOUSEHOLD, ASK: Were **all** the children in your household born in the United States?

- YES (SKIP TO L9)..... 1
- NO ..... 2
- REFUSED ..... 7
- DON'T KNOW ..... 8

L8a. Are the children in your household ... (READ LIST)

- All US citizens ..... 1
- Are some, but not all US citizens, or are ..... 2
- None of the children in the household US citizens..... 3
- REFUSED ..... 7
- DON'T KNOW ..... 8

L9. Is anyone in your household disabled? By disabled, I mean unable to work or limited in the amount or type of work because of a mental or physical condition.

- YES ..... 1
- NO ..... 2
- REFUSED ..... 7
- DON'T KNOW ..... 8



L10. The next questions are about the telephone numbers in your household. Do you have any other home phone numbers in addition to [FILL VAR: AREA CODE/TELEPHONE NUMBER FROM SAMPLE TELEPHONE NUMBER]? Don't count any cell phone or pager numbers.

- YES ..... 1
- NO (GO TO L13)..... 2
- REFUSED (GO TO L13)..... 7
- DON'T KNOW (GO TO L13)..... 8

L11. Is this second number for home use only, for business use only, or for both home and business use?

- HOME ONLY ..... 1
- BUSINESS ONLY (GO TO L13) ..... 2
- BOTH HOME AND BUSINESS ..... 3
- REFUSED (GO TO L13)..... 7
- DON'T KNOW (GO TO L13)..... 8

L11a. Is this second number used only for computer or fax communication?

- YES ..... 1
- NO ..... 2
- REFUSED (GO TO L13)..... 7
- DON'T KNOW (GO TO L13)..... 8

L12. Do you have a third home phone number in addition to the two you have already told me about?

- YES ..... 1
- NO (GO TO L13)..... 2
- REFUSED (GO TO L13)..... 7
- DON'T KNOW (GO TO L13)..... 8

L12a. Is this third number for home use only, for business use only, or for both home and business use?

- HOME ONLY ..... 1
- BUSINESS ONLY (GO TO L13) ..... 2
- BOTH HOME AND BUSINESS ..... 3
- REFUSED (GO TO L13)..... 7
- DON'T KNOW (GO TO L13)..... 8

L12b. Is this third number used only for computer or fax communication?

- YES ..... 1
- NO ..... 2
- REFUSED ..... 7
- DON'T KNOW ..... 8

L13. During the past 12 months, has your household been without telephone service for 1 week or more?

- YES ..... 1
- NO (GOT TO CLOSE) ..... 2
- REFUSED (GO TO CLOSE) ..... 7
- DON'T KNOW (GO TO CLOSE) ..... 8

L13a. For how long was your household without telephone service in the past 12 months?

\_\_\_\_\_ NUMBER  
(IF ONE WEEK OR LESS, ENTER 0 FOR THE NUMBER)

ENTER PERIOD: \_\_\_\_\_

- DAY(S)..... 1
- WEEK(S) ..... 2
- MONTH(S) ..... 3
- REFUSED ..... 7

These are all the questions I have for you. Thank you for your participation in this survey.