
Date: January 15, 2016 **Texas Works Bulletin Number: #16-06**

To: Eligibility Services – Regional Directors
Program Managers
Eligibility Services Supervisors
Regional Attorneys
Hearings Officers

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Subjects: **1. SNAP Verification of Compliance with Parole or Community Supervision for Individuals with Felony Drug Convictions**
2. SNAP Combined Application Project (SNAP-CAP) Shelter Threshold and Allotment Changes

Bulletins are sent to supervisors and other regional managers. Supervisors must share this information with all Texas Works staff. Please ensure that copies are provided to staff that do not have access to e-mail. If you have any questions regarding the policy information in this bulletin, follow regional procedures. Active bulletins are posted on the Texas Works Handbook (TWH) website at <http://www.dads.state.tx.us/handbooks/TexasWorks/>.

1. SNAP Verification of Compliance with Parole or Community Supervision for Individuals with Felony Drug Convictions

Background

Senate Bill (SB) 200, 84th Legislature, Regular Session, 2015, removes the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) permanent disqualification for individuals with felony drug convictions that occurred on or after August 22, 1996. In addition, it requires new penalties for individuals with felony drug convictions occurring on or after September 1, 2015.

Current Policy

Staff must verify whether an individual is complying with the conditions of their parole or community supervision (more commonly known as probation) related to a felony drug conviction occurring on or after September 1, 2015, at each application, redetermination, and when adding a new individual with a felony drug conviction at a change for SNAP.

Staff must use the Form H1806, Parole/Community Supervision Report, to obtain the individual's signed statement of compliance or noncompliance with the conditions of their parole or community supervision. Form H1806 is currently the only acceptable verification for compliance of parole or community supervision.

Note: If the individual does not provide the completed Form H1806 by the due date, staff must deny the SNAP eligibility determination group (EDG) for failure to provide.

If the completed Form H1806 is returned and indicates that the individual is:

- complying with parole or community supervision, no additional action is needed by staff.
- not complying with the conditions of parole or community supervision, staff must impose the appropriate disqualification.

New Policy

Individuals applying, renewing, or reporting a change for SNAP through YourTexasBenefits.com or reporting a change through the Your Texas Benefits Mobile App can indicate if a household member with a felony drug conviction occurring on or after September 1, 2015, is in compliance with their parole or community supervision.

Two new questions were added to YourTexasBenefits.com and the Your Texas Benefits Mobile App.

| Felonies | | |
|---|---------------|---|
| | Current facts | Your updates |
| Has this person been convicted of a felony that: (1) took place after August 22, 1996? and (2) involved illegal drugs? | Yes | <input checked="" type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No |
| Has this person been on parole or under community supervision for a felony drug conviction on or after September 1, 2015? | | <input checked="" type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No |
| Has this person been following parole or community supervision rules? | | <input type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No |
| Has this person: (1) been charged with or convicted of a felony and is fleeing the police? or (2) broken a rule of their probation or parole? | Yes | <input checked="" type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No |

In addition to the Form H1806, staff may use the answers submitted online as verification of compliance or noncompliance with parole or community supervision for individuals with a felony drug conviction occurring on or after September 1, 2015. However, staff may only use the answers to these questions as verification when the individual who has the felony drug conviction is the same individual who signed the online application, renewal, or submitted the change.

Staff must continue to pend for a signed Form H1806 if verification of compliance is required and:

- the questions are not completed through YourTexasBenefits.com or the Your Texas Benefits Mobile App; or

- the individual who has the felony drug conviction is not the same individual who signed the application, renewal, or submitted the change.

Note: Staff must continue to deny the SNAP EDG for failure to provide if verification of compliance with parole or community supervision is not returned by the due date.

When the questions answered on YourTexasBenefits.com, the Your Texas Benefits Mobile App, or the signed Form H1806 indicates that the individual is:

- complying with parole or community supervision, no additional action is needed by staff.
- not in compliance with the conditions of parole or community supervision, staff must impose the appropriate disqualification.

Automation

If the individual answers the new questions online through YourTexasBenefits.com or the Your Texas Benefits Mobile App, the answers display in the **Self Service Information** section on the **Individual Demographics-Conviction/Rehabilitation** page in TIERS. Staff must review the information and accept the answers, as applicable, to pre-populate the **Compliance Information** section on the **Individual Demographics-Conviction/Rehabilitation** page in TIERS.

When staff accepts the answers submitted online, the **Verification of compliance/noncompliance** field will default the verification source to **Client Statement**. Staff must change the verification source to **Electronic Signature** when accepting the online questions as verification of compliance with parole or community supervision. TIERS pends the SNAP EDG for compliance with parole or community supervision if the verification source selected is either **Client Statement** or **Not Verified**.

The screenshot shows a web form titled "Compliance Information". It contains the following fields and options:

- Is the individual on parole or community supervision for a felony drug conviction? YES
- Compliance with parole/community supervision? NO
- Verification of compliance/noncompliance: Not Verified
- Verification date:

A dropdown menu is open for the "Verification of compliance/noncompliance" field, showing the following options:

- Client Statement
- Electronic Signature
- H1806
- Not Verified (highlighted)

Buttons for "Previous" and "Next" are visible on the right side of the form.

Reports

A new DataMart report, DF-001, Felony Drug Conviction, is available to track various data regarding the new SNAP policy for individuals with felony drug convictions.

The DF-001 is divided into three sub-reports:

- DF-001a, FDC Disqualification for SNAP, provides a monthly count of individuals previously disqualified for a felony drug conviction occurring on or after August 22, 1996 who are now receiving SNAP benefits on an approved SNAP EDG.

- DF-001b, EDGs Denied for Parole/Community Supervision Compliance Verification, provides data on SNAP EDGs denied for failure to provide verification of compliance with parole or community supervision.
- DF-001c, SNAP FDC Disqualifications, which will be released on February 4, 2016, provides data on the number of individuals who have a two-year or permanent SNAP disqualification related to felony drug convictions.

Effective Date

The policy is effective with the implementation of TIERS Release 95.0.1.0 (anticipated implementation on January 16, 2016) for applications, redeterminations, and changes (to add individuals with a felony drug conviction) processed on or after the effective date.

Handbook

The Texas Works Handbook will be updated with the July 2016 revision.

Training

Training is not required.

2. SNAP Combined Application Project (SNAP-CAP) Shelter Threshold and Allotment Changes

Background

HHSC operates a SNAP Combined Application Project (SNAP-CAP) to simplify the application process for individuals who are elderly or have a disability.

States administering SNAP-CAP are required to adjust shelter and allotment amounts regularly to reflect changes in SNAP and SSI benefit levels.

Current Policy

SNAP-CAP participants receive a standard allotment amount based on monthly shelter expenses.

- If the individual's monthly shelter expenses are less than \$289 per month, the monthly SNAP-CAP allotment is \$65.
- If the individual's monthly shelter expenses are more than or equal to \$289 per month, the monthly SNAP-CAP allotment is \$81.

New Policy

Effective with the March 2016 benefit month, the shelter threshold will increase from \$289 to \$400 when determining the SNAP-CAP allotment amounts.

- If the individual's monthly shelter expenses are less than \$400 per month, the monthly SNAP-CAP allotment will remain \$65.

- If the individual's monthly shelter expenses are more than or equal to \$400 per month, the monthly SNAP-CAP allotment will increase to \$95.

| SNAP-CAP Benefit Month | Monthly Shelter Expenses | | |
|------------------------|--------------------------|------------------|-----------------------|
| | <i>Below \$289</i> | <i>\$289-399</i> | <i>At/Above \$400</i> |
| Prior to March 2016 | \$65 | \$81 | \$81 |
| March 2016 and ongoing | \$65 | \$65 | \$95 |

Automation

TIERS will apply the appropriate shelter threshold and allotment amounts for each benefit month, regardless of whether the benefit month is before or after March 2016. TIERS will run a mass update for all active SNAP-CAP EDGs during the weekend of February 13, 2016 and send a notice to those SNAP-CAP households receiving an adjusted allotment.

Effective Date

Changes will be effective for March 2016 benefits.

Handbook

The Texas Works Handbook will be updated with the July 2016 revision.

Training

Training is not required.