



# October 2014

# On Target

## October '14 Contributors

Paul Buntrock  
Matthew Bogart  
Kris Rash  
Quality Assurance  
Quality Control  
TANF Policy Analysts  
SSP Training Unit

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Looking for past

### On Targets?

There is a link from the Food Stamp web tools page. Or click

here:



## What Makes a Good Narrative?

The following qualities are hallmarks of a good narrative:

### CONCISE

- Tell a story that someone can understand the actions taken, decisions made and reasons why.
- Clearly narrate information gained from the interview. If it is not narrated, that information doesn't exist.
- No unnecessary information is included. For example, if the person is not fleeing felon, no need to mention it.
- Avoid repetition.

### CLEAR

- Remember that income errors are the number one source of inaccurate benefits and QC errors. A good interview and narration of earned and unearned income are by far the best ways to achieve overall accuracy.
- Provide names or descriptions of people who are referred to in the narrative.
- Be specific about information found on screens and how information was verified (pay stubs, on screens, etc.).
- If you pended for an item due to a questionable statement by the client, be sure to narrate the specifics of why it is questionable.
- Limit the use of acronyms and abbreviations.
- Use appropriate punctuation, formatting and spell-check to ensure your narrative is legible.

### ACCURATE

- Write out income calculations to be sure math and logic are clear.
- Ensure all people in the household are listed on the application.
- Describe any changes in the eligibility groups. If someone in the household is not in the benefit group, explain why.
- If there are inconsistencies among the information on the application, screens or from interview, narrate how you resolved them.

### OBJECTIVE

- Avoid emotionally loaded words or statements.
- Personal feelings should not be included. Narratives are legal documents.

*Quality Assurance*

Income always tips the scales as the highest error category. To help avoid errors, consider these points every time you adjust income on a case.

### **Make Sure you are Using Representative Income**

Ask if income is expected to continue. If not, begin by asking why? If it makes sense, use the new income. If not, verify.

Drop a pay period if it isn't representative—but explain why. If you can justify what you use to anticipate income and it's allowed by policy, you will probably be supported. In any case, narrate what's going on.

Never anticipate income that has not happened yet...like UC that the client has applied for but has not started received...or a seasonal job that will restart, but they have not started yet.

### **Get the Pay Dates Right**

Identify how often the client is being paid and convert the income correctly. Are they being paid biweekly, twice a month, every other week, and what does it mean?

Look at the paydays and pay periods to figure it out. Use a calendar every time to ensure you are capturing how often they are being paid. Narrate the pay periods used.

### **Check the Verification**

Does it support the client's statement? If not, ask questions, get more proof as needed and narrate what you've found. Always pay attention to pay dates (including the year) and changes in the rate of pay (especially on the last check provided). Is it possible the customer is receiving tips based on the industry they are working in?

Are there bonuses, pay differentials, or other unexplained incomes listed on the pay verification? If so, be sure to address it in your narrative.

For unearned income, make sure you get current verification. Verification from a year ago is not sufficient, unless the statement indicates it is a lifetime, unchanging benefit. Also, make sure you look for gross amounts versus net amounts.

### **Calculate Correctly**

Once you've figured out the pay periods and average hours or payment, use the correct conversion factor, and narrate the calculation.

If you are calculating using rate of pay, times hours/wk, always multiply by 4.3 regardless if they are paid only twice a month.

### **Use Correct Income Type Codes**

You need the correct income code to get FSMIS to calculate benefits correctly. Do not lump income sources together. Code each individually and always narrate the type of income:

Earned income = EML

Self-Employment = SEC or SEN

TANF Grant = GNT

Retirement Income = OTH

### **Get the Income on FSMIS**

The last step is probably the simplest, but overlooking it guarantees an error. Before you hit F9 to save, check the summary line on page one. Catching your entry errors before they become issuance errors is a life-saver.

### **Do You See a Common Denominator??? NARRATION!**

Always support your decision and why you used what you did in your narrative. Good narration is the key to accuracy.

## SNAP Quality Control CAPER (Negative) Errors

Page 3

Did you know that 54% of Quality Control errors cited for incorrect negative actions (close, suspend, deny) are a result of untimely processing? Here are some pointers to help reduce these types of errors:

- Whenever possible, put the SNAP case into “PE” status with the correct filing date, a language code and correct address so the system will deny timely with appropriate notice.
- If an 852 is incomplete, send the 487 before the case suspends. *Don't forget to ensure the correct address is listed on the system AND the 487 pend notice so that all notices are sent to the reported address.*
- Act promptly on pending items returned prior to suspend action.
- Process all 852's before the case suspends, regardless of where it is submitted. (Good communication and partnership between branches is critical in assisting clients timely☺.)
- Do not pend an 852 for information that is not required to be reported. *Don't be a “Pender Offender.”*
- Review for correct coding of the 852 at your team meetings. *Don't forget the “y” in the “Rept field.”*
- If a household fails to complete the application process (no interview or failure to provide requested verification), deny the application on the 30th day following the filing date. Establish a branch process that flags cases on the 30<sup>th</sup> day to ensure they are denied timely. Refer to the first bullet if possible.

Quality Control has heard from several branches who have established processes in place that help in timely processing. We would love to hear from you if your branch has a process in place to help reduce untimely errors. Contact us at [Unit.Quality-Control@state.or.us](mailto:Unit.Quality-Control@state.or.us)

### Error Prevention Tips for Calculating Income for SNAP Prospective Eligibility and Budgeting

When we look at something *prospectively*, it means looking forward.

To make prospective budgeting work best for you and your clients:

- Spend time up front talking with the client about anticipating income.
- Be sure to use representative income so you are basing your estimate on valid figures; compare the stated hours to the verification and application.
- Make sure the client understands what changes must be reported.
- Emphasize with your clients the importance of reporting changes, then place responsibility with them.
- **Narrate** the income calculation and available verification **CLEARLY**.

*Quality Assurance*

**Didja Know??** TA-DVS is an emergency assistance program, which means eligibility is only for 90 days. No extensions are allowed. If a client needs more time than the 90 days' time frame, we would want them to reapply for TA-DVS and start a new 90 day eligibility period. Thanks April P. for the suggestion. *TANF Policy Analysts*

With the launching of J82 in July, it's a good time for a few JPI reminders.

**1. JPI benefits = EN/IN issuance type.** Any and all JPI issuances need to be sent using the EN or IN issuance type (ISS ATP). If folks don't use the EN/IN issuance code it will NOT be considered a TANF payment and will not be pulled into participation.

Note: We have seen folks using ED/ID issuances lately. This is a SNAP issuance code and in essence when you use this you are sending a SNAP benefit in error if you had intended to issue JPI (a TANF funded benefit).

**2. Must manually issue JPI initial month benefit.** When you start a JPI case you need to ensure that the benefit for the initial month of eligibility is issued. The FCAS case will not generate a JPI benefit until the following FSMIS end of month process.

Example: Eligibility determined on 7/18 and JPI HH type coded. This alone will not pull this client into July TANF participation. It will however send a JPI eligibility notice starting with July and ending when the SRS or certification period ends. An EN/IN issuance action is needed to issue out the July JPI benefit. The JPI HH type will generate future monthly JPI issuances.

**3. All JPI = \$10 per SNAP case.** J82 is still the same \$10 issuance per SNAP case that has JPI eligible folks within it. There is not an additional \$10 due to them being two parents.

If you need additional training and coding information around JPI (JPI, JP2, & J82) please check out the updated information on staff tools website and/or the Computer Based Training for JPI.

<http://www.dhs.state.or.us/caf/ss/tanf/index.html>

Additionally, three recent transmittals have detailed information about expanding to two parents, including SNAP cases in CRS, and coding availability.

*TANF Policy Analysts*

### Child Care - Client vs Provider Eligibility

An increasing number of customers are frustrated because they thought their child care provider would be eligible to receive payment from DHS at the same time their ERDC case was determined to be eligible. It is important for families to know that DHS can only make payments to a child care provider on or after the date that the provider is placed into an approved status with DHS. **No payment will be made for any care prior to the provider's approval date.** Please contact your DPU representative if you are unsure of the approval date.

Keep in mind that any old listing forms should have already been recycled. Providers who send in an old version will have a delay in their approval and payment process. Only new forms with the revision date of 04/14 can be accepted and processed by DPU. The 7494 Listing form can be printed directly from the DHS Forms Server.

If you have any questions about this, remember to contact [Childcare.policy!](#)

*Child Care Policy Analysts*



# September 2014

## Targeted SNAP Reviews

### 100% Accuracy Honor Roll

0311 Oregon City APD	1311 Burns APD	2019 Cottage Grove AAA
0511 St. Helens APD	1402 New Market Theater SSP	2403 N. Valley Proc Ctr SSP
0913 La Pine APD	1404 Refugee Branch SSP	2911 Tillamook AAA
1211 John Day APD	1611 Pringleville APD	3102 Enterprise SSP
1301 Burns SSP	1612 Madras APD	3111 LaGrande APD
	1811 Klamath Falls APD	

### 90% or Better

97.78 Eugene AAA	2011	95.00 Corvallis SSP	0201	93.33 Tigard APD	3415
96.67 Lebanon SSP	2202	94.74 La Pine SSP	0903	92.86 Ontario APD	2311
96.55 Santiam Center SSP	2404	94.00 North Salem SSP	2402	92.86 Florence AAA	3211
96.00 Roseburg APD SSO	1011	93.33 Baker City APD	0111	92.00 McMinnville AAA	3617
96.00 SE Portland AAA	1418	93.33 Canby APD	0310	91.67 Redmond APD	0914
96.00 West Portland AAA	2518	93.33 Milwaukie APD	0313	90.91 Portland Mid-Area AAA	3515
95.83 Dallas AAA	2711	93.33 Salem AAA	2411	90.00 Prineville SSP	1601

### News and Upcoming Training Offered by the SSP Training Unit

Our schedule, registration data and waitlist information are updated weekly, and are available on the training unit's intranet site at [https://inside.dhsoha.state.or.us/images/stories/dhs/self-sufficiency/training-unit/docs/training\\_schedulex.pdf](https://inside.dhsoha.state.or.us/images/stories/dhs/self-sufficiency/training-unit/docs/training_schedulex.pdf).

**Contact the training unit if you have questions regarding offered courses.**

Core Class offerings and begin dates:

<b>Interpersonal Competence Essentials</b>	11/12 Salem, 12/9 Portland
<b>Computer Connections</b>	11/18 Tigard, 12/16 Tigard
<b>Expedited SNAP</b>	11/4 Salem, 11/18 Salem, 12/2 Portland & Salem, 12/9 Tigard
<b>SNAP Basics</b>	11/18 Salem
<b>ERDC</b>	12/2 Tigard, 12/9 Portland
<b>TANF Eligibility</b>	11/4 White City, 11/18 Tigard, 12/2 Tigard
<b>TANF Case Management</b>	12/2 Salem, 12/9 Clackamas
<b>DV Policy &amp; Case Planning</b>	12/2 Salem
<b>Services to Noncitizens</b>	11/6 Salem
	11/4 Salem, 11/18 Portland, 12/2 Clackamas, 12/16 Salem

Have you taken one of our online courses? View this short video, <https://vimeo.com/79249744>, to learn about all the convenient features that make learning at your desk a cinch! The video lists all the online courses currently available which each take between 10-20 minutes to complete.

Look for Webcasts and other Online courses for:

- SNAP Civil Rights** – C02996: This course needs to be completed annually.
- SNAP NED Eligibility and Coding** – C03279
- Job Participation Incentive (JPI)** – C03468
- SNAP Transitional Benefit Alternative (TBA)** – C03472
- Oregon Vital Event Registration (OVERS) Update Training** – C03639