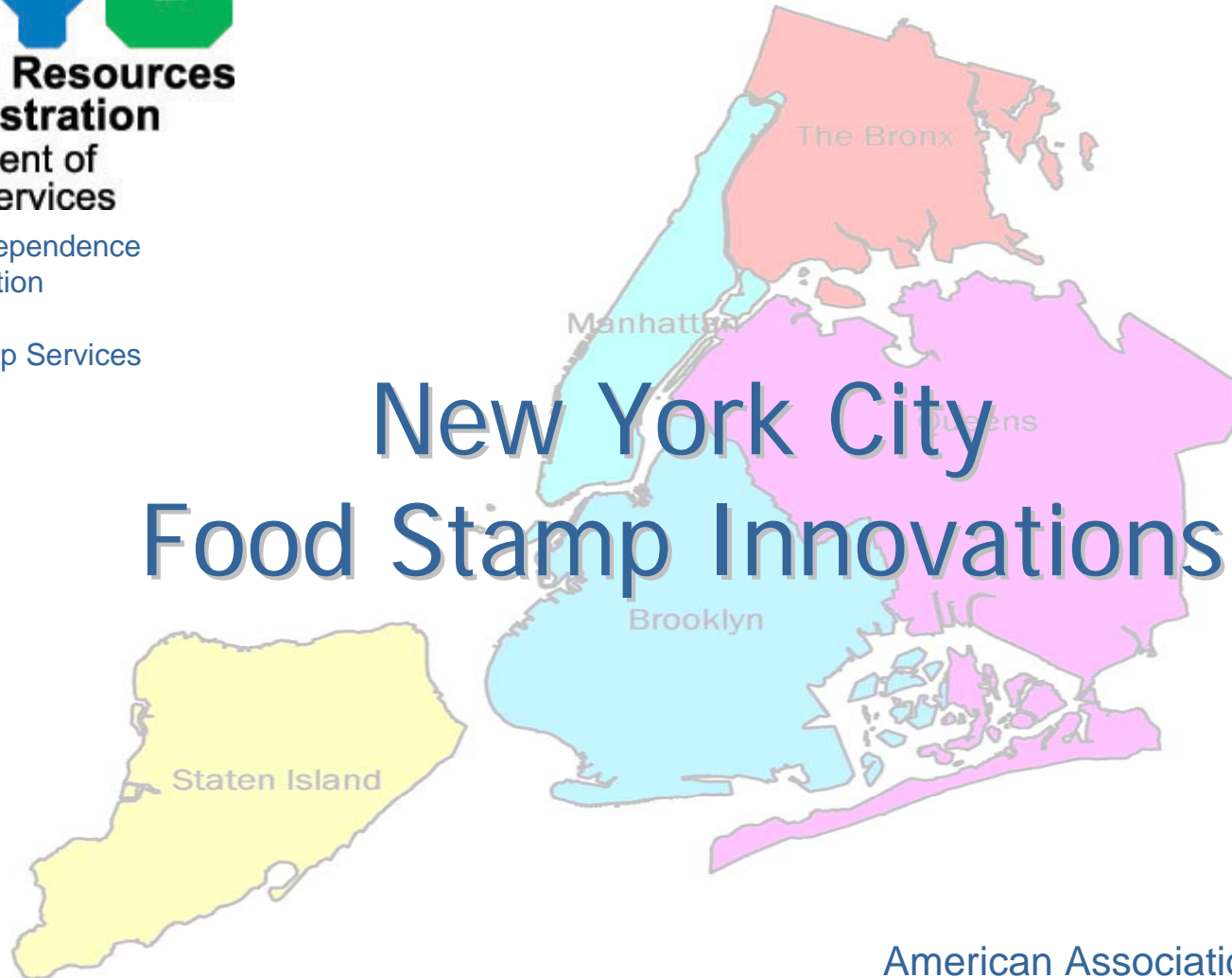




**Human Resources
Administration**

**Department of
Social Services**

Family Independence
Administration
Division of
Food Stamp Services



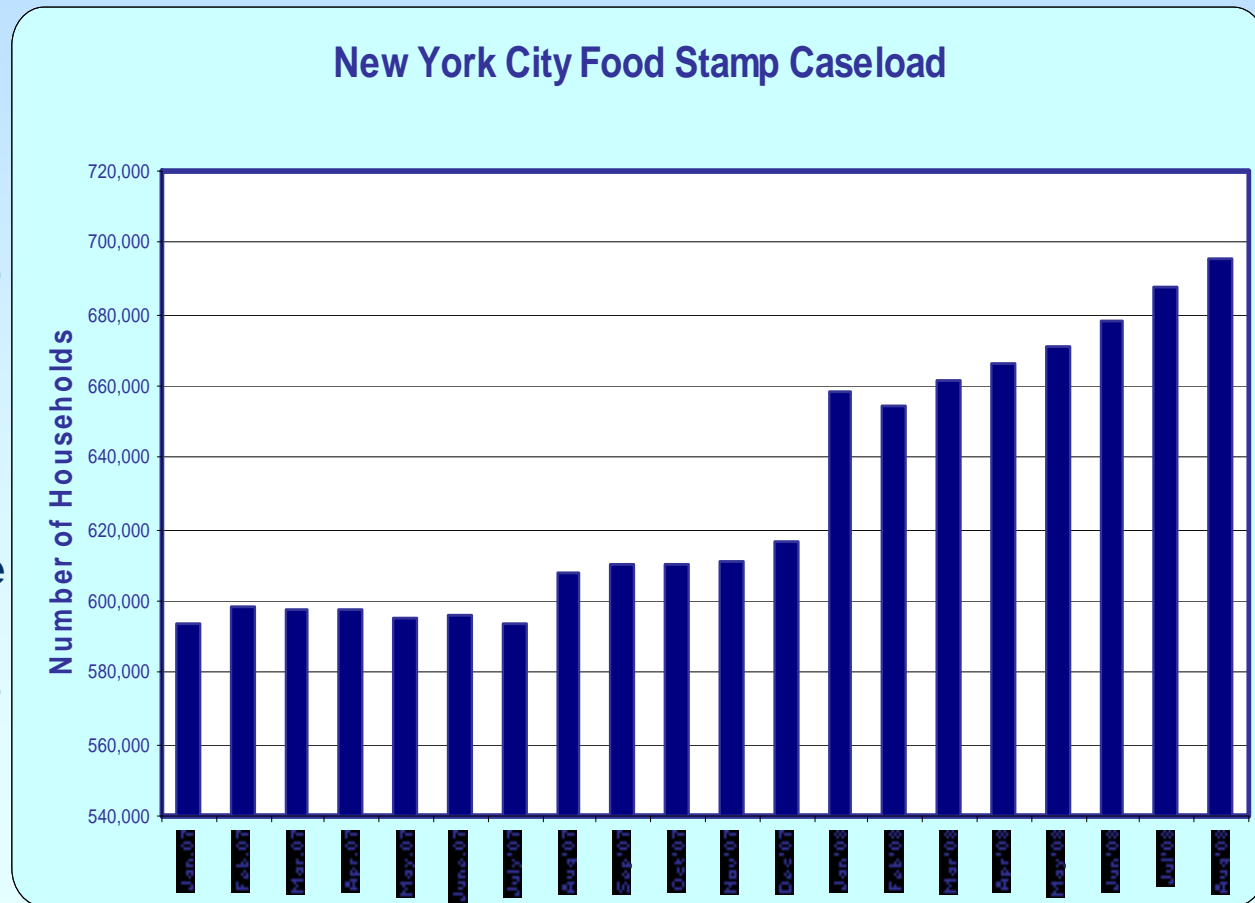
New York City Food Stamp Innovations

American Association of Food
Stamp Directors
October 26-29, 2008
Burlington, Vermont

- **Total Food Stamp caseload as of August 2008 was 695,625 households, consisting of 1,276,590 individuals**
 - **Cash Assistance Food Stamp caseload as of August 2008 was 192,474 households, consisting of 399,712 individuals**
 - **Non-cash Assistance Food Stamp caseload as of August 2008 was 503,151 households, consisting of 876,878 individuals**

- **NCA Caseload increased 86,312 (20.7%) households since July 2007, consisting of 176,139 (25.1%) individuals**

- **NCA Caseload increased 276,866 cases (122.4%) since January 2002, consisting of 518,248 (144.5%) individuals**



Using Technology to Improve Services

Paperless Office System (POS)

The Paperless Office System (POS) is an electronic case record and was initially designed for and currently used in all the Cash Assistance Job Centers. Staff using POS are electronically guided through the interview process with prompts designed to improve the integrity of the case file and the accuracy of the benefits issued. POS provides on-line work-flow monitoring tools to facilitate the timeliness of case actions and provides management tools that enhance the oversight of the work process. POS also facilitates the audit process as case actions can be tracked in the system and documentation found in designated on-line folders for each case.

In 2005, USDA Grant funding provided the opportunity to expand POS technology to the Non-Cash Assistance Food Stamp Centers. We have implemented POS in all of our 26 Food stamp Centers.

Facilitated Enrollment

The 2005 USDA Grant funding allowed us to develop a Facilitated Enrollment process that allows us to partner with Community Based Organizations (CBO's) and increase accessibility to the Food Stamp Program.

- Our original CBO partners, Food Change and The New York City Coalition Against Hunger, assist Food Stamp applicants in soup kitchens and food Pantries throughout the city by completing the electronic application, gathering required documentation, and electronically transmitting the applications and documents to designated Food Stamp Centers using POS technology. The local Food Stamp Centers then conduct the required interview and process the eligibility determinations.

- Since December 2006, HRA has received 1,997 application cases through this process.

- We have recently partnered with The Robin Hood Foundation who awarded a grant to expand the facilitated enrollment process. On September 22, 2008 the facilitated enrollment process began at one single stop location. It will expand to seventeen single stops citywide over the coming year.

Restructuring Service Delivery

In June 2007, a restructuring effort took place in New York City that resulted in the creation of the Division of Food Stamp Services. This restructuring separated Non-cash Assistance Food Stamp program from the Cash Assistance Program, which had been previously merged as part of the implementation of Welfare Reform.

This was done to provide a dedicated oversight structure that would work to streamline the delivery of services and eliminate barriers that inhibit eligible households from applying for and receiving Food Stamp benefits.

Restructuring of the program included:

- Created Six new Food Stamp Regions within New York City: 5 Geographic and one for our Special Population Centers that handle SSI, congregate care and homebound cases citywide.**
- Created Change Centers in each region that process case actions that do not require in-office interviews and handle telephone application interviews for working families.**
- Redesigned the workflow in the other centers in each region to allow them to handle all in-person interview activity and focus on the timeliness and accuracy of application and recertification determinations.**

Increasing Our Flexibility

Working Families: In February of 2008, we began the roll-out of New York State's Working Families initiative which allows us to waive the in-office application interview for working families and individuals.

- Households with 1 adult must be working a minimum of 30hrs/week, and 2 adult households must each be working a minimum of 20 hrs/week.
- We shifted all earned income cases from a 6 to a 12 month recertification period with a 6 month Periodic Mail Reporting process to further reduce the burden on working families to come into the Food Stamp Centers to maintain their benefits.

Telephone Recertifications:

- All Food Stamp recipients are offered the opportunity to conduct their recertification interview over the telephone. The recertification application form and all necessary documents are mailed, faxed or dropped off to their local Food Stamp Center to facilitate the process and eliminate the need for the recipients to spend long periods of time in the local Food Stamp Center.
 - Telephone Recertification process was a pilot in 2 of our 26 Food Stamp Centers from November of 2007 through February of 2008. During the pilot stage of this initiative 5,948 households (approximately 50%) recertifying for benefits had telephone interviews.
 - The City-wide roll-out of Telephone Recertification started in March of 2008 and will be completed by the end of November 2008.
 - All Households are encouraged to participate in the telephone recertification process.

- We market telephone Recertification's' by mailing out a brochure one month prior to the mailing of the recertification notice.



FOOD STAMP TELEPHONE RECERTIFICATION

WHY?

To make the **RECERTIFICATION** process for **FOOD STAMPS** easier and more convenient for you.

WHEN?

Telephone interviews can be scheduled instead of your having to go to **THE FOOD STAMP CENTER** for the interview.

WHERE?

We will call the telephone number that your provided to us.

Rights and Responsibilities

By calling 877-472-8411 or 311 you may receive client informational booklets regarding:

- 1) What You Should Know About Your Rights and Responsibilities, when applying for or receiving benefits.
- 2) What You Should Know about Social Services Programs.
- 3) What You Should Know if You Have an Emergency.

Or visit our Website:

<http://www.nyc.gov/hra>

Frequently Asked Questions

Question:

What is Telephone Recertification?

Answer:

Your interview for Food Stamp recertification is done over the telephone instead of your having to travel to the Food Stamp Center.

Question:

How will I know if I can participate in Telephone Recertification?

Answer:

You will receive instructions and information in your next recertification packet.

Question:

When will I be called?

Answer:

We will call you on the date and time recorded on your recertification appointment letter; but only if we've received your completed signed application.

Question:

What if I need a different time or want to use a different telephone number?

Answer:

When you receive your recertification packet a telephone number will be provided to call and change the appointment date, time or telephone number we will call you at.

Question:

What if I miss the call?

Answer:

You will be able to reschedule your appointment."

Question:

What if I need to send in new documents like pay stubs or a birth certificate?


Answer:

You will be asked to mail any necessary documents to your Food Stamp Center (copies, not originals).

FOOD STAMP
TELEPHONE
RECERTIFICATION

- Included with the brochure is an insert to verify the telephone number we have on file for the head of household. This gives the head of household an opportunity to update their telephone number or provide an alternative number if necessary.

Form W-501A LLF/MLF
Rev. 11/4/04

 **The CITY of NEW YORK**
Human Resources Administration
Family Independence Administration

Date: _____
Case Number: _____
Case Name: _____

Telephone Recertification Contact Information

1) Please clearly write the area code and telephone number where we can contact you between the hours of 9 AM and 6 PM.

{ } - _____

2) Please indicate whether the telephone number you have provided is your (please check one):

Home number Work number Cell phone number Other _____
(specify)

3) Please indicate the best time to call you between the hours of 9 AM and 6 PM in order to conduct the recertification interview. Select one:

9:00 AM – 10:00 AM 10:00 AM – 11:00 AM 11:00 AM – 12:00 PM 12:00 PM – 1:00 PM
 1:00 PM – 2:00 PM 2:00 PM – 3:00 PM 3:00 PM – 4:00 PM 4:00 PM – 5:00 PM
 5:00 PM – 6:00 PM

- Recipients opting to use the Telephone Recertification process can mail or drop-off their application and documents to the local center where it is immediately logged in through a clerical process.
- To ensure the cases are prepped prior to the interview the returned recertification packages are kept in a tickler file and are assigned to eligibility staff one day before the interview date.
- Staff are provided with telephone headsets so they can data-enter information directly into POS while they are interviewing the recipients.
- If additional documentation is needed the recipient can mail the documents using the return (postage pre-paid) envelope that was included in the recertification package. They may also drop the documents off at the local Food Stamp Center.

If the recipient does not answer the phone the worker calls 20 minutes later. If they do not answer the second call POS automatically updates the appointment log as 'failed to keep'. A 'request For Contact/Missed Interview' notice is mailed the following day. The notice is issued in an attempt to encourage the recipient to reschedule to reduce the incidence of case closures for failure to recertify.

LJSS-4/53 (Rev. 1/03) FORM 01

FOOD STAMPS - REQUEST FOR CONTACT/MISSED INTERVIEW

NOTICE DATE:		NAME AND ADDRESS OF AGENCY/CENTER OR DISTRICT OFFICE			
CASE NUMBER	CIN NUMBER				
CASE NAME (And CIO Name if Present) AND ADDRESS					
				GENERAL PHONE NO. FOR QUESTIONS OR HELP _____	
				OR Agency Conference _____	
				Record Access _____	
				Legal Assistance information _____	
OFFICE NO.	UNIT NO.	WORKER NO.	UNIT OR WORKER NAME	PHONE NO.	

In order for us to see if you can get or continue to get food stamp benefits, please see the checked () box below:

1. **REQUEST FOR CONTACT**

We recently received information about a change in your household. In order for us to make sure you can still get food stamp benefits, we need the following:

In order for us to make sure you can still get food stamp benefits, we need you to contact us by _____ to provide the information/documentation requested above.

If you do not contact us by this date, your food stamp benefits may be reduced or stopped.

This decision is based on 18 NYCRR 387.17.

2. **MISSED INTERVIEW - APPLICATION**

You recently applied for food stamp benefits. In order for us to see if you can get food stamp benefits, you must be interviewed. You were scheduled for an interview on _____, but you missed that interview.

You must be interviewed, or you will be denied food stamp benefits.

Please call us at _____ to set up another interview.

This decision is based on 18 NYCRR 387.7.

3. **MISSED INTERVIEW - RECERTIFICATION**

We recently told you that you must apply if you want continued food stamp benefits. In order for us to see if you can continue to get food stamp benefits, you must be interviewed. You were scheduled for an interview on _____, but you missed that interview.

You must be interviewed, or your food stamp benefits will be discontinued as of _____.

Please call us at _____ to set up another interview.

This decision is based on 18 NYCRR 387.7.

NOTE: You have the right to request that the Food Stamp in-office interview be waived in hardship situations. Hardship generally includes, but is not limited to, illness, transportation difficulties, care of a household member, hardship due to residency in a rural area, prolonged severe weather, or work or training hours that prevent you from coming in during regular office hours.

- On the first day of the following month the State mails missed appointment notices through a batch process to all recipients who did not have their telephone interview and did not arrange for an in-person interview.


XL0118 10/000

WASHINGTON COUNTY DSS
383 BROADWAY
FORT EDWARD, NY 12828

NOTICE NUMBER : 0530053539 Page: 1 *****

NOTICE OF RECERTIFICATION FOR
FOOD STAMPS.

SE LE ENVIARA UNA COPIA EN ESPAÑOL DE ESTA
NOTIFICACION EN UN SOBRE APARTE

NOTICE NUMBER: 0530053539		DATE: August 29, 2006		CASE NUMBER: Z004P	
OFFICE Z99	UNIT W002B	WORKER TEXT	UNIT OR WORKER NAME FOOD STAMPS	TELEPHONE NO. 518-746-2300	
AGENCY TELEPHONE NUMBERS GENERAL TELEPHONE NO. 518-746-2300 FOR QUESTIONS OR HELP OR Agency Conference 518-746-2300 Fair Hearing information and assistance 518-746-2300 Record Access 518-746-2300 Child/Teen Health Plan 518-746-2300			CASE NAME / AND ADDRESS Z99/W002B/TEXT  Z004P XX XX, NY 12865		
IF YOU DO NOT AGREE WITH AN DECISION EXPLAINED IN THIS NOTICE, YOU HAVE A RIGHT TO ASK US FOR A CONFERENCE AND/OR ASK THE STATE FOR A FAIR HEARING. READ THE CONFERENCE AND/OR FAIR HEARING SECTION TO SEE HOW TO ASK FOR A CONFERENCE AND/OR A FAIR HEARING.					
FOOD STAMPS MISSED FOOD STAMP RECERTIFICATION INTERVIEW We recently told you that you must re-apply to continue getting food stamp benefits. In order to determine if you can still get food stamp benefits, you must be interviewed. We attempted to phone you at the number(s) you provided in order to conduct your recertification interview, but were unable to speak with you. You must be interviewed or your food stamp case will be CLOSED. Please call the general phone number at the top of this notice to make arrangements for another interview. This decision is based on Regulation 18 NYCRR 387.7.					

11 010001

Interactive Voice Recertification System (IVRS) Expansion

- Currently the IVRS project is a pilot in one Food Stamp Center that targets the cases of elderly and disabled recipients that are not prone to case changes. Through an automated telephone system, these households complete the recertification process without the need of an interview or visit to the local Food Stamp Center.
- Matches are run on a monthly basis on earned and unearned income, such as WRS, UIB, SSI, Workman's Comp, OASDI, and the lottery, to ensure the information we have in the system on these cases is up to date.
- A data sheet with the case information is populated by the system with the case information and the data sheet is sent to the recipient for the IVRS process.
- The recipient is asked to review the information on the data sheet and if it is correct and there have not been any case changes that would effect the budget they are encouraged to proceed with the IVRS process.
- If there are changes in the case information the recipient is asked to return the telephone recertification package which is mailed to them along with the IVRS data sheet so the recertification interview can be conducted over the telephone or they are advised to come in for an in-office interview.

- HRA has requested approval from the USDA to expand this initiative throughout the city.
 - There are approximately 77,000 households that would be eligible to recertify through IVRS.
 - In the pilot approximately 30% of those who were offered the IVRS were able to complete it which is a significant **work load assist**.

You can recertify for food stamps by telephone



Interactive Voice Response System (IVRS)

W-901C
Rev. 7/14/07

Recertify Food Stamps by Phone

Q: How will I know if I can recertify by telephone?

A: If you are selected to recertify by telephone, you will receive a packet notifying you of your eligibility. This packet will be mailed to you after your normal recertification packet has been mailed. If the information in the packet concerning your household is correct, you can recertify by phone using the Interactive Voice Response System.

Q: What is IVRS?

A: IVRS is an Interactive Voice Response System that is used by the Human Resources Administration (HRA) to allow certain Food Stamp households to recertify for food stamps by telephone.

Q: Is there a special telephone number I have to call to recertify via IVRS?

A: Yes. The telephone number is a toll-free number and will be provided in the IVRS packet sent to you. The IVRS recertification must be completed at least one day before your scheduled in-office appointment.

Q: If I recertify by IVRS, do I have to keep my scheduled in-office recertification appointment?

A: No. If you recertify successfully by IVRS you will be given a confirmation number. Within two weeks of completing the IVRS interview you will receive a notice in the mail about your continued eligibility for food stamps. Remember, if you recertify using IVRS you do not have to keep your in-person office appointment.

Q: What happens if I'm not able to recertify by IVRS or I do not complete the interactive interview successfully?

A: If you cannot recertify by IVRS you must keep your scheduled in-office appointment or call your Food Stamp Office to reschedule the in-office appointment.

Benefits of IVRS

If you choose to use our new telephone recertification process:

- You can call from any touch-tone telephone, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.
- You will be able to choose English, Spanish or Chinese (Mandarin) from the system options.
- You do not have to go to your local NPA FS Office.
- You will receive a confirmation number once you complete the telephone interview.

You will receive a notice in the mail indicating your continued eligibility for food stamps.



CITY OF NEW YORK
Michael R. Bloomberg
Mayor



HUMAN RESOURCES ADMINISTRATION/
DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES

Robert Doar
Administrator/Commissioner

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New York City Human Resources Administration.

Data Sheet with Pre Filled Information

Form W-908D (page 1) LLF
3/8/06



The CITY of NEW YORK
Human Resources Administration
Family Independence Administration

Date: _____
Case Number: _____
Case Name: _____

Data Sheet

Listed below is information HRA currently has on file concerning your Food Stamp case. We need to verify this information to determine if you are still eligible for assistance. If the information here is correct and has not changed, you can recertify using HRA's automated telephone recertification process.

Household Composition		
Name	Birthdate	SSN

Shelter Information

Address of Record: _____

 City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____
 Monthly Rent Amount: \$ _____

Mail Job #542

Form W-908D (page 2) LLF
3/8/06

Human Resources Administration
Family Independence Administration

Persons in Household with Income		
Name	Income Type	Monthly Income
Total Monthly Household Income		

Aliens (Non-U.S. Citizens) in the Household	
Name	Alien Registration Number

Other Allowances	
Allowance Type	Name of Person with Allowance

If the information on this data sheet is incorrect and/or has changed, you must recertify in person at your local Food Stamp Office or Job Center, unless you claim a waiver for hardship situations as explained in the Notice of Food Stamp Appointment Insert (W-129RR [Insert]), mailed to you as part of your Food Stamp recertification package. If you are a Center 17 Family Call Center customer, go to the Bureau of Eligibility Verification, 253 Schermerhorn Street, 4th floor, Brooklyn, New York or call (718) 752-3937.

- When the recertification packet is mailed to recipients we include the 'Telephone Recertification Letter', encouraging recipients to use the IVRS.

Form W-908E (page 1) LLF
Rev. 10/8/08
MELISSA



Date: _____
Case Number: _____
Case Name: _____

Automated Telephone Recertification Letter

Human Resources Administration (HRA) now has a new method to make your recertification process for Food Stamps easier. Households with no earned income and no changes to report can now recertify by using the automated Interactive Voice Response System (IVRS). All you have to do is call a toll-free number from a touch-tone phone and answer some questions.

If you have no earned income and no changes to report and you want to recertify using the automated IVRS, you must call (866) 761-8357 (toll-free) at least one day prior to your scheduled telephone or in-office recertification date.

Included with this letter is a Data Sheet (W-908D) listing all the current information HRA has on file concerning your Food Stamp case. If the information on the Data Sheet is **correct and has not changed**, you are encouraged to use the automated IVRS for your recertification. If the information on form W-908D is incorrect or has changed, you must recertify by means of the manual phone interview or the face-to-face interview that has already been scheduled for you.

If you use the new automated IVRS process:

- You can call from any touch-tone telephone, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.
- You will be able to choose English, Spanish, or Chinese (Mandarin) from the system options.
- You will not have to keep your manually scheduled telephone or face-to-face interview that has been scheduled for you in the previously sent recertification package.
- You will receive a confirmation number once you complete the automated IVRS process.
- You will receive a notice in the mail indicating your continued eligibility for Food Stamps.

Mall Job #542