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Amended October 23, 2024

DISPOSAL DATE: Ongoing

TO: County Departments of Human Services Directors
County Departments of Social Services Directors
Tribal Chairpersons/Human Services Facilitators
Tribal Economic Support Directors

FROM: Jonelle
Division of Medicaid Services

ADMINISTRATOR'S MEMO

NOTICE: 24-04

CUSTOMER SERVICE

PURPOSE

The purpose of this memo is to provide clarification of expectations regarding the provision of services at local and Tribal agencies where customers can receive services. This memo has been amended to:

- a) Provide clarification on the specific FoodShare and Civil Rights postings that are required to be available in all income maintenance lobby areas.
- b) Clarify the ability of an agency to close for a full day no more than twice per year for the purpose of holding staff trainings and/or staff meetings.
- c) Provide a process for agencies to follow when requesting a change in lobby services hours, FoodShare On Demand Hours or call center hours.

BACKGROUND

The income maintenance contracts between DHS and consortium, or Tribes requires grantees to provide lobby services as defined in Wis. Stat. § 49.78(2) (b). The definition of "lobby services" requires additional clarification, which is described below. In addition, policies and procedures written in eligibility management handbooks and manuals are also applicable.

Wisconsin law states that lobby services must be available in each county a minimum of 35 hours per week. Lobby services include services provided to both walk-in customers and to customers who call the agency. DHS, in collaboration with consortia and Tribal agency feedback, have established guidelines related to the availability of lobby services as defined above.

- Agencies may close lobby services for a full day no more than twice per year to hold staff trainings and/or staff meetings. Agencies must notify the DHS CARES Problem Resolution Team by submitting the information to the DHS CARES Problem Resolution team using the online request format least 10 business days in advance of a scheduled closure so accommodations can be made to routing rules on the call center system.
- Agencies must submit requests for changes for lobby agency hours for walk in traffic, On Demand call Center hours, or call center hours. That process is described below.

Federal SNAP regulations require state agencies provide individuals who complete an online FoodShare application or renewal in person at a local IM or Tribal agency office the opportunity to review the information that has been recorded electronically and must provide them with a hard copy of that information for their records, upon request.

LOBBY SERVICES FOR WALK-IN CUSTOMERS

To comply with the federal regulations, certain requirements must be implemented by local and Tribal agencies, which are described in the section below entitled "Services to Customers Completing an Online FoodShare Application or Renewal at the Local Agency."

If an applicant and/or participant is physically in the agency, they must be given the option to speak to someone who can provide them with program information or to utilize a self-service option if they choose not to wait for in-person assistance. The following list outlines the services that must be provided to a walk-in customer:

- 1) Answer general questions about income maintenance health care and FoodShare programs, processes, and services. This includes information about the federal Health Insurance Marketplace. Individuals working in this area must be able to answer questions about:
 - Available programs.
 - Options of how to apply.
 - Information on where to apply.
 - The importance of setting a filing date and how to set a filing date.
- 2) Accepts program requests by allowing customers to set filing dates.
- 3) Print copies of correspondence sent through CARES. This includes but is not limited to notices, replacement six-month report forms, verification checklists, etc.
- 4) Schedule face-to-face appointments and interviews with income maintenance or Tribal staff.
- 5) Accept verification forms and other documentation.
- 6) Must offer and issue temporary QUEST cards for expedited FoodShare benefits and replacement cards.
 - Assist with activating and pinning temporary QUEST cards.
 - Maintain an adequate supply of temporary QUEST cards.
- 7) Facilitate access to interpreter services.

- 8) Provide dedicated, confidential space, which includes a telephone for the purpose of fair hearings, face-to-face appointments, or interviews.
- 9) Receive and hold mail for individuals who have no permanent mailing address.
- 10) Display and make available to all visitors the current state and USDA publications (pamphlets, informational flyers, posters, and other materials) that inform and advise of benefits and eligibility requirements. These publications must be available in all office locations and in both English and Spanish languages. An attachment to this memo outlines the FoodShare lobby posting requirements.
- 11) Provide a computer for people to complete ACCESS and/or federal Marketplace applications.
- 12) Provide a telephone to enable a customer to call the consortium call center as needed.

PROCESS FOR LOBBY SERVICES HOURS CHANGE REQUESTS

Lobby services include services provided to both walk-in customers and customers who call the agency or consortia call centers. The following process must be followed when a consortium or Tribal agency wishes to make long term changes to either lobby office hours or On Demand Call Center hours.

Area	Min. Advanced Notice
Lobby Hours only	2 weeks
Call Center Hours only	2 weeks
FoodShare On Demand Hours only	30 days

Important notes:

- For changes to FoodShare On Demand hours, it is required that agencies choose an effective date for implementation that is post adverse action to ensure that notices list correct hours to avoid member confusion.
- A change to On Demand Call Center hours must impact the entire consortium, not just an individual agency within the consortium.

To effectuate any of the changes listed above:

1. The consortium operational lead or a supervisor must submit the following information to the DHS CARES Problem Resolution team using the online request form process:
 - The county/consortium name
 - The current hours: lobby, On Demand, Call Center
 - The new scheduled hours
 - Start date for requested hour change
 - Updated greeting for Genesys
2. The Bureau of Eligibility Operations and Training will review for compliance with the following: and route to appropriate sections.

- Lobby Hours can be no less than 35 hours per 5-day week (contractual and Admin Memo; Wis. Stat. 49.78(2)(b) – legal holidays do not apply to this provision)
 - Call Center Hours can be no less than 35 hours per 5-day week (contractual and Admin Memo; Wis. Stat. 49.78(2)(b) – legal holidays do not apply to this provision)
 - FoodShare On Demand Hours must have on demand hours scheduled each business day the agency is open (FNS waiver requirement and 273.2(c)(1)(iii))
3. DMS Communications will make all necessary changes to the webpage and to associated PDFs.

TEMPORARY CALL CENTER CLOSURES

If a Consortium or Tribal agency wishes to make short term changes of one day or less to call center hours (due to weather, trainings, technology issues or other reasons), the consortium operational lead or a supervisor should email Wisconsin Help Desk (wihelpdesk@wisconsin.gov) and the Bureau of Eligibility Operations Training Bureau Director and Deputy Director. DHS staff will notify Member Services of this temporary closure.

LOBBY SERVICES FOR CALL-IN CUSTOMERS

Local agencies are encouraged to publish the call center contact information for their consortium on their promotional materials and/or websites. However, if a customer calls the local agency number and indicates a need for FoodShare or Health Care, the agency must provide them with:

- All options on how to apply (ACCESS, call center, mail, or at the local agency.
- The importance of setting the filing date.

Customers must be informed of ALL their options for applying— in person, over the telephone, online, by mail—and provided the necessary information (e.g., consortium call center telephone number, local office address, website) for them to do so.

Local agencies are encouraged to use the attached script for receptionists to ensure that the required information is being shared with call-in customers or transfer the caller to the consortium's call center.

SERVICES TO CUSTOMERS COMPLETING AN ONLINE FOODSHARE APPLICATION OR RENEWAL AT THE LOCAL AGENCY

Local agencies must ensure the following for customers completing online FoodShare applications or renewals in person at the local or IM Tribal agency office:

- 1) Must offer customers a paper or electronic copy of the submitted FoodShare application or renewal information or ACCESS application summary:
 - Customers should have the option to print their information at the time of application or renewal, or the IM agency must provide a paper copy or an electronic copy of the information upon the customer's request.
- 2) Have staff available to assist customers in printing the application or renewal summary.

- 3) Post signs near the area where customers complete their online applications or renewals that inform them of their right to receive a paper copy of their application or renewal and the process for doing so. For more information on agency signage that can be used to comply with this requirement, please see the "Agency Signage" section below.

DHS highly encourages all staff providing program information to complete the "IM New Worker Training for Clerical Staff" if they have not already completed the "IM New Worker Training."

AGENCY SIGNAGE

To comply with the FoodShare waiver requirement described earlier in this memo, local agencies must post the Department of Health Services "Print Your FoodShare ACCESS Summary" sign near the area where customers complete online applications. These signs inform customers that they have the right to receive a copy of the ACCESS summary when completing a FoodShare application or renewal in the local office and explain the process for printing and obtaining the paper copy of the ACCESS application summary.

Two signage options are available, "Print Your FoodShare ACCESS Summary Poster- Agency Printing Information" (P-01 157A) and "Print Your FoodShare ACCESS Summary Poster- Applicant Printing Instructions" (P-01157). Local agencies should choose the option that aligns with their service model for printing and providing copies of ACCESS application summaries to customers.

Agencies must also display and make available to all visitors the current state and USDA publications (pamphlets, informational flyers, posters, and other materials) that inform and advise of benefits and eligibility requirements. These publications must be available in all office locations in all available languages.

An attachment to this memo outlines the FoodShare lobby posting requirements. A list of required local agency postings is attached and is also available on the FoodShare and FSET Forms and Publications web page: dhs.wi.gov/foodshare/publications.htm. Required signs and posters can be ordered online or downloaded. Go to dhs.wi.gov/forms/printformsonline.htm to find instructions and the order form.

ATTACHMENTS

- Exhibit A: 2024 FoodShare Lobby Requirements
- Exhibit B: Telephone Script Tool for Consortia and Local Agency Use

REGIONAL OFFICE CONTACT

OHS Area Administrators

CENTRAL OFFICE CONTACT

Jonelle Brom, DMS

jonellem.brom@dhs.wisconsin.gov

Telephone: 608-267-3535