

OFFICE OF THE SPECIAL MASTER

Gemmell v. Hawkins – C. A. No. 16-350 WES

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Report (#21) to the Court

This Report is filed pursuant to Section IV.A.4 of the Order Appointing Special Master. As was the case in June, the time that I spent in July was *de minimis*, hence I am not submitting a time sheet.

In June, DHS continued to meet and exceed the SNAP 96% timeliness standard set forth in the Stipulation and Order of Settlement – 97.9% for expedited applications and 98.5% for non-expedited applications. This means that out of a total of 3561 eligible SNAP applications submitted in June, only 67 were not processed in a timely fashion. Both the technology and the DHS staffing continue to work well, and DHS’s goal of achieving compliance in 11 out of the 12 months since October 2018 is in sight. *See* Article VII, Section 29 of the Stipulation. DHS continues to examine those applications that are not timely processed to determine the causes of the delay.

On related matters:

- The June technological release, which included enhancements to the customer portal to make it easier to submit an application for SNAP, was successful. DHS does not have any major defects affecting the SNAP program stemming from that release and continues to monitor applications coming in from the customer portal.

- The July technological release included functionality that will track wait times and customer flow across the several offices. DHS believe this functionality will be an effective tool to help it continue to improve customer experience.
- DHS continued its pilot program allowing customers to phone in for interviews, which has been successful. Customers still receive a notice that includes a time for an in-person interview; however, they are offered the opportunity to call-in for an interview, during business hours, instead.
- DHS has continued to work on the design of its new application and the supplemental booklet that will accompany the application once it is launched. DHS has received some preliminary feedback from FNS but is waiting for its additional comments.

Respectfully submitted,

/s/ Deming E. Sherman

Special Master

July 30, 2019

cc Counsel of Record (by email)