



August 20, 2019

**United States
Department of
Agriculture**

Food and
Nutrition
Service

Northeast Region

10 Causeway St.
Room 501
Boston, MA 02222

Courtney Hawkins, Director
Department of Human Services
Louis Pasteur Building
57 Howard Avenue
Cranston, RI 02920

Dear Director Hawkins:

This letter serves as the Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) Northeast Regional Office's (NERO) response to Rhode Island Department of Human Services (DHS) Corrective Action Response (CAR) received on July 22, 2019. This CAR relates to the Federal Fiscal Year (FFY) 2019 FNS Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) Management Evaluation (ME) conducted during the week of October 22, 2018. The ME focused on Quality Control (QC) Integrity.

CLOSED FINDINGS

The CAR sufficiently addressed the findings listed below. The State provided sufficient information and documentation to validate that the corrective action was implemented.

Finding QC 19.1 Systems: Untimely submission of QC cases to FNS.

DHS has submitted reports verifying the timely transmission of FFY 2019 cases from October 2018 to present. FNS will be closing this finding.

Finding QC 19.3 State Agency failed to date stamp all documents.

DHS has purchased and distributed new date stamping devices that are linked to the official US Atomic Clock and cannot be changed. All field clerical and central scanning staff have been trained on the new process. DHS has submitted correspondence to support the validation. FNS has accepted this response and has closed this finding.

Finding QC 19.4 Improper use of Likely Conclusion.

DHS has implemented a training for the QC reviewers on July 15, 2019. Training documents submitted have supported the State's response. FNS has accepted the response and closed this finding.

Finding QC 19.6 Misapplication of conversion rules.

DHS conducted a mandatory training on July 15, 2019 for all QC staff. This corrective action has been accepted and the finding has been closed.

Finding QC 19.8 Improper Sanctioning of Refusal to Cooperate.

DHS submitted pertinent screen prints to verify that the “Refusal to Cooperate” sanction has been added to the eligibility system. The generated notice pertaining to this sanction was clear and understandable. This finding has been closed.

LONG TERM CORRECTIVE ACTION

The CAR sufficiently addressed the findings listed below, but Corrective Action steps have not been fully implemented nor validated yet. These findings will transition to the State’s Semi-Annual Corrective Action Plan.

Finding QC 19.2 SNAP households were incorrectly certified known as “Pass-through.”

The State responded to this finding by stating that the process of the “Pass through” ceased over a year ago. All cases have been through the recertification process as of review date. FNS has accepted this response but the finding will remain open pending validation. FNS will validate by reviewing current cases.

Finding QC 19.5 QC case records lacking required verifications and applications.

FNS has accepted this response but the finding will remain open pending validation. FNS will validate by monitoring current reviews to determine that the submission of required scanned documents are accessible at transmission.

Finding QC 19.7 Unclear bilingual forms and notices sent to SNAP households.

The state has submitted a ticket with high priority PMOC-1093 that addresses this issue. FNS has accepted this response but the finding will remain open pending validation.

Finding QC 19.9 SA failed to provide the required documentation to support eligibility, ineligibility and benefit determination.

Ticket RIB 54237 created in October 2017 scheduled for release in December 2019 will address this finding. FNS has accepted this response but the finding will remain open pending validation.

Thank you for your efforts in resolving findings through the Corrective Action process.

If you have any questions please contact Joanna Cross at Joanna.Cross@usda.gov or 617-565-1608 or Lefki Orphanides at Lefki.Orphanides@usda.gov or 617-565-1633.

Sincerely,



Bonnie Brathwaite, Director
Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program
Northeast Region

cc: Maureen Donnelly
Kimberly Nikolaidis
Dana Denman
Julie Penta