



United States Department of Agriculture

Office of the Secretary  
Washington, D.C. 20250

OCT 17 2017

Ms. Courtney Hawkins  
Director  
Department of Human Services  
Louis Pasteur Building  
57 Howard Avenue  
Cranston, Rhode Island 02920

Dear Ms. Hawkins:

The United States Department of Agriculture's Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) is working to improve the integrity of the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) Quality Control (QC) system. As a part of this effort, starting in Federal Fiscal Year 2015, FNS conducted reviews of State agency operations, issued clarifying guidance, conducted training, and worked closely with State agencies as they developed and implemented corrective action plans to improve the reliability of the data used for the SNAP payment error rate.

To date, FNS QC integrity initiatives have focused only on the payment error rate process. FNS has now determined an expanded focus is necessary to ensure that additional measures and reporting that rely on underlying QC data, specifically the case and procedural error rate (CAPER) and the application processing timeliness (APT) rate, remain free of bias. Therefore, FNS is postponing the announcement of CAPER and APT rates, and associated bonuses, until we can review the reliability of State reported data in these areas.

Proper administration of the SNAP QC system is our shared responsibility and essential to guaranteeing the program is run efficiently, effectively, and with the utmost integrity. FNS will provide additional details about future actions to ensure the integrity of the CAPER and APT measures in the coming months. In the interim, please forward any additional inquiries to your FNS Regional Office.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Bh Lipps", is positioned below the word "Sincerely,".

Brandon Lipps  
Acting Deputy Under Secretary  
Food, Nutrition, and Consumer Services