



**Commodity Supplemental Food Program (CSFP)  
Caseload Allocation Process  
National CSFP Association Conference  
May 7, 2009**

**What is caseload?**

Caseload is the number of persons the State agency may serve on an average monthly basis over the course of the caseload cycle. The caseload cycle runs from January 1 through December 31.

**How does the USDA's Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) determine each State's caseload?**

Each year, the USDA's Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) looks at the amount of resources available to support CSFP, including the funding which Congress provides. FNS also considers projected food and administrative costs for the year, which are impacted by inflation.



Once FNS knows how much it has for CSFP and how much things are going to cost, we first try to assign base caseload to all currently participating CSFP States. If FNS still has resources remaining, we then consider the additional or "expansion" requests of currently participating States. Finally, if FNS still has resources remaining, we consider caseload requests from new States with approved State Plans but are not currently participating in the program.

**What is base caseload?**

If resources permit, a State's base caseload is equal to actual program participation in the prior fiscal year, which runs from October 1 to September 30. Base caseload may not exceed the prior year's total caseload assignment. Base caseload equals the highest of:

- a. Average monthly participation in the prior fiscal year (October 1 – September 30);
- b. Average monthly participation in the final quarter of the prior fiscal year (July 1 – September 30); or
- c. In certain limited circumstances, September only. What limited circumstances?
  1. Full-year appropriation for the previous fiscal year enacted on or after February 15; **and**
  2. In previous caseload cycle, State agency received additional caseload equal to or greater than 10 percent of base caseload; **and**
  3. October participation in current fiscal year equal to or greater than 95 percent of September participation in the previous fiscal year.

**What is additional caseload?**

If resources permit, additional caseload is what currently participating States receive over and above base caseload to potentially expand their program and increase the number of individuals served. States can't get any additional caseload if they don't request it.

### **How does my State qualify for additional caseload?**

A currently participating CSFP State qualifies to receive additional caseload if it achieved a participation level equal to or greater than 95 percent of assigned caseload for the previous year, based on the highest of the available participation periods provided above.

#### **EXAMPLE**

For fiscal year 2009, the full year appropriation was enacted on March 11, 2009. State Z had a total caseload of 100 slots in 2009, *including* 95 base caseload slots and 5 additional caseload slots. For fiscal year 2009, State Z's annual average monthly participation was 97, its final quarter average participation was 99, and its September-only participation was 100. The State's October-only participation level was 98.

Can the State use September-only for its base caseload calculation? Please explain.

No. The State's additional caseload (5 slots) was not equal to or greater than 10 percent of base caseload (95 slots).

Assuming sufficient resources, what is the State's base caseload for 2010?

State Z's base caseload equals the greater of (1) average monthly participation in the prior fiscal year (October 1 – September 30), or (2) average monthly participation in the final quarter of the prior fiscal year (July 1 – September 30). The State's final quarter average monthly participation was higher at 99. Thus, State Z's base caseload for 2010 is 99.

Does the State qualify for additional caseload in 2010? Please explain.

Yes. State Z's final quarter average monthly participation was 99. Its prior year caseload was 100. Because it achieved a participation level equal to or greater than 95 percent of assigned caseload for the previous year, State Z qualifies for additional caseload. IMPORTANT: *Eligibility* for additional caseload does not guarantee receipt (see below).

### **By what date should my State request additional caseload each year?**

All requests for additional caseload from eligible States must be submitted to your Regional Office by November 5 each year for the following caseload cycle.

### **What should be included in the additional caseload request?**

The following should be included in your additional caseload request to the Regional Office:

1. Calculated base caseload;
2. The number of additional caseload slots your State is requesting. Only ask for a number of slots that your State can reasonably use early in the year; and

3. Other information provided in support of the caseload request.

An important note is that each State's additional caseload request is over and above its calculated base caseload, *not* previous year's total caseload. Base caseload may not exceed the prior year's total caseload assignment.

### **How does FNS assign additional caseload?**

If resources allow, FNS determines the amount of total additional caseload available. FNS assigns additional caseload to those States most likely to use it, based on the following factors:

1. Participation in the previous fiscal year;
2. Percentage of caseload used by the State in the previous fiscal year;
3. Program participation trends in the State in previous fiscal years; and
4. Other information provided by the State agency in support of the caseload request.

### **Where can I look to get further information about how caseload assignments work?**

The program regulations at 7 CFR Part 247 provide further information regarding caseload assignments. Go to [http://www.fns.usda.gov/fdd/programs/csfp/csfp\\_regs.htm](http://www.fns.usda.gov/fdd/programs/csfp/csfp_regs.htm).

### **Program Contacts**

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## CSFP Caseload Checklist

### Monthly

- Ensure timely and accurate submission of FNS-153 participation data by CSFP State agencies. This report is due 30 days after the report month—submit this report as early as possible each month. Financial data is due quarterly. See § 247.29(b)(2). **Address reporting issues early in fiscal year.**
- Monitor year-to-date average monthly participation against assigned caseload and make adjustments as needed.

### August 15

- New State Plans due to the Regional Office, including new State caseload requests. Once approved, the State Plan is considered permanent, with amendments submitted as needed or at FNS request—see § 247.6(a).

### Early October

- As a courtesy to FNS, submit final FNS-153 participation data for previous fiscal year (ending September 30). Check to ensure accuracy prior to submittal.

### November 5

- Additional caseload requests, including any justifications, are due to the Regional Office.