Food Distribution
National Policy Memorandum

United States Department of Agriculture

Food and Nutrition Service

3101 Park Center Drive

Alexandria, VA 22302-1500

DATE: February 23, 2005

POLICY NO: FD-044: Commodity Supplemental Food Program (CSFP)

SUBJECT: Use of Proxies in Certification, Recertification, and Distribution of Food Packages

This memorandum serves to clarify the permissible use of proxies during the CSFP certification, recertification, and food package distribution processes. For purposes of the CSFP, a proxy is any person designated by an applicant or participant, or by the applicant's or participant's adult parent or caretaker, to obtain supplemental foods on behalf of the participant. Allowing the use of proxies in the CSFP significantly reduces a barrier to participation in the program for eligible homebound elderly persons and other qualified individuals with limited mobility.

However, State agencies that choose to permit the use of proxies must require local agencies to implement procedures that deter fraud. At a minimum, such procedures must require that a proxy designation be in writing, the period of time such a designation is intended to cover be reflected in the written designation, records of proxy designations be maintained on file by the local agency, and that the proxy provide some form of identification prior to permitting the proxy to complete the certification, recertification, or food package distribution process. State agencies must also ensure that local agencies can meet all program requirements prior to permitting the use of proxies. For example, local agencies would have to implement a system through which nutrition education and health care referrals can be provided to the applicant or participant, or to the applicant's or participant's adult parent or caretaker.

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