

December 12, 2016

Dear County Director of Social Services:

Attention: Food and Nutrition Services Managers and Supervisors

Re: Work Number Usage

The purpose of this letter is to provide guidance in the use of The Work Number.

While the Division is dedicated to providing counties with as many tools as possible to assist in managing their workload in a timely and efficient manner, rising costs affect us in all areas. Our most recent agreement with the vendor for The Work Number ended on June 30, 2016. While the Division has negotiated a temporary extension through December 2016, this resulted in a significant increase in the monthly contract amount paid with State and Federal funds. We will be considering contract options beginning January 1, 2017. While in the past the cost for the Work Number was a flat rate, from this point forward it will be based upon usage, defined as the number of attempts yielding data on the individual. We are issuing the following guidance regarding the use of The Work Number to assure appropriate utilization of this important tool.

The Work Number is not considered part of Online Verification System (OVS) and should not be run on every household as a standard practice. The Work Number should only be used to facilitate or expedite the processing of benefits when the client is unable to provide the required verifications.

Examples of appropriate use of The Work Number:

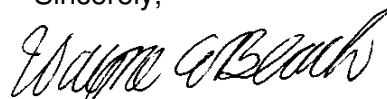
- The client indicates that a FNS unit member is currently working and does not have sufficient verification of income on hand at the time the application is submitted or at time of interview.
- The client indicates that they are currently working and does not have sufficient verification of their income and request assistance in obtaining the verifications.
- At application or recertification, the client states they lost their job within the base period. They have their check stubs. It would be appropriate to run The Work Number only after attempting to contact the employer to verify loss of job.

Examples of inappropriate use of The Work Number:

- At application or recertification, the client indicates that they lost their job prior to the base period. It would not be appropriate to run The Work Number as the loss of the job occurred outside the base period and verification is unnecessary.
- The client indicates that they are currently working and provides their first and last pay stub. It would not be appropriate to run The Work Number because the gross can be determined by using YTD.
- It is inappropriate to run The Work Number on any individual not included in the application/case or designated as financially responsible by policy.

We request your assistance in assuring that The Work Number is utilized as an important tool when appropriate, but not utilized when not needed. This allows us to make the most efficient use of funds to provide this service.

Sincerely,



Wayne E. Black

WEB/cg

DIR-04-2016