



North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services Division of Social Services

325 North Salisbury Street
2420 Mail Service Center • Raleigh, North Carolina 27699-2420
Courier # 56-20-25

Beverly Eaves Perdue, Governor
Lanier M. Cansler, Secretary

Sherry S. Bradsher, Director
(919) 733-3055

February 27, 2009

Re: Electronic Applications and Signatures

Dear County Director of Social Services:

Attention: Food and Nutrition Services Managers & Supervisors

The following information was recently received from the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) regarding the use of electronic applications and electronic signatures for Food and Nutrition Services applications.

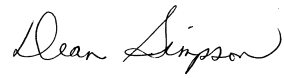
An applying household who completes an on-line electronic application in person or via a telephone interview must be given an opportunity to review the information that was recorded electronically and a copy of that information. An opportunity to review the information and a copy of that information is to be provided without a request from the applicant.

Counties who receive an electronic application from a remote location may accept an electronic signature so long as they are able to receive and retain the electronic signature. Counties must record the date of receipt of the electronic application with the electronic signature as the date of application.

The electronic signature on the application will have the same validity and effect as a signature affixed by hand. The policies regarding the disclosure of information and access to records are the same for electronic information as with paper records. The use of any form of electronic automation also creates IT issues, such as adequate back-up and security confidentiality protections. Therefore, the county must ensure that adequate measures are in place to protect said information as with those records not produced by electronic means. Also, the county needs to have the capability to print out a hard copy for monitoring or audit purposes or if there is an appeals hearing.

Please contact your Food and Nutrition Services Representative if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Dean Simpson".

Dean Simpson, Chief
Economic and Family Services Section

EFS-FNSEP-03-2009

DS:sd