

SEMI-ANNUAL REPORTING (SR) QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Reacting to Changes

1. Do we notify the client that we are not reacting to the changes that are reported? **Refer to 400.05-.07, 450.05-.07, and 500.05-.07. Use the DSS-8562, Effect of Change Notice, to inform the FSU that the benefit amount is not changing if the change is a reportable change. It is not necessary to inform the FSU if the change is not a reportable change. Document the case and the reason for not making the change.**
2. SR policy in Section 450.04 #3 states act on a change that WFFA acts on. If WFFA acts on an income change or household size change that is not a reportable change for FS, do we still act on it? **Yes, we are required to act on changes acted on in Work First.**
3. In a Standard or Simplified Recertification, policy states that the client is required to report changes in the amount of gross monthly earned income of more than \$100 and changes in the amount of gross monthly unearned income of more than \$50. If the client has a change of \$50 in earned income one month, a change of \$25 in the earned income the next month, and a change of \$50 earned income the third month, is the client required to report a change when the cumulative amount exceeds \$100 or only a single change that is more than \$100? **Only if a single change results in more than \$100. Consider each a separate change and evaluate on its own.**
4. Is job quit applicable to Semi-annual Reporting cases since not a reportable change? **No. If reported, increase benefits based on no income and change the recert category to Standard if it was the household's only income. Send the new change report form but do not disqualify. Disqualify the quitter at the next recert if applicable.**
5. If ESC sends an E&T transmittal that reports new employment or receipt of UIB, is this considered verified upon receipt for a SR case? **No. E&T information verified upon receipt is limited to compliance/non-compliance only.**
6. Is a UIB hit considered verified upon receipt for a SR case? **No.**
7. A Simplified recert HH reports medical bills during the CP that cannot be acted on since they are not associated with a change of address or employment. During the same CP, the case becomes SR when the client reports that VA benefits have started. Can the worker then take action on the previously reported medical bills? **Yes.**
8. What happens when one FSU HH moves in with another FSU household? How much weight is given to policy requirements for HH composition? For example, a Standard recert household of one reports that he has moved in with his girlfriend. The girlfriend receives FS for herself and their child. The boyfriend is required to report the change of address since he is Standard. The girlfriend is not required to report since his income does not put her over gross income, and adding him to her case would cause a decrease in her benefits. **Document, change his address, and leave both cases as is until the SR recertification takes place.**
9. Using the same situation as above, how do we react if he was not a required member of the FSU but they stated they were eating and preparing together? **Same response as above.**
10. Using the same situation as above, what action would we take if adding the boyfriend to her case would increase her benefits? **Close his case and add him to the woman's case since reacting to the change increases her benefits.**
11. For information considered verified upon receipt, is the list in the policy all-inclusive, or can there be other situations that are considered "verified upon receipt?" For example, a social worker reports to FS that she has removed children from home. **The list is all-inclusive. Keep in mind that broadening the definition of "verified upon receipt" may defeat the purpose of simplified reporting.**

12. SR FSU of one reports that spouse in home and income over for one but within limits for two. Policy says terminate since over limit, so is that the correct action even though the client would be eligible for a reduced allotment if spouse could be added? Is there a way to avoid termination and simply make the change to add the spouse? **Policy does not say to terminate the case based on the reported change. Policy says that this is a reportable change because it puts the client over 130% of the poverty level. The worker needs to assess the situation by determining what effect adding the spouse has to the benefit amount. If the benefit level decreases, document the case and add the spouse at the next recertification. If the benefit level increases, take action to add the spouse. If inclusion of the spouse's income exceeds the gross income limit for two, close the case.**
13. SR FSU of one dies, do we terminate case even though not a reportable change? **Yes, since there is no longer an eligible individual in the household.**
14. SR FSU of one goes to nursing home. Do we terminate? **Yes, since there is no longer an eligible individual in the household.**
15. SR HOH dies leaving minor children in FSU, and no one else applies for these children. Since this would be a reduction of FS, is the proper procedure to leave mom in and add an authorized rep? **Yes. Enter the individual into the SLAR System as an authorized representative.**
16. The job bonus letter generated from Work First tells client that earned income will not affect the Work First payment but will affect food stamps because Food Stamp Program does not have a job bonus. This notice also tells client about fair hearings. Is it necessary to send a NOAA in addition to the job bonus notice? **Yes. Send NOAA since Job Bonus/Work First rules are separate from the Food Stamp requirements.**
17. Does a county react when a one-person SR case is institutionalized, i.e., enters a hospital or prison? **Yes, since there is no longer an eligible individual in the household.**
18. If a member moves from one SR case to another SR case and the action to move him would decrease the benefits in both cases, do we change the case at all? **No.**
19. For cases with income from working at a school, if the recert occurs at a time when the income is very small (partial month) for the first month of the new SR recert period, do we do a variable allotment or just leave the partial month income in place for the entire six-month recert since we do not react to changes within the CP? **Use variable allotment and project anticipated income for the CP.**
19. Is ESC non-compliance information the only information considered verified upon receipt? **Yes.** If other good information is given, do we follow instructions in 450.14, Changes Reported by Third Party Source, regular SR rules about reacting to changes in benefits, or ignore it completely? **Refer to Section 450.05, and determine if the change is a reportable change. If the change is not reportable, do not react unless change results in an increase in benefits.**
20. If a deduction change during the CP for Standard (or Simplified) cases is reported by WFFA, do we change it if it is not tied to earned income or residence change? **Do not react unless the change is related to earned income or residence change.**
21. If "verified on receipt" only applies to SR cases, will the SSA/SSI mass change still be done in January? **Yes.**
22. Is the VA match considered "verified on receipt"? **No.**
23. Must SDX/BENDEX changes be acted on during the CP for Simplified/Standard cases if the change is under \$100? **Yes. The FSU is not required to report the change, but the caseworker is still responsible for reacting to these changes.**

24. If a Simplified/Standard case reports a change in deduction that cannot be considered until recertification, and then reports a change that puts them in SR category where deduction changes can be made if the benefit goes up, can the deduction change be considered once the case goes to SR? **Yes.**
Must the client re-report the deduction change after the effective date of the category change for it to be considered? **No.**
25. When SR client reports moving out of state (even though not required to report it), what action should the worker take? **Terminate only if the client requested it when the change was reported or you learn that client has applied for benefits in another state.**
Is it appropriate to ask the client if they would like to stop the FS in NC and reapply in the new state, and go ahead and close the case here if they agree? **Yes.**
Must this be in writing, or can documentation of the phone conversation suffice to terminate the case? **Phone call is acceptable.**
26. When a review for change is generated when a child turns 18 so we are aware when an individual becomes an ABAWD. Will the months that the individual receives benefits count toward their free months? Example: A HH is SR and the only child turns 18 in the second month of the CP making all adult members subject to ABAWD. The adults will receive four months of benefits after the child turns 18. At what point do we begin counting the free months? **Make no changes when the child turns 18. This is not a reportable change. The four months of benefits received after the child turns 18 do no count as free months. The free months start at the beginning of the next CP.**

Implementation

27. What action is required on QR's received in June 2003? **Process the QR's as recerts, placing each case in its new recertification category. Certify SR cases for six months, provided the household does not go more than 12 months without a face-to-face interview.**
28. When will an initial supply of the new forms (SR Recert form and both change reports) be sent to the counties? What is the form number for the SR Recert form? **Initial supplies of the SR form, DSS-2435SR, were mailed to counties May 27. The new SR form looks much like the old QR form. The new forms are DSS-2435SR, DSS-2435SSI/SSA, DSS-8550, and DSS-8550SR.**

***NOTE:** The DSS-8550 has not been printed because the waiver is still pending approval.*

Automation and System Action

29. Is FSIS now going to generate the DSS-8550? **It is not possible at this time to automate the DSS-8550.**
30. Section 400.24 - Would be helpful to add the transaction and action codes to 1 and 2. **The FSIS User's Manual contains this information and it is not appropriate to duplicate this information in the Certification Manual.**
31. When does FSIS generate the semi-annual report form? **The Semi-Annual Recertification cases are selected on the tenth calendar day of the fifth month of the certification period. Cases are selected on the first workday following the tenth if it falls on a weekend or holiday. Semi-Annual Recert forms will be mailed to FSU's five workdays from the end of the month (same time that QR's are mailed now).**
32. The presence of an individual coded 'J' (ineligible ABAWD) in field 80K has no effect on the recertification category a case falls into, correct? **That is a true statement. Remember, cases with participating ABAWD's cannot be Simplified Recerts.**

33. Are changes being made to the SLER-024-01, Redeterm Due/Review for Change to identify which cases get the Notice of Expiration and SR form? Will the quarterly ESC matches going to be discontinued? **Yes, the Redeterm Due report will reflect who gets what notice. Quarterly ESC matches continue to be generated.**
34. Standard Case is certified for three months, 6/03 to 8/03. Client reports a change in June. Worker sends NOAA effective 7/1/03 and sends Change Notice regarding SR eff 7/1/03, keys appropriate code in FSIS eff 7/1/03. Will the correct SR notice be sent out in 7/03 for the recertification due in 8/03? **Yes.**
35. There may be problems with October mass change, and others, in SR cases by processing cases with a TC-2 SLUO followed by the TC-6 SLUP the next day. Has this been considered? **Thanks for bringing this up. We will start now to develop procedures for these cases.**
36. Counties have requested that the DSS-2435SR form include the collateral statement as shown in the draft. How soon will the programmers be able to revise the form? **Collateral information is included on the SR. Due to the amount of information on the form and the complexity/cost of making this change, it is not feasible at this time.**
37. Will cases with a zero in field 47 A be coded "N"? **Yes.**
38. When categories of recertification change, option for doing mail-out recertifications becomes complicated. FSIS assumes a face-to-face interview was done. For example, a standard case is given a six-month certification of 8/03 through 1/04. Case is recertified as a standard for using the mail-out process for 2/04 through 7/04. In March, the client reports receipt of worker's comp income. Once the income is added, the case becomes SR and the field 13 is populated with an "R." A SR is mailed in July when a NOE is actually necessary. The client will not get a face-to-face interview for 18 months. Will the mail-out/telephone interview keep us from having an uncertified case if pulled by QC if the client does not meet the criteria for waiving the face-to-face? The same thing may occur with three-month certifications if the change happens in the third or fourth certification period and mail-outs were used for all the CP's following the initial application. **Recommend use of the Review for Change, field 74, to track the month/year the face-to-face interview is required for the case.**
39. The SLAW budget is currently in error when there are ineligible and disqualified individuals in the FSU. The SLAW fails to capture these persons to include them in the SUA/BUA and/or standard deduction determination, and counties are manipulating SLAW. One of the e-mails regarding variable allotments said to use the TC9 function, requiring SLAW budgets. The need to do SLAW budgets will increase significantly with the TC9 process. If the manipulation is not done or is done incorrectly, it will likely result in underissuances. What is the current status of changes to the SLAW? **The programmers are currently working on this. Use deductions from the TC2 transaction in determining deductions as long as HH composition is unchanged. If a higher SUA amount is appropriate, enter that amount as an actual utility expense. If a higher standard deduction amount is appropriate, enter the difference between what the system allows and what the HH is entitled to in the child support payment deduction field in SLAW.**
40. Must participating ABAWD's living in geographically remote counties (coded J in Field 80E) have a "Z" in field 80K? **Yes.**

General

41. Are WFFA cases ever included in the Simplified Recert category? **No. WFFA cases are included in the Semi-Annual Recertification Category.**
42. Are separate households living in the same home still limited to a six-month CP, or can SSA/SSI folks who eat separately have a 12-month CP based on Simplified Recert status? **Assign a 12-month CP.**

43. Many SSA cases may have other income such as pensions, VA, retirement, etc. Are these cases now Semi-annual Reporting instead of Simplified? **Yes.**
44. If a FSU has no income at initial certification but anticipates future income, can the FSU be placed in the Semi-Annual Reporting category? **No. The recertification category is determined by entries made on the DSS-8590. This FSU is a Standard Recertification case until income is entered on the DSS-8590.**
45. What is the maximum income limit for a SR FSU when there is a household of three and one of them is an ineligible alien? **Two. For these types of cases, it is critical to keep a copy of the change report or document the case thoroughly regarding the household's reporting requirements.**
46. What is the maximum income limit for a SR FSU when there is a household of three and one of them is an ineligible student? **Two. For these types of cases, it is critical to keep a copy of the change report or document the case thoroughly regarding the household's reporting requirements.**
47. What happens if the SR is returned the month following the month the CP ends and there is good cause? **Do not prorate benefits if good cause is determined.**
48. What category is a two-person FSU with one adult who receives SSA based on disability and another adult who is elderly and has no income? **Simplified. It is not necessary for all members to have income as long as all members are elderly or disabled and the only income is SSA and/or SSI.**
49. Is a signed DSS 8207 required for Standard and/or Simplified recertifications? **No.**
50. When will the new change report forms and SR form be available in Spanish? **The forms have been forwarded for translation.**
51. What is the DSS-8207 requirement for recerts? **Use the DSS-8207 at initial application and reapplication only. Use the DSS-8207 to screen for expedited benefits for late recerts, but do not require client signature if you have a signed and dated recertification form.**
52. Does the DSS-2435SR form contain a question asking for a collateral name and number? **Yes.**
53. Are IEVS matches required to be completed for SR cases at each recert? **Yes.**

Procedures

54. Under current QR procedures, if the QR is received in the month following the month in which the CP ends, the base period does not shift and the verification the client provides is accepted. Is this true for SR's? **Yes. This also applies to standard and simplified recertifications.**
55. Under current QR procedures for an untimely QR, the client must provide information by the end of the month following the month the CP ends. Is this true for SR's? **Information must be provided by the end of month following month CP ends (450.25). Policy for Late Recerts in all categories will also be corrected to require completion by the month following the month the certification ends.**
56. Sections 635.07 and 635.08 both say to give the change reports "at application, recertification if the FSU needs a new one," and if one is returned. Is a comma missing after the word 'recertification'? Without the comma, it instructs to give at recert *only if they need a new one*. This conflicts with 400.04, 450.04, and 500.04 that say to "give at certification and recertification." Is it correct to give at every recert whether the client says they need it or not? **Yes.**

57. Is it appropriate to give a change report at the interview, or wait and mail it at disposition when the approval is keyed? If the recert category changes between the date of the interview and the disposition date, should a new form be mailed at disposition? **Recommend giving the client the form at the interview and explaining the reporting requirements. If the recert category changes before disposition, send the correct report form then.**
58. What is the procedure if the recert category changes during the initial application process? For example, client has final income the month of application and no income the following month, or no income the first month but new income in the following month. The FSIS issue handout says not to do a two-step certification process for variable allotments for SR cases. Is the recert category always determined by the situation at disposition? **Yes. To process the second month of the CP, key a TC 2 with a start issuance of the second month, and key TC9 retro benefit on the same day to issue benefits for the first month of the CP. Determine the retro benefit amount using SLAW. For example, a May application is processed in June. Complete a TC2 with a CP of 5/03 thru 10/03. Enter a Start Issuance date of 6/03. Immediately follow this transaction with a TC9 to issue May benefits. It is also acceptable to issue May benefits using the DSS-8593 (SLSE) transaction.**
59. If the county erroneously assigns the stable SSA and other income case a 12-month certification instead of six months and codes them "S," Simplified, by mistake, what action is required when this is discovered since the CP can't be shortened? If they have coded them incorrectly they may act on changes incorrectly also. **Correct the case category, send the correct change report, and establish a claim if applicable.**
60. Since cases are selected for NOE or SR mailout on the tenth of the month prior to the end of the CP, and a change of category from SR to Standard takes place after selection but before the end of the CP, would a telephone contact with the SR form meet the requirement for a standard recert? **Yes.**
61. 400.24, A. and B. state for a timely and untimely recert, if verification is provided from the 31st day until the last day of the month following the end of the CP, the case can be reopened. Under current policy they have longer - a second 30 days. In 450.25 it still says for a late SR, they have 30 days, when your response was they have until the end of the month following the month the CP ends. Which is correct? **Information must be provided by the end of month following month CP ends (450.25). Policy for Late Recerts in all categories will also be corrected to require completion by the month following the month the certification ends.**