

FNS Processing Best Practices

- Upon receipt screen/triage all applications received by ePASS, mail, fax, drop offs or walk-ins
- Interview applicant on same day when possible, be sure to screen for expedite. If identity is provided and interview is completed, application should be processed on same day as applicant applies. Remember identity does not have to be a picture ID.
- If interview cannot be completed on same day of application you must send a DSS-8650 with an exact date, time and method of interview. If applicant fails to keep the interview appointment you must send a second DSS-8650 informing the household they missed their appointment and it is their responsibility to contact the agency to reschedule.
- **ePASS Applications:**
 - All ePASS applications must be assigned to staff on same day received and screened for expedite. Attempt to contact applicant by phone for interview, if unable to make contact, send DSS-8650 with appointment (See previous bullets)
 - If ePASS application received after normal business hours of your agency, the application date should be changed to reflect the next business day, this should be clearly documented why the date was changed.
- **Mail In Applications:**
 - When applicants contact your agency requesting an application be mailed to them, inform them if they are able to come to the agency on the same day and complete the application in the office it may speed up the application processing time. However, if applicant states they can't then the application should be mailed.
 - It is ok to include a check list of possible items applicants may need to bring in order to speed up the application processing. It must be clear to the applicant that they don't have to bring anything but if they do it may speed up the application processing. (The Division is developing this statement)
- **Faxed Applications:**
 - Refer to information regarding ePASS applications above
 - Ensure fax machines are checked throughout the day for faxes received
 - Make sure faxed applications are assigned immediately

- **Drop Off Applications:**
 - Reevaluate location of agency drop box. Before application is dropped off, offer the client the opportunity for an interview, inform them this may speed up the processing time. If applicant cannot stay, get as much information as possible to contact them for interview. Provide a DSS-8650 on same day as drop off when possible.
 - There is no requirement that a drop off box be available.
 - If applicant understands they may get benefits sooner if they wait for an interview, most likely they will wait.

- **Walk In Applications:**
 - Screen all applications for expedite.
 - Complete the interview while applicant is in the office
 - Request only the “required” verifications, check NC FAST for verifications that may already be available before requesting again.
 - If all information is available, process the application on the same day

- **Other Considerations:**
 - Supervisors and Managers review work of case managers
 - Ensure staff are not requesting unnecessary information
 - Ensure agency mail is disbursed immediately. Consult with post office to discuss possible changes needed with your mail delivery. Can mail be delivered more than once a day? Can mail be delivered earlier in the day?