



SNAP Workload Management During Difficult Times



We worry about:

- Accuracy
- Timeliness
- Customer Service
- Access
- Caseloads
- Emails
- Phone Calls
- Media Reports



Perspective helps:

- Tonight we have hotel beds to retire to, and not an underpass or sidewalk.
- We have jobs; *meaningful* jobs.
- And our jobs are pretty good!



There are other stressful jobs ...

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You provide so much for your community:

- Reduce hunger
- Strengthen communities and country
- Reduce health issues
- Help working families
- Help the elderly
- Reduce juvenile delinquency
- Improve education for children



Increase food security and reduce hunger in partnership with cooperating organizations by providing children and low-income people with access to food, a healthful diet, and nutrition education in a manner that supports American agriculture & inspires public confidence.

**Goal 1:
Improved nutrition of children
and low-income people**

**Objective 1.1:
Improved food security**

**Objective 1.2:
FNS program participants
make healthy food choices**

**Objective 1.3:
Improved nutritional quality of
meals, food packages, commodities,
and other program benefits**

**Goal 2:
Improved stewardship
of Federal funds**

**Objective 2.1:
Improved benefit accuracy and
reduced fraud**

**Objective 2.2:
Improved efficiency of
program administration**

SNAP has a significant impact on our nation:

In FY 2008:

- 28.4 million Americans participated
- \$34.6 billion in benefits issued
- About \$63.7 billion in economic activity

Further challenges are expected:

- The economy
- Shifting expectations
- Competition
- Decreasing State funds
- Rising caseloads
- Stagnant/falling staffing levels
- Work-intensive programs
- Outdated technology

Recent Innovations:

- ATMs
- Cell Phones
- Airport Kiosks
- On-line Banking
- HD TV
- Digital Music (iPods!)
- NetFlix



The Solution?

The rest of the world has
changed. We must too!!

You can be the catalyst for innovation!

Here are some ideas for changing the way we do business that can result in improved payment and negative error rates in your agency.

Workflow Analysis:

- AKA: Lean Thinking; Process Mapping
- Identify redundancies, unnecessary steps, and waste

Considerations

- Worker buy-in and involvement is essential

Telephone Interviews

- Reduces no-show rate
- More convenient for clients, particularly those who work
- Fewer customers in the lobby
- Allows for expansion of service hours
- Allows for teleworking
- Potential to improve service timeliness

Telephone Interviews (continued)

Considerations

- Workers require special training
- Can be initiated by client or worker
- There is no longer a limit to the number/percent of applications that can have telephone interviews
- Ensure staff have the proper equipment, i.e. headsets

Electronic Case Files

- Case information is easy to find
- Reduces the occurrence of lost case records and verification
- Saves on filing, space and paper costs
- Simplifies process to redistribute caseload

Electronic Case Files (continued)

Considerations

- Access can be provided (inquiry only) to other authorized agencies within the State
- More successful when specialized staff are used to scan and index documents

Automated Voice Response System and/or Online Account Access

- Provides 24/7 access to information about program
- Can be set up to accept changes
- Reduces phone calls and inquiries for workers

Automated Voice Response System and/or Online Account Access

(continued)

Considerations

- Programming needed to enter information directly into system
- Needs to work seamlessly with automated system for best results

Targeted Interviewing & Case Processing

- Allows staff to spend more time on the most error prone cases instead of treating all case equally
- Recognizes that few households commit fraud
- Can result in better customer service

Targeted Interviewing & Case Processing (continued)

Considerations

- Needs to be data based
- Workers may resist approach, wanting to apply same procedures to all households
- Needs to be sensitive both to error proneness and need for applicant assistance

Real-Time Data Access

- Allows workers to verify additional information on a client while the interview is conducted
- Access to additional information at workers' fingertips
- Workers don't have to wait for overnight or regular data/wage matches and then process hits

Real-Time Data Access (continued)

Considerations

- Private contractor can develop at a higher cost or State may develop less expensively in-house
- More readily available data should improve payment accuracy
- May require significant amount of time and coordination with IT Department

Automated Application Processing

- Some steps in the process can be automated, such as the Notice of Missed Interview and denial on the 30th day
- Reduces workload for intake staff
- Provides more consistent application of policy across the state

Automated Application Processing

(continued)

Considerations

- Programming needed for system to process correctly
- Staff must use scheduling function within eligibility system in order to automate the NOMI
- May require a notification to worker so that they can verify the accuracy of the termination, i.e. ensure that outstanding verifications were not received

What does excellence look like?

- Define it.
- Quantify it.
- Figure out what to do to start getting there.

Corrective Action Planning is:

1. Fixing problems that have caused QC errors.

AND

2. Preventing QC errors by correcting problems as they emerge.

Proactive rather than Reactive

Where to Begin?

- Sound corrective action planning starts with good data!
- The effectiveness of the plan depends on how well the errors have been identified and how completely and thoroughly they are understood.
- Monitor data at least monthly.

Data sources to consider :

- Quality Control Findings
- Case Review Findings
- Claims
- Customer Complaints
- Fair Hearings
- Employee Suggestions
- Management Evaluation Findings
- Your Observations

What should your Corrective Action Plan (CAP) include?

- Description of the problem
- Magnitude and geographic extent
- Description of the initiative to fix the problem
- Tasks needed to implement the initiative, person(s) responsible for each task, and target completion date for each task

What should your Corrective Action Plan (CAP) include?

- Plan to monitor implementation
- Plan for evaluating effectiveness
- Expected outcome
- Current status
- Person Responsible for overall initiative

Tips for Easy, Effective Corrective Action Planning

- Involve staff from all levels
- Don't exclude new/different ideas
- Go for quality, not quantity
- Start with initiatives that will have the most impact
- Make sure you have the power to carry out the initiatives you develop
- Get support of upper management before you start

Remember the CAP Basics:

- Supervisors are the Foundation
- Mandatory 2nd Party Reviews
- Determine Root Causes
- Constant Monitoring & Analysis
- Measurement
- Accountability

QUESTIONS???

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