



FAMILY INDEPENDENCE ADMINISTRATION


James K. Whelan, Executive Deputy Commissioner

Jill Berry, Deputy Commissioner
Office of Program Support

Stephen Fisher, Assistant Deputy Commissioner
Office of Procedures

POLICY BULLETIN #15-57-OPE

SELF-ATTESTATION OF SHELTER EXPENSES FOR CERTAIN NON-CASH ASSISTANCE SUPPLEMENTAL NUTRITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (NCA SNAP) HOUSEHOLDS

Date: June 18, 2015	Subtopic(s): SNAP Shelter expenses
<p> This procedure can now be accessed on the FIAweb.</p> <p>See PB #15-12-ELI for SUA information.</p>	<p>The purpose of this policy bulletin is to inform Non-Cash Assistance Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (NCA SNAP) Center staff that the New York State Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance (OTDA) has waived the requirement of mandatory verification of shelter expenses (e.g. rent) as a three-year demonstration project for the following categories of NCA SNAP applicant or participant households (unless the self-reported rent amount is questionable):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Households with the following Welfare Management System (WMS) Shelter Type codes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 02 (NYCHA Apartment – Utilities Included) ▪ 24 (NYCHA Apartment – Utilities Not Included) ▪ 40 (NYCHA / Section 8 Voucher – 30% Limit) • Households who are non-primary/secondary tenants (these are households who are not the tenant of record in the dwelling in which they reside); and • Households that do not contain an aged (60 years of age or older) or disabled individual and who qualify for the heating/cooling Level I standard utility allowance (SUA).

HAVE QUESTIONS ABOUT THIS PROCEDURE?
Call 718-557-1313 then press 3 at the prompt followed by 1 or
send an e-mail to *FIA Call Center Fax* or fax to: (917) 639-0298

The self-attestation of shelter expenses for the above listed households applies when processing information listed on any of the following forms:

- Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) Application/Recertification (**LDSS-4826**);
- Periodic Report (**LDSS-4310**);
- Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) Change Report Form (**LDSS-3151**);
- NYSNIP Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) Benefits Interim Report (NYC) (**LDSS-4836-NYC**); or
- Important Notice to Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) Applicants/Participants (**W-127 N/P**).

In addition, self-attestation of shelter expenses is permitted for applications and recertifications submitted online through ACCESS NYC.

Residence and household size must still be verified.

NCA SNAP households that are not required to verify their shelter expense are still required to verify their residence and household size. In many instances, a household's verification of its residence (e.g. lease or a letter from the landlord/primary tenant) will also include verification of its shelter expense.

Self-Attestation for NCA-SNAP households only.

The waiver of the requirement to verify a household's shelter expense does not apply to SNAP households that are applying for or in receipt of recurring Cash Assistance.

Processing Applications and Recertifications in SNAP POS

SNAP POS will run a match for NCA SNAP households with shelter type codes **02**, **24**, and **40** against a New York City Housing Authority (NYCHA) data base to independently verify that the correct amount of shelter expense is budgeted for those households.

For NCA SNAP households that can self-attest to their shelter expenses, SNAP POS will display a message informing the Worker that the household must not be asked to verify their shelter expenses unless the self-attested information is questionable. Self Attestation will appear in the drop down list for **Accepted Document**. For these households, if Self-Attestation is selected, a request for verification of shelter expenses will not appear on the Documentation Requirements and/or Assessment Follow-Up Form (**W-113K**).

The screenshot shows a software window titled 'SNAP POS 9.1.1 - [SHELTER (HOUSING) EXPENSES]'. The main question is 'Do You (Or Anyone Who Lives With You) Have A Rent, Mortgage, Or Other Shelter Expense?'. Below this, there are sections for 'Shelter Information' and 'Landlord Information'. A 'Response to Question' table lists documents with checkboxes: W-2 Form, Title to Property, Tax Bill showing ownership of house, Recommendation from RACCU, and Self Attestation. A callout box points to the 'Self Attestation' checkbox. At the bottom, there are fields for 'Document...', 'Scan', and 'Comment...', along with 'OK' and 'Cancel' buttons.

Option to select
Self Attestation

Processing Periodic Reports

See [PD #12-16-ELI](#) for information on processing Periodic Reports.

When processing the information contained on a Periodic Report for households who can self-attest to their shelter expense, a reported increase in shelter expenses resulting in an increase in SNAP benefits must be processed without requiring verification as long as the self-reported shelter expense amount is not questionable.

If a household submits a Periodic Report with increased shelter expenses and does not provide verifying documentation, the Worker must determine if the household qualifies to self-attest to their shelter expense. The determination can be made by reviewing case information in WMS and/or SNAP POS. If the household is not eligible for self-attestation, and the increase in shelter expenses would result in an increase in SNAP benefits, the Worker must mail the household the Notice of Documentation Required – Change in Household Circumstances (**W-132S**) to request verification.

Note: Any other reported changes that would result in an increase in SNAP benefits (e.g. decrease in income) must still be verified before those changes may be processed.

Determining if Self-Attested Shelter Expense is Questionable

For NCA SNAP households that qualify for self-attestation, verification of the shelter (rent) expenses will be required only if the self-attested information is deemed “questionable” by the Worker. Otherwise, the shelter (rent) expense amount indicated on an application, recertification, or any form listed above, will be sufficient to establish a household’s shelter expenses without any further documentation.

Questionable information is information provided by an applicant/participant that is inconsistent with statements made by the applicant/participant or inconsistent with other information that was previously provided.

An example of a household’s self-attested rent amount being considered questionable would be when a household continues to reside at the same location and reports a significant increase (e.g. a 50% increase from \$800 per month to \$1,200 per month) from the last reported rent expense.

Effective June 22, 2015

References:

7 CFR 273.2(f)(1) and 273.2(f)(3)(i)
18 NYCRR 300.11(b)(2) and 387.8(b)(1)(i)

Related Items:

[PB #14-10-ELI](#) Determining the SNAP Shelter Cost
[PB #15-12-ELI](#) SUA Eligibility and the Shelter Type Codes/SUA Levels Desk Guide (**W-205HH**)
[PD #12-16-ELI](#) SNAP Change Reporting Rules and Periodic Reporting