



American Association of Food Stamp Directors

an affiliate of the American Public Human Services Association

Fall and Food Stamps: Changing Colors
October 26 – 29, 2008
Tentative Workshop Descriptions
(as of August 11, 2008)

The following workshops are being planned for the 33rd Annual Education Conference of the American Association of Food Stamp Directors:

Connecting the Dots: Performance in SNAP

What's new out there in terms of tried and true strategies for improving performance in the FNS four bonus areas? What are the latest innovations in program delivery from across the country? Is there something particular that states have done to elevate their performance and earn recognition and performance bonuses from FNS? Join representatives of the FNS National Payment Accuracy Workgroup (NPAWG) and find out!

Just the Facts — The Latest on Food Stamp Program Research Findings

Researchers will share recent Food Stamp Program study findings and lead discussion on the implications of these findings. Attend and you'll learn the latest on program participation trends, household characteristics, food consumption patterns among recipients, non-participants and higher income persons. Highlights of new research underway will also be shared.

"Modernization" and Assessing Customer Service and Program Delivery

States are restructuring their eligibility and benefit delivery in new and creative ways: by increasing the use of technologies such as call centers and on-line services, and in some cases by revamping workforce practices, business models, and use of policy waivers. These changes are exciting and offer the promise of improved customer service and greater efficiencies for the state. But how can states tell if these new changes are really working? Do new service delivery tools work for all types of households? What should be the measure of success? The Farm Bill included several provisions that require more data collection and FNS oversight of state systems practices. Beyond QC error rates and the volume of cases, what are the ways states can measure the success of their program delivery? How will FNS research contribute to thinking about these issues?

Preparing for a Pandemic Flu: A Food Perspective

This workshop will focus on the social services aspects of planning for a pandemic flu emergency, with an emphasis on food assistance, supplies and resources. Dennis Barry will share Connecticut's vision and extensive planning efforts to provide ideas for other states to draw from. Attendees will learn what a pandemic flu is, and hear about particular issues that are relevant to planning for such a disaster.

Principles of Stress Reduction and Time Management

There are lots of things people can do to cut down on stress. Most people probably know what to do. It's not the lack of knowing what to do; it's actually implementing what's known to work and doing what you have to do. There never seems to be enough time in the roles of multi-tasking required for today's activities. The goal of time management is not to imply that people are wasting time. The goal is to set a reasonable amount of time to spend on these tasks and then use that time wisely. The workshop presenter addresses the topics of stress management and time management together because they are so closely interrelated and improving at either helps improve both. The ability to manage time and stress is absolutely critical to the success of individuals and organizations regarding productivity, a better work environment and a healthier, happier lifestyle. Let us give you tips on making better use of your time and reducing your stress level.

Re-Branding the Food Stamp Program

This workshop will highlight recent efforts from FNS to improve the image of the Food Stamp Program. Speakers will discuss the lessons learned in re-branding the FSP from welfare to a nutrition assistance program with a limited budget. A

panel will share media and outreach tools developed to promote the nutrition benefits of the FSP, what worked and what didn't work. The panel will also discuss partnerships and the important role these individuals have in any campaign. The lessons learned can be incorporated into your campaign. Why reinvent the wheel? Attend and learn answers to your questions. There will be plenty of opportunities for questions and to discuss the ideas presented by the speakers.

Successful Strategies to Reduce Negative Action Errors

This workshop will focus on both the challenges and opportunities facing state Food Stamp Programs to improve their respective negative error rates. It will provide workshop participants with three state experiences, one state struggling with an ever-increasing negative error rate, another seeing marked improvement and, finally, a state with a historically low error rate.

Taking Full Advantage of Categorical Eligibility

The 2007 Farm Bill requires states to exclude IRAs, 529 education savings accounts and to begin indexing the resource limits. Those are welcome changes, but a number of states have gone even further by either eliminating the asset test altogether or raising the resource limit to a level they deem appropriate. This workshop will discuss how to use the categorical eligibility option to set your state's asset (and gross income policy). If it sounds too good to be true, this workshop is for you. This option is real and is being used in 15 states. State presenters will describe how and why they pursued the policy change as well as the impact on their state.

Telephone Interviewing — Best Practices

Many states are considering implementing telephone interviewing as an alternative to face-to-face interviewing in their initial and recertification processes. Learn about the steps to implementing telephone interviewing, pitfalls to avoid, lessons learned, best processes and practices from a state perspective (Massachusetts) and from a city (New York City). Also learn about the next step, New York City's Integrated Voice Response System.

OTHER WORKSHOP TOPICS INCLUDE:

Claims and Claim Collections — Best Practices

Information Technology Solutions

Modernization Mayhem — It Really Doesn't Have to Be: Lessons Learned From States That Have Gone Before You

Nutrition Education & Anti-Obesity

Program Access