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(2) Intentionally withholding information pertaining to eligibility in CSFP;

(3) Selling commodities obtained in the program, or exchanging them for non-food items;

(4) Physical abuse, or threat of physical abuse, of program staff; or

(5) Committing dual participation.

(b) *What are the penalties for committing program violations?* If applicants or participants, or the parents or caretakers of applicants or participants, commit program violations, the State agency may require local agencies to disqualify the applicants or participants for a period of up to one year. However, if the local agency determines that disqualification would result in a serious health risk, the disqualification may be waived. For program violations that involve fraud, the State agency must require local agencies to disqualify the participant from CSFP for a period of up to one year, unless the local agency determines that disqualification would result in a serious health risk. The State agency must require local agencies to permanently disqualify a participant who commits three program violations that involve fraud. For purposes of this program, fraud includes:

(1) Intentionally making false or misleading statements to obtain CSFP commodities;

(2) Intentionally withholding information to obtain CSFP commodities; or

(3) Selling CSFP commodities, or exchanging them for non-food items.

(c) *What must the local agency do to notify the individual of disqualification from CSFP?* The local agency must provide the individual with written notification of disqualification from CSFP at least 15 days before the effective date of disqualification. The notification must include the effective date and period of disqualification, the reason for the disqualification, and a statement that the individual may appeal the disqualification through the fair hearing process, in accordance with § 247.33(a).

§ 247.21 Caseload assignment.

(a) *How does FNS assign caseload to State agencies?* Each year, FNS assigns

a caseload to each State agency to allow persons meeting the eligibility criteria listed under § 247.9 to participate in the program, up to the caseload limit. To the extent that resources are available, FNS assigns caseload to State agencies in the following order:

(1) *Base caseload.* The State agency may not receive base caseload in excess of its total caseload assigned for the previous caseload cycle. Base caseload is determined in the following manner:

(i) Each State agency entering its second year of program participation receives base caseload equal to the amount assigned to it in its first year of participation; and

(ii) A State agency that has participated in two or more caseload cycles receives base caseload equal to the highest of:

(A) Average monthly participation for the previous fiscal year; or

(B) Average monthly participation for the last quarter of the previous fiscal year; or

(C) Participation during September of the previous fiscal year, but only if:

(1) The full-year appropriation for the preceding fiscal year was enacted on or after February 15; and

(2) The State agency received additional caseload equal to or greater than 10 percent of its base caseload in the previous caseload cycle; and

(3) October participation in the current fiscal year was equal to or greater than 95 percent of September participation in the previous fiscal year.

(2) *Additional caseload.* Each participating State agency may request additional caseload to increase service to women, infants, and children, and the elderly. Requests by State agencies to increase service to women, infants, and children receive priority over requests to increase service to the elderly. Eligibility for and assignment of additional caseload are determined in the following manner:

(i) A State agency entering its second year of program participation qualifies to receive additional caseload if the State achieved a participation level which was equal to or greater than 95 percent of assigned caseload for the previous caseload cycle, based on the highest of:

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(A) Average monthly participation for the previous fiscal year; or

(B) Average monthly participation for the last quarter of the previous fiscal year; or

(C) Participation during September of the previous fiscal year, but only if:

(1) The full-year appropriation for the preceding fiscal year was enacted on or after February 15; and

(2) October participation in the current fiscal year was equal to or greater than 95 percent of September participation in the previous fiscal year.

(ii) A State agency that has participated in two or more caseload cycles qualifies to receive additional caseload if the State achieved a participation level which was equal to or greater than 95 percent of assigned caseload for the previous caseload cycle, based on the highest of:

(A) Average monthly participation for the previous fiscal year; or

(B) Average monthly participation for the last quarter of the previous fiscal year; or

(C) Participation during September of the previous fiscal year, but only if:

(1) The full-year appropriation for the preceding fiscal year was enacted on or after February 15; and

(2) The State agency received additional caseload equal to or greater than 10 percent of its base caseload in the previous caseload cycle; and

(3) October participation in the current fiscal year was equal to or greater than 95 percent of September participation in the previous fiscal year.

(iii) Of each eligible State agency's request for additional caseload, FNS assigns an amount that it determines the State needs and can efficiently utilize. In making this determination, FNS considers the factors listed below, in descending order of importance. If all reasonable requests for additional caseload cannot be met, FNS assigns it to those States that are most likely to utilize it. The factors are:

(A) Program participation of women, infants, and children, and the elderly in the State, in the previous fiscal year;

(B) The percentage of caseload utilized by the State in the previous fiscal year;

(C) Program participation trends in the State in previous fiscal years; and

(D) Other information provided by the State agency in support of the request.

(3) *New caseload.* Each State agency requesting to begin participation in the program, and with an approved State Plan, may receive caseload to serve women, infants, and children, and the elderly, as requested in the State Plan. State agency requests to initiate service to women, infants, and children receive priority over requests to initiate service to the elderly. Of the State agency's caseload request, FNS assigns caseload in an amount that it determines the State needs and can efficiently utilize. This determination is made based on information contained in the State Plan and on other relevant information. However, if all caseload requests cannot be met, FNS will assign caseload to those States that are most likely to utilize it.

(b) *When does FNS assign caseload to State agencies?* FNS must assign caseload to State agencies by December 31 of each year, or within 30 days after enactment of appropriations legislation covering the full fiscal year, whichever comes later. Caseload assignments for the previous caseload cycle will remain in effect, subject to the availability of sufficient funding, until caseload assignments are made for the current caseload cycle.

(c) *How do State agencies request additional caseload for the next caseload cycle?* In accordance with § 247.6(d), a State agency that would like additional caseload for the next caseload cycle (beginning the following January 1) must submit a request for additional caseload by November 5, as an amendment to the State Plan. The State agency must also describe plans for serving women, infants, and children, and the elderly, at new sites in this submission.

§ 247.22 Allocation and disbursement of administrative funds to State agencies.

(a) *What must State agencies do to be eligible to receive administrative funds?* In order to receive administrative funds, the State agency must have signed an agreement with FNS to operate the