



Ohio Administrative Code

Rule 5101:4-5-03 Food assistance: establishing certification periods.

Effective: August 1, 2022

(A) What is a certification period?

A certification period is the amount of time an assistance group is authorized to receive supplemental nutrition assistance program (SNAP) benefits. The county agency shall certify each eligible assistance group for a definite period of time. The county agency shall not require an assistance group to report for an interview during their certification period.

(B) What is the first month of the certification period?

The first month of the certification period is the first month that the assistance group is eligible to participate including an initial month in which no benefit is issued due to the initial proration being less than ten dollars. The certification period cannot exceed a total of twelve months, except as specified in paragraph (C) of this rule.

(C) How long is the certification period?

At application or recertification the county agency shall assign the longest certification period possible based on the predictability of the assistance group's circumstances. Assistance groups shall be assigned a twelve month certification period unless an assistance group meets one of the following exceptions:

(1) The elderly or disabled assistance group's (ED AG) certification period is assigned in accordance with paragraph (D) of this rule; or

(2) When the assistance group has unstable circumstances the certification period is to be assigned in accordance with paragraph (E) of this rule.

(D) How long should the certification period be for an ED AG?



An ED AG is when all adult members are elderly or disabled and the assistance group has no countable earned income, the ED AG shall be certified for thirty-six months. The ED AG may include minor children, regardless of disability status.

(E) How long should the certification period be when the assistance group has unstable circumstances, anticipated changes or is a migrant or seasonal farm worker?

These assistance groups should be assigned certification periods consistent with their circumstances. The certification period options are four, five, six or twelve months when the assistance group has unstable circumstances such as:

- (1) An assistance group with zero net income;
- (2) An assistance group with an able-bodied adult without dependents (ABAWD) who has no countable earned income is to be assigned a certification period in accordance with rule 5101:4-3-20 of the Administrative Code.
- (3) Assistance groups that are homeless;
- (4) The assistance group anticipates changes that will make the assistance group ineligible for SNAP benefits in the near future; or
- (5) The assistance group contains a migrant or seasonal farm worker.

(F) When can SNAP benefits stop prior to the end of the certification period?

The county agency shall end an assistance group's benefits earlier than its certification expiration date when one of the following is true:

- (1) The county agency receives information that the assistance group has become ineligible;
- (2) The assistance group fails to return the interim report as set forth in rule 5101:4-7-01 of the



Administrative Code;

(3) The assistance group reports a change or fails to respond to a request for contact when information reported to the county agency is unclear in accordance with paragraph (J)(5) of rule 5101:4-7-01 of the Administrative Code. The county agency may also adjust the assistance group's benefit amount in response to a reported change.

(G) What notification is required when a certification period is ended earlier than the expiration date?

Prior notice of adverse action shall be provided by mail or personal delivery as described in rule 5101:6-2-04 of the Administrative Code unless the assistance group's situation meets one of the exceptions to the prior notice provisions as specified in rule 5101:6-2-05 of the Administrative Code.

(H) When can a certification period be aligned with certification periods for other public assistance programs?

(1) When the assistance group applies for SNAP within a certification period for other public assistance programs, the SNAP certification period may be shortened to align with the certification dates already established.

(2) When the assistance group is within a current certification for SNAP and applies for other public assistance programs, the SNAP certification date may be terminated early and a new certification period may be established. Prior notice of adverse action as described in paragraph (G) of this rule is not required when aligning certification periods.