

Department of Social and Health Services  
Olympia, Washington  
**EAZ Manual**

Revision # 1227  
Category Reporting Requirements  
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**Summary**

FNS granted a temporary waiver to verifying shelter costs for food assistance when an address change is reported between reviews. The waiver is in effect from 3/1/2023-2/29/2024. Worker Responsibilities under WAC 388-418-0007 – “When do I have to report changes in my circumstances?” have been revised to clarify temporary rules under the FNS unwind waiver.

See below for new text:



**WORKER RESPONSIBILITIES - WAC 388-418-0007**

1. **During the application, recertification or eligibility interview:**
  - a. Tell clients what changes they must report and how much time they have to report the changes; and
  - b. Explain how to report changes either in writing, online, by phone, or in person. (See [RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES](#)).
2. **When people report a change or when you learn of a change:**

- a. Ask for more information or proof if needed. See [LETTERS](#) for the rules and the process on asking someone to take an action or give us information.
  - b. Take action on the information using the effective date rules in [WAC 388-418-0020](#).
  - c. If we averaged household income under [WAC 388-450-0215](#), recalculate this source of income if you expect this change to last at least a month beyond when you learn of the change.
  - d. Document:
    - i. The details of the change;
    - ii. The date we learned about the change or the date the change was reported;
    - iii. The impact on benefits; and
    - iv. The effective date for any change in benefits.
  - e. Send written notice about the change based on requirements in [LETTERS](#) even if the benefits do not change.
3. **For Basic Food, if the household doesn't report a change in medical expenses, but you learn about a change:**
- a. Do not contact the AU about the change;
  - b. Act on the change **only** if you can get proof of the change from someone other than the AU; and
  - c. Set an alert to get proof of the change at the next recertification. Update the Expense Page in ACES once you get proof of the medical expenses.
  - d. Document in the ACES narrative whether or not we should use the medical expense at the next recertification.

**NOTE:** If you later approve medical assistance that covers a person's medical expenses, delete the medical expenses on the Expense Page and recalculate the person's Basic Food benefits.

4. **For Basic Food, when the client voluntarily reports a move in person or on the phone:**
- a. Ask for the new out-of-pocket share of shelter costs associated with the new residence.
  - b. Don't require verification of the new shelter expenses unless questionable.
  - c. Make it clear that they don't need to wait for the first regular rental or utility payment to tell us the amount(s).
  - d. Update and document the new shelter costs in ACES.
  - e. Send notice to the client if there is a change in the benefit amount. Give advance notice if there is a decrease.

5. If the client reports a move in writing or we receive returned mail with a new forwarding address on the envelope:

- a. Attempt to contact the household by phone. If successful, follow instructions in (4.) above.
- b. If unable to contact by phone and it's the month of an ER or MCR, don't send the household a general correspondence letter.
  - i. Update the address;
  - ii. Re-send the return form(s) to the new address; and
  - iii. Wait to update shelter information until the ER or MCR.
- c. If unable to contact by phone and **not** in the month of an ER or MCR, send the household a general correspondence letter asking for the new shelter costs associated with the move.

~~i. Include a statement in the letter warning the household we will remove the old shelter deduction from the budget and recalculate benefits using no shelter costs if new expenses aren't reported within 10 days.~~

~~ii.~~ Make it clear in the letter they don't need to wait for the first regular rental or utility payment to tell us the amount(s); and

~~iii.ii.~~ Don't require verification of the new shelter expenses unless questionable.

d. If the household responds to the letter:

i. Update and document the new shelter costs in ACES; and

ii. Send notice to the household if there is a change in the benefit amount. Give advance notice if there is a decrease in benefits.

e. If the household doesn't respond to the letter take no action. Verify new shelter expenses at the next review.

~~ii. Don't close the Basic Food AU;~~

~~iii. Remove the old shelter costs; and~~

~~iv. Send advance notice to the household if there is a change in the benefit amount~~

**NOTE:** Do not use a "Request for Information" letter as this letter requires a Basic Food AU closure if the client does not respond.