



Ohio Administrative Code

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

Effective: April 1, 2026

(A) What is a certification period?

A certification period is the amount of time an assistance group (AG) is authorized to receive supplemental nutrition assistance program (SNAP) benefits. The county agency is to certify each eligible AG for a definite period of time. The county agency is not to require an AG 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 AG 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 is to assign the longest certification period possible based on the predictability of the AG's circumstances. AGs are to be assigned a twelve month certification period unless an AG 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;
- (2) When the AG has unstable circumstances or the AG includes an able-bodied adult (ABA), 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 AG has no countable earned income. The ED AG may include minor children, regardless of disability status. The ED AG is to be certified for thirty-six months. An AG that includes an ABA, regardless of income, is not to be considered an ED AG.

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

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

- (1) An AG with zero net income;



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- (2) An AG with an ABA is to be assigned a six month certification period;
- (3) AGs that are homeless;
- (4) The AG anticipates changes that will make the AG ineligible for SNAP benefits in the near future; or
- (5) The AG contains a migrant or seasonal farm worker.

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

The county agency is to end an AG's SNAP benefits earlier than its certification expiration date when one of the following is true:

- (1) The county agency receives information that is verified upon receipt and no additional information is needed and the AG has become ineligible;
- (2) The AG fails to return a complete interim report as described in rule 5101:4-7-01 of the Administrative Code;
- (3) The AG fails to respond to a JFS 07105, "Verification Request Checklist" issued for a change reported in accordance with rule 5101:4-7-01 of the Administrative Code.

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

Prior notice of adverse action is to be provided by mail or personal delivery as described in rule 5101:6-2-04 of the Administrative Code unless the AG'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 AG 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 AG 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.