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**NEW YORK STATE**  
**OFFICE OF TEMPORARY AND DISABILITY ASSISTANCE**  
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## **Local Commissioners Memorandum**

### **Section 1**

<b>Transmittal:</b>	04-LCM-05
<b>To:</b>	Local District Commissioners
<b>Issuing Division/Office:</b>	Temporary Assistance
<b>Date:</b>	May 20, 2004
<b>Subject:</b>	Food Stamp Management Evaluation Procedures
<b>Contact Person(s):</b>	Denis Sheehan at 518-473-6352
<b>Attachments:</b>	Food Stamp Application Processing - Case File Review Document Food Stamp Application Processing - Self -Assessment Interview/Observation Instrument Food Stamp Management Evaluation Review Schedule
<b>Attachment Available On – Line:</b>	X

### **Section 2**

#### **I. Purpose**

The purpose of this release is to advise local districts of the continued requirement to conduct Food Stamp Management Evaluation (ME) self-assessments outside of New York City.

#### **II. Background**

Program Access MEs are a portion of the ongoing oversight of Food Stamp program administration required by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA). Beginning in 2002, the Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance (OTDA) introduced the ME self-assessment process to share program responsibility, by allowing local districts to assess, evaluate and, when necessary, adjust their own management practices. OTDA required districts to retrieve a random sample of cases, review these cases, complete an interview instrument, respond to individual case findings and, if indicated, prepare and implement a Corrective Action Plan (CAP) to address deficiencies.

#### **III. Program Implications**

##### **Program Access Reviews**

OTDA is continuing the ME self-assessment process for program access reviews under USDA-approved procedures. Districts will continue to self-assess key areas of program access, including application processing, expedited processing, timeliness and accuracy of benefits and notices, separate determination, including transitional food stamp benefits, complaint procedures and waiting room observations. This year, 19 districts outside of New York City will complete a self-

assessment and OTDA will conduct 14 on-site reviews (see attachment A). The districts receiving on-site reviews will not be required to self-assess. Future selection of the on-site review districts will be targeted based on review findings and other factors.

The self-assessment will include a questionnaire (Attachment B-1) and a review of 20 cases currently under process using a State prescribed Casefile Review Instrument (Attachment B-2). Completed forms will be sent to OTDA, and if indicated, a CAP must be submitted for areas identified as needing improvement. This year, OTDA has automated the Food Stamp Program Access ME Reviews. Participating districts will access the web-based questionnaires and transmit the resulting data to OTDA on-line.

### **Program Access Self-Assessment Guidelines**

Districts will select 20 cases, including each of the following categories: temporary assistance (TA) case openings, denials, withdrawals and closings; and non-temporary assistance/food stamp (Non-TA/FS) case openings, denials and withdrawals. One recording form will be completed for each case and the reviewer may be either designated centrally or may be any supervisor who did not sign the original case action. In addition, each district will complete a structured Interview Guide to assess other pertinent areas of operation. The guide remains largely unchanged from prior years.

All districts identified for participation in the Food Stamp Program Access self-assessment process have been notified and given instructions for on-line form access. Security considerations necessitate a short window of activity for completion of the on-line forms. As such, all Program Access self-assessment forms must be electronically filed by June 15, 2004. Districts will then provide their Corrective Action Plans to OTDA, where they will be used for statewide program analysis and follow-up.

### **Corrective Actions**

Although the sample reviewed by districts may not constitute a statistically valid sample, the review of FS processing in the several areas listed above will provide local managers with indications of those actions that were taken in error and how best to correct them. Districts experiencing significant errors in any of the review areas will submit a corrective action plan with the case review forms.

After reviewing local findings, the district will determine if administrative deficiencies are evident and submit a plan addressing how they are to be corrected. Plans may include remedies such as: topical training, communications improvements, recordkeeping changes, staff realignments or any other locally developed processes or resources required to improve the problem area. Districts should include dates by which activities are to be conducted.

### **State Oversight**

The OTDA will review the materials submitted, as well as those obtained from the on-site reviews, and prepare a statewide ME report on program access to be submitted to the USDA. Review findings and CAPs will be used by OTDA on follow-up monitoring and subsequent ME reviews.

### **Claims Reviews**

On-site ME claims reviews will be conducted by OTDA's Division of Audit and Quality Control. As there were no FSME claims reviews conducted in 2003, the 2004 schedule includes the required 2003 and 2004 FS Claims reviews. Please see attachment A-2, for the districts scheduled for on-site claims reviews.

**Issued By** \_\_\_\_\_  
**Name: Patricia A. Stevens**  
**Title: Deputy Commissioner**  
**Division/Office: Temporary Assistance**

**New York State  
Food Stamp Management Evaluation – Program Access Review Schedule  
Federal Fiscal Year 2004**

<b>Outside New York City</b>	<b>NYC</b>
<b>Large Counties</b>	
<u>State On-site Reviews</u> Erie, Monroe, Suffolk, Westchester	BayRidge-60 Bushwick-66 Dekalb-64 Euclid-79 Rider-38 Waverly-13 Greenwood -85 Bergen -48 Hamilton-28 Concourse-45 Dyckman-35 Crotona-46 F42-Rockaway F26-North Brooklyn F20-Fort Greene F53 (FORMERLY F44) F21-Bushwick F23-Boro Hall F27-Bayridge F61-T.E.N
<b>Medium Counties</b>	
<u>State On-site Reviews</u> Albany, Cattaraugus, Nassau, Orange, Oneida, Rockland  <u>County Self-Assessments</u> Cayuga, Chautauqua, Chemung, Niagara, Oswego, Rensselaer, Rockland, Schenectady, Schuyler, Seneca, Steuben, Ulster	
<b>Small Counties</b>	
<u>State On-site Reviews</u> Delaware, Hamilton, Herkimer, Wyoming  <u>County Self-Assessments</u> Columbia, Essex, Livingston, Montgomery, Orleans, Otsego, Schoharie	



**New York State  
Food Stamp Management Evaluation—Claims Review Schedule**

**Federal Fiscal Year 2003**

Albany  
Broome  
Cayuga  
Clinton  
Cortland  
Dutchess  
Erie  
Franklin  
Fulton  
Jefferson  
Monroe  
Nassau  
Ontario  
Onondaga  
St. Lawrence  
Suffolk  
Westchester

**Federal Fiscal Year 2004**

Erie  
Monroe  
Niagara  
Oneida  
Orange  
Oswego  
Otsego  
Rockland  
Steuben  
Suffolk  
Sullivan  
Tioga  
Tompkins  
Ulster  
Westchester