

FOOD STAMP PROGRAM QUALITY CONTROL POLICY MEMO

Region: ALRO
Index No.: QC-06-01
Provision: Handbook 310

Subject: Retention of Quality Control (QC) Records

The purpose of this policy memo is to notify State agencies of the specific record retention requirements for recent QC review periods. As required by regulations, QC records must be retained for three years following fiscal closure.

For all years prior to Fiscal Year (FY) 2003, fiscal closure was the point when all states with liabilities signed settlement agreements. For those State agencies that pursued appeal through the Administrative Law Judge process, fiscal closure occurred when all judicial actions ceased and decisions rendered at the end of that process were resolved or settlement agreements were signed.

QC Records for the FY 1997 review periods and earlier were previously released and should have been destroyed. At this point in time, the three year period following fiscal closure for all records for the FY 1998, 1999 and 2000 review periods has expired. All records for those years can now be destroyed.

For the FY 2001 and FY 2002 review periods, fiscal closure occurred on January 21, 2005. All State agency records must continue to be maintained for three years following the fiscal closure date. These records may be destroyed after January 22, 2008.

Beginning with the FY 2003 review period, fiscal closure for QC records will be determined on an individual State agency basis. Fiscal closure for all State agencies not incurring a liability amount will be based upon the announcement date of the error rates. Fiscal closure for those State agencies incurring a liability amount will be based upon the signed date of the settlement agreement.

Since no State agency incurred a liability amount for the FY 2003 review period, fiscal closure for all State agencies occurred on June 22, 2004. All State agencies will still need to maintain FY 2003 review period records for the required three years, through June 23, 2007.

For the FY 2004 review period, fiscal closure occurred on June 24, 2005 for all State agencies except the four states that were assessed a liability amount. State agencies not assessed a liability amount must maintain the records through June 25, 2008. The fiscal closure dates for those states with liabilities are:

The contents of this guidance document do not have the force and effect of law and are not meant to bind the public in any way. This document is intended only to provide clarity to the public regarding existing requirements under the law or agency policies.

Guidance documents lack the force and effect of law, unless expressly authorized by statute or incorporated into a contract. USDA may not cite, use, or rely on any guidance that is not available through their guidance portal, except to establish historical facts.

Idaho-July 21, 2005, Maine-August 25, 2005, Oregon-July 13, 2005, and Rhode Island-July 21, 2005. Records for these State agencies must be maintained as follows: Idaho-July 22, 2008, Maine-August 26, 2008, Oregon-July 14, 2008, and Rhode Island-July 22, 2008.

Attached is a table that lays out the information in an easily readable format, including the earliest destruction date per QC review period.

Signed 11-18-2005

Karen J. Walker
Director
Program Accountability Division

QC Record Retention

Review period (Fiscal Year)	Retention Instruction	Date of Fiscal Closure	Future Date of Record Destruction
1997 and before	Previously Instructed to Destroy	N/A	N/A
1998 through 2000	Records Can Now Be Destroyed	March 2002 for FY 2002, earlier for 1998 and 1999	N/A
2001 and 2002	QC Record Retention	January 21, 2005	January 22, 2008
2003	3 year retention	June 22, 2004	June 23, 2007
2004 Non Liability States	3 year retention	June 24, 2005	June 25, 2008
2004 Liability States:	3 year retention from date of signed settlement agreement by FNS and State	Settlement agreement date	3 years from settlement agreement date
Idaho 2004		July, 21, 2005	July 22, 2008
Maine 2004		August 25, 2005	August 26, 2008
Oregon 2004		July 13, 2005	July 14, 2008
Rhode Island 2004		July 21, 2005	July 22, 2008

Guidance documents lack the force and effect of law, unless expressly authorized by statute or incorporated into a contract. USDA may not cite, use, or rely on any guidance that is not available through their guidance portal, except to establish historical facts.

FNS:FSP:PAD:QCB:QC Policy Memos:FranHeil:5-19-04/11-1-
2005:305-2442
I:QCB\QC Policy Memos\QC POLICY MEMO 06-01