

Worker Guide Returned Mail

A. Processing Returned Mail

There are several steps offices take to ensure participants receive notices and other mail from the department in a timely manner. All participants must provide a valid mailing address. Do not use a department office address as the participant’s mailing address. Even though we take steps to ensure a valid mailing address, the post office sometimes returns mail marked “undeliverable,” “unable to forward” or “unclaimed,” etc. This returned mail needs to be handled carefully.

SNAP in SRS or TBA



This policy does not apply to SNAP cases in SRS or TBA. Take no action on SRS or TBA cases with mail returned for these reasons. However, you may still need to take action on companion cases for other programs.

1. Check TRACS, ACCESS, UCMS, FCAS, incoming mail that has not been processed and the case file to be sure there is not a more up-to-date address.
2. Check U.S. Postal Service website <http://www.usps.com/> or use HZIP on the Department of Human Services (DHS) mainframe to verify accuracy of address.

OTHER SCREENS



Other screens such as DMV, SMUX, etc., are not required to be checked as information is not always up to date.

3. If an updated address is located and certification is not expiring at the end of month, update the mailing address on open CM and SNAP cases, narrate and resend the mail to the correct address.
4. Except for SNAP cases in SRS or TBA, if there is no updated address available and you have followed the above steps, close the case for the end of the current

month and narrate the exact wording on the return label. No notice is required (see [SNAP-H.10](#)). Use these program-specific procedures:

- a. In the SNAP program for cases in CRS:
 - Use reason code RM. If the case is expiring or going into suspense at the end of the month, narrate only and do not take the close action.
 - If the participant contacts the department before the case closes, update and narrate the new address, household composition and shelter costs. Act on any changes necessary following the applicable notice requirements;
 - If the participant contacts the local office during the first month after the case closes (i.e., worker receives returned mail on January 12 and takes action on the system to close the case effective January 31. The first month after the case closes is February), update and narrate the new address, household composition and shelter costs, and reopen the case with a ROP back to the first of the current month. Do not prorate benefits. Do not take a new application or do a REC action – this is not a recertification. Use the IJ or EJ Rel-ATP codes to issue SNAP;
 - Act on other changes for the following month. If benefits will be reduced, send *a timely continuing benefit decision notice* before making the changes;
 - If a participant contacts the department more than a month after the closure, they have to reapply.
- b. **For cases in SRS or TBA with** mail returned as unclaimed or as undeliverable, narrate the receipt of returned mail but take no action on the case. For mail returned with a new mailing address listed on it, or if the new address is reported for another program, update the mailing address on the case. Do not close SRS or TBA cases for returned mail.

For all programs, narrate the returned mail just once, then place in the office shred bin. Do not file the mail in the participant case file and do not repeatedly narrate returned mail from the same address.

SEE SNAP EXAMPLES OF MAIL RETURNED AS UNDELIVERABLE AT THE END OF THIS WORKER GUIDE.

- c. For all programs except SNAP:
- End benefits by sending a basic decision notice to the last known address;
 - Use reason code “OM – Unable to Locate” to close the case and “OM” code in the Ntce field to send notice;
 - If the participant contacts the department before the case closes, gather the new address information and any other information that affects the case, such as household composition, and act on the information;
 - If a participant contacts the department after the closure, the case will remain closed until the participant chooses to reapply for benefits. Establish a new filing date when the participant reapplies.

Notice Situation; Client Moved or Whereabouts Unknown Rule

[461-175-0210](#) — Notice Situation; Client Moved or Whereabouts Unknown

B. Moved Out of State

When the post office returns mail and the address listed on the return label is out-of-state, this returned mail is handled differently. This information is considered reported to the department and we have to act on it appropriately:

1. For SNAP and JPI, no notice is required. Close the case using reason code OS.
2. For all other programs, send a *timely decision notice*. If the participant becomes eligible for benefits in another state, send a *basic decision notice*.
3. Use reason code “OS – Moved out of State” to close the case.
4. To send notice, use Notice Writer “CMCONSB – Moved to Other State – Close” or *Notice of Decision and Action Taken* ([MSC 456](#)) form and narrate.

Responsibilities of Clients Rule

[461-105-0020](#) — Responsibilities of Clients

Residency Requirements Rule

[461-120-0010](#) — Residency Requirements

Notice Situation; Client Moved or Whereabouts Unknown Rule

[461-175-0210](#) — Notice Situation; Client Moved or Whereabouts Unknown

SNAP examples of returned mail

Example 1: *An open SNAP case in SRS or TBA has mail returned by the post office marked “undeliverable, no forwarding address.” The same mailing address is coded on the OHP case. The SNAP case remains open. Narrate the exact wording on the return label and place in the office shred bin.*

Example 2: *A SNAP case in CRS has a certification period of September 1 through August 31. Mail is returned by the post office on January 5 marked “undeliverable, no forwarding address.” The same mailing address is coded on the OHP case. The SNAP case is closed effective January 31 using the RM reason code. On February 12, the participant comes to the office because there are no SNAP benefits on their EBT card. The worker gathers the new information about residence, rent and household composition. There is no change in the benefit amount so all new information is coded on FCAS. The SNAP case is reopened using a ROP ISS effective February 1.*

Example 3: *A SNAP case in CRS has a certification period of May 1 through April 30. Mail is returned by the post office on September 5 marked “undeliverable, no forwarding address.” The same mailing address is coded on the OHP case. The SNAP case is closed effective September 30 using the RM reason code. On October 12, the participant comes to the office because there are no SNAP benefits in the EBT account. The worker gathers the new information about residence, rent and household composition. There is no change in the benefit amount so all new information is coded on FCAS. The SNAP case is reopened using ROPISS effective October 1.*

Example 4: *A SNAP case in CRS has a certification period of September 1 through August 31. Mail is returned by the post office on January 5 marked “undeliverable, no forwarding address.” The same mailing address is coded on the OHP case. The SNAP case is closed effective January 31 using the RM reason code. On March 5, the participant contacts the office because there are no SNAP benefits in the EBT account. The SNAP case has been closed for more than one month. The participant will need to reapply for SNAP benefits.*

Example 5: *A SNAP case has a certification period of September 1 through August 31. Mail is returned by the post office on January 5 marked “undeliverable, no forwarding address.” There is a different mailing address on the OHP case. The address on the OHP case was changed on November 9. Update the address on FCAS and resend the notice to the new address.*