

Telephonic Signature in Wisconsin

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An Introduction to Changes in Policy and Process

March 2014



Wisconsin
Department of Health Services

SNAP Telephonic Signature: 2008 Farm Bill

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- Allows verbal assent by phone for FoodShare application (Sec 4190)
- Requires voice recording technology for telesignature
- Other Requirements:
 - Record verbal assent and information to which assent given
 - Safeguards against impersonation and identity theft
 - Preserve right to apply in writing
 - Provide timely written copy of completed application and procedure for correcting errors/omissions
- All telesignature requirements must be met to set application effective date

Current Telesignature

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- Telesignature used by DHS for FoodShare and Health Care programs
- Telesignature offered at application or renewal
 - Is not used for a change report
- Current telesignature process is dynamic
 - Script differs depending on which program(s) are requested

Current Telesignature Process

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- Obtain application information by phone
- Provide applicant ability to sign the application by phone
- Capture an audio recording of the telesignature including:
 - Key eligibility information
 - Rights and responsibilities
 - Attestation of accuracy and understanding of rights and responsibilities
- Mail written summary of eligibility information to applicant
 - Includes procedure for correcting errors and omissions

FNS Review and Recommendations

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- FNS reviewed WI telesignature – 2013 Management Evaluation
- Impressed with process but offered suggestions:
 - Shorten telephonic script to reduce burden on applicant
 - Current average time = 13 minutes
 - Reduce duplication and simplify language
 - Standardize language across programs, when possible
 - Increase training efforts to improve consistency and effectiveness of case summaries

Streamlined Telephonic Signature

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- **Interdepartmental effort to streamline telephonic signature**
 - DHS collaborating with DCF Child Care (CC)
 - CC to accept telesignature at application and renewal
- **Steps in the change process:**
 - DHS internal workgroup addressed suggestions from FNS and other agencies
 - Interdepartmental workgroup developed single telescript for FoodShare, Health Care and Child Care
 - FNS reviewed and approved updated telescript

Changes to Telephonic Signature

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- A single static script covers eligibility for all programs
 - Script no longer dynamic by program
- Script streamlined
 - Reduces time needed to complete the signature process
 - Increases IM worker efficiency and reduces workload
- Language added for Child Care program
- Simplified language to promote understanding
- Removed reporting requirements

Ongoing Use of Telesignature

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- **During interview, IM Workers must continue to:**
 - Screen and apply expedited policies and procedures
 - Inform households of SSN opt-out process
 - Notify household that a copy of rights and responsibilities and reporting requirements in the mail.
 - Answer applicant and member questions

Next Steps

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- **DHS and DCF to issue an Ops Memo in early June 2014 on the new telephonic signature changes, including:**
 - Use of static rather than dynamic signature text
 - The new Child Care signature policy
 - How to present a case summary over the phone
 - What needs to be covered during the interview
- **Changes anticipated to go live in late June 2014**
- **Final rule on telesignatures is forthcoming, additional changes may be required at a later date**