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(b) *Contractual responsibilities.* The standards contained in Circulars A-90, A-102 and A-110, where applicable, do not relieve the State or local agency of the responsibilities arising under its contracts. The State agency is the responsible authority, without recourse to FNS, regarding the settlement and satisfaction of all contractual and administrative issues arising out of procurements entered into in connection with the Program. This includes, but is not limited to: Disputes, claims, protests of awards, source evaluation, or other matters of a contractual nature. Matters concerning violation of law are to be referred to such local, State or Federal authority as may have proper jurisdiction.

(c) *State regulations.* The State or local agency may use its own procurement regulations which reflect applicable State and local regulations, provided that procurements made with Program funds adhere to the standards set forth in Circulars A-90, A-102 and Circular A-110, where applicable.

(d) *Property acquired with Program funds.* State and local agencies shall observe the standards prescribed in A-102, Attachment N, and A-110, Attachment N, where applicable, in their utilization and disposition of property acquired in whole or in part with Program funds.

(Approved by the Office of Management and Budget under control number 0584-0063)

(44 U.S.C. 3506)

[46 FR 6341, Jan. 21, 1981, as amended at 47 FR 746, Jan. 7, 1982]

§ 247.15 Audits.

(a) *Federal access to information.* The Secretary, the Comptroller General of the United States, or any of their duly authorized representatives, or State auditors shall have access to any books, documents, papers, and records of the State and local agencies and their contractors, for the purpose of making surveys, audits, examinations, excerpts, and transcripts.

(b) *State agency response.* The State agency may take exception to particular audit findings and recommendations. The State agency shall submit a response or statement to FNS as to the action taken or planned re-

garding the findings. A proposed corrective action plan developed and submitted by the State agency shall include specific time frames for its implementation and for completion of the correction of deficiencies and problems leading to the deficiencies.

(c) *Corrective action.* FNS shall determine whether Program deficiencies have been adequately corrected. If additional corrective action is necessary, FNS shall schedule a followup review, allowing a reasonable time for such corrective action to be taken.

(d) *State sponsored audits.* (1) Each State agency shall provide for an independent audit of the financial operations of the State agency and local agencies. Audits may be conducted by State and local government audit staffs, State licensed public accountants who were licensed on or before December 31, 1970, or by Certified Public Accountants and audit firms under contract to the State or local agencies. Audits shall conform to: "The Standards of Audit of Governmental Organizations, Program Activities and Functions," issued by the Comptroller General of the United States (Reprint 1974, for sale by the Superintendent of Documents, U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, DC 20402); the "Guidelines for Financial and Compliance Audits of Federally Assisted Programs," issued by the U.S. General Accounting Office, October 1978 (for sale by the U.S. General Accounting Office, Distribution Section, Room 1518, 441 G Street, NW., Washington, DC 20013); any compliance supplements approved by OMB; and generally accepted auditing standards established by the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants. An audit shall be used to determine whether:

(i) Financial operations are properly conducted; (ii) the financial reports are fairly presented; (iii) the State or local agency has complied with applicable laws, regulations, and administrative requirements pertaining to financial management; and (iv) proper inventory controls (physical and paper) are being maintained.

(2) The State agency shall conduct audits in accordance with the provisions of A-102, Attachment P. Audits of the State agency and the local agencies

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under the State agency's jurisdiction shall be performed in a representative sample of grant program audit examinations during each audit cycle which occurs, not less frequently than once every two years. In some audit cycles, a grant program or programs other than this Program may be audited. However, audits of the Program shall be performed at intervals frequent enough to ensure consistency with good Program management. Also, at any time, the Department, FNS or the State agency may at its discretion audit a Program if an audit appears to be warranted. If FNS in the course of Program reviews of State agency operations finds that the efficiency and effectiveness of the State agency's financial management system is in question, FNS may request the State agency to include the Program in the sample for the next audit examination.

(3) Each State agency shall make all State or local agency sponsored audit reports of Program operations under its jurisdiction available for the Department's review upon request. The cost of these audits shall be considered a part of administrative costs and funded from either State or local agency administrative funds.

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(44 U.S.C. 3506)

[46 FR 6341, Jan. 21, 1981, as amended at 47 FR 746, Jan. 7, 1982]

§ 247.16 Investigations.

(a) *Authority.* The Department may make an investigation of any allegation of noncompliance with this part. The investigation may include, where appropriate, a review of pertinent practices and policies of any State or local agency, the circumstances under which the possible noncompliance with this part occurred, and other factors relevant to a determination as to whether the State or local agency has failed to comply with the requirements of this part.

(b) *Confidentiality.* No State or local agency, participant, or other person shall intimidate, threaten, coerce, or discriminate against any individual for the purpose of interfering with any right or privilege under this part be-

cause the individual has made a complaint or formal allegation, or testified, assisted, or participated in any manner in an investigation, proceeding, or hearing under this part. The identity of every complainant shall be kept confidential except to the extent necessary to carry out the purpose of this part, including the conduct of any investigation, hearing, or judicial proceeding.

§ 247.17 Claims.

If FNS determines through a review of the State agency's reports, program or financial analysis, monitoring, audit, or otherwise, that any Program funds provided to a State agency for administrative purposes were, through State agency or local agency negligence or fraud, misused or otherwise diverted from Program purposes, a claim shall be made by FNS against the State agency, and the State agency shall pay promptly to FNS a sum equal to the amount of the administrative funds so misused or diverted. Further, if FNS determines that any part of the money received by a State agency was lost as a result of thefts, embezzlements, or unexplained causes, the State agency shall, on demand by FNS, pay to FNS a sum equal to the amount of the money so lost. Claims for losses or misuse of supplemental foods shall be handled in accordance with § 250.6(m), 7 CFR part 250—Subchapter B—Food Distribution. The State agency shall have full opportunity to submit evidence, explanations or information concerning alleged instances of noncompliance or diversion before a final determination is made in such cases.

§ 247.18 Closeout procedures.

(a) *Fiscal year closeout reports.* State agencies shall submit preliminary and final closeout reports for each fiscal year or part thereof. All obligations shall be liquidated before final closure of a fiscal year grant. Obligations shall be reported for the fiscal year in which they occur State agencies shall:

(1) Submit to FNS, within 30 days after the end of the fiscal year, preliminary financial reports which show cumulative actual expenditures and obligations for the fiscal year, or part