

Food and Nutrition Service, USDA

§ 274.12

purchase of prepared meals from authorized homeless meal providers. Such meal providers may use uncanceled and unmarked \$1 coupons which were previously accepted for meals served to food stamp recipients when change is required for \$5 and \$10 coupons. However, in the case of homeless food stamp households, neither cash change nor credit slips shall be returned for food stamps used for the purchase of prepared meals from authorized public and private nonprofit homeless meal providers. Such meal providers may use the lowest denomination coupons that are uncanceled and unmarked for making change in food stamp transactions. Restaurants which are authorized by FNS under §278.1 to provide meals to homeless food stamp recipients shall return cash change to such recipients in food stamp transactions when the amount of change due is less than one dollar. If change of one dollar or more is due, uncanceled and unmarked one dollar coupons shall also be used for change.

[54 FR 7004, Feb. 15, 1989, as amended at 54 FR 51352, Dec. 15, 1989; 57 FR 11249, Apr. 1, 1992; 61 FR 53600, Oct. 15, 1996]

§ 274.11 Issuance and inventory record retention, and forms security.

(a) *Availability of records.* The State agency shall maintain issuance, inventory, reconciliation, and other accountability records for a period of three years as specified in §272.1(f) of this chapter. This period may be extended at the written request of FNS.

(1) Issuance, inventory, reconciliation, and other accountability records shall include all Agency, State, and local forms involved in the State agency's receipt, storage, handling, issuance, and destruction of coupons completed by contract agents or any other individuals or entities involved in issuance or inventory, as well as those completed by the State agency.

(2) In lieu of the records themselves, easily retrievable microfilm, microfiche, or computer tapes which contain the required information may be maintained.

(b) *Control of issuance documents.* The State agency shall control all issuance documents which establish household eligibility while the documents are

transferred and processed within the State agency. The State agency shall use numbers, batching, inventory control logs, or similar controls from the point of initial receipt through the issuance and reconciliation process. The State agency shall also ensure the security and control of authorization documents in transit from the manufacturer to the State agency.

(c) *Accountable documents.* (1) HIR cards, authorization documents, and mandated Photo ID cards shall be considered accountable documents. The State agency shall provide the following minimum security and control procedures for these documents:

- (i) Preprinted serial numbers;
- (ii) Secure storage;
- (iii) Access limited to authorized personnel;
- (iv) Bulk inventory control records;
- (v) Subsequent control records maintained through the point of issuance or use, and
- (vi) Periodic review and validation of inventory controls and records by parties not otherwise involved in maintaining control records.

(2) For notices of change which initiate, update or terminate the master issuance file, and blank ID cards, the State agency shall, at a minimum, provide secure storage and shall limit access to authorized personnel.

[54 FR 7004, Feb. 15, 1989, as amended at 60 FR 20183, Apr. 25, 1995]

§ 274.12 Electronic Benefit Transfer issuance system approval standards.

(a) *General.* This section establishes rules for the approval, implementation and operation of Electronic Benefit Transfer (EBT) systems for the Food Stamp Program as an alternative to issuing food stamp coupons. By October 1, 2002, State agencies must have EBT systems implemented statewide, unless the Secretary provides a waiver for a State agency that faces unusual barriers to implementing an EBT system. In general, these rules apply to both on-line and off-line EBT systems, unless stated otherwise herein, or unless FNS determines otherwise for off-line systems during the system planning and development process.