

**EASTERN BAND OF CHEROKEE INDIANS
FOOD DISTRIBUTION PROGRAM**



**POLICY AND PROCEDURE
MANUAL**

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**EASTERN BAND OF CHEROKEE INDIAN
FOOD DISTRIBUTION PROGRAM
CERTIFICATION POLICY**

FOOD DISTRIBUTION PROGRAM

POLICY CHAPTER:	Certification Policy	CHAPTER#:	I
SUBJECT:	Application Procedures	SECTION-SUBSECTION:	A
REVISED DATE:	October 22, 2021		

PURPOSE

To establish a method for households to be proven eligible or not eligible to participate in the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indian Food Distribution Program (EBCI FDP) in accordance with the FNS Handbook 501, Chapter III, Application Processing Procedures.

POLICY

It is the policy of the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians Food Distribution Program to provide applications that can be filed by the applicant or by the applicant's chosen authorized representative at the food distribution office. An application can be filed during normal business hours at the food distribution office, by mail, email, or data fax (as long as it is readable and the signature is clear). An application is considered complete for filing purposes and must be accepted if it contains the applicant's name and address and is signed by the head of household. Authorized representatives may only sign the application if a signed release of information is on file stating they have permission to sign in head of household's stead. Power of Attorneys may sign the application for head of household at any time.

Applicants shall be advised of the right to file an application form on the same day they contact the food distribution office whether the contact is made in person or by telephone. If same day service is not possible, the application process must be completed no later than seven (7) calendar days (excluding weekends and holidays) after an application is filed, the household must be given an opportunity to receive USDA foods. If the application is incomplete and household is unable to be contacted, the application will be denied.

Expedited services shall be provided by the program to households which would likely be eligible and would otherwise suffer a hardship if required to return to the office at a later date. See Expedited Service for Need Page 8.

PROCEDURE

The application process involves such actions as:

- A. Making application available;
- B. Assisting a household in the completion of its application;
- C. Interviewing a member of the household or an authorized representative;
- D. Performing necessary collateral contacts and verifications;
- E. Screening for dual participation;
- F. Advising the household of its rights and responsibilities; and
- G. Preparing necessary documents to authorize or deny household.

Filling out the Application:

- 1.** Applicant's information: name, address (mailing and physical), city, state, zip code, directions to home, telephone number.
- 2.** Household Members: list all household members, including head of household, each relation to head of household, birth date(s), social security number(s), and age(s).
- 3.** Income (earned and unearned): List household member, employer or source of income, type of income, gross amount and how often paid.
- 4.** Self-Employment Income: Check Yes or No if any household member is self-employed. List the household member, type of business, monthly sales income, monthly expenses (if any) and total self-employment income after expenses are deducted.
- 5.** Students: Check Yes or No if member is a student receiving financial assistance. List household member, amount of grant(s)/loan(s), period of time funds intended to cover, type of payments and amount used to pay tuition/schools fees.
- 6.** Standard Shelter/Utility Expense: Check Yes or No if household pays shelter/utility expenses. If yes, fill in the type of shelter/utility.
- 7.** Dependent Care: Check Yes or No if household pays for dependent care. If yes, fill in name and address of person providing care, amount paid, and how often paid.
- 8.** Child Support: Check Yes or No if household pays or receives court ordered child support. Fill in amount ordered to pay and/or received and amount actually paid and/or received.
- 9.** Excess Medical Expenses: Check Yes or No if anyone in household is elderly or disabled. If yes, fill in monthly total after the excess of \$35.
- 10.** Racial/Ethnic Data Collection: This information is confidential and used solely for the end of month reporting. Check Yes or No to questions on racial/ethnic data.
- 11.** SNAP Dual Participation: Check Yes or No on questions regarding SNAP (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program) benefits. Write the date and time SNAP participation was checked for. Staff is to initial who called for dual participation and make any necessary notations.
- 12.** Authorized Representative(s): Fill in name, address and phone number of person(s) authorized to act on the Head of Household's behalf. (If home delivery is requested, note in this section).

Filling out the Application: (continued)

- 13. Home Delivery:** If home delivery services are requested, provide an explanation to detail the request. All requests must list at least one authorized representative.
- 14. Rights and Responsibilities/Consent:** Check and initial appropriate check box once participant rights and responsibilities are reviewed and issued. Check and initial appropriate check box once head of household has completed the consent to release information.
- 15. Fair Hearing:** All Households must be informed that they have the right to disagree with any action taken on their case and request a Fair Hearing. See Fair Hearing Reference Fair Hearing Section E-1.
- 16. Penalty Warning:** A household that receives USDA foods must follow the rules stated on the application. Failure to comply can result in a claim being filed and/or disqualification.
- 17. Intentional Program Violation (IPV) Penalties:** Applicant and/or any household member knowingly and willingly violates the rules in the Penalty Warning may be determined to have committed an IPV and will be ineligible to participate in the Food Distribution Program according to regulations stated on the application.
- 18. Authorization:** Signing the application authorizes the release of any necessary information or forms to the Food Distribution Office needed to determine/verify eligibility. This authorization is good for 12 months from the date signed or revoked in writing by person signing the application.
- 19. Certification Statement:** Applicant certifies that they have read the application and the information is true and correct to the best of their knowledge. They also certify they will comply with program rules and will report any changes within ten days (excluding holidays and weekends) of the date the change becomes known.
- 20. Applicant's Signature and Date:** All applications must be signed by the head of household. Authorized representatives may only sign the application for head of household if there is a signed release of information on file stating permission to do so. Power of Attorneys may sign for head of household at any time.

FOOD DISTRIBUTION PROGRAM

POLICY CHAPTER:	Certification Policy	CHAPTER#:	I
SUBJECT:	Expedited Services for Need	SECTION-SUBSECTION:	B
REVISED DATE:	October 22, 2021		

PURPOSE

To provide expedited services to households, which would likely be eligible and would otherwise suffer a hardship if required to return to the office at a later date.

POLICY

It is the policy of the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians Food Distribution Program to allow households that report no income in the current month and those households that, would likely be eligible and would otherwise suffer hardship if required to return to the office the next day to be provided with an opportunity to obtain USDA foods within one calendar day, excluding weekends and holidays, after the date the application was filed. The basis for the determination that the household qualifies for expedited service must be recorded in the case file.

To expedite the certification of households in immediate need, the verification provisions under FNS 501 Handbook Section 5 – Verification and Documentation of Eligibility Criteria Paragraph 3504 Mandatory Verification and 3505 Verification of Questionable Information may be postponed. The household's identity and address through a collateral contact or readily available documentary information must be verified. If possible, the household's income statements should be verified at the same time. Every effort to check for dual participation in SNAP within the expedited service processing time frame must be conducted.

PROCEDURE

1. Complete application form following the application procedures.
2. Information for application is verbally taken if documentation is not readily available.
3. Complete Income calculations and compare to the FDPIR Net Monthly Income Standards.
4. Complete the Notice of Eligibility that will list of all of the documentation required for full certification for the next month. After the Notice of Eligibility is complete a copy is given to the participant and one is placed in the file.

FOOD DISTRIBUTION PROGRAM

POLICY CHAPTER:	Certification Policy	CHAPTER#:	I
SUBJECT:	Income Determination	SECTION-SUBSECTION:	C
REVISED DATE:	October 22, 2021		

PURPOSE

To provide a method of determining income eligibility according to FDPIR Net Monthly Income Standards.

POLICY

It is the policy of the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians Food Distribution Program to determine income eligibility according to FDPIR Net Monthly Income Standards. Determining eligibility includes household eligibility, establishing the household's residency, if the household meets the income requirements and verifying that the household does not participate in SNAP.

PROCEDURE

Household income is calculated by determining all earned and/or unearned income that was received in the previous thirty (30) days. Income calculations should include (if applicable):

1. Total Gross Monthly Earned Income
2. Total Gross Earned and Self-Employment Income
3. Net Monthly Earned Income
4. Unearned Income
5. Student Financial Assistance
6. Allowable Deductions

CALCULATION OF NET MONTHLY INCOME

1. Household member, Income Source, Type of Income, Gross Amount, Frequency received.
2. Add together the gross monthly income earned by all household members and average. Multiply the averaged income by 2.15 if pay is received bi-weekly or 4.3 if received weekly, to determine the household's total gross income.
3. Add together any self-employment calculated, if applicable.

4. Add together total gross earned income and self-employment income. Subtract 20% from the total amount to determine Net Monthly Earned Income.
5. Add unearned income to the Net Monthly Income, if applicable.
6. Add monthly student financial assistance, if applicable.
7. Subtract allowable monthly deductions.
8. Compare final total to FDPIR Net Monthly Income Standards.

EARNED INCOME

1. All adult members (18 and older) that are receiving earned income such as wages, self-employment, training allowances, and work study earnings should provide the appropriate documentation (i.e. paystubs, receipts of payment).

INCOME (UNEARNED)

2. Specify type of Unearned Income: Social Security, Supplemental Security Income, Veteran's Benefits, Pensions or Retirement Income, Unemployment or Workman's Comp., Child Support or Foster Care Payments or Other (specify).

SELF-EMPLOYMENT

Self-Employment is monies a household receives by conducting business themselves. This includes income from rental property, roomers, boarders, farming, ranching, crafts, and/or operating your own business.

STUDENT FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

Student Financial Assistance includes grants, scholarships, and loans. Student financial assistance received from Title IV of the Higher Educational Act is excluded. The portion of financial assistance not used for allowable education expenses (tuition, mandatory fees, books, supplies, transportation, and miscellaneous personal expenses other than normal living expenses) is counted as income.

DEDUCTIONS ONLY

3. Deductions Only: Check which deduction that applies to the household: Child Support, Dependent Care, Excess Medical Expense Paid by Elderly/Disabled HH Members and/or Shelter Utility Expense Paid by Household. The Shelter Utility Deduction is a standard deduction.

4. Child Support: A court order or similar documentation may be used to verify the household member's legal obligation to pay the child support. Documentation is required that verifies the actual amount paid, if needed the certifier will assist in obtaining documentation.
5. Dependent Care: The actual cost of dependent care paid to a non-household member for a child or other dependent when necessary for a household member to search for, accept, or continue employment or to attend training or pursue education that is preparatory to employment can be used as a deduction. The total for the month is deducted from income.
6. Excess Medical Expenses Paid by Elderly (60 and over)/Disabled household members: This income deduction applies to household that incur a monthly medical expense more than \$35 by any household member who is elderly or disabled. Proof of medical deductions must be submitted.
7. Shelter and Utility Expense Paid by the Household: Shelter and Utility includes Electric, Water, Rent/Mortgage, Phone, or Gas. This income deduction applies to households that incur shelter or utility expenses. Documentation for at least one allowable shelter or utility expense is incurred by the household on a monthly basis is required. The standard shelter/utility deduction will be applied.

RESIDENCY VERIFICATION

1. Residency will be verified by Geographic Information System (GIS)
2. Letter from 911 addressing center, for initial certification.
3. Picture ID (Enrollment card, Driver's license, NC State ID, or Passport)

ELIGIBILITY

8. Eligibility is determined when household composition is determined, residency is verified, dual participation from SNAP cleared, and household meets the FDPIR Net Monthly Income Standards.

NARRATIVE

9. Complete Narrative with any notations or remarks regarding the case file.
10. Check: Knows to Report Changes after informing client about reporting changes.
11. EBCI Tribal Food Distribution Representative signs and dates.

FOOD DISTRIBUTION PROGRAM

POLICY CHAPTER:	Certification Policy	CHAPTER#:	I
SUBJECT:	Verification of Employment	SECTION-SUBSECTION:	C-1
REVISED DATE:	October 22, 2021		

PURPOSE

To provide a form for documentation of employment to assist in determining income eligibility.

POLICY

It is the policy of the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians Food Distribution Program to determine eligibility by verifying all earnings for applicant household according to USDA FNS regulations on income determination.

PROCEDURE

The Employer Statement is to be used for participants that are paid cash, or contract labor. If clients are paid with checks the following are required: four recent (previous 30 days) check stubs if paid weekly, two recent (previous 30 days) check stubs if paid every two weeks. If paystubs are not provided then the certifier should complete the following:

1. Certifier can verify through a collateral contact. If collateral contact is made list the contact type and any notes necessary.
2. A written statement can be submitted from employer that lists gross wages for the previous 30 days.

FOOD DISTRIBUTION PROGRAM

POLICY CHAPTER:	Certification Policy	CHAPTER#:	I
SUBJECT:	Zero Income Verification	SECTION-SUBSECTION:	C-2
REVISED DATE:	October 22, 2021		

PURPOSE

To provide a form for documentation of unemployment to assist in determining income eligibility.

POLICY

It is the policy of the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians Food Distribution Program to determine eligibility by verifying all earnings for applicant household according to USDA FNS regulation on income determination.

PROCEDURE

The Zero Income Verification is utilized when a household member 18 or older is unemployed or has no income. This form can also be used in determining no income for the household member.

1. Print name of verifier.
2. Participant: List name of adult member unemployed.
3. Notate length of unemployment or no income that is being verified.
4. Verifier provides signature, date, and phone number.

Written statement from someone not living in the household with the participant stating to the best of their knowledge the participant is unemployed, may be used for initial certification.

5. Signature, contact information, date of person making statement must be on the written statement.

FOOD DISTRIBUTION PROGRAM

POLICY CHAPTER:	Certification Policy	CHAPTER#:	I
SUBJECT:	Zero Income Form	SECTION-SUBSECTION:	C-3
REVISED DATE:	October 22, 2021		

PURPOSE

To provide a form to households reporting zero income, to question how they are able to sustain themselves and other household members.

POLICY

It is the policy of the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians Food Distribution Program to determine eligibility by verifying how zero income households sustain living expenses with no income.

PROCEDURE

The Zero Income Form is utilized when the household is reporting zero income. It must be filled out by head of household or the households authorized representative.

1. Participant fills out the zero income form and answers all the questions.
2. Participant signs and dates the form.
3. Certifier stamps form as received and signs it.
4. Certifier reviews form and questions any discrepancies.

FOOD DISTRIBUTION PROGRAM

POLICY CHAPTER:	Certification Policy	CHAPTER#:	I
SUBJECT:	Self-Employment Income	SECTION-SUBSECTION:	C-4
REVISED DATE:	October 22, 2021		

PURPOSE

To provide a method of determining if clients who are self-employed are income eligible.

POLICY

It is the policy of the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians Food Distribution Program to determine income eligibility according to USDA FNS regulations on income determination.

PROCEDURE

Self-Employment is verified through the information filed on a household's previous year's taxes or previous 30 days income minus deductions for self-employment expenses.

1. Determine source of self-employment income from previous year's tax papers schedule, if applicable.
2. They may sign and submit a self-declaration statement listing their wages for the previous 30 days.

FOOD DISTRIBUTION PROGRAM

POLICY CHAPTER:	Certification Policy	CHAPTER#:	I
SUBJECT:	Self-Employment Statement	SECTION-SUBSECTION:	C-5
REVISED DATE:	October 22, 2018		

PURPOSE

Provide a document to applicants that are self-employed to assist in determining income eligibility.

POLICY

It is the policy of the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians Food Distribution Program to determine eligibility by verifying all earnings for applicant household according to USDA FNS regulations on income determination.

PROCEDURE

The Self-Employment Statement is utilized to record income from odd jobs, sales or cash payments. This form can also be used to record the expenses and incoming payments for self-employed persons. Participants will sign a self-declaration statement that list the following:

3. Record For: List name of participant.
4. From_____to_____: List dates in months to months.
5. Date: List dates worked or dates paid.
6. Source of Income.
7. Amount Earned.
8. Allowable Expenses. List each expense and amount paid.
9. Total Amount Earned.
10. Total Allowable Costs/Expenses
11. Total Amount Earned (-) minus Total Allowable Costs/Expenses (=) equals Total Gross Income for the month.
12. Participant's signs form.

FOOD DISTRIBUTION PROGRAM

POLICY CHAPTER:	Certification Policy	CHAPTER#:	I
SUBJECT:	Doctor's Statement	SECTION-SUBSECTION:	C-6
REVISED DATE:	October 22, 2021		

PURPOSE

To provide a form for documentation for household members on a doctor's medical leave to assist in determining income eligibility.

POLICY

It is the policy of the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians Food Distribution Program to determine eligibility by verifying all earnings for applicant household according to USDA FNS regulations on income determination.

PROCEDURE

A Doctor's Statement will be accepted as a form of zero income verification for participants who are unable to work due to medical issues.

1. Statement should include household member's name and length of time unable to work.
2. Signature, date, address, and telephone number of medical doctor.

FOOD DISTRIBUTION PROGRAM

POLICY CHAPTER:	Certification Policy	CHAPTER#:	I
SUBJECT:	Separate Household Statement	SECTION-SUBSECTION:	C-7
REVISED DATE:	October 22, 2021		

PURPOSE

To determine eligibility when a household is claiming a separate household from other individuals not participating in CTFDP.

POLICY

It is the policy of the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians Food Distribution Program to determine if a household is living with others to determine if household is considered a separate household.

PROCEDURES

1. Participant must submit proof of separate household (statement from individual whom they are claiming separate household from). The letter should include living arrangements, food storage, and food preparation. Statement needs to be signed, dated, and contain contact information.
2. Self-declaration statement on zero income form or admission to certifier (this can be used for initial certification).
3. The statement is placed in participant's file and any necessary notes are made.

FOOD DISTRIBUTION PROGRAM

POLICY CHAPTER:	Certification Policy	CHAPTER#:	I
SUBJECT:	Dependent Care Statement	SECTION-SUBSECTION:	C-8
REVISED DATE:	October 22, 2021		

PURPOSE

To provide a form for documentation on dependent care deductions to assist in determining income eligibility.

POLICY

It is the policy of the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians Food Distribution Program to determine eligibility by verifying all earnings and deductions for applicant household according to USDA FNS regulations on income determination.

PROCEDURES

1. Participant submits written documentation or receipts of Dependent Care paid on a monthly basis.
2. Certifier may verify by collateral contact to determine dependent care expenses. Any notes will be made in file.

FOOD DISTRIBUTION PROGRAM

POLICY CHAPTER:	Certification Policy	CHAPTER#:	I
SUBJECT:	Notice of Eligibility, Denial, or Status Change	SECTION-SUBSECTION:	D
REVISED DATE:	October 22, 2021		

PURPOSE

To provide proper documentation for the program on eligibility status, denial, status change.

POLICY

It is the policy of the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians Food Distribution Program to utilize the Notice of Eligibility, Denial, or Status Change form when the household has met the eligibility requirements, requires certification, changes in income or household, or has been determined ineligible according to USDA FNS regulations for income determination.

PROCEDURES

1. List name, mailing address, file number of participant, and date.

NOTICE OF ELIGIBILITY – will be filled out when the household has met the eligibility requirements, the household will be issued USDA foods within the approved months.

2. Check box of notice of eligibility.
3. Enter months approved.
4. Enter beginning and ending certification date.
5. Enter number in household.
6. Enter date for recertification.
7. List any needed information required for recertification.
8. Participant will be issued an issuance sheet for receipt of food based on household size.

NOTICE OF DENIAL-will be filled out when the household has been determined ineligible for participation.

9. Check box of notice of denial.

NOTICE OF DENIAL (continued)

10. List date denied.

11. Give reason for denial and inform household of fair hearing process.

NOTICE OF ADVERSE ACTION – will be completed if household is no longer eligible due to a household change or an increase in income.

NOTICE OF REDUCTION – will be completed if a change in household size is reported or discovered.

NOTICE OF REQUEST FOR TERMINATION – will be completed if client requests their case be closed to apply for SNAP benefits or for other unspecified reasons.

INCOME CHANGES-will be filled out when the household has an income change of \$100.00 or more per month.

12. Check box of income change.

13. Enter Name.

14. State where income is received.

16. State total new amount.

NOTICES OF CHANGES FORM-will be filled out when the household reports a change in household size.

17. Check box of household change.

18. Enter previous household size.

19. Enter current household size.

20. Name of person being added or removed from household.

21. Check if new household member.

22. Check if no longer in household.

23. Enter date the change occurred.

FAIR HEARING SECTION-will be filled out if participant requests a fair hearing and appeals the decision to a higher authority in accordance with USDA FNS 501 Handbook, Section 5-Fair Hearings.

24. Name of person requesting fair hearing.
25. Social Security number.
26. Address of person requesting fair hearing.
27. Enter telephone number.
28. Applicant provides reason why Fair Hearing is requested.
29. Signature of Applicant.
30. Date of signature.
31. Date Fair Hearing request received in office.

After the completion of the form, the Cherokee Tribal Food Distribution Representative explains the section that pertains to the participant.

32. Applicant's signature noting receipt of the copy of the Notice of Eligibility, Denial, Recertification or Status Change.
33. Signature of Cherokee Tribal Food Distribution Representative.
34. Date of signature.

FOOD DISTRIBUTION PROGRAM

POLICY CHAPTER:	Certification Policy	CHAPTER#:	I
SUBJECT:	Notice of Changes Form	SECTION-SUBSECTION:	
REVISED DATE:	October 22, 2021		

PURPOSE

To provide a form that documents any changes a household may occur that effects eligibility or level of benefits.

POLICY

It is the policy of the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians Food Distribution Program to utilize the Notice of Changes Form when the household has a change of Income, Employer, Head of Household, Name, Household Composition, Address/Residency Change, or Child Support.

PROCEDURE

When a change has been reported the certifier must fill out the Notice of Changes Form. The date, participants name, address, file number, and county must be documented on the form.

1. Check appropriate box or boxes next to type of change being reported.
2. Fill in information on the form related to the change.
3. Have participant sign,
4. Certifier will also sign the form and make any notes needed.

FOOD DISTRIBUTION PROGRAM

POLICY CHAPTER:	Certification Policy	CHAPTER#:	I
SUBJECT:	Responsibilities on the Fair Hearing Process	SECTION-SUBSECTION:	D-1
REVISED DATE:	October 22, 2021		

PURPOSE

To establish formal procedures on responsibilities for the Fair Hearing process.

POLICY

The Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians Food Distribution Program has an established formal procedure to process “Fair Hearing Request”. This procedure calls for an impartial decision maker, which did not participate in the original decision, to preside as the “Hearing Official”.

PROCEDURE

Summarized below are the responsibilities of the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians Food Distribution Program and responsibilities of the Hearing Official. Reference: FNS Handbook 501 Chapter V, Section 5-Fair Hearings.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE FOOD DISTRIBUTION PROGRAM

1. Notify the Hearing Official, in writing, of the request for a fair hearing. This notice must also advise the timeliness required for processing this appeal.
2. Make available all documents and/or records used by the program in the original determination. Example: applicant’s certification application and/or records.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE HEARING OFFICIAL

1. Establish a hearing date and send written notice to the appellant of the date, time, and location of the hearing. This notice must be sent Certified Mail to assure the appellant receives the notice fifteen (15) days in advance of the hearing date.
2. Request, receive, and make part of the hearing record all evidence determined necessary to decide the issues being raised.
3. Rule solely on the evidence presented at the hearing and the statutory and regulatory provisions governing the program.

Responsibilities on the Fair Hearing Process (continued)

4. The basis for conclusion shall be stated in writing and mailed to the appellant within sixty (60) days from the date of the Request for the Fair Hearing.

NOTE: The appellant must be granted one opportunity for postponement of the hearing upon request. This postponement shall not exceed 30 days and the time limit for action on the decision may be extended for as many days as the hearing is postponed.

FOOD DISTRIBUTION PROGRAM

POLICY CHAPTER:	Certification Policy	CHAPTER#:	I
SUBJECT:	Daily Sign-In Sheet	SECTION-SUBSECTION:	E
REVISED DATE:	October 22, 2021		

PURPOSE

To provide accurate sign in records of households of certification or recertification.

POLICY

It is the policy of the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians Food Distribution Program to keep accurate records of participation.

PROCEDURE

SIGN-IN FORMS:

The Sign-in form is used by all participants and will be placed in lobby area. The Data Entry clerk or Cherokee Tribal Food Distribution Representative determines whether the participants are new, recertifying, or picking up.

1. List site: Food Center or Name of field site.
2. Date.
3. Page of sign in forms, if more than one.
4. New or File Number
5. A if application or C if pick up.
6. Time of arrival
7. NEW: Check. If new applicant, give applicant and application. (see Application Procedures).

FOOD DISTRIBUTION PROGRAM

POLICY CHAPTER:	Certification Policy	CHAPTER#:	I
SUBJECT:	Request of Information	SECTION-SUBSECTION:	G
REVISED DATE:	October 22, 2021		

PURPOSE

To provide a method of documentation when a participant requests information out of their file.

POLICY

It is the policy of the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians Food Distribution Program to have proper documentation placed in participant files when a request of information is given.

PROCEDURE

1. When a participant requests information from their file, the Tribal Food Representative will make appropriate notes in file. Head of Household must be present, unless an Authorization of Release of Information is on file from person requesting information.
2. Head of Household or Authorized Representative, with documented permission, will sign off on note made by Food Distribution Representative.

FOOD DISTRIBUTION PROGRAM

POLICY CHAPTER:	Certification Policy	CHAPTER#:	I
SUBJECT:	Release of Information	SECTION-SUBSECTION:	G
REVISED DATE:	October 22, 2021		

PURPOSE

To provide a method of documentation when a participant gives permission to another individual to have access to their file or certain information in the file.

POLICY

It is the policy of the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians Food Distribution Program to have proper documentation placed in participant files for verification that the request was made.

PROCEDURE

1. Participant will fill out the authorization for release of information form.
2. Participant will fill in what authorization they would like to have released, if needed and list to whom.
3. Participant will fill in date of how long the authorization will be good for, up to 1 year.
4. Tribal Food Distribution Representative should also notify the participant this authorization may be revoked at any time by requesting in writing.
5. The authorization of release of information form must be signed and dated by the participant in front of Food Distribution Representative or a NC Notary Public.
6. The Food Distribution Representative or NC Notary Public will also sign the form.

FOOD DISTRIBUTION PROGRAM

POLICY CHAPTER:	Certification Policy	CHAPTER#:	I
SUBJECT:	Shelter/Utility Statement	SECTION-SUBSECTION:	H
REVISED DATE:	October 22, 2021		

PURPOSE

To provide a method of documentation when a participant does not have a utility bill or telephone bill in their name for verification of shelter/utility deduction.

POLICY

It is the policy of the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians Food Distribution Program to have documentation if a participant does not have a utility bill or shelter bill in their name for verification of utility deduction

PROCEDURE

Certifier will obtain written documentation from person who's name the utility bill is in. The statement must be signed, dated, and have contact information. For initial certification, the certifier may verify by collateral contact.

FOOD DISTRIBUTION PROGRAM

POLICY CHAPTER:	Certification Policy	CHAPTER#:	I
SUBJECT:	Claims Against Household	SECTION-SUBSECTION:	I
REVISED DATE:	October 22, 2021		

PURPOSE

To establish a method of recovering monies when any household receives more USDA foods that they are entitled to according to USDA Foods regulations for claim determination.

POLICY

It is the policy of the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians Food Distribution Program to issue a claim for recovery of monies when any household that receives more USDA foods than it is entitled to receive according to USDA regulations for claim determination. These instances may include but are not limited to the following.

1. Household provided incorrect or incomplete information on the application at the time of certification.
2. Household failed to report subsequent income or resource changes in household composition that affect eligibility or benefit levels.
3. Household participated in SNAP and Food Distribution Program at the same time or in another Food Distribution Program in more than one location.
4. Household was found to be ineligible for USDA foods, or eligible for fewer USDA foods than it received while a fair hearing decision was pending.
5. ITO failed to take immediate action on changes reported by households, which resulted in over issuances, whereby recipients received more USDA foods than they were entitled to or were ineligible as a result of the reported changes.
6. ITO erroneously calculated the household's eligibility during verification of certification, and an eligible or ineligible household received USDA foods to which it was entitled.
7. Household received an overallotment of USDA foods for the month.

Claims Against Household (continued)

NOTE: Notice of Adverse Action time frames should be followed when calculating months the over issuance occurred for claim situations involving changes that household was obligated to report.

Household may be disqualified from participation for failure to pay a claim in accordance with USDA regulations FNS 501 Handbook. Notice of Adverse Action for unpaid claim should be given in advance. Participant may not receive benefits during the period of disqualification.

ITO may not recover benefits from households by reducing the amount of USDA foods the household would otherwise receive.

PROCEDURES

1. If a household is found ineligible according to one or more of the reasons Listed above, the Cherokee Tribal Food Distribution Representative will verify and document reason for the claim on the Compliant Action Notice.
2. Certification Representative will verify number of months household received ineligible benefits.
3. Certification Representative will pull issuance cards of amount of food received for the period household was ineligible.
4. Claims can be calculated by running a “Value of Commodities Issued” report in AIS for the appropriate month(s) the household received ineligible commodities for.
5. Claims may also be calculated according to the formula provided by USDA Regulations and by the commodity food average value list provided by the Food and Nutrition Service as follows:
 - a. Unit of food item over issued per month
$$\frac{\text{x number of months}}{\text{= total number of each unit over issued.}}$$
 - b. Total number of each unit
$$\frac{\text{x average food value per unit}}{\text{= value of over issued.}}$$
 - c. Add all values of units for total claim amount.

Claims Against Households (continued)

NOTE: A copy of issuance sheets for month(s) of ineligibility will be attached to the claim issuance worksheet for documentation.

6. Approval by the manager before the letter is sent.
7. Demand Letter for Over Issuance is completed by the Certification Representative and mailed to participant if the claim exceeds \$125.00. This information is documented in the participant's file.
8. Additional demand letters will be sent to households in no more than 30-day intervals via certified mail for a maximum of three letters. Disqualification will begin date after the 3rd demand letter. Certified mail receipts will be attached to initial claim letter being mailed.
9. Participants will be given claim information to repay over issuance and they will be required to submit proof of repayment,

NOTE: The ITO may waive disqualification, if in the opinion of the state agency, the disqualification would cause undue hardship to the household.

Any household that willfully misrepresents information in any form or convicted of fraud by a court as stated in the USDA FNS 501 Handbook shall be disqualified for 1 year, for first offense, 2 years, and indefinitely, according to seriousness of the misrepresentation as determined by the Tribal Food Distribution Program.

FOOD DISTRIBUTION PROGRAM

POLICY CHAPTER:	Certification Policy	CHAPTER#:	I
SUBJECT:	Demand Letter for Over Issuance	SECTION-SUBSECTION:	I-1
REVISED DATE:	October 22, 2021		

PURPOSE

To provide a method of filing a claim against a participant that received USDA foods while being ineligible or becoming ineligible.

POLICY

It is the policy of the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians Food Distribution to file a claim against a participant upon determining they received USDA foods while being ineligible or becoming ineligible.

PROCEDURE

1. Fill in date claim was processed.
2. Name, address, city, state, and zip of participant.
3. Check the notice this claim pertains to.
4. Head of Household's name.
5. List dollar amount of total claim due.
6. List months of ineligibility and reason why claim was filed.
7. Certification Supervisor checks information and submits to the Program Manager for signature.
8. Letter is mailed certified and a copy is placed in participant's file
9. This information is then logged in claim log book, and follow-up letters are consecutively mailed out.

FOOD DISTRIBUTION PROGRAM

POLICY CHAPTER:	Certification Policy	CHAPTER#:	I
SUBJECT:	IPV Intentional Program Violations	SECTION-SUBSECTION:	I-2
REVISED DATE:	October 22, 2021		

PURPOSE

To establish regulations when household member intentionally provides false (or) misleading information.

POLICY

It is the policy of the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians Food Distribution to determine when an IPV has been committed and must implement disqualification procedures.

PROCEDURE

If household member(s) are determined to have committed an IPV, they are determined ineligible to participate in FDP.

- A. For a period of 12 months first violation.
- B. For a period of 24 months for the second violation.
- C. Permanently for the third violation.

FOOD DISTRIBUTION PROGRAM

POLICY CHAPTER:	Certification Policy	CHAPTER#:	I
SUBJECT:	Notice of Expiration of Certification	SECTION-SUBSECTION:	J
REVISED DATE:	October 22, 2021		

PURPOSE

To provide a method of notifying participants their certification will be expiring and that they will need to reapply for services to continue receiving benefits.

POLICY

It is the policy of the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians Food Distribution Program that all participants will be provided prior notice for recertification utilizing the Notice of Expiration letter. Participants will be mailed a letter detailing when their certification will be expiring and that they will need to reapply.

PROCEDURE

1. Certifier will determine which participants will be mailed a letter by running three (3) separate reports in AIS. The reports are Certification Due List, HH Listing FSP Exchange, and Client Information List.
2. Using the reports, the letter will be generated in a mail merge in Microsoft Word.
3. Letters will be signed by the certifier and mailed to the participants address on file.
4. A copy of the letter will also be placed in the participants file.
5. In the instance of a returned letter, a note will be made in file and the participant will be required to present proof of an updated mailing address.

FOOD DISTRIBUTION PROGRAM

POLICY CHAPTER:	Certification Policy	CHAPTER#:	I
SUBJECT:	Reviewing of Case Files	SECTION-SUBSECTION:	L
REVISED DATE:	October 22, 2021		

PURPOSE

To provide a method of being in compliance with the USDA Management Evaluation on reviewing case files.

POLICY

It is the policy of the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians Food Distribution Program that applications when completed will be reviewed. The USDA Management Evaluation Review Form will be utilized in completing a sample (10%) of application during each month by the Office Coordinator.

PROCEDURE

1. Cherokee Tribal Food Distribution Representatives when completed with files, submits them to other representatives able to determine eligibility for review.
2. Reviewing files.
 - a.) On the Notice of Eligibility Form stamp date file was reviewed and initials.
 - b.) Check files for errors.
 - c.) Reviewer notes errors and returns file to clerk for corrections.
 - d.) After corrections, Clerk returns file to the reviewer to be rechecked.
 - e.) File is returned for filing.
3. After completion of the file review, the reviewer will provide the Program Manager a written report within 10 working days of the last day of the month.

FOOD DISTRIBUTION PROGRAM

POLICY CHAPTER:	Certification Policy	CHAPTER#:	I
SUBJECT:	Dual Participation	SECTION-SUBSECTION:	M
REVISED DATE:	October 22, 2021		

PURPOSE

To provide a method of being in compliance with the USDA Management Evaluation on checking for Dual Participation.

POLICY

It is the policy of the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians Food Distribution Program that applications will be cross checked for Dual Participation with the North Carolina Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP).

PROCEDURE

1. Before each certification, Cherokee Tribal Food Distribution Representatives must insure due diligence in verifying that the participant/s are **NOT** participating in SNAP.
2. Certifier will call EBT call center, or related social service areas to screen for dual participation. Any necessary notes will be made in file by Tribal Food Representative.

**EASTERN BAND OF CHEROKEE INDIANS
FOOD DISTRIBUTION PROGRAM
DATA ENTRY POLICY**

FOOD DISTRIBUTION PROGRAM

POLICY CHAPTER:	Data Entry Policy	CHAPTER#:	II
SUBJECT:	Data Entry Site Procedures	SECTION-SUBSECTION:	A
REVISED DATE:	October 22, 2021		

PURPOSE

To establish a method of daily procedure for client issuances at Food Distribution Sites.

POLICY

It is the policy of the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians Food Distribution Program that Data Entry employee will follow the method for client issuances.

PROCEDURE

1. Data Entry clerk uses the sign in sheet to determine what the participant needs assistance with.
2. Make sure a current food list is available to participants
3. Take participants food order and schedule their appointment for the following month. When scheduling appointments, obtain head of household name, phone number, and file number, if applicable.
4. When scheduling appointment, determine what type of appointment (distribution or certification), if certification give participant application and any other appropriate forms if necessary.
5. Answer phones in a courteous manner.
6. Establish a weekly report to forward to the Food Distribution Representative and Office Coordinator.
7. At the end of the day, print an availability list and daily issuance summary and file.

FOOD DISTRIBUTION PROGRAM

POLICY CHAPTER:	Data Entry Policy	CHAPTER#:	II
SUBJECT:	Data Entry Issuances at Tailgates	SECTION-SUBSECTION:	B
REVISED DATE:	October 22, 2021		

PURPOSE

To establish a method of daily procedure for client issuances at tailgate sites.

POLICY

It is the policy of the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians Food Distribution Program that Data Entry staff will follow the method for client issuances at tailgate sites.

PROCEDURE

1. Obtain list of available foods from Food Delivery Services Supervisor.
2. Make sure the food choice sheets are up to date and print off food sheets for the site.
3. Make sure all needed equipment is loaded.
4. Make sure all boxes have what is needed for the tailgate site.
5. When at tailgate site make sure everything is set up and ready for clients.
6. When clients have been processed through the sign in. The food choice is given to clients so they can be issued out the food they have chosen.
7. After tailgate site make sure all is placed back in box and place is clean.
8. Tailgate issuance sheets need to be entered into AIS, when time allows.
9. At the end of the day, print an availability list and daily issuance summary and file.

FOOD DISTRIBUTION PROGRAM

POLICY CHAPTER:	Data Entry Policy	CHAPTER#:	II
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SUBJECT:	Data Entry Report Procedure	SECTION-SUBSECTION:	C
REVISED DATE:	October 22, 2021		

PURPOSE

To provide accurate documentation in order to complete monthly USDA FNS 152 Report.

POLICY

It is the policy of the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians Food Distribution Program that Data Entry staff will ensure that all files and reports are completed with 100% accuracy by the last day of the month in order to be prepared to serve participants the following month.

PROCEDURE

1. Check to ensure all issuance invoices are entered on the computer
2. Combine truck and warehouse inventory corrections on the edits sheet.
3. Inventory clerk enters all damage and submits damage count sheets to Data Entry (see Damage Disposal Procedure). After damage report is printed cross-check source material to ensure accuracy. The codes entered are A- Concealed Damage (-) B-Transit Damage (-) (State Warehouse to local site); C-Unfit/out of Condition (-); D-Stolen/Lost (-); or E-Inventory Error (+/-).
4. Nutrition Education report needs to be completed (See Nutrition Education Procedure).
5. Inventory Clerk/Data Entry enters received and transfer. Physical inventory will be entered last if approved by the Assistant Manager.

FOOD DISTRIBUTION PROGRAM

POLICY CHAPTER:	Data Entry Policy	CHAPTER#:	II
SUBJECT:	Data Entry Delivery/Order/Transfer	SECTION-SUBSECTION:	D
REVISED DATE:	October 22, 2021		

PURPOSE

To provide a method of accurate documentation of all received and transfer of shipments.

POLICY

It is the policy of the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians Food Distribution Program to maintain accurate documentation of all received and transfer of shipments.

PROCEDURE

A. RECEIVED

The Data Entry Technician/Data Entry is to cross-check the receiving log with source materials to ensure items, cases, and units are correct before entering on main computer.

1. Check received with Inventory Clerk’s logbook to make sure all Bills of Lading are accounted for.
2. All food items are to be totaled and verified with current FNS 152.
3. All received is to be verified, recorded on FNS 155 A by dates.

FOOD DISTRIBUTION PROGRAM

POLICY CHAPTER:	Data Entry Policy	CHAPTER#:	II
SUBJECT:	Replacement of USDA Foods	SECTION-SUBSECTION:	E
REVISED DATE:	October 22, 2021		

PURPOSE

To establish procedure for Replacement of destroyed foods.

POLICY

It is the policy of the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians Food Distribution Program to replace Food lost in a household misfortune (e.g. flood, fire, tornado, extended power outage, hurricane, or vehicle accident on the way home from distribution site).

PROCEDURE

1. Requests of replacement of foods no later than 10 days following the date USDA foods were destroyed. Initial request may be made orally, written, and must be signed.
2. Extended power outage will result in only a full month’s issuance of refrigerated/frozen foods per the family size.
3. All other households misfortunes, households may receive up to a full month of food issuance per the family size.
4. Replacement foods may be the same food items or appropriate alternatives based on food availability at FDPIR location.
5. Replacement USDA Foods and Disaster Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (D-SNAP) benefits may not be received in the same month.
6. Household has the right to request a Fair Hearing if Replacement of USDA Foods is denied.

**EASTERN BAND OF CHEROKEE INDIANS
FOOD DISTRIBUTION PROGRAM
NUTRITION EDUCATION POLICY**

FOOD DISTRIBUTION PROGRAM

POLICY CHAPTER:	Nutrition Education Policy	CHAPTER#:	III
SUBJECT:	Nutrition Education Policy	SECTION-SUBSECTION:	A
REVISED DATE:	October 22, 2021		

PURPOSE

To establish a method of documentation when utilizing USDA Foods for the Nutrition Education component of the program.

POLICY

It is the policy of the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians Food Distribution Program to document all Nutrition Education demonstrations utilizing USDA Foods.

PROCEDURE

1. Qualified volunteers, Program Staff, or Home Economists requesting to utilize USDA Foods for the purpose of providing education must complete the request for USDA Foods form.
2. The request for USDA Foods form should be provided to the Program Manager for approval.
3. A food demonstration report should be completed and returned to the program within five (5) working days of the demonstration.
4. Tribal Food Distribution will have one (1) cooking demo a month at the Tribal Food Distribution building.
5. Upon availability of kitchen usage or camping cookware, staff will do cooking demos at Graham and Cherokee counties during our monthly distribution satellite trips.

**EASTERN BAND OF CHEROKEE INDIANS
FOOD DISTRIBUTION PROGRAM
WAREHOUSE POLICY**

FOOD DISTRIBUTION PROGRAM

POLICY CHAPTER:	Warehouse Policy	CHAPTER#:	IV
SUBJECT:	Warehouse Receiving All Food Items	SECTION-SUBSECTION:	A
REVISED DATE:	October 22, 2021		

PURPOSE

To ensure all food items received are physically counted and any discrepancies are properly reported.

POLICY

The Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians Food Distribution Program will ensure all food orders are examined and received with 100 percent accountability.

Reference: FNS Handbook 501, Chapter VI, Section 2, USDA Commodity Receipt Procedures
Receiving for USDA Commodities, dtd: April 2005 (Multi Foods)
FNS Instruction 709-5 Shipment and Receipt of Foods (Direct Orders)

SCOPE

The Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians TFD Program receives food orders from two different outside agency ordering sources.

- Multi Line Item - multiple item orders distributed from the USDA contracted warehouse
- Direct - single item full truck load orders received directly from the manufacturer but may be shipped from a USDA Warehouse.
- Fresh Produce - received weekly from the current contracted vendor.

PROCEDURE

Direct Order Receipts:

1. Each month an Order Status report will be generated from WBSCM (Web Based Supply Chain Management) for the direct orders scheduled to be received that month.
2. The Order Status report will be used to verify Catalog Item, Sales Order Number and PO number if needed for carriers making delivery appointments.

3. When the carrier makes contact for a delivery appointment the Order Status report will be matched by item, catalog number, sales order # and quantity to be delivered.
4. The name and telephone number of the person calling, date, carrier name and requested delivery date will be noted on the monthly receiving calendar along with a call back number.
5. When the order is delivered and prior to the seal being broken and the doors opened the receiving documents will be matched to the order status report to verify the item, sales order number, quantity and correct delivery destination.
6. A physical count will be made of the quantity received during unloading.
7. The Date of Pack/Best if used by/Expiration Date of the item will be noted on the manifest.
8. If no shortage/overage or damage is noted the receiving documents will be noted with the start and finish time of the unloading, the reefer temperature if applicable, seal number and stated as intact if so or broken if not intact and signed and dated.
9. If there is a shortage/overage or damage noted at the time of unloading the driver will be requested to verify the count and any damage noted. The TFD representative will be informed and may take pictures of the damage and will verify the shortage/overage and/or damage and notify the Paris Brothers Trucking Company and USDA Warehouse Either by telephone or e-mail.
10. The TFD Food Delivery Services Supervisor or Office Coordinator will enter the receiving documents into WBSCM and report any overages/shortage and/or damages as well as enter the receipt into the USDA, Integrated Food Management System (IFMS), reference IFMS operating manual, complete the weekly receipt log and maintain the documents in the proper receipt file.

The weekly receipt log will be completed and forwarded each week to the TFD Program Manager.

Multi Item Order Receipts:

1. Multi Orders are normally received bi-monthly, on a predetermined delivery schedule by site agreed upon between the FDP and the USDA contracted distributor on an annual delivery schedule.

2. When the order is delivered and prior to the seal being broken and the doors opened the receiving documents will be matched to the order status report to verify the item, sales order number, quantity and correct delivery destination.
3. A physical count will be made of the quantity received during unloading.
4. The Date of Pack/Best if Used by/Expiration Date of the item will be noted on the manifest.
5. If no shortage/overage or damage is noted the receiving documents will be noted with the start and finish time of the unloading, total units received, the reefer temperature if applicable, seal number and stated as intact if so or broken if not intact and signed and dated.
6. If there is a shortage/overage or damage noted at the time of unloading the driver will be requested to verify the count and any damage noted. The Warehouse Manager will be informed and may take pictures of the damage and will verify the shortage/overage and/or damage and notify the responsible trucking company and USDA Warehouse either by telephone or e-mail.
7. The FDP Food Delivery Services Supervisor or Office Coordinator will enter the receiving documents into WBSCM and report any overages/shortage and/or damages as well as enter the receipt into the USDA, Integrated Food Management System (IFMS), reference IFMS operating manual, complete the weekly receipt log and maintain the documents in the proper receipt file.

The weekly receipt log will be completed and forwarded each week to the TFD Program Manager.

Fresh Produce Order Receipts:

1. Fresh produce will normally be received weekly from the current USDA contracted vendor
2. When the truck arrives, the receiving documents provided by the driver will be verified to the original order for the destination and correct quantities shipped.
3. A physical count will be made of the quantity received and a check mark made on each item received.

4. A minimum of one case of each item will be opened and examined for quality and case unit count. If any discrepancies are noted the Program Manager will be notified and further examination made.
5. If no shortage/overage or damage is noted the receiving documents will be noted with the start and finish time of the unloading, the reefer temperature and signed and dated. If no copies are received a copy will be made for the driver and the original attached to the original order for file.
6. If there is a shortage/overage or damage noted at the time of unloading the Program Manager will be notified prior to taking any action or making any corrections to the receiving documents. The driver will be requested to verify the count and any damage noted. The Stock Clerks may take pictures of the damage and will verify the shortage/overage and notify the Program Manager. Any overage will be returned to the delivery truck for return to the vendor.
7. The Program Manager will notify the vendor of any shortage/damage and determine if a redelivery for replacement is possible.
8. If a replacement is to be made no changes will be made to the receiving document and normal receiving procedures noted in paragraph 5 above will be followed.
9. If no replacement can be made the receiving document quantities will be lined thru not scribbled out and the correct amount received noted. The TFD Program Manager will initial the correction and make a brief statement as to the reason, person contacted and sign and date below the statement.
10. Some items will have to be counted manually before entering into AIS. Once counted then the stock clerks will divide product amount by distribution rate for that item. Stock Clerk will turn in a total inventory count to the Food Delivery Services Supervisor or Office Coordinator, to be entered into AIS.
11. The Food Delivery Services Supervisor or Office Coordinator will enter the receiving documents into FFAVORS and report any overages/shortage and/or damages and print an edited order confirmation if required as well as enter the receipt into the USDA, Integrated Food Management System (IFMS), reference IFMS operating manual, complete the weekly receipt log and maintain the documents in the proper receipt file.

The weekly receipt log will be completed and forwarded each week to the Program Manager.

FOOD DISTRIBUTION PROGRAM

POLICY CHAPTER:	Warehouse Policy	CHAPTER#:	IV
SUBJECT:	Inventory Procedures	SECTION-SUBSECTION:	B

PURPOSE

To maintain 100 percent accountability of all commodities and to verify any overages, shortages or errors from receipt to storage and distribution.

POLICY

The Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians, Food Distribution Program (FDP) shall maintain the highest level of accountability of all USDA commodities during storage.

References: FNS Handbook 501, Chapter VII, Section 4, Inventory Control

PROCEDURE

FDP Warehouse and Distribution Center Monthly Inventory:

1. Preparation for the monthly physical inventory will begin prior to the actual inventory period by arranging, positioning and stocking items for ease of physically counting.
2. The TFD Program physical inventory will be conducted once monthly during the last working day of each month.
3. TFD Warehouse only: All perpetual inventory records will be reviewed and verified to the actual quantity (physical count) of cases on hand.
4. The physical inventory will be performed by the Tribal Food Distribution Stock Clerks and Food Delivery Services Supervisor. All items in storage will be physically counted by case and unit and entered on the monthly inventory worksheet packet.
5. After all items are counted the individual item entries on the physical inventory packet will be totaled and a grand total in units will be determined for each item.
6. The totals for each item from each inventory packet will be compared and any discrepancies in item totals will be marked with an “RC” in the left margin signifying a recount is necessary for that item. The math calculations will be checked for all items not matching and an “add” remark signifying an addition error will be noted below the “RC” if the reason for the team inventories not matching was a mathematical error. If no addition errors were made, a “phy” remark signifying a physical recount will be made below the “RC”.

7. After the Inventory Packets are compared, corrected and matched, the physical inventory will be compared to the “Book” inventory from the Integrated Food Management System (IFMS) FNS 152 report.
8. The difference between the physical and book inventory will be calculated to show a plus or minus level to the physical inventory. Every effort should be made by all staff to document the distribution of items correctly during the month. The most common errors are; not writing the item on the issuance in the correct spot or not at all, not documenting transfers and receipts, not verifying counts of items when received or transferred and writing the incorrect quantity on the issuance.
9. Any item exceeding a plus or minus (10) ten units from the AIS book count to the physical inventory will be cause for a recount.
10. The issuances and all documents involving the receipt, transfer or disposal of those items not matching will be reviewed for correctness.
11. All entries on the perpetual inventory record will be reviewed.
12. All possible causes of the error will be examined prior to forwarding the report to the FDP Manager. If no resolution for the error can be found or the difference is not able to be brought within a plus or minus of (10) ten units, the Food Delivery Services Supervisor will be notified and will inform the Food Distribution Representative to assist in determining the error.
13. The Food Delivery Services Supervisor or Office Coordinator will enter the physical inventory into the AIS following the guidelines contained in the AIS manual.
14. A final Distribution Center FNS 152 will be generated, signed and dated by Warehouse Manager and submitted with the monthly inventory packets.
15. The original physical inventory packets plus the original FNS 152 will be due to the Food Distribution Representative by the close of business (COB) on the last working day of each month.

FOOD DISTRIBUTION PROGRAM

POLICY CHAPTER:	Warehouse Policy	CHAPTER#:	IV
SUBJECT:	Refrigerated Storage Monitoring	SECTION-SUBSECTION:	C

PURPOSE

To ensure all products are maintained and monitored according to recommended storage conditions.

POLICY

The Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians Food Distribution Program will ensure all refrigerated items are maintained within the recommended temperature ranges for frozen, refrigerated and dry storage items accordingly and are monitored daily.

Reference: FNS Handbook 501, Chapter VII, Section 1, Warehousing of USDA Commodities

PROCEDURE

1. All Food Distribution Program facilities will be equipped with reliable, accurate reading thermometers in all areas where USDA products are stored. Assigned warehouse personnel will document the temperature of each area two times a day and record the results on the FDP Temperature Log (Attachment # 1 FDP Temperature Log). Each entry will reflect the temperature, time, date and initials of person checking the temperatures. If all areas are within recommended ranges no further action is necessary.

Frozen: Maintained at 0 degrees F and below or within 10 degrees F
Refrigerated (Chill): 35-45 degrees F.
Dry Storage: 68 degrees F.

2. If a reading is not within the recommended range the following action(s) will be followed:

Warehouse staff are not to attempt to perform any types of repairs but should be able to determine some information to determine the extent and nature of the problem.

- a) Note temperature and time on log and notify TFD Program Manager.
- b) Examine stored products. Determine if frozen foods are still frozen, refrigerated items are still cool to the touch.
- c) Determine if there has been any power outages. Examine breaker box for tripped switches. Reset if necessary.

Refrigerated Storage Monitoring (continued):

- d) Identify proper refrigeration unit. i.e. freezer unit, chill unit.
Observe unit: Is unit running?
Note any excessive ice buildup.
Examine unit to see if there is anything blocking the fins, i.e. grass buildup, dirt, plastic sucked up against the unit. Clean and remove debris if necessary.
 - e) If no readily identifiable problem is found the unit may be in defrost cycle. Continue to monitor unit and storage area to note any temperature changes for at least an hour. If unit begins running or temperature is noted as beginning to drop, continue to monitor until acceptable temperature is reached.
 - f) If after examining and monitoring the unit and storage area for a period of time and neither the recommended temperature has been reached or unit has not began to operate normally the Stock Clerk on duty will contact the TFD Manager to inform of the problem. The TFD Manager will then be tasked with contacting the EBCI Department of Facility Management. Facility Management Staff will determine if other repairman shall be called. The Program Manager will determine if product(s) need to be moved to another storage area or facility and will direct appropriate staff to assist if necessary.
 - g) Note actions taken and any information found on the TFD Temperature log and personnel contacted. Date and initial.
3. The TFD Stock Clerk will document all actions taken, any loss or damage and prepare a memo explaining the circumstances and/or description of the problem as determined by the refrigeration repair technicians and corrective repairs performed.
 4. The Environmental & Safety Manager will be contacted to request an inspection of any questionable product that shows evidence of thawing, bloody packages or loss of product integrity. All significant losses due to refrigeration malfunction will be verified in writing by the Environmental & Safety Manager.

All monthly temperature logs will be maintained together in a file by calendar year and maintained for a period of three (3) years for review.

FOOD DISTRIBUTION PROGRAM

POLICY CHAPTER:	Warehouse Policy	CHAPTER#:	IV
SUBJECT:	Field Site (Tailgate) Procedures	SECTION-SUBSECTION:	D

PURPOSE

To provide client services through the semi-tractor and trailer “tailgate” system. The purpose of the tailgate system is to allow clients who do not live close to the Cherokee Distribution Center the opportunity to once a month have a semi-tractor and trailer bring commodities to one of the field sites. A selection from all food groups is made available on the trucks but it is limited due to space constraints on the semi-trailers.

POLICY

The Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians, TFD program provides additional opportunities for client participation in the TFD by way of field sites, also referred to as tailgates. Currently the EBCI TFD has two (2) field sites; Robbinsville and Murphy.

PROCEDURES

1. The TFD Program provides a monthly calendar identifying the tailgate sites, dates and times to inform participants when the field site will be served in their area and they will have the opportunity to pick up their commodities.
2. Each month a “standard” load, in sufficient quantities based on participant history levels will be selected for offering on the tailgates during the month.
3. The standard will be made from items normally available at the Distribution Centers. Due to the limited space on the trailers all items cannot be made available for client selection each month but all food groups will be made available and each month a different variety will be selected for issue depending on inventory available.
4. The standard will be provided each month to the FDP Warehouse staff for staging in the warehouse. The selected items and quantities will be loaded in such a manner as to allow ease of pulling the clients selection and allow the warehouse staff at the site ample room to work inside the trailer.
5. Frozen and chill food items will be maintained at their required storage temperatures, reference temperature monitoring procedures, during transit and at the time of distribution.

Field Site (Tailgate) Procedures (continued):

6. All refrigerated items will be removed from the semi-trailers upon return from the field site and returned to the Cherokee Tribal Food Distribution Center for issue.
7. Prior to going to the site and after the completion of that days issuances a 100 percent inventory will be performed.
8. The inventory will be compared to the daily issuance for the site and any discrepancies in physical and daily end counts will be reconciled.
9. All damage will be collected and removed from the semi-trailer after each site and accounted for by listing on the TFD Warehouse Damage report, reference Damage Reporting procedures.
10. The Data Entry staff will be informed of items available for selection on the standard and assist clients at the site in completing their commodity selections.
11. The assigned Warehouse staff will pull and box items selected by the client and secure the clients signature on the issuance.
12. The issuances will be collected and turned into the Staff tasked with Data Entry for entering into the AIS system, reference AIS Data Entry Procedures.
13. After each site the standard load will be replenished and brought back to a “full” standard load or quantities determined necessary to serve the next site based on participation history levels.
14. All trash and debris will be maintained in a neat manner during the site operations and will be removed upon returning to the TFD Warehouse.
15. After all sites have been completed for the month, the remaining inventory will be removed from the trailer(s) and transferred back to the TFD Warehouse.
16. The remaining quantities will be received-in on the TFD Warehouse perpetual inventory record by item and trailer number. Reference Inventory Monitoring Procedures.
17. After all items have been removed the inside of the semi-trailers will be swept and washed prior to reloading.
18. During the course of the month, general spot cleaning will be performed as necessary to maintain the semi-trailers in a neat and clean manner.

FOOD DISTRIBUTION PROGRAM

POLICY CHAPTER:	Warehouse Policy	CHAPTER#:	IV
SUBJECT:	Damage/Loss/Shortage/ Overage Reporting	SECTION-SUBSECTION:	E

PURPOSE

To provide a means of accounting for any damage/loss/shortage or overage of food items.

POLICY

It is the policy of the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians Food Distribution Program to maintain the highest level of accountability for all food items throughout the receipt, storage and distribution process. In all areas of handling food products some damage and unavoidable loss is inevitable. To account for these occurrences these procedures will be followed to document the reason and cause if known to maintain inventory integrity and staff accountability.

References: FNS Handbook 501, Chpt. VI, Sect 2, Chpt. VII, Chpt. IX
FNS Instruction 410-1, Rev. 1, Non-Audit Claims- Food Dist. Program
FNS Instruction 709-5 Shipment and Receipt of Foods
Receipting for USDA Commodities, July 2001
(Multifood Shipments from USDA Warehouses)

PROCEDURE

A. Routine Daily Loss/Damage

During the course of daily operations it is inevitable that items may be damaged; by cutting with a box knife, by mechanical damage from a forklift/pallet jack, torn/opened by clients during shopping or by going out of date.

1. It is the responsibility of the Program Manager to ensure that all staff are aware of the cost and waste of excessive damages. If continued excessive damage is noted and can be related to a particular staff then further disciplinary action shall be enforced according to the *EBCI Personnel Policy and Procedures*.
2. Each Distribution Center will have a segregated area for the proper storage of their damage items and the Damage Report available in that area for ease of documenting items placed in the damage collection container.
3. All damage will be reported on the FDP Damage Report, ref. Attachment 1. and will be reported on the damage report at the time they are placed in the damage area.

A. Routine Daily Loss/Damage (continued)

4. Any individual item exceeding 20 units damaged at one time or collectively for the month will be explained on an FDP Inventory Monitoring Sheet, ref. attachment 2, and state the reason for the excessive damage.
5. If an item is within a month of expiration, then it will be donated to a program that can distribute the item before it expires.
6. All damaged items will be segregated by chill, frozen and dry. Damaged items will be noted and disposed of the day of the discovery of the damaged item. The stock clerk disposing the food shall document the disposal and notify the TFD program manager.
7. Prior to returning the damaged items staff will verify all items noted on the damage report are accounted for, quantities match and items are listed by correct AIS code. Staff will initial the appropriate block verifying they have checked the items and the report is complete and correct.
8. The Program Manager will review the damage report to be sure it is complete and correct and initial off on the report.
9. A copy of the damage report will be made and given to the Tribal Food Distribution Staff that oversees Data Entry for entering into the AIS, ref. AIS Operating Procedures. A copy of the damage report along with the inventory monitoring report if required will be maintained on file at the Distribution Center for record.
10. The original Damage Report and supporting documents will accompany any damage sent to the FDP Warehouse for disposal.
11. The FDP Warehouse will collect all damaged items from the Distribution Centers and transport them to the local landfill for disposal per Environmental Health disposal guidelines.

The Environmental Health and Safety Manager is required to periodically monitor disposal procedures and will contact the TFD Warehouse to arrange for accompanying the truck or meeting at the disposal site on the day of disposal. The TFD monthly damage report will be presented for signature to the Environmental Health and Safety Manager.

B. Receipt of Damage/Shortage/Overage Commodities (USDA Multi Line Item and Direct Order Receipts)

1. All damage, shortages and overages discovered on receipt of a USDA load will be reported on WBSCM, Report of Shipment Received Over, Short, and/or Damaged. See WBSCM on line instructions for entering the required information.
- 2.

**B. Receipt of Damage/Shortage/Overage Commodities
(USDA Mult Line Item and Direct Order Receipts (continued))**

2. Designated receiving personnel are to visually inspect all cases during unloading. Any cases found to have damage to the primary containers are to be opened and the contents examined to determine the extent of the damage. In some instances, the primary containers may be crumpled, dented, or torn but the individual boxes, bags, or cans may not be damaged. Since the order system is in cases only full case amounts can be reported.
3. If damage/shortage/overage is noted the Food Delivery Services Supervisor or Program Manager will ensure the receiving document is adjusted to show the actual quantity received in good condition and quantity received damaged/short/over is properly noted and initial the changes as well as the last page of the manifest provide a brief description of the cause and initial.
4. Unless otherwise directed all damage will be received-in and disposed of following normal disposal methods.
5. The driver may request a carrier's inspection report to be completed. In no instance will damaged commodities be released to the carrier without a written receipt for the items and authorization from USDA.
6. The Stock Clerk will inform the Food Delivery Services Supervisor of the condition and amounts noted and attempt to take pictures for inclusion in the Damage/Shortage/Overage report.

C. Concealed Shortage: Unopened Cases, Opened/Taped/Damaged Cases/Inner Pallet Shortages

1. Shortages found during the process of stocking and opening unopened cases will immediately be brought to the Program Managers attention. The Tribal Food Distribution Program Damage Report column, concealed shortages, will be used to account for any shortages of this nature. Isolated incidences may occur due to manufacturing packing error but any continued/excessive concealed shortages noted by staff need to be documented on an Inventory Monitoring report with appropriate information provided and continued monitoring.
2. Shortages noted that may be a result of theft and attempted to be hidden within pallets or from damaged cases that have been repaired will be accounted for on the concealed damage column as well to include additional documentation; pictures of the case(s), placement in the pallet, position of the cases on the pallet and will be provided to the USDA, KCCO for further investigation along with the inventory monitoring report to document the appropriate information.

D. Damage/Loss Due to Other Means and/or Exceeding \$250.00

Unforeseen large losses and damage may occur due to refrigeration breakdown, power outages, natural disaster and insect or rodent infestation. In any event the accountability of inventory is required.

1. The Tribal Food Distribution Program Manager will compile dates, times, circumstances and any information available and document the cause of the loss to the best of his/her ability.
2. The Food Delivery Services Supervisor will provide the Program Manager with a written report as to the nature of the loss, quantities, and corrective action taken if possible to prevent further loss. Reference FNS Handbook 501, Chpt.IX, for specific reporting requirements required by USDA and must be reported to USDA within 30 days of occurrence.

FOOD DISTRIBUTION PROGRAM

POLICY CHAPTER:	Warehouse Policy	CHAPTER#:	IV
SUBJECT:	Fresh Fruit and Vegetables Program	SECTION-SUBSECTION:	F

PURPOSE

To increase the nutritional benefit of the USDA commodity package by including the selection of fresh fruits and vegetables. Funding for the F,F,& V is provided by the Department of Defense (DoD). This funding is independent of the TFD Program annual budget and is monitored by the USDA, FNS, State Office. Funding is initially allocated by site and is dependent upon individual site participation levels for the total TFD Program budget.

POLICY

F, F, & V will be made available at all Distribution Centers and Field Sites. F, F, & V items will be ordered and received weekly to maintain the freshest product available.

References:

USDA Storage and Handling Guidelines
FFAVORS Instruction Manual

PROCEDURES

A. Weekly Orders:

1. The weekly orders (reference FDP Weekly Order Form) will be placed by to the TFD Program Manager each week an order is required no later than Friday, 12:00 noon.
2. The Food Delivery Services Supervisor will review all of the Food Distribution Center's orders for current inventory available, continual under ordering and items not being maintained in stock and over ordering and excessive items remaining in stock creating excessive damage and loss.

B. Storage, Handling, Reworking and Damage

1. F, F, & V items will be stored according to recommended storage practices for each item, reference USDA Storage and Handling Fact Sheets and USDA Storage and Handling Handouts.
2. Due to the variety of items received and the different recommended storage conditions for each item, an optimum temperature of 40 degrees will be maintained in the storage coolers.
3. Items can be stored in front, rear middle of cooler or lower and higher shelving to place them in a more optimum temperature range depending on space available and length of storage time.
4. Products will be rotated by date of receipt (FIFO) to ensure the oldest product is issued first.
4. F, F, & V items are to be handled in such a manner as to not create unnecessary bruising or damage. Items should be placed, not thrown, on shelving and in bins to prevent such damage. Products on the shelf, in bins and other containers will also be rotated as stocked to prevent older product from remaining on the bottom and fresher product being stocked on top of it.
5. F, F, & V is inherently susceptible to loss. To prevent or reduce losses, items should be reworked when a small amount of loss is noted. i.e. remove one bad apple to prevent the loss of the whole bag. Usually one bag may be used to replenish the ones removed from other bags when reworking and the one bag used to replenish the others will be noted on the FDP Damage report, ref. Damage/Loss reporting Procedures.
6. In the case of large losses notify the TFD Program Manager for further direction and possible replacement from the vendor.

FOOD DISTRIBUTION PROGRAM

POLICY CHAPTER:	Warehouse Policy	CHAPTER#:	IV
SUBJECT:	Mileage and Fuel Log Reporting	SECTION-SUBSECTION:	G

PROPOSE

To have proper documentation for miles traveled and funds spent on fuel.

POLICY

The Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians, FDP operates throughout the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians jurisdiction either by the operation of 1 Distribution Center, 2 field Sites, home deliveries, site inspections and other tribal requests. In the course of these duties the FDP will document and verify accurate accountability of mileage traveled and funds spent for fuel.

Ref: Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians, Finance and Accounting Office Procedures for GSA/Tribal Vehicle Conveyance reporting.

PROCEDURE

Mileage and Fuel Log Reporting

1. FDP staff assigned to drive for the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians FDP will be responsible for completion of the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians Trip Log Report to include documentation of the fuel, oil and other maintenance expenditures.
2. The Mileage Sheet report will be initiated prior to leaving the FDP truck yard by completing the date, time, beginning mileage (odometer reading), destination, purpose, the drivers signature and employee number.
3. Upon return the driver will complete the Trip Log report by completing the ending mileage (odometer reading).
6. The Food Delivery Service Supervisors is assigned a Fleet credit card for the FDP vehicles and they will be responsible for maintaining the card in a secure location. Staff using the GSA vehicles will check out and turn in a credit card with the vehicle key each time a vehicle is needed. All staff will be responsible for immediately reporting the loss or theft of a credit card to their supervisor.

Mileage and Fuel Log Reporting (continued)

5. All fuel, oil, or other maintenance items purchased with a credit card will be noted on the appropriate sections of the Mileage sheet, Vehicle Fuel and Maintenance Report and a signed receipt for the purchase will be turned in to the Food Distribution Representative upon returning to the TFD Warehouse for the FDP vehicles. GSA receipts will be maintained in the envelope with the trip log.
6. At the end of each month drivers will ensure all entries are completed and turn in the trip log reports and all receipts to the Program Manager for TFD and GSA vehicle mileage usage reporting.
7. The TFD Program Manager will review the trip logs for proper completion and total each trip log mileage and fuel usage for reconciliation to the fuel/maintenance receipts.
8. It is expected that the TFD program complies with all policy and procedures set forth by the EBCI Department of Finance regarding fiscal management and GSA WEX cards.

**EASTERN BAND OF CHEROKEE INDIANS
FOOD DISTRIBUTION PROGRAM
FOOD ORDERING POLICY**

FOOD DISTRIBUTION PROGRAM

POLICY CHAPTER:	Food Ordering Policy	CHAPTER#:	V
SUBJECT:	Multi Item /Warehouse Ordering	SECTION-SUBSECTION:	A

PURPOSE

To establish guidelines and procedures for ordering sufficient quantities of commodities to ensure product availability at all times to clients.

POLICY

To maintain a wide variety of commodities available to order from USDA in sufficient quantities to allow a continuous selection of all items throughout the month. The TFD Warehouse and Distribution Centers will order in sufficient quantity to prevent items from being out of stock yet maintain a continual rotation of items received to offer the freshest product available.

**References: FNS Handbook 501, Chapter. VI
USDA Electronic Commodity Ordering System Manual (ECOS)**

PROCEDURE

Multi Line Item Orders:

1. Multi Line Item orders are multiple item orders placed to a USDA contracted National Warehouse.
2. Multi Item orders will be placed in WBSCM by the 1st Wednesday of the Month. Multi Item orders are due in the WBSCM before the 18th day of the month prior to the delivery date.
3. Food Delivery Services Supervisor and the Food Distribution Representative will together determine the quantity of food ordered. The Food Delivery Services Supervisor will do an estimation of how many cases of each food item will be needed to serve 1,000 people, or more depending on participation increase, while accounting for each of that item currently in the warehouse inventory.
4. Multi Item orders will be based on maintaining a 1 to 1.5 month inventory level by item based on the Distribution Center monthly averages. Each month the Distribution Centers monthly issuances will be posted to the spreadsheet. Each time before an order is placed the physical inventory will be posted to the spreadsheet. The spreadsheet will automatically update projected inventories and quarterly issuance averages to determine current inventory levels and estimated quantities needed for future orders.

Multi Line Item Orders: (continued)

5. Multi Item orders will be placed in the WBSCM once the spreadsheet is completed and has been reviewed by the FDP Manager for current inventory levels, projected inventory with the order amounts placed and accuracy of the spreadsheet.
6. The FPD Manager is also assigned as the administrator and organization user in the WBSCM and may go into the WBSCM and make updates to site profiles, review and approve/reject orders, create and/or delete sites as needed.
7. Once the Multi Item order has been placed in WBSCM, the site will print an order conformation for that order. The Food Distribution Representative or Food Delivery Services Supervisor confirms that the order has been placed in WBSCM.
8. The Multi Order confirmation will be printed and verified for correct items, quantities and delivery period to the FDP order spreadsheet. The printed order confirmation will then be used for documentation and verification of receipting for the items upon delivery. (Ref. C.N. FDP, Receiving Procedures)

**EASTERN BAND OF CHEROKEE INDIANS
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EASTERN BAND OF CHEROKEE INDIANS

FOOD DISTRIBUTION PROGRAM

POLICIES AND PROCEDURES MANUAL

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