TO: DIRECTORS, LOCAL DEPARTMENTS OF SOCIAL SERVICES
DEPUTY/ASSISTANT DIRECTORS FOR FAMILY INVESTMENT
FAMILY INVESTMENT SUPERVISORS
HEARINGS AND APPEALS COORDINATORS

FROM: CHARLES E. HENRY, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

RE: DISQUALIFIED RECIPIENT SUB-SYSTEM AND VOICE RESPONSE
UNIT (DRS/VRU)

PROGRAM AFFECTED: FOOD STAMPS

ORIGINATING OFFICE: OFFICE OF POLICY, RESEARCH AND SYSTEMS

SUMMARY:
In the Food Stamp Program persons disqualified from participation for intentional program
violations (IPV) are subject to escalating penalties depending on the number of offenses
(up to permanent disqualification). Since the Food Stamp Program is national, the
penalties imposed by one state are valid in all states. So that states can track records and
determine appropriate penalty levels, FNS has a central database in which states enter
data. States can retrieve data directly from the database, called the Disqualified Recipient
Sub-system (DRS), or by telephoning the Voice Response Unit (VRU).

The Family Investment Administration has access to the DRS, maintains it through monthly
updates and uses it for inquiry. Local departments forward the Disqualified Recipient
Report FNS 524 or the Waiver to an Administrative Disqualification Hearing DHR OIG 7 to
Sherri Dyson-McCray in FiA’s Office of Policy, Research and Systems to implement
disqualification penalties for IPV’s. Ms Dyson-McCray enters the disqualification into the
DRS.

ACTION REQUIRED:
When the local department has reason to believe that an individual was disqualified in
another state, the local department must access the FNS database. Before taking
adverse action based on information obtained from DRS, the local department must again
contact the DRS/VRU to get details on contacting the state that submitted the data to the
DRS, and then contact the state to verify the information. Some local departments have staff who have DRS/VRU logonids and passwords and have signed an acknowledgement of responsibility memo. Those staff may call the VRU directly. Other local departments may access the DRS/VRU by calling the State Security Officer, Sherri Dyson-McCray, at 410-767-7035. If Ms Dyson-McCray is not available, you may call Monice Butler at 410-767-7884 or Myrth Smothers at 410-767-7675 in the Office of the Inspector General, who also have access to the DRS/VRU.

If you would like a member of your staff to have direct VRU access, please complete the attached FCS Computer System Access Request FCS-674 and send it to Ms Dyson-McCray at 311 W. Saratoga Street, Room 645, Baltimore, MD 21201. She will arrange with FNS for a logonid and password for your staff, send an acknowledgement of responsibility memo (sample attached) for the staff member to sign and a copy of the VRU User’s Guide.

**ACTION DUE:**
Immediately.

**INQUIRIES:**
If you have questions about accessing the DRS/VRU, please call Sherri Dyson-McCray at 410-767-7035. If you need training on the DRS/VRU, please call Rosemary Malone at 410-767-7949.

c: DHR Executive Staff
   FIA Management Staff
   Constituent Services
   Help Desk
   CTF