

DEPARTAMENTO DE LA
FAMILIA

ADMINISTRACIÓN DE
DESARROLLO
SOCIOECONOMICO
DE LA FAMILIA



NAP State Plan of Operations

FY 2022



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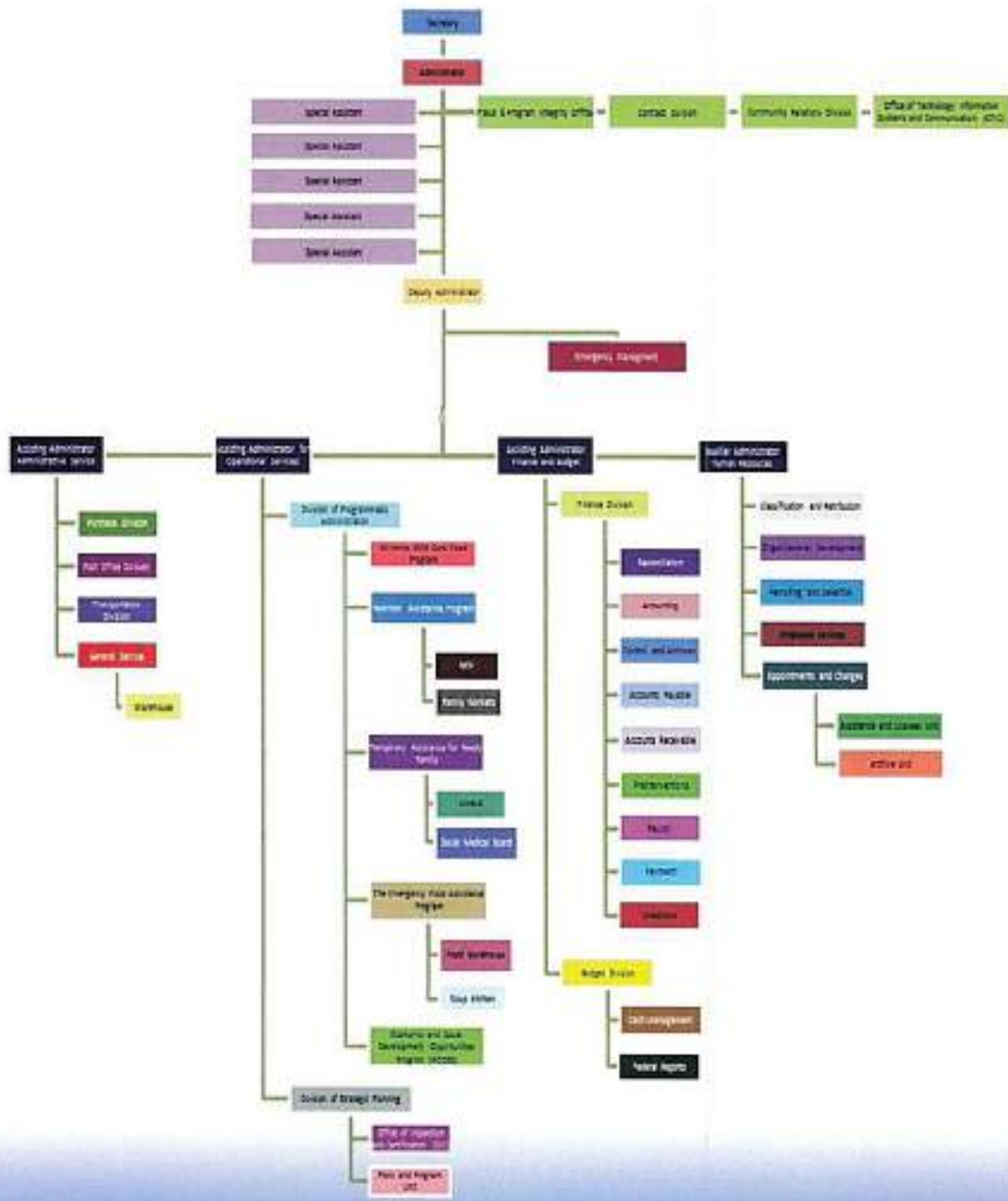
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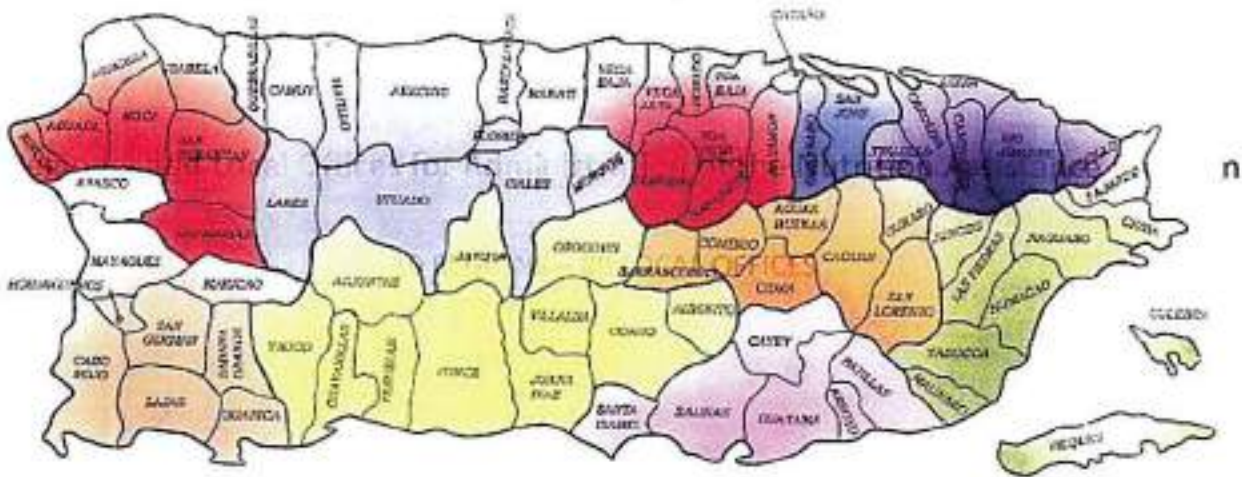
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Organizational Chart





ADSEF REGIONS & LOCAL OFFICES



Aguacilla	Arecibo	Bayamón	Caguas	Carolina
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Aguada Aguadilla I Aguadilla II Isabela Las Marias Moca Rincón San Sebastián 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Arecibo I Arecibo III Barceloneta Camuy Ciales Florida Hatillo Lares Manatí Morovis Quebradillas Utuado I Utuado II 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bayamón II Bayamón III Cataño Corozal Dorado Naranjito Toa Alta Toa Baja I Toa Baja II Vega Alta Vega Baja I 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Aguas Buenas Barranquitas Caguas I Cidra Comerio Gurabo San Lorenzo 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Caróvanas Carolina Loiza Luquillo Río Grande I Trujillo Alto I
Guayama	Humacao	Mayaguez	Ponce	San Juan
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Arroyo Cayey Guayama Patillas Salinas Santa Isabel 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ceiba Culebra Fajardo Humacao Juncos I Las Piedras Maunabo Naguabo Vieques Yabucoa 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Añasco Cabo Rojo Guánica Hormigueros Lajas Maricao Mayagüez I Mayagüez II Sibana Grande San Germán 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adjuntas Aibonito Castañer Coamo Guayanilla Jayuya Juana Díaz Orocovis Peñuelas Ponce I Ponce II Ponce III Villalba Yauco 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Guaynabo I Guaynabo II Río Piedras I Río Piedras II Río Piedras III Río Piedras IV San Juan I



SPO NAP 2022

III. Designation of State Agency

The former Puerto Rico Department of Social Services (P.L. 171, of June 30th, 1968, as amended) was reorganized on July 27th, 1995, becoming the Department of the Family as established in the agency's Administrative Reorganization Plan 1. As part of the reorganization the agency was separated in four (4) administrations which grouped all the social services and programs.

The Administration for the Socioeconomic Development of the Family (ADSEF) is one of the four administrations within the Department of the Family responsible of administering all Puerto Rico's federal and state welfare programs. ADSEF has eighty-nine local offices (at least 1 in each municipality and shares 10 Regional offices with the other three (3) administrations.

Therefore, the State Agency responsible for the administration of Puerto Rico's Nutrition Assistance Program (NAP) is ADSEF, refer to below for agency's information:

Department of the Family

Administration for Socioeconomic Development of Family (ADSEF)

Physical address:

Capitol Office Building
800 Ponce de Leon Avenue – 9th Floor,
San Juan, Puerto Rico

Telephone numbers:

(787) 289-7600, extensions: 2433, 2314
or (787) 289-7651

Mailing address:

Administration for Socioeconomic Development of Family (ADSEF)
PO Box 8000
San Juan, P. R. 00910-0800

IV. Executive Summary

Since September 20th 2017, Puerto Rico's need for Nutrition Assistance has change significantly. The urge of families and individuals for basic necessities have increased, as a result of a series of events that have affected Puerto Rican's social and economic wellbeing during the last four (4) years.

Two (2) Hurricanes (Irma and Maria) in September 2017, several earthquakes that impacted the south region of the Island in January 2020, and a seventeen (17) month deadly COVID 19 pandemic that has stricken families from al social-economic levels, are responsible of the increase in unemployment, homelessness and welfare needs benefits needs.

Consequently, ADSEF's 2022 State Plan of Operations will include innovative strategies that aim to address eligible families and individual's need for food assistance, as well as work experiences and training opportunities, among others; according with the allocation, distribution and administration of the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) funding requirements. The document here within will describe some of Puerto Rico's economic characteristics and trends data; such as the unemployment rate, personal and family income distribution, NAP participant's socioeconomic-demographic characteristics, and families' basic cost of living. In addition, to Puerto Rico's need for distributing nutrition assistance benefits.

Furthermore, the FY 2022 SPO includes the description of all the strategies that will be implemented in order to provide eligible NAP participants reliable, prompt and innovative services.



SPO NAP 2022

IV. Executive Summary (cont.-)

The Department of the Family will continue implementing the Family Markets during fiscal year 2022, by extending the collaborative agreement between ADSEF, the Department of Agriculture, and the Administration for Agricultural Businesses Development (ADEA). ADSEF proposes for this FY 2022 to increase the NAP Family Markets set aside funds to give participants more opportunities to purchase healthy foods.

Also, ADSEF will continue to strengthen and improve the Programmatic Integrity Division (DIP, Spanish acronym) at headquarters and regional offices. The agency's legal affairs Office is responsible for monitoring the EBT retailers' transactions and redemptions by using the data warehouse as one of the tools to identify and prevent fraud, analyze, and process possible participants program violations complaints in coordination with local and regional offices. This office investigates possible Intentional Program Violations (IPV), claims, and collections that result from an investigation.

IV. Executive Summary (cont.-)

The Technology and Information Office (OTI) will continue working to improve and innovative services and case management. ADSEF has revised and modified the participants **re-certification and certification processes** transitioning to a virtual mode.

ADSEF will continue improving the recently developed **online** page which allows participants to apply for benefits through an online application. This system will include coordinated appointments through the **TURNOS.PR** application which will give access to request appointments, and report household's changes, among others.

ADSEF has started the planning process to implement the **Work Requirement**. During this FY 2022-SPO will continue working with FNS to provide the necessary trainings to the personnel, identify eligible and able participants for the work requirement, and develop work opportunities in collaboration with state agencies, non for profits and municipalities.

Another project that ADSEF proposes for this FY 2022 SPO is to develop the **PR NAP-Online Purchases Project**. This will provide access to NAP participants to purchase groceries online using their NAP EBT card.

Additionally, ADSEF will continue with the implementation of a permanente **call center** which will facilitate NAP participants' access to a program technician to respond to any questions, doubts or specif inquiries.

ADSEF will continue the process of developing the RFP for selecting an EBT provider.

IV. Executive Summary (cont.-)

ADSEF has established the following Memorandum of Understandings (MOU) with Federal and State agencies to collaborate with NAP's implementation in Puerto Rico.

MOU's Pending to be signed	Current Signed MOU's
Social Security Administration	PR Department of Commerce
Puerto Rico Labor	ASUME
Puerto Rico Department of Education	Department of Agriculture
PR Municipalities Revenue Collection Center	Demographic Local Registry

V. Statement of Goals and Objectives

The Food Stamp Act of 1977, as amended, and the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009, authorizes payments to the Government of Puerto Rico for the NAP which is designed to promote the general welfare and safeguard the health and wellbeing of the Nation's population by raising the levels of nutrition among low income-households. The Government of Puerto Rico authorizes the Department of the Family through ADSEF, to implement the NAP.






The mission of the Department of Family is to improve the overall health and well-being of our children and families, facilitate self-management and auto-sufficiency of individuals, families, and communities, and promote strengthening, with sensitivity and respect for their needs and aspirations for development.

The Department of the Family's fundamental commitments are:

1. Family Violence Prevention, particularly children and adolescents' abuse.
2. Strengthening families and preventing child abuse and neglect
3. Protecting children when abuse or neglect has occurred
4. Ensuring that every child and youth has a permanent family or family connection.
5. Safety—Preventing and responding to child abuse.
6. Permanency—Stabilizing children's living situations and preserving family relationships and connections.
7. Well-Being—Enhancing families' capacity to meet their children's physical, mental health, and educational needs.
8. Support families to promote self-reliance and development.
9. Dignifying life for seniors and people with special needs.
10. Empower individuals, families, and communities.
11. Support homeless.
12. Developing opportunities for women heads of family and domestic violence survivors.
13. Developing transparency in management of all finances.
14. Using technology for efficiency and effectiveness of processes and services given to the community.
15. Promoting fair and adequate alimony.
16. Making a fair Puerto Rico with equal opportunities for all.

V. Statement of Goals and Objectives (cont-)

ADSEF **vision** is to help low-income families/individuals improve their quality of life and access to social justice. The agency's **mission** is to provide social and economic development opportunities to disadvantaged families by providing them opportunities to achieve society's self-sufficiency and integration. The following is the list of ADSEF's priorities:

-  Battle childhood maltreatment.
-  Achieve solidary socioeconomic development.
-  Promote family support networks and community living.
-  Develop human resources to increase auto sufficiency.
-  Offer agile and efficient services to the community.

Due to the COVID-19 Pandemic ADSEF has been forced to modify and re-structure NAP participants' services by developing interactive tools and online-virtual services to achieve the goals traced.

For NAP SOP FY 2022, ADSEF has established the following goals:

1. Complete the restructuring of the administration's **on-line services tools** for providing NAP participants/applicants program benefits and services.
2. Increase NAP participants **Family Market's** set aside from 4% to 6% due to the monthly adjustment.
3. Continue with the **Workforce Requirement's** Implementation process.
4. Make permanent the ADSEF **Call Center** established under Pandemic EBT and ARP funds and extend it to NAP participants.

V. Statement of Goals and Objectives (cont-)

6. Continue with the implementation of **TURNOS.PR**
7. Implement the new participants' **certification and re-certification** process.
8. Encourage eligible food retailers to Implement the **NAP online purchases system**.
9. Complete **EBT RFP** and start competition process.
10. Complete **NAP technology Assessment**.
11. Start NAP participants case files **digitalization**.
12. Continue to expand the **Nutrition Education Program (NEP) Plan**
13. Reach the Measurement of Efforts and Results System (MER) goal, on annual reports' error rate as required by FNS.
14. Develop outreach campaign to inform participants on new benefits, changes on their benefits, new and current services, re-certification and certification processes, Family Markets, and other NAP related issues.

VI. Needs Assessment & Current Statistics

A. Puerto Rico's Economic Situation

The impact of a series of atmospheric and other events have had an enormous impact on the economy in Puerto Rico for almost a decade. However, this past year (2020) was critical for our economy, by significantly increasing the poverty levels in the Island, as consequence of the COVID 19 Pandemic.

Since the summer of 2005, Puerto Rico's economy has been experiencing a significant slowdown for job's creation, economic activities, housing, and trades. The origins of this recession started with the constant increase on oil prices, reduced personal consumption and the financial and fiscal adjustments implemented by the Financial Oversight and Management Board (FOMB) to reduce the public debt, a notable deterioration in the labor market, and a hold on the construction activity due to the COVID 19 pandemic.

One of the greatest challenges of our local economy has always been the labor market. When Puerto Rico started to project signs of a modest fiscal recovery, the COVID-19 Pandemic impacts all sector by slow down the small and medium businesses, big retailers, local and state governments, and self-employed individuals. During year 2020, **Colmena66** conducted a poll in Puerto Rico in which concluded that 57% of business in Puerto Rico had to closed temporarily due to COVID 19, 10% started operating virtually, 3% closed permanently and other 3% was on the verge of closing. In addition, from a total of four thousand (4,000) restaurants 50% were expected to close due to the pandemic.

Regarding **unemployment rate** in Puerto Rico, the Department of Labor's most recent statistics reported an 8.1% for June 2021. This represents 0.3 less than June 2020 which reached an 8.4% unemployment rate.



VI. Needs Assessment & Current Statistics(cont.-)

In terms of Puerto Rico's population, statistics reflect a constant decrease for the last eight (8) years. The table below demonstrates the total population from year 2014 until 2021. The difference in population between year 2020 and 2021 is of 4,143. However, if we compare year 2017 with 2021, the difference is of 330,127 people (refer to table below).

PUERTO RICO'S POPULATION HISTORY YEAR 2014 -2021		
Year	Total Population	Difference
2014	3,478,560	-1.18 %
2015	3,417,293	-1.76 %
2016	3,332,048	-2.49 %
2017	3,222,908	-3.28 %
2018	3,101,127	-3.78 %
2019	2,986,065	-3.71 %
2020	2,896,924	-2.99 %
2021	2,892,781	-0.14 %

There are several reasons that have contributed to this significant migration:

High unemployment rate

Less economic assistance when compared with the rest of the states or territories

Government's Bankruptcy

Fiscal Oversight and Management Board

Hurricane Maria 2017 and other natural disasters occurred afterwards

COVID 19 Pandemic

VI. Needs Assessment & Current Statistics (cont.-)

B. Population & Poverty

Puerto Rico's high poverty index and its challenging financial situation have a direct impact on NAP's goal of reducing hunger and increasing food security by providing low-moderate income individuals and working families access to food and a healthy diet. NAP provides benefits to Puerto Rico's needy residents so they can manage their nutritional needs.

The NAP 2022 SPO establishes participants' basic needs and criteria for the nutrition assistance funds distribution and administration. The Plan describes the Government's policies and general procedures used to determine eligibility, benefits distribution and calculation methods, organization, and administrative control systems for the operation and administration of an effective program. Most of the eligibility requirements, fully described in this SPO are validated through the Automated Case Management System (SAIC, Spanish acronym). This substantially improves, the quality of the eligibility determination process, therefore, reducing the percent of errors and fraud.

Puerto Rico has as land and water area of only 13,790 km² (5,324 square miles), a coastline of 501 km (311 miles) and a population of approximately **2,892,781** (Census – Annual Estimates for 2021). This is broken down as 47.5% are men and 52.5% are women. From these 17.9% are under 18 years old and 21.3% of the population is over 65 years old. The population density reflects 323 people per square kilometer. Puerto Rico's population density is among the ten (10) highest in the United States, above states such as Florida and New York. Current estimates show a decrease of more than eighteen percent (18%) of the population. For more than 50 years, Puerto Ricans have been migrating mostly to the United States due to the economic situation and the lack of work, among other reasons.

Forty-nine percent (**49%**) of Puerto Rico's population is currently receiving NAP benefits. This reflects an almost **three (3%)** percent more than last year 2020. From this number, ninety point five per cent (**90.5%**) of females' head of families depend on TANF and NAP benefits as their main sources of income.

VI. Needs Assessment & Current Statistics (cont.-)

B. Population & Poverty

This increase on NAP participants respond to what experts and aid groups have expressed in the past, that families living below the poverty level would increase over the next few years. The main reason for this increase is the COVID 19 pandemic, which started affecting the Island in March 2020. When we compare Puerto Rico with the Nation's poorest states, Puerto Rico is classified as the poorest.

Puerto Rican families, living under poverty levels, have **less** than a four hundred eighty dollars (**\$480.00**) monthly income, including government's support. States and territories comparison table below.

Persons in Family or Household	48 Contiguous States, D.C., Guam & Virgin Island	Alaska	Hawaii
1	\$12,880	\$16,090	\$14,820
2	\$17,420	\$21,770	\$20,040
3	\$21,960	\$27,450	\$25,260
4	\$26,500	\$33,130	\$30,480
5	\$31,040	\$38,810	\$35,700
6	\$35,580	\$44,490	\$40,920
7	\$40,120	\$50,170	\$46,140
8	\$44,660	\$55,850	\$51,360
For each additional person add:	\$4,540	\$5,680	\$5,220

① [Table above reflects HHS Poverty Levels as of February 2021]

The maximum NAP allotment for an individual in Puerto Rico is \$112.00 monthly. For each family member 60 years old and over, they receive an additional 20% in benefits up to the maximum allotment per month, which adds to \$134.00. Participants might receive a slight increase in benefits per month, depending on the monthly percentage adjustment.



VI. Needs Assessment & Current Statistics (cont.-)

C. Economic Perspective

Puerto Rico continues to face increasing economic pressures. A weak labor market together with fiscal constraints, remain the main causes affecting the local economy recovery. However, the devastation caused by Hurricanes Irma and María, the several earthquakes which stroked the Islands' south region, several tropical storms and the COVID-19 Pandemic has given us the opportunity to redesign major components of the Island's critical infrastructure, invest in the quality and resiliency of public and private buildings, restructure and modernize systems and reevaluate service delivery.

Main objectives are:

1. Develop and protect human capital.
2. Correct structural issues, bolster economic growth efforts, and utilize areas of opportunity.
3. Improve Puerto Rico's competitiveness through less regulation, energy reform and other various structural reforms.
4. Position Puerto Rico as a global investment destination.
5. Upgrade policies of public private partnership investment in energy, water, waste management, and other infrastructure projects.
6. Increase labor force flexibility and create high quality jobs.
7. Develop a safe, educated, healthy and sustainable society.

Employment – As of June 2021 the number of employed individuals reported by the Puerto Rico Department of Labor and Human Resources (PR-DLHR) totaled **980,000**. In comparison with June 2020, which revealed that **971,000** individuals were employed, representing an increase of **nine thousand (9,000)** individuals more employed for June 2021. When we contrast June 2021 with May 2021, the total of employed individuals were **978,000**, this represents an increase of 2,000 people in a thirty (30) days period.

VI. Needs Assessment & Current Statistics (cont.-)

C. Economic Perspective

Self-Employment - The Puerto Rico Department of Labor and Human Resources (PR-DLHR) informed that the seasonally adjusted estimate for self employed individuals as of June 2021, was 170,000 versus **177,000 reported on June 2020**.

Unemployment- The PR-DLHR informed that seasonally adjusted estimate for unemployed individuals as of for June 2021 was **86,000** versus 87,000 in May 2021 (1,000 less) and 88,000 in June 2020, which represented 2,000 less than June 2021.

D. Nutrition Assistance Program Participants

Number of average household units, household members, and monthly benefits per household for FY 2011 to 2020 from the ADSEF

Federal FY	Number of Household Units (Thousands)	Household Members (Millions)	Average Monthly benefits Per Household
2021	854	1,528	\$191.13
2020	759	1,378	\$293.91
2019	723	1,329	\$296.32
2018	692	1,287	\$253.65
2017	659	1,257	\$238.61
2016	666	1,289	\$238.24
2015	669	1,324	\$225.38
2014	668	1,348	\$221.05
2013	666	1,390	\$240.26
2012	664	1,375	\$237.99
2011	644	1,353	\$246.73



VI. Needs Assessment & Current Statistics

C. Nutrition Assistance Participants (cont.-)

Nutrition Assistance Program Monthly Participation and Benefits FY 2021

Month	Household Unit	Household Members	Benefits
October, 2020	840,226	1,509,717	\$158,319,103.86
November 2020	841,267	1,510,148	\$167,033,632.78
December 2020	844,455	1,514,506	\$157,156,490.80
January 2021	847,753	1,518,932	\$159,498,701.40
February 2021	851,531	1,524,257	\$164,511,521.27
March 2021	856,684	1,532,293	\$161,619,093.61
April 2021	861,256	1,538,646	\$164,306,236.27
May 2021	865,267	1,543,852	\$165,765,465.41
June 2021	867,743	1,546,594	\$165,118,862.74
July 2021	866,847	1,544,688	\$169,523,863.08

VI. Needs Assessment & Current Statistics

D. Nutrition Assistance Participants (cont.-)

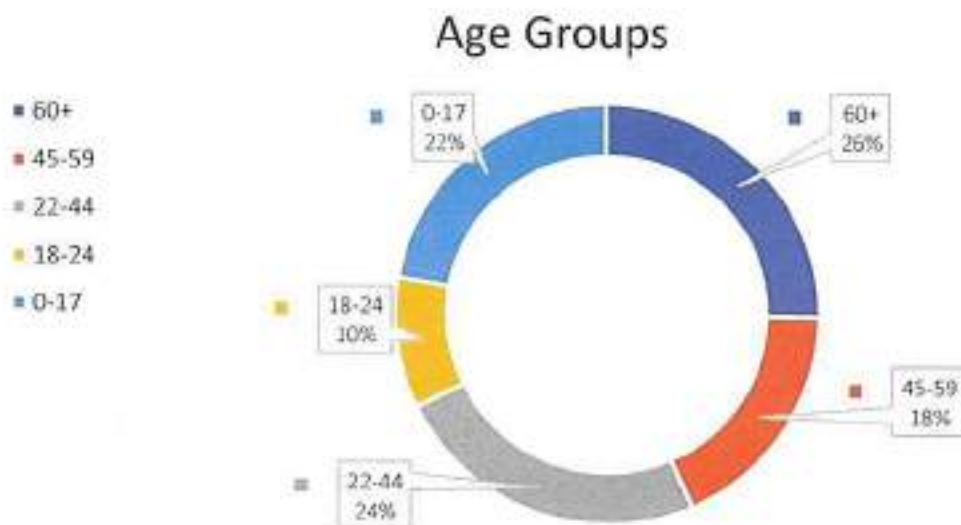
Average of NAP Participants and Households FY 2020 (October 2020 to July 2021)

Households	Individuals	Benefits
866,847	1,544,688	\$1,632,852,971*

*Includes COVID 19 emergency funds

FY 2021 – July 2021 of NAP Participants by Age Groups

22% or 345,333 of NAP participants that received benefits during July 2021 are between ages 0 to 17, being this the highest percentage per age group. The other age groups are 18 to 24 with 10% (160,689), ages 25 to 44 with 24% (378,234), ages 45 to 59 with 18% (274,485), and ages 60 or older with 25% (391,197).



VI. Needs Assessment & Current Statistics

D. Nutrition Assistance Participants (cont.-)

July 2021 NAP Participants 60 years and over

By Gender

- Females
- Males



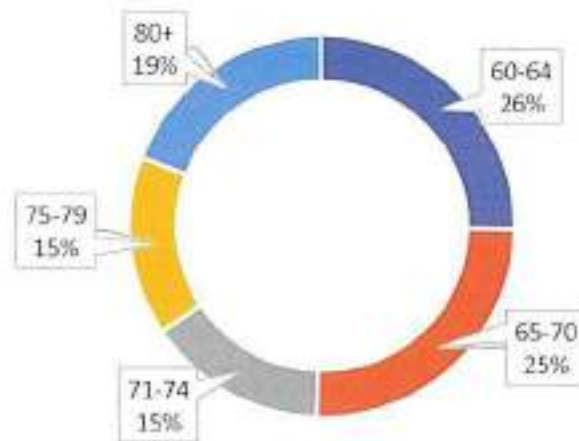
During July 2021, of 25 % or 96,476 of NAP participants that receive benefits are between the ages 60-64 . The other age groups over 60 years are: ages 65 to 70 with 25% (99,468), being the highest percentage age group in the 60 years and over category. 71 to 74 with 15% (60,221), 75 to 79 with 15% (60,584) and 80 and over with 19% (74,458).

VI. Needs Assessment & Current Statistics

D. Nutrition Assistance Participants (cont.-)

60 years & Over

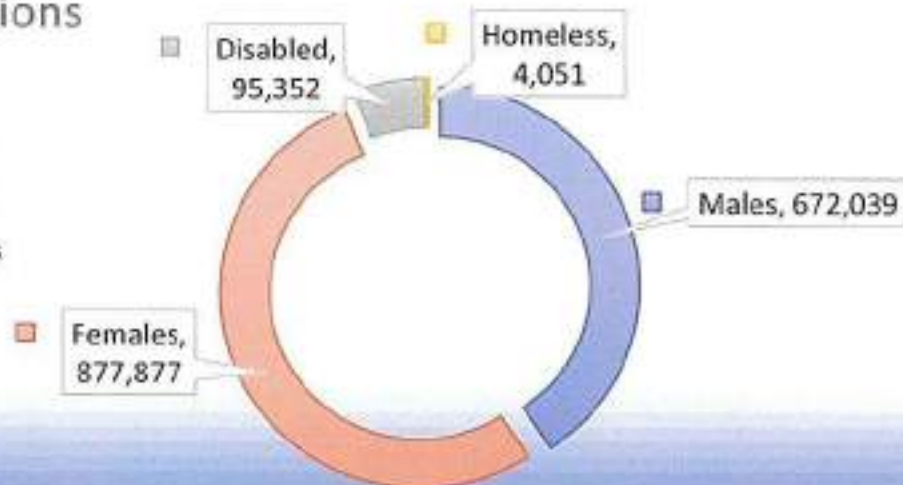
- 60-64
- 65-70
- 71-74
- 75-79
- 80+



During July 2021, 43.4% or 672,039 of participants were male and 56.6% or 877,877 were females; 95,352 were disabled and 4,051 were homeless NAP participants.

Populations

- Males
- Females
- Disabled
- Homeless





VII. Criteria for Funds Distribution

To determine if a participant is eligible for receiving NAP benefits, local offices are using the agency's online system. The following information is an overview of the eligibility process. The Regulation No. 8684, dated December 28, 2015 - Rules for Determining the Eligibility of Applicants and Participants for the NAP is currently under review.








Criteria for funding distribution includes the following:

1. Eligibility Requirements
2. Regular Distribution Method
3. Benefit Calculation Method

Requirements for eligibility are determined mainly by participants' income level and resources with slight variations aimed at simplifying eligibility requirements and reducing fraud as much as possible. Eligibility parameters are determined through the SAIC. The specific eligibility requirements are described below.

1. Eligibility Requirements

a. Non-Financial Requirements

-  Verification of identity
-  Resident of Puerto Rico
-  Form "Authorization for Require the Release of Information"
-  Citizen of the United States or eligible alien
-  Verification of alien status
-  # Verification of Social Security Number of all members of household
-  Enrolled in School or participation in the homeschooling System (5 to 17 years of age).



VII. Criteria for Funds Distribution

Eligibility Requirements (cont.-)

b. Financial Requirements

Financial eligibility for NAP benefits is based on the household size and net income. Income deductions to which the household is entitled are applied before final benefit determination, in accordance with Regulation No. 8684. On September 2018, ADSEF began to apply special deductions to unemployment income and earned income, also applied 50% for retirement, veterans, and Social Security, as approved on August 2018 by FNS.

SOURCE	DEDUCTIONS
Earned Income: Wages/Salaries/Trainings/ Self-employment/ unemployed	50% up to \$700 (new october2021) or Fixed \$100 if 50% is less than \$100
Income from agriculture (bonafide farmers and farm workers)	\$760
Income from approved products during harvest (coffee, tomatoes, plantains, bananas, green bananas, cassava, orange, watermelon, mango and pineapple)	100% of income
Retirements and Social Security: Retirement, Veterans, Social Security	50%
Other Income: Pensions (Child Support, Retirement, veterans, Social Security, Unemployment) Assistance from relatives and friends	\$100

VII. Criteria for Funds Distribution

Eligibility Requirements (cont.-)

b. Financial Requirements

On FY 2015, ADSEF began evaluating college students that depend economically on a parent(s) 60 + years or disabled as independent for NAP benefits. This was approved by FNS on September 1, 2015.

c. Special Deductions

SOURCE	DEDUCTION
Student	\$100
Dependent for each child 2 years or less	\$225
Dependent: each child / adult 2 or older	\$200
Elderly (60 years and older)	\$100*
Totally Disabled	\$100*
Recurrent Medical Expenses (Elder and/or Disabled or Children)	\$100
Terminally ill	\$100
Standard Deduction	\$100

* Cannot take both Elderly and Disabled deductions



VII. Criteria for Funds Distribution

Eligibility Requirements (cont.-)

d. Resources

The maximum allowable resources for a household is **\$5,000** except for households with a 60-year-old or more member, in which that case can go up to **\$15,000**. Disability benefits under the Social Security Act, Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) or disability retirement benefits from a governmental agency will not be included for eligibility determination purposes.

Maximum Monthly Net Income by Household Size (effective date October 2021).

Household Size	Income limit	Max benefit (current)	Max benefit 48 states and DC
1	\$ 619	\$ 140	\$ 250
2	\$ 1,179	\$ 257	\$ 459
3	\$ 1,706	\$ 368	\$ 658
4	\$ 2,206	\$ 468	\$ 835
5	\$ 2,666	\$ 556	\$ 992
6	\$ 3,199	\$ 666	\$ 1,190
7	\$ 3,599	\$ 737	\$ 1,316
8	\$ 4,112	\$ 842	\$ 1,504
9	\$ 4,632	\$ 948	\$ 1,692
10	\$ 5,152	\$ 1,053	\$ 1,880
11	\$ 5,666	\$ 1,158	\$ 2,068
12	\$ 6,186	\$ 1,263	\$ 2,256
13	\$ 6,699	\$ 1,369	\$ 2,444
14	\$ 7,219	\$ 1,474	\$ 2,632
15	\$ 7,732	\$ 1,579	\$ 2,820
16	\$ 8,252	\$ 1,684	\$ 3,008
17	\$ 8,766	\$ 1,790	\$ 3,196
18	\$ 9,286	\$ 1,895	\$ 3,384

add by each
elderly \$ 28.00

• Maximum benefits reflect 23% increase recently approved by USDA

VII. Criteria for Funds Distribution

2. INCOME ELIGIBILITY

Electronic Benefits are issued once a month and distributed in a staggered manner between the 4th and 22nd of the month, according to the last digit of the participants' Social Security Number. The 100% of benefits are issued for eligible food purchases and they are assigned according to the Table of Benefits.

- a. A cut-off date is established for the local offices by the Office of Technology Information (OTI) to process benefits issuance for the next month.
- b. OTI executes the programs to obtain the total monthly number of eligible households, persons, benefits, retroactive payments, and claims deductions. This program also calculates the 20% increase for the elderly persons (60 years and older).

3. BENEFIT CALCULATION METHOD

The method for calculating benefits under the NAP takes into consideration the number of household unit members and their net income. The method is as follows:

Income eligibility criteria: Net income is used to determine eligibility of all household units. If the household monthly net income is less than or equal to the established limits, the benefits corresponding to the household unit is determined.

As approved by FNS the schedule exemption of income for NAP recipients who start a new job has been extended. Their schedule of benefit is now for 18 months as follows:

- Gross income exemption months 1-6 = 100%
- Gross income exemption months 7-12 = 66%
- Gross income exemption months 13-18 = 33%

VII. Criteria for Funds Distribution

3. BENEFIT CALCULATION METHOD (cont.-)

In addition, NAP participants receive monthly benefit adjustments, according to ADSEF's monthly distribution system. NAP participants benefits increase (percentage adjustment) is based on the amount of funds available to be distributed monthly, according to the approved budget (available funds), minus the monthly benefits total authorized, according to the information provided by OTI (benefits issued). The total is divided between the participant's monthly benefits. ADSEF established the percentage adjustment as a method to distribute any NAP carryovers among all the participants. This process is made monthly, and it is subject to the availability of funds.

The 4% that is set aside from participant's benefits in their EBT cards hail from the monthly increase percentage amount. If the final numbers do not total the 4% portion, the entire amount available will be part of the Family Markets and it will not have an increase on their regular benefits like the regular monthly adjustment.

4. CERTIFICATION PROCESS

A. REGULAR

ADSEF certification process was designed to facilitate NAP participants Access to apply for benefits, request changes on household's composition through the government's webpage servicios.pr.gov This change allows ADSEF local offices to provide virtual services. In order to develop these guidelines, the agency established a digital platform system integrating **TURNOS PR** and **Microsoft Teams** applications, which are complemented with the SAIC and EBT systems.



VII. Criteria for Funds Distribution

4. CERTIFICATION PROCESS (cont.)

Through this platform participants will be able to change their postal address, generate voluntary program closeouts, report moving to other state or territory, participant's death through a representative. Since July 2021 we have staff assigned to our local offices running system tests and identifying faults, gaps and any other aspects that need changes and improvements. Due to system technical hitches during the development and testing stages to synchronize the different applications and be able to start the new recertification process KPG staff has been located at our headquarters to correct and perform tests with our staff. We have been constantly testing different scenarios to ensure that the systems are ready to go. However, we have still found some flaws in the processes, that are currently being fixed while testing and trainings are being carried out. On July 20, 2021, ADSEF presented the new certification process to all regional and associate directors, and staff from these offices.

Regional offices trainings started on August 13, 2021 (See Training Calendar). ADSEF will start the certification process for the following 10 local offices on October 2021: Isabela, Hatillo, Bayamón II, Caguas, Luquillo, Santa Isabel, Yabucoa, Sabana Grande, Aibonito, Rio Piedras I.

The second group will be: Rincón, Camuy, Toa Alta, Cidra, Canóvanas, Cayey, Las Piedras, Mayagüez I y II y Ponce.

To carry continue providing NAP participants services during the pandemic, ADSEF had to purchase new technology equipment for all its staff. The equipment delivery was delayed because of factory problems due to the COVID 19 pandemic. Once it arrived the equipment was installed, and the staff was trained.

A work plan was developed to integrate systems and software into all computer equipment. Operation manuals were developed to incorporate the systems and currently continue the training on (Microsoft Team. The appointment schedule system was completely changed, currently, all appointments will be sent from the Office of Information Services (OSI-Spanish) staff. This transformation has entailed additional unforeseen time, that will not allow ADSEF to comply with the 2 months prior notice requirement. ADSEF proposes to start with the recertification process in November covering 10 local offices, in December 43 local offices and in January 2022 will start the remaining 43 local offices.

Therefore, we request a time period extension waiver to leave participants sixty (60) years and older, and disabled certification process for the end due to the lack of technicians.

VII. Criteria for Funds Distribution

b. DISASTER/EMERGENCY

Special benefits are provided to applicants and participants who have an immediate need for food due to disasters such as, hurricanes, storms, flooding, earthquakes, landslides, Pandemic, fire or lack of energy because of a disaster, and if no other public or private entity has provided the same aid. Benefits must be issued no later than five (5) days from the date of the application. The amount to be received will be prorated according to the date the application has been filed. If the household applies between the 1st and the 15th of the month, will be entitled to receive up to 100% of the benefits. If the household applies between the 16th and the 31st of the month will be entitled to receive up to 50% of the benefits. If a household was already participating at the time of the disaster and already received its regular benefits but needs immediate food, it is entitled to receive an additional 50% of the regular benefit amount. Benefits are effective the month following the eligibility determination. **ADSEF will only issue NAP-Disaster benefits once a Presidential Disaster Declaration has been signed. In addition, ADSEF will request FNS budget approval prior to any D-NAP issuing of benefits.**

5. VERIFICATION

ADSEF will require participants to provide necessary documentation in order to verify their identity, income, address, and family composition, among others.

The following is the list of documents required for the regular verification process:

- ✓ Photo ID
- ✓ Residency
- ✓ Authorization to require of release information
- ✓ Citizenship and alien status
- ✓ Social Security Number of all household members
- ✓ Income and resources
- ✓ Self-employment expenses



VII. Criteria for Funds Distribution

5. Verification (cont.-)

- ✓ Post-secondary student status
- ✓ Enrolled in School or Home-Schooling System minors 5 to 17 years old
- ✓ Care of minor or dependents with physical or mental limitations
- ✓ Disability status
- ✓ Medical expenses
- ✓ Age
- ✓ Homelessness – If the person does not have the social security card, it can be verified through other official documents such as: checks, official letters, Medicare card or a referral requesting social security card. Under this circumstance, the homeless person is referred to the Administration of Children and Families (ADFAN by acronyms in Spanish). Nevertheless, ADSEF will provide that person 30-days to present social security evidence, as described above. Their identity and residence will be verified with any source of identification available, such as an official letter of an institution offering other services. Residence can be an emergency shelter, welfare hotel, hall, park, plaza, shelter and transitional housing programs, and a home visit is not a requirement for granting aid.

ADSEF will continue to evaluate and incorporate collaborative agreements to assist in the verification of client information throughout the NAP certification process.

VII. Criteria for Funds Distribution

5. Verification (cont.-)

ADSEF will continue to evaluate and incorporate collaborative agreements to assist in the verification of client information throughout the NAP certification process.

- a. Agreement with the PR Health Department Demographic Registry. This agreement permits the exchange of information regarding death certificates. Current status: the agreement was signed ADSEF is waiting for the Health Department's data exchange.
- b. Social Security Administration – Social Security Number Verification System (currently we are waiting for response to a request for meeting for program updates to do the exchange). This agreement is under evaluation.
- c. Beneficiary and Earnings Data Exchange with the Department of Labor. This agreement is under evaluation.
- d. Referral of fraud investigations to Internal Revenue Service, Department of Justice and Department of Treasury of Puerto Rico. ADSEF is in the process of negotiating with the federal agencies an MOU to include fraud investigations.

6. APPEAL PROCESS

The Administration will provide applicants/participants, who have been adversely affected by an action, the opportunity to be heard in an administrative or appellate process, which must be ruled by the terms and procedures included on the Regulation Number 7757, titled: "Regulation for the Establishment of Procedures for the Adjudication of Controversies before the Adjudicative Board of the Department of the Family".



VII. Criteria for Funds Distribution

a. APPEAL PROCESS

The Administration will provide applicants/participants, who have been adversely affected by an action, the opportunity to be heard in an administrative or appellate process, which must be ruled by the terms and procedures included on the Regulation Number 7757, titled: "Regulation for the Establishment of Procedures for the Adjudication of Controversies before the Adjudicative Board of the Department of the Family". In this case recipients have the right to appeal any action or inaction affecting eligibility, benefits' determination, or condition of payment, within fifteen (15) days of the adverse notification date.

Applicants, participants, or their authorized representatives shall be entitled to file an appeal when any of the following occurs:

1. Applicants

- ✓ Delay in acting with the application.
- ✓ Rejection of the application.
- ✓ Disagreement with the amount of assistance assigned.
- ✓ Disagreement with a condition set as requirement of eligibility.
- ✓ Disagreement with any other action taken by the Program regarding the case application.

2. Participants

- ✓ Disagreement with the decision made to suspend, reduce, or discontinue the assistance.
- ✓ Disagreement with the amount of assistance assigned.
- ✓ Disagreement with a claim and disqualifications.
- ✓ Delay in making payment adjustments or in acting on a request or information submitted by the participant.
- ✓ Disagreement to return benefits the client erroneously received.



VII. Criteria for Funds Distribution

7. Filing an Appeal Application

- a. The applicant, participant or an authorized representative may file the appeal application. The agency shall accept any verbal or written expression of the applicant or participant indicating the desire to appeal the determination of the agency within fifteen (15) calendar days after the date of the written notice of action taken.
 1. The applicant shall be given the opportunity to express if he/she wants to continue receiving the benefits without changes until the appeal action is taken. The corresponding office shall proceed according to the appellant's preference.
 2. The participant shall be informed that if decides to continue receiving the benefits without any adjustment and the Board of Appeals confirms the action, he/she shall have to reimburse the ADSEF for any benefits received during the appeals process.
 3. The appellant shall be informed that if accepts that the recommended action and the decision are in favor, all benefits not issued during the process shall be **restored to him/her**.
- b. Once the appeal application has been received, the Board Director or the Examiner will have thirty (30) days to select a date and send a notification to all concerned parties indicating the date, time and place where the adjudicative hearing would take place. The notification must be sent at least fifteen (15) days prior to the date selected.
 1. Usually, as an informal process, the hearings will be celebrated at the regional offices, but also can be arranged at the Department of the Family Headquarters, or at any other place chosen near the local office depending upon participants' or location availability.

VII. Criteria for Funds Distribution

7. Filing an Appeal Application (cont.)

- c. Once the hearing process is concluded the Examiner officer will have thirty (30) days to prepare a resolution draft or a written report with recommendations, facts determinations and legal conclusions for the Board members consideration.
- d. The members of the Adjudicative Board can approve or deny the recommendations and conclusions included in the draft resolution and expose another opinion about the matter. The final decision should be made within ninety (90) days of the initial hearing.
- e. Any reconsideration petitions on the Board decisions must be presented within twenty (20) days from the Board's resolution notification. The Board shall consider any petitions within fifteen (15) days of filed.
- f. As stated before, the final resolution must be presented and filed within ninety (90) days of the reconsideration petition filed.

8. WORK REQUIREMENT

Even though Puerto Rico is not required to comply with the Work Requirement because does not receive SNAP benefits , we have started a planning process to implement the program in Puerto Rico. As stated in 7 CFR §273.24 ADSEF will require able-bodied adults ages 18 through 50 with no dependents (ABAWDs) to meet an ABAWD work requirement as a condition to continue receiving NAP.



VII. Criteria for Funds Distribution

9. ELECTRONIC BENEFIT TRANSFER (EBT) – FAMILY CARD (FC)

Benefits are issued and deposited electronically into an EBT account. The EBT service is provided by **EVERTEC Group, LLC**. NAP benefits deposited in the EBT account can only be accessed by using the Family Card (FC) issued to the head of household or another authorized representative. It is important to state that the Family Card cannot be use outside of Puerto Rico. This contract is currently under its last extension. Even though ADSEF is working on a new RFP to select the next provider, will have to extend EVERTEC a new contract until the process is completed.

Transactions made at authorized retailers involving eligible food purchases are free of charge or additional fees. Each authorized cardholder selects a personal identification number (PIN) at the Point of Sale (POS) terminal in the local office. A single card and PIN are required to access remaining benefits in EBT accounts. The FC is mailed to the participant's address, and the PIN number is mailed separately with the activation instruction. Recipient orientation includes the use of an audio response unit (ARU) and access to a Customer Service Representative (CSR) using a 1-877-467-4832; available 7 days a week, 24 hours a day.

The guidance provides:

- How to report a stolen or lost card.
- How to inquire about account balances.
- How to obtain information about previous transactions.
- The participant can change the pin number by calling our customer services representative.

Homeless participants are given a NAP benefits Family Card and PIN number, when they visit a local office to apply for the benefits.



VII. Criteria for Funds Distribution

9. ELECTRONIC BENEFIT TRANSFER (EBT) – cont.

As part of the benefit assignment process, the Article 51(G) of NAP Regulation Number 8684, states that when the person responsible for the services or their representative, doesn't access the benefits in the account for more than 60 days, the account is inactivated or called dormant. If the person in charge of services or their representative does not access the account benefits for more than 60 days, the participant's benefits are reverted to the program, which is called expunge. At **180 days**, the funds available on the inactive account are transferred back to participants' benefits account so it can be redistributed again, among all NAP participants. ADSEF will monitor these cases.

In terms of the **Family Markets** benefit, the pocket that manages these funds doesn't have dormant process, which means that when the **180 days** are reached, expunge is applied so the available funds on the Family Market pocket are withdrawn even if the case is still active on the food and cash benefits pockets. The expunged funds from the Family Market are transferred to the general benefits pocket of the NAP Grant.

VII. Criteria for Funds Distribution

10. FAMILY MARKETS

6% (this reflects a 2% increase) of NAP Participant benefits will be separated **exclusively to purchase nutritious fresh food at the Family Markets** in participating regions and municipalities. The 6% portion is included in the monthly adjustment as an “electronic voucher” and is calculated by applying the formula of the monthly adjustment. An example of the formula can be the following:

- The monthly percentage adjustment amount is calculated and 6% of the Family Market portion is subtracted from that number. If the total percentage adjustment is 10%, a 6% will be part of the Family Market portion and the remaining 6% is given as regular benefits among all the participants during that month.
- If a participant does not reside in a region with Family Market, will receive their regular benefit (base) plus a 10% of monthly percentage adjustment as his regular benefit; but if the participant reside in a region with Family Market will receive the regular benefit (base) plus 6% for the Family Market portion and 4% of monthly percentage adjustment.

11. CALL CENTER

ADSEF will **substitute the 3.1.1** hotline to establish a permanent Call Center to provide NAP participants and/or potential clients on-phone services. The center’s staff will provide callers an orientation on eligibility requirements, respond to program inquiries, general guidance on certification services, and attend complaints regarding possible violations to Regulation 8684 (NAP Regulation) and 8857 (NAP Retailers Regulation). In addition, the call center could be used to report client and retailer fraud. Once the call center’s representative receives the complaint, they will refer it to the Director of the Programmatic Integrity Division (Spanish acronym, DIP). In terms of the eligibility process, the operators will primarily determine eligibility through the Family and Individual Benefit System (SIBIF, Spanish Acronym). After the pre- determination of eligibility, an appointment will be scheduled through TURNOS.PR within ten (10) working days for completing the application process.

VII. Criteria for Funds Distribution

12. Program Administration

ADSEF Administrates the Nutrition Assistance Program (NAP) for the Department of the Family. The ADSEF's Organizational Chart and the Regional and Local Offices are included within this document.

A. Office of the Assisting Administrator for Operational Services (OAAOS).

The office of the Assisting Administrator for Operational Services (OAAOS) is responsible for the planning coordination, organization, direction, supervision, and evaluation of the administrative, operational, and programmatic performance of all the activities related. OAAOS consist of two (2) Divisions, Program Administration and Strategic Planning. The Assisting Administrator for Operational Services participates actively with the Administrator in the formulation of public policies and is responsible for the State Plan of Operations. The Division is responsible of implementing any policy changes and for developing regulations and procedures required for the state plan operation. The following are the Programmatic and Administrative units assigned to this division:

1. Division of Programmatic Administration

- a. Food and Nutrition Services
- b. Nutrition Assistance Program (NAP)
 - i. Nutrition Education Program (NEP)
 - ii. Family Market.
- c. The Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP)
- d. Commodities Senior Food Program (CSFP)
- d. Soup Kitchen
- e. Child Care Food Program (CCFP)

VII. Criteria for Funds Distribution

12. Program Administration (cont.-)

f. Administration for Children and Families

- i. Temporary Assistance of Needy Families (TANF)
- ii. Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP)
- iii. Economic and Social Development Opportunities Program (PODES)
- iv. Strategic Planning Division

g. Programs and Planning Unit

This Unit responds directly to the Assisting Administrator of Operational Services and has the responsibility of planning, evaluating, measuring, and producing the programs' statistics of the Office of the Assisting Administrator for Operational Services and any other Administrative units within ADSEF. Some of the responsibilities of the Planning and Programs Unit are:

- Ensures the compliance with the execution standards as established in the work plans of each area.
- Administers the Measures of Efforts and Results System (MER).
- Identifies the areas that must be improved to request the Program Directors the preparation of strategies and Corrective Action Plans (CAP's).
- Develops evaluation strategies to measure quality and quantity of ADSEF's services.
- Administers the Random Moment Sampling System (RMS) for Cost Allocation.
- Evaluates the application of the Federal Regulations, Instructions and Procedures of NAP.
- ADSEF is responsible for compliance at the sub-grantee level. In addition, it is responsible of informing the sub-grantee of the applicable federal requirements and any administrative requirement.



VII. Criteria for Funds Distribution

12. Program Administration (cont.-)

Measures of Efforts and Results System (MER)

The MER System is used to evaluate the accessibility, accuracy, and timeliness of services provided by the NAP through case reviews conducted by the ADSEF.

The objectives of the reviews are to provide a:

1. Systematic measuring method plus the accuracy and timeliness of eligibility and benefits determinations.
2. Basis for determining a payment error rate of active and negative cases.

The ADSEF is responsible for conducting quality control reviews of NAP cases. The focus of this review depends on the selection of a sample. MER results are used to assess the accessibility, accuracy and timeliness of the services offered by the NAP case reviews.

The Office of Technology and Information (OTI) selects a sample of all the nucleus of service centers that are participating in the NAP. The sample consists of 1,800 cases; 1,200 of those are active cases and 600 negative cases. The total sample is divided into number of 450 cases per quarter four times in the FY (December, March, June, and September). The sample of active cases is reviewed to determine if the nucleus of service is eligible and is receiving the correct total of benefits. The negative cases are reviewed to determine whether the decision to deny or terminate the services was correct. The budget month is used as the basis to verify all elements of eligibility resulting in the sample month. For example, we use monthly samples of December and budget month of October. The data obtained from the research is shared with the regional and local offices through the ADSEF MER-01-C and 01-D for reporting detected errors.

VII. Criteria for Funds Distribution

12. Program Administration (cont.-)

The local office prepares a corrective action plan to address the mistakes and reports the actions taken through the ADSEF-213. The Regional Office follows up on the findings by checking the MER Findings Control Sheet.

The reviews include the examination and verification of eligibility elements (examples: resources, income, identity, address, household composition, citizenship/residency, social security number, work registration and school attendance). The benefit calculation is reviewed (examples: deductions and household composition) through contacts with collateral sources of information, face-to-face interviews to all clients and data exchanges with other agencies.

The percent error established on the tolerance level is 4.5% for positive samples (active cases) and 6% for negative cases. Certification of the error percent obtained is sent to FNS, 6 months after the end of the federal Fiscal Year. MERS's annual report findings are submitted 90 days after the error's percent is certified.

Random Moment Sampling (RMS)

The Random Moment Sampling System (RMS) is a procedure that scientifically gathers information to distribute costs among assistance programs administered by ADSEF. The number of samples required for RMS are 3,300 distributed between the ten (10) Regions.



VII. Criteria for Funds Distribution

12. Program Administration (cont.-)

Random Moment Sampling (RMS) (cont.-)

The Office of Technology Information Systems (OTI Spanish, Acronym) provides digital samples divided by four (4) quarters in the year. Hence, it is necessary to keep the system functioning efficiently in order to obtain exact and real results that make it possible to distribute the operating expenses of programs financed with federal funds, since all the activities are concentrated on the Social and Family Assistance Technicians, who carry out the task for all the programs.

The fact that this system is available at the Central Offices helps expedite the management, collection, distribution, and tabulation of data samples through RMS. The improvements achieved helped to improve significantly the required efforts to manually prepare and classify the hand-written forms by means of eliminating the information interchange between case workers and Central ADSEF.

To guarantee that the process is performed according to the RMS Procedures Manual, we conduct local offices reviews with the RMS Coordinator at the agency's headquarters. The responsibility of the RMS is assigned to the RMS Headquarters Coordinator. This employee evaluates results, provides follow up on the sample cases response process and periodically evaluates that the RMS is has been applied accordingly by checking the data entry, among other responsibilities.

The Random Moment Sample for ADSEF's central office started in January 2020. Currently the agency has completed 3,300 samples.

VII. Criteria for Funds Distribution

2. Office of Inspection and Certification

The Office of Inspection and Certification (OIC) is responsible for developing, implementing, and managing systems, procedures, and personnel to enable retailer and wholesaler control and inspection functions. OIC accomplishes its mission mainly carrying out two main activities: education and orientation, and on-site inspections.

OIC is responsible of preparing the agency's monthly reports to FNS on the following:

- Monthly Retailers-SDEC and NAP Family markets Reports
- Non-Redeeming Report (also known as Zero Redeemers)
- Complaints Report (complaints against retailers)
- NAP Retailer Status Report
- NAP Family Markets

3. Education and Orientation

OIC is focus on keeping retailers, wholesalers, and beneficiaries informed of the NAP's objectives and requirements. The fraud prevention education is provided through on-site visits and at special workshops.

During the on-site monitoring reviews, OIC personnel ensures that all personnel working at the establishment are aware of NAP rules and regulations. New retailers and wholesalers must sign a certification that they have received and understand Regulation Number 8857, dated November 23, 2016, for the Commercial Establishments certification, which will give them authorization to debit NAP Program Funds from the participants Family Card.



VII. Criteria for Funds Distribution

3. Education and Orientation (cont.-)

On-site Authorizations, Reauthorizations and Monitoring

Regulation Number 8857 establish that the agency must provide an inspection visit as a requirement for the initial authorization and bi-annual recertification. OIC visits and evaluates all new retailers and wholesalers, to verify that the information provided on the application is accurate. Also, ensures that the food inventory is adequate and compatible with the Program goals. Periodically, the OIC personnel visits retailers and wholesalers randomly to verify that the Electronic Benefit Transfer (EBT) management process is in accordance with procedures.

At the same time, the OIC employees or contractors will verify through the establishments on- site visits, that the Authorization Certificate and orientation/informative posters are visible to the public. During the visit , OIC verifies NAP redemptions for at least a 12-month period prior to the visit. This will demonstrate if the redemptions comply with program requirements. OIC personnel are required to take pictures of food inventory and facilities during their visits.

ADSEF might disqualify an authorized food retailer if by any instance a violation occurs as a result of an on-site investigation, findings on inconsistent redemption data, evidence obtained through an EBT system transactions report, or a retailer's disqualification from the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children (WIC), based on 7 CFR 278.6.



VII. Criteria for Funds Distribution

3. Education and Orientation (cont.-)

As part of the Regulation 8857 penalties, ADSEF could fine or disqualify a retailer if it does not comply with NAP policies. Sanctions could fluctuate, starting with an initial fine and could end with the revocation of the retailer's NAP certification, in the case that fraud is proven or persists. Decisions will be subject to a full analysis and interpretation of the program's regulation. In case of re-occurrence the penalties will be as follows:

- a. For one (1) previous determination of regulation's violation, the suspension will be extended up to six (6) months and a fine will be applied.
- b. For two (2) previous determinations of regulations' violation, the suspension will be extended for up to twelve (12) months and a fine will be applied.
- c. For three (3) or more previous determinations of regulation's violation, the suspension will permanent and a fine will be applied.

ADSEF has developed a system to determine merchants' eligibility and case management for those interested on NAP funds. The Commerce Eligibility Determination System (acronyms in Spanish as SDEC). This application provides filters for any information displayed on the monitor, shows case numbers and authorizations, the persons that have been recently working at a retailer, retailers integration as ADSEF's merchants and print any information needed. ADSEF will continue monitoring the institutions (group homes/rehabs, etc.) that have been certified by OIC.

VII. Criteria for Funds Distribution

3. Education and Orientation (cont.-)

The following are the requirements for the Debit Nutrition Assistance Program (NAP) Funds Family Card (FC)

- i. Any owner or operator of an eligible business, as established in Regulation Number 8857 that requests authorization to debit Nutrition Assistance Program (NAP) funds from the Family Card (FC), will have the obligation to request a certification for such purposes. Certification is issued by ADSEF.
- ii. Any establishment that wants to participate or renew its certification must file an application. ADSEF has the authority to approve or deny the application or request additional information within thirty (30) days of the application's receipt. ADSEF will visit the retailers/wholesale at least once a year to confirm that the establishment complies with Article 13(B) and 15(C) from the Regulation Number 8857.
- iii. **Retailer with an expired certification could have its EBT cards privilege removed by ADSEF at any time.**

Subsection 3. Sale of ineligible items, as defined in Article 5 (6) of this regulation and collected from the NAP beneficiary's Department of the Family EBT card. This practice will be penalized with a minimum fine of five hundred dollars (\$500.00) and a maximum fine of three thousand dollars (\$3,000.00) for each item sold.

Subsections 11. In the case of certified institutions, use all or part of the funds for the purchase of products that are not eligible food or for any other purpose other than the purchase of eligible items. This practice will be penalized with a minimum fine of five hundred dollars (\$500.00) and a maximum fine of three thousand dollars (\$3,000.00).

Subsections 12. In the case of farmers, use the POS to carry out transactions other than the Family Markets. This practice will be penalized with a minimum fine of two hundred fifty dollars (\$250.00) and a maximum fine of five hundred dollars (\$ 500.00).

B. Legal Affairs Office ADSEF

The Legal Division Office is responsible for matters concerning legal claims; contracts; agreements; investigations of complaints concerning retailers and employees; meetings with retailers because of investigations; community relations; and fraud cases. ADSEF's Legal Division Office works directly with the Legal Affairs



VII. Criteria for Funds Distribution

Legal Affairs Office ADSEF (con.-)

Office of the Department of Family - Secretariat and advises the Administrator and Assistant Administrators in any legal matters that may arise related to ADSEF.

i. Contracts and Agreements

The Legal Division Office is responsible for preparing the contracts and agreements related to ADSEF. The office's responsibilities include drafting of contracts or agreements; request funds and authorization to the Office of Management and Budget; requesting the contractor to present all the necessary documentation according to the law; and making sure that the contracts or agreements comply with all federal and state laws, as well as with any Administrative Orders that may exist; among others.

ii. Investigation, Meetings and Sanctions of Authorized Retailers

The Legal Affairs Office evaluates complaints regarding possible violations to Regulation Number 8857, received by phone, letter, and/or email, among other ways, and investigates them (undercover visits, transaction analysis, and other information on the retailers file). If as a result of an investigation a meeting with the retailer is needed to explain findings, applicable fines and disqualification, notifications will be sent and meeting held with the legal counselors of the ADSEF, specifically contracted for evaluated that type of cases and to make sure that all the investigation it's been done with due process of law. Afterwards, the Legal Office makes a recommendation to the Administrator about the imposition of monetary penalties and/or disqualification. The Administrator's decision is duly notified to retailers who may: accept and pay the fine, accept the disqualification or request a review before the Adjudicative Board of the Department of the Family, ADSEF's legal counselors act on behalf of the Agency during the appeal process. A monthly retailer's meetings, fines, sanctions, and collection report is issued to MARO-FNS.

VII. Criteria for Funds Distribution

ii. Investigation, Meetings and Sanctions of Authorized Retailers (cont.-)

The criteria for determining that a retailer is in breach of the provisions of the Regulation are settled on the Article 21:

- 1) Not to notify in writing to the ICO, on or before fifteen (15) days of occurrence any change related to the data of the commercial establishment or institution.
- 2) Do not keep items eligible with the selling price properly adhered or labeled.
- 3) Sale of ineligible items, as defined in Article 5 (6) of this regulation and collected with NAP funds from the holder of the Family Card (FC).
- 4) Failure to deliver the cash register and/or POS (fixed or wireless) receipt that reflects the transaction made to the person holding the FC.
- 5) Collection of sales and use tax (IVU) on transactions with the Family Card.
- 6) Credit purchase to the person holding the FC. Any transaction made with NAP funds must reflect the sale at the date and time the eligible food was purchased.
- 7) Sales of alcoholic beverages, and tobacco in any of its forms of consumption, pornographic material and / or electronic games or lottery tickets with NAP funds to the person in possession of the FC.
- 8) Hold the Family Card for any reason.
- 9) In the case of certified institutions, allow the use of all or part of the NAP funds to purchase non eligible foods or any other transaction not related to the purchase of eligible items.
- 10) In the case of farmers, use the POS to conduct transactions outside the Family Markets.
- 11) Commit fraud, as defined in Article 5 (15) of the Regulation.
- 12) Failure to comply with any other obligation or duty set forth in Article 18, which is not specifically contemplated in this Article 21.

VII. Criteria for Funds Distribution (cont.-)

The following table represents the retailers' penalties imposed for committing program violations between January 2020 and December 2020.

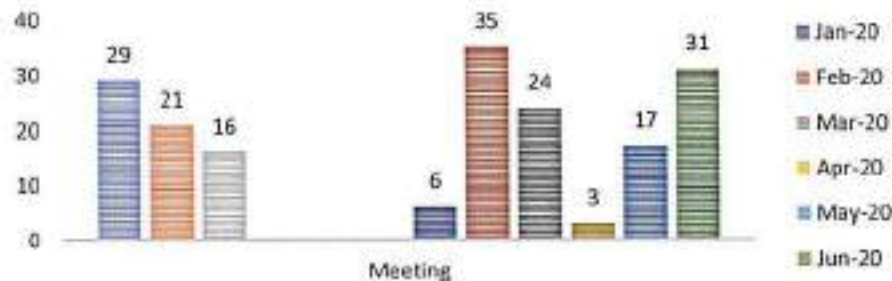


VISITS' RESULTS



VII. Criteria for Funds Distribution (cont.-)

RETAILERS MEETINGS RELATED TO PROGRAM ACTIVITY



iii. COMMUNITY RELATIONS OFFICE

The office staff provides guidance on NAP's eligibility, policies, and procedures to citizens and program participants. In addition, assists regional and local offices with participants' inquiries and complaints, received at the office via phone, letter or email. In addition, responds to the any information requested by subpoenas and court orders.

Interagency Cases: this is a subdivision within the office which offers support in PARIS Match processing, by answering states/territories requests, and any other issue related to matching a participant's information in Puerto Rico. Also, verifies TANF time participation for category C - applicants.

Immigration Status: This office Staff is responsible of using the SAVE application to verify benefits status for immigrants.

VII. Criteria for Funds Distribution (cont.-)

iii. Programmatic Integrity Division

The Programmatic Integrity Division ("DIP" Spanish acronym) within the Legal Affairs Office is responsible for monitoring EBT transactions and redemption by using the data warehouse as a tool to identify and prevent participants and retailers' possible fraud. This Division is responsible for analyzing and processing participants, retailers or institutions violations to NAP regulations in coordination with local and regional offices. For FY 2022, we intend to continue strengthening the headquarters and regional offices' DIP.

The NAP claims process indicates that in all cases where it is determined that a household or the institution received and/or used benefits to which it was not entitled, a claim shall be made. Once the claim is presented, the Department of the Family will start a collection process, against the household's person responsible. A notification including the following information will be sent or delivered:

1. Reasons for the claim and the period covered.
2. Classification of the claim.
3. Amount owed.
4. Compensation for retroactive benefits that reduced or paid off the debt, if applicable.
5. Right to file an appeal with the Department's Adjudicating Board and term.

This office will also investigate the cases to determine Intentional Program Violations and will with claim's collections that result from the investigation. A potential intentional violation is a claim in which the person responsible for the household, his/her spouse or an authorized representative, or the authorized representative of the institution intentionally with a misleading intent and voluntarily, incurs in one or more of the following:



VII. Criteria for Funds Distribution

iii. Programmatic Integrity Division (cont.-)

- Presents a false or incorrect written statement about the circumstances of the service core.
- Hides information about changes, as established in these Regulations, for a period exceeding thirty (30) days as of the date of the change.
- It presents altered documents.
- Makes a false representation.
- The amount of the claim is \$ 500.01 or more.

The DIP is also responsible of preparing monthly reports to FNS on: Participant Claims (monthly and annual reports) and Retailer Actions (actions against retailers for NAP Program violations).

C. OFFICE OF THE ASSISTING ADMINISTRATOR FOR FINANCE AND BUDGET

Finance Division

The Office of the Assisting Administrator for Finance and Budget offers part of the administrative support for the programs. In coordination with the EVERTEC, Group LLC, is responsible for implementing and operating the required systems to process payment to beneficiaries. It prepares the annual budget to be submitted to local, federal agencies and as well as the Legislature. The office responds directly to the Administrator.

VII. Criteria for Funds Distribution

C. Office of the Assisting Administrator for Finance and Budget

Finance Division (cont.-)

Reconciliation Method used with EBT Systems (EBT)

- The EBT services provider makes payments to authorized retailers, network, third party providers, and financial institutions on behalf of the Government of Puerto Rico for benefits accessed and distributed to recipients daily. The EBT services provider is reimbursed as authorized by the Banco Popular de Puerto Rico (BPPR).
- Payments are recorded and compared to the Daily Activity File and Daily Payments Summary File prepared by the EBT services provider for the Department of the Family. EBT system reports provide these and other standardized computer reports as well as ad hoc access to EBT system data to perform the following key reconciliation:
 1. Benefits authorized= benefits posted.
 2. Benefits accessed by recipients (net EBT account debits/credits) = benefit amount transactions approved by the EBT services provider.
 3. Net EBT account debits/credits = amount paid to merchants and financial institutions, "+/-" authorized adjustments.
 4. Amount paid to merchants and financial institutions = funds requested by the EBT services provider, "+/-" authorized adjustments.

VII. Criteria for Funds Distribution

C. Office of the Assisting Administrator for Finance and Budget

Finance Division (cont.-)

Collections Section

- Receive, review, analyze and register the deposits of all monies collected from claims corresponding to NAP by the Assistant Collector at the local offices. The Assistant Collector collects claimed monies from local offices weekly.
- Receive monies collected at the Department of Justice corresponding to NAP claims.
- Prepare and submit the deposits, for accounting purposes, to the Department of Treasury, which has an exclusive account called NAP Coll (one account is opened for each fiscal year). When the account reaches certain quantity, all funds are transferred back into the NAP participants benefit account so it can be funneled back to the participants. This quantifies the account needs before benefits are reverted. The claims are made daily or weekly depending on the local office and the available Assistant Collector.
- The assistant collector is designated directly by the Treasury Department. The official definition for Assistant Collector is staff in a regular, transitory or by contractor position in any agency of the government, designated by the Treasury Department Secretary, to act as a substitute for the Official Collector when this person is absent because of vacation, sickness, or other short terms.
- The official collector is the person that deposit the money recovered from the claims all Mondays. If Monday is a holiday the deposit will be on Tuesday. Money is kept in a safety deposit box. ADSEF has established policies and procedures at the Central Office regarding the safety of the money and its deposits and follows the Department of Treasury policies and procedures regarding deposits.
- Review and submits to the Department of the Treasury, the documents related to the persons nominated for official, assistant, and Assisting collector.
- Reconcile the deposit forms after their accounting to ensure correctness.
- Distribute official receipts and deposit forms to regional and local offices.
- Review and consolidate island-wide data, which includes reports submitted by local and regional offices for collection. This is the data ADSEF uses to feed FNS-209-PR.

VII. Criteria for Funds Distribution

C. Office of the Assisting Administrator for Finance and Budget

Finance Division (cont.-)

Accounts Payable

The Accounts Payable Section of the Finance Division generates and maintains control of the obligations of payments for contracted and non-contracted services. Prepares payment vouchers for disbursements of all programs attached to the agency. Among other things, it assigns the number of travel orders and application and authorization for private car use (Models SC 1231 and 1232). The application for admission to the register of suppliers is received through form SC 730 and refers to Accounting in the Department of the Treasury. The accounts payable section records the payment vouchers and obligations in the PRIFAS system of the Department of the Treasury.

Budget Division

- Prepares the annual budget to be submitted to local, federal agencies and the Legislature.
- Prepares fiscal reports.
- Evaluates the availability of funds for the acquisition of goods and services for the operation of the program.
- Prepares the Monthly Operational Cost Budget for the NEP.
- Managing the Operational Cost

The Monthly Operational Cost is based on current expenditures for those items that apply to the operation of the NAP as submitted to Puerto Rico's Budget and Management Office, for FY 2020-21. A description of those operational costs follows:

1. Salaries: Included Regular Employees, Transitory Employees, Irregular Employees, Professional, and Consultant Services Government's contribution to Social Security, Retirement Plan, and Christmas Bonuses.

VII. Criteria for Funds Distribution

C. Office of the Assisting Administrator for Finance and Budget

Budget Division (cont.-)

2. Travel expense estimates and out-of-the country official travel.
3. Unemployment Insurance is based on procedures established by the Department of Labor of the Government of Puerto Rico.
4. State Insurance Premiums are those related to work compensation insurance for employees.
5. Insurance for employees in travel status.
6. Medical Plans are the government's participation of the employees' medical plan premiums.
7. Public Building Rent.
8. Rent of non-public building and other equipment.
9. Postage – includes mailing of communication related to the Program.
10. Printing of all forms required for NAP.
11. Electricity for central, regional, and local offices.
12. Building repairs and conservation.
13. Miscellaneous services.
14. Material, supplies, and parts.
15. Telephone services.
16. Equipment includes the purchase of replacement of furniture or additional equipment.
17. Water and sewer services.

VII. Criteria for Funds Distribution

C. Office of the Assisting Administrator for Finance and Budget

Budget Division (cont.-)

Cash Management

The Cash Management Section is responsible for claiming daily disbursements corresponding to Federal Programs activities managed by ADSEF. These funds request is based and ruled by the Cash Management Improvement Act and is issued by the United States Treasury Department.

Once the funds are requested, Cash Management Section is responsible of submitting the financial documents that allow the proper accountability of fund on the federal accounts created on the State Treasury Department. Cash Management is also responsible for preparing and submitting to the Treasury Department, U.S Department of Health and Human Services and Federal Reports Section, the required reports detailing all the requests of funds made.

Federal Reports

1. 7 CFR 3016.25 (b) = Uniform Administrative Requirements for Grants and Cooperative Agreements to State and Local Governments.
2. Program Income: Program income means gross income received by the grantee or sub-grantee directly generated by a grant-supported activity or earned only because of the grant agreement during the grant period.
3. Benefit cash collections will be deposited back into NAP benefit account and reissued as benefits and be reported as program income on the SF-425/778, Financial Status Report.



VII. Criteria for Funds Distribution

Federal Reports (cont.-)

4. In the SF – 425/778 (Financial Report for NAP), ADSEF submits quarterly (December, March, June and September) the information to FNS. Submits claim reports (FNS-209-PR) to the USDA, Food and Nutrition Service and to the Federal Reports Section.
5. Prepares the actual operating cost reports on a quarterly basis to allow management to compare against the budgeted cost to take the proper corrective actions. The USDA, Food and Nutrition Service authorize the portion of funds from the Block Grant used to cover the fifty percent (50%) of the allowable administrative cost of the program.
6. The Federal Reports Division performs the following duties:
 - Prepare and execute reports about the use of funds as required by Federal Government Agencies.
 - Review considered transactions to verify that they have been coded correctly.
 - Calculate the amount claimed to Federal Agencies relating to indirect costs and the Random Moment Sampling (RMS) application. This federal indirect cost rate is negotiated through the Department of the Family and is submitted to the Department of Health and Human Services Division of Cost Allocation using their guidelines.
 - FNS-209-PR, Monthly Claims Report to be reported quarterly on FPRS. The purpose of this report is to notify the number of claims and recoveries recovered by the claims of the Nutrition Assistance Program (cash, check, money order, reduction of benefits, retroactive benefits). Must be submitted and certified in the system on or before 30 days after the end of the quarter of which it is being reported.

VII. Criteria for Funds Distribution

Federal Reports

- SF-425/778, Financial Status Report. As of October 1st, 2013 will be reported on Food Program Reporting System (FPRS), which will allow the data to be on the National Data Bank (NDB). The report includes the administrative and benefits expenses incurred by the ADSEF. It is sent 30 days after the end of the quarter during the fiscal year and a closing report, 120 days after the end of the fiscal year.
- FNS-388 PR Monthly Participation and Benefits Report that is reported on Food Program Reporting System (FPRS), which will allow the data to be on the National Data Bank (NDB). This Report summarize the total of cases, persons and benefits issued by ADSEF every single month, including the regular and complementary payments.

D. Office of the Assisting Administrator for Human Resources

The Office of the Assisting Administrator for Human Resources is responsible for the administrative support of the Program's personnel and human resources. This office handles the headquarters, regional and local offices personnel matters, including personnel requests. It also evaluates staffing needs and provides recommendations on staffing situations.

The office is also in charge of supporting the coordination of trainings to all staff to provide information regarding the amendments and new proposals to implement. The Assisting Administrator for Human Resources responds directly to the Administrator.

VII. Criteria for Funds Distribution

E. Office of the Assisting Administrator for Administration Services

The Administration Services Area provides support for the agency and its programs. It is responsible for ensuring compliance with the administrative rules and procedures for each of the locations. It is also responsible for the planning, organization, management, and control of administrative services, and recommendations to optimize its performance. The office participates in the development and actualization of the administrative procedures' manuals.

The office handles requests for supplies requisitions to purchase goods and services at headquarters, regional and local levels. It also reproduces the forms and materials supplies through requisitions to all its offices. It is responsible for the distribution of all mail from the central office to the divisions, the Office of the Secretary, regional and local offices as well as other Administrations of the Department and other government agencies. Provides and oversees all transportation required for official visits to regional and local offices as well as vehicle fleet maintenance. It is responsible for the management of the property in the central office and informs all the reports of the inventory to the Treasury Department. Maintains inventory of the property in the central office and collaborates with the inventory of the regional offices and the 89 locals.

The Assisting Administrator monitors and maintains the inventory of the agency and works in collaboration with Emergency Management and the Census, in case of natural disasters. Also, oversees the work of the Agency's Central Warehouse and the entire process for the disposal of documents and computers in offices. In the same way, shall attends and resolves all matters related to the physical plant in coordination with the Building Manager.



VII. Criteria for Funds Distribution

E. Office of the Assisting Administrator for Administration Services (cont.-)

It is necessary that checks, processes and validate the information and results of the work processes in which he intervenes, according to his assigned area. In the meantime, shall also control and processes the information, forms and documents generated by services provided and received by the Agency, and starts the hiring of professional and consulting services. For make this happen, the Administrator Assistant will maintain a close communication with the General Services Administration of the Government of Puerto Rico to enforce the laws and regulations promulgated by that government agency and all other public policy applicable.

Finally, in emergency, the Office of the Assisting Administrator for Administrative Services shall check processes and validates the information and results of the work processes in which is involved, according to their assigned area (Procurement, General Services, Post Office, Property Management, Store Supplies and Transport Office) in the Secretary Office.

F. Office of Technology and Information (OTI)

This office provides ADSEF's programs with the verification of input data that includes the benefits calculation, payments issuance, computer matching, participant's master files/database updates, transfers electronically the benefit file to the EBT System, preparation of the operation and detailed cost management, such as the amount of benefits certified by local offices, and the total amount of benefits island-wide.

VII. Criteria for Funds Distribution

F. Office of Technology and Information (OTI) (cont.-)

Also, this office is responsible for maintaining the technology information and communications infrastructure, developing the programming, and maintaining the Automated Case Management System (SAIC, Spanish acronym). This system needs to be updated gradually, since it was created in the 1980 and contains NAP participants' database. The ADSEF implemented an alternative recovery data center (DRC) to ensure service continuity at the Department's Headquarters, it consists of several servers with updates of our database and application servers that would be activated and available for our users in case of an emergency. This backup system will be available to the users that have access to a live communications line. The servers are located at the "Minillas" facilities, ADSEF is confident with the integrity of the secured, climate-controlled environment and will proactively monitor the "Minillas" data center and Network. OTI is also responsible for reading, analyzing, processing, and answering requests of information related to NAP participants, including those made within the agency, by other agencies in Puerto Rico and the United States, and by state and federal courts.

The OTI issues the PARIS list to local offices four times a year (February, May, August, and November) and matches the beneficiaries' information of Puerto Rico with the United States, making it easier to detect improper participation in NAP and TANF Programs.

VII. Criteria for Funds Distribution

F. Office of Technology and Information (OTI) (cont.-)

The information provided in the list will appear in the case numerical order as follows:

Region-Municipality- Office	It indicates where the case is active in Puerto Rico
SSN MUF/JUF PR	Social Security Number is verified to enter accurate information with the participants' eligibility documents, name, and date of birth of the person.
SSN JUF/ENC	Social Security and Name of Head of Household or Service Manager.
Type of Service	Nutrition Assistance Program or Temporary Assistance for Needy Families.
Beginning and Closing Dates	Year-Month-Day.
Social Security	Social Security, name, and date of birth.
State	Name of the State where it is reflected to receiving benefits, case, and contact phone number.
Address	Address in the United States.
Type of Service	Indicates the type of benefit received in the United States (Example: SNAP, TANF, Medicaid).

To review and update the information above, the local office schedules an appointment with the participant to review the information. Participants come to the office when there is a hit on PARIS, participants get summoned to the local office through an appointment to review and update the information above. If the participant does not attend the appointment, the Social and Family Assistance Technician proceeds to close the case and send the form of Action Taken (ADSEF-109) in the NAP.

DEPARTAMENTO DE LA
FAMILIA

ADMINISTRACIÓN DE
DESARROLLO
SOCIOECONOMICO
DE LA FAMILIA



2022 NAP of Operations STRATEGIES

VIII. FY 2022 STRATEGIES

For Fiscal Year 2022, ADSEF will continue developing the following strategies.

FAMILY MARKETS

The Family Market were approved by FNS as a permanent project on April 15, 2016. Family Markets are product of a collaborative agreement between the Department of Agriculture and the Administration for Agricultural Business Development (ADEA) with the Department of Family and the ADSEF. The Family Market resides in the Regulation Number 8775, "Regulation for the Organization and Development of Agricultural Family Markets in Puerto Rico", of July 22, 2016. The Regulation 8775 is a regulation of the Administration of Agricultural Business Development (ADEA) of the Department of Agriculture. ADEA responsible of the Family Market operation authorizing eligible products, selecting farmers, and promoting the markets

ADSEF certifies the eligible farmers for the acceptance of NAP benefit payments and sets aside a portion of the NAP grant administrative costs for the ADEA to cover part of their operational expenses. The ADEA will provide documentation to support their state match of 50% mainly from self-generated revenues. This agreement is included in the new collaborative agreement between the ADSEF and ADEA.

For FY 2022 ADSEF will continue reimbursing ADEA's 50% portion which is approximately \$350,000. ADSEF will use part of the NAP's administrative budget's Operation Costs (FMNP) to cover this expense. To calculate FY 2022 Family Markets total expenses, ADEA used as reference Family Market's FY 2021 expenses.

Currently, the Family Market is operating at the 10 regions with a total of the Island's 78 Municipalities.

VIII. FY 2022 STRATEGIES

For Fiscal Year 2022, ADSEF will continue developing the following strategies.

FAMILY MARKETS (cont.-)

ADSEF will continue working with municipal governments to coordinate transportation for disabled, elderly, and homeless participants. The Department of Agriculture selects accessible locations for the entire population and communities. As a regular procedure, persons with disabilities may assign an “authorized representative” to make their purchases and carry out transactions on their behalf, as defined in NAP Regulation Number 8684.

Farmers who participate in the Family Market are authorized by the Department of Agriculture, accordingly to the regulations of the ADEA and are certified by ADSEF as required by Regulation Number 8857. The ADEA has been meeting with participating farmers regarding these requirements. To be certified farmers, they must comply with requirements established in the OIC regulations covering certification.

The electronic voucher is a portion of the benefits that participants receive through the Family Card, which now includes an additional portion that is exclusively for the consumption of Puerto Rican agricultural products in the Family Markets. This additional portion is the result of targeting the monthly percent adjustment from the participant’s benefits. Once certified, they can redeem the electronic voucher and the additional benefits, as participants would do in any authorized retailer.

VIII. FY 2022 STRATEGIES

For Fiscal Year 2022, ADSEF will continue developing the following strategies.

FAMILY MARKETS (cont.-)

Participants can purchase fresh agricultural products at the Family Market venues through an “electronic voucher” in the Family Card which equals **6%** of the monthly adjustment.

To ensure the proper use of the program benefits, the Family Markets transactions are monitored by ADSEF’s Office of Inspection and Control (OIC). This office focuses on the use of the EBT system, provides program oversight, and conducts on site monitoring visits to markets. The OIC also certifies the Farmers’ EBT card transactions to verify compliance.

NAP Participants receive a communication which includes Family Markets information, the additional benefits received and the Family Markets schedule. In addition, Family Market’s partners collaborate with program’s informative posters, local and national media (written and radio press), banners, speakers, and social networks posts, among others.

Some of the markets’ advantages are: to increase contact between farmers and the NAP participants; provide nutritional benefits for participants when they purchase food; acquired locally grown products, quality products, food with high nutritional value; ensure marketing opportunities for farmers, maintenance and creation of agricultural jobs, and creation of new opportunities on agro-businesses and to the Island’s economy.

Participants have up to six (6) months (expunge) to use their Family Market NAP benefits, once deposited in their EBT benefits card, before they expired. If the funds reach the 6 months, they will be retrieved from the participants’ benefits and returned to the agency’s NAP accounts.

VIII. FY 2022 STRATEGIES Family Markets Draft Calendar

August to December 2021

Date:	Municipality:	SUPERVISOR	location:
August 4 , 2021	Florida		}
	Guayama		
	Patillas		
August 6, 2021	Vega Alta		
August 11, 2021	Aguada		
	Cidra		
	Castañer		
August 13, 2021	Ponce		
August 18,2021	Hormigueros		}
	Naguabo		
	Toa Alta		
August 20, 2021	San Lorenzo		
	Toa Baja		
August 25, 2021	Luquillo		
	Lares		
	Naranjito		
August 27, 2021	Canóvanas		
	Cabo Rojo		
	Isabela		
AUGUST			
NUMBER OF MUNICIPALITIES:			
19			
September 1, 2021	Salinas		
	Arecibo		
	Aguadilla		
September 3, 2021	Comerio		
	San Germán		
September 8, 2021	Trujillo Alto		
	Las Piedras		
September 10, 2021	Utua		}
	Juana Díaz		
	Orocovis		
September 15, 2021	Guayanilla		
	Juncos		
	Ciales		
September 17, 2021	Sabana Grande		
	Maunabo		
	Hatillo		
September 22, 2021	Yabucoa		
	Lajas		
September 24, 2021	Mayagüez		
September, 29 2021	Quebradillas		
	Fajardo		
SEPTEMBER			
NUMBER MUNICIPALITIES:			
21			
October 1, 2021	Guánica		
	Cayey		

VIII. FY 2022 STRATEGIES Family Markets Draft Calendar

August to December 2021 (cont.-)

	Morovis		
	Peñuelas		
October 8, 2021	Aguas Buenas		
	Manatí		
	Maricao		
October 13, 2021	Santa Isabel		OCTOBER NUMBER MUNICIPALITIES: 22
October 15, 2021	Vega Baja		
October 16, 2021	Jayuya		
	Bayamón		
	Añasco		
October 20, 2021	Río Grande		
October 22, 2021	Carolina		
	Las Marias		
October 27, 2021	Arroyo		
	Corozal		
	Coamo		
October 29, 2021	Yauco		
	Vieques		
	Aibonito		
November 3, 2021	Rincón		
	Barceloneta		NOVEMBER NUMBER MUNICIPALITIES: 10
November 5, 2021	Villalba		
	Barranquitas		
November 10, 2021	Camuy		
November 12, 2021	Cataño		
	Loíza		
November 17, 2021	San Sebastián		
November 19, 2021	Culebra		
	Guaynabo		
December 1, 2021	Humacao		DECEMBER NUMBER MUNICIPALITIES: 7
December 3, 2021	San Juan		
	Dorado		
December 8, 2021	Gurabo		
	Caguas		
December 10, 2021	Moca		

*Calendario no oficial, sujeto a cambio.

VIII. FY 2022 STRATEGIES

For Fiscal Year 2022, ADSEF will continue developing the following strategies.

Nutrition Education Program

ADSEF will continue providing NAP recipients a Nutrition Education Program (NEP) for Fiscal Year (FY) 2021. The program's principal goal is to outreach eligible individuals for NAP benefits; to teach how to make healthy food choices within a limited budget and choose physically active lifestyles consistent with the "Dietary Guidelines for Americans for 2015-2020 (Eight Edition)", My Plate, and the Puerto Rico Food Pyramid. The NEP is designed with the goal of promoting good health and preventing or postponing the onset of diet-related chronic diseases by changing the nutrition and physical activity behaviors of the participants.

To support and reinforce nutrition education messages for FY 2022, ADSEF will re-take the education campaign, which was postpone due to the COVID 19 last year. NEP will take this message to the communities by using mass public media, internet, and social networking.

The media campaign will continue to promote a wellness nutrition program for NAP recipients and provide educational, promotional materials and techniques to be able to achieve a more nutritious diet.

The Department of Family-ADSEF will administer a statewide NEP program promoting nutrition education and obesity prevention interventions, among low-income older adults.

NEP educators' goals are related with the following objectives:

- ☞ Make half your plate fruits and vegetables, at least half your grains whole grains and switch to fat-free or low-fat milk and milk products as shown My Plate for Healthy Puerto Rico.



VIII. FY 2022 STRATEGIES

For Fiscal Year 2022, ADSEF will continue developing the following strategies.

Nutrition Education Program (cont.-)

- ☞ Promote physical activity and reduce time spent in sedentary behaviors as part of a healthy lifestyle.
- ☞ Maintain appropriate calorie balance during each stage of life, limiting simple sugars and high sodium products.
- ☞ Help recipients stretch their benefits and prepare low cost easy, nutritious, and tasty meals, and take advantage of seasonal foods.
- ☞ Make the communities aware of proper nutrition can help prevent and manage chronic and acute condition in Puerto Rico through NEP.

Target Populations

Since the target population is NAP recipients, the characteristics described in the NAP State Plan of Operation, remain the same.

Diet Patterns

The NEP in addition to providing education services also monitors trends and dietary patterns of the NAP recipients. NEP educators provide orientations, questionnaires, and informative sheets in most of the activities they perform.

Obesity Trends

Today, we experience a different lifestyle. Also, portion sizes are now two to five times larger than they were in years past.

Health Impact

According to the National Vital Statistics Report of the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) in Atlanta, Georgia inadequate eating habits are identified as one of the major health risks associated with the top four among the ten leading causes of death. Overweight and obesity are conditions related with the pre-disposition to develop other chronic diseases.

VIII. FY 2022 STRATEGIES

For Fiscal Year 2022, ADSEF will continue developing the following strategies.

Nutrition Education Program (cont.-)

The NEP provides NAP recipients education and promotion strategies that help maximize food resources and make healthy food choices to support and promote good health. The NEP aim is to facilitate the voluntary adoption of eating and other nutrition related behaviors conducive to the health and well-being for those on a limited budget.

Goals and Objectives

NEP's goal is to improve the likelihood of NAP recipients to make healthy food choices with a limited budget and chose physically active lifestyles consistent with the Dietary Americans Guidelines. The Department of the Family-ADSEF in coordination with the Department of Health and other agencies will work collaboratively to create an effective and integrated services delivery system to benefit NEP participants in their neighborhoods, schools, work, playgrounds, and shops.

During next FY 2022 and in compliance with USDA-FNS guidance, Puerto Rico NEP will provide the following:

- ✓ Continue to train Program staff, home economists and Nutritionist on issues that strengthen a healthy nutrition education promotion for NAP participants.
- ✓ Site visits to various certified supermarkets to evaluate if the products are cost effective for a NAP participant with a limited budget, for a healthy menu certified by a nutritionist.
- ✓ Telephone surveys to learn about Family Card recipients' food practices in order to focus and re-evaluate educational strategies and interventions.
- ✓ Restart site visits to all ten (10) regions, local offices, family markets, and food distributions to reach NAP participants, to distribute information brochures and educate about healthy foods and the proper use of benefits.
- ✓ Use of technology and other visual resources to promote nutritional information, through educational capsules, etc.
- ✓ Develop monthly statistics' reports on people impacted by our educational program.
- ✓ Continue Child Care Food Program annual support by promoting nutritional education to care providers.
- ✓ Continue supporting ADFAN's Elderly Multiple Activity Centers (CAMPEA) by reviewing their certified menu.
- ✓ Establish collaborative efforts with local universities, the medical association, and the Food and Nutrition Commission to address the challenges of collecting population's obesity data.

VIII. FY 2022 STRATEGIES

For Fiscal Year 2022, ADSEF will continue developing the following strategies.

Nutrition Education Program (cont.-)

Methodology

The NEP Educators will encourage their efforts on behaviors that are associated with the risk reduction of some forms of cancer, diabetes type II and coronary heart diseases.

Different methods of dissemination will be used as media campaigns, interactive groups and one to one instruction, are among the approaches used to deliver nutrition education to NAP recipients. The NEP has three (3) Nutrition Educators that travel island-wide to provide nutrition lectures and presentations in different work sites such as local offices, community health fairs, public housing, supermarkets, schools and some senior care centers.

FY 2022 Strategies

Considering that COVID-19 pandemic is still a reality, NEP interventions could be group-based and individually. Education services could include direct or virtual nutrition education, health promotions, and virtual and in person intervention strategies. Nutrition Education implies an in-depth modification of eating habits for adults and the development of good eating habits in children. The message needs constant reiteration and must exploit all means of public broadcasting. At the same time, we are incentivizing the farmer markets for having fresh good healthy vegetables and fruits for NAP participants.

Media Campaign

Efforts for an educational campaign will include a mixed strategy using paid and nonpaid media efforts in traditional media, such as television, radio, print and billboards, as well as digital outlets and social media, focusing on educating families on how to best use their benefits, nutrition choices and staying physically active. Educational materials, forums, events, and discussion sessions will aid recipients to transform their eating habits, make healthier and maximize their benefits.

VIII. FY 2022 STRATEGIES

For Fiscal Year 2022, ADSEF will continue developing the following strategies.

Nutrition Education Program (cont.-)

The Nutritional Educational Program provides information to beneficiaries to promote the selection of nutritious foods. Most of the media effort are done through earned media efforts, but in lieu of the various changes to be implemented it is best to coordinate a non-paid and paid media efforts. This includes the creation, production and printing of written materials to be handed out to the public and shared through multi platforms and digital media, the development, media planning and the implementation of the campaign (radio, television, newspapers, magazine, billboards and digital) divided per media and effort. The educational campaign is worked with an external communications agencies in direct contact with ADSEF.

Nutrition Capsules

Educational capsules using public figures, professionals on the field of nutrition, chefs, doctors, and trainers will be created to reinforce positive messages and lifestyles. The capsules are targeted to all the population and will have a multimedia approach, using social media, local television, and radio. The educational campaign will also use a multimedia approach with paid media strategies in radio, television and digital media intended to promote the proper use of NAP benefits, prevent fraud, and promote healthy choices. The paid media messages will be reinforced with nonpaid media strategies in TV, radio, print media and digital outlets.

Recipe Cards

Nutrition educational efforts will also use digital and print recipe cards with a variety of healthy Puerto Rican recipes to be shared through social media and in events to be distributed among the NAP recipients. Recipes include USDA Foods made available in food distributions. The cards will be reviewed and updated with new recipes that will help in menu planning and educate all members of the family to commit to better nutritional choices.

VIII. FY 2022 STRATEGIES

For Fiscal Year 2022, ADSEF will continue developing the following strategies.

Nutrition Education Program (cont.-)

Nutrition Education online

Educational capsules for social media and public local television station, using public figures, professionals on the field of nutrition, chefs, doctors, and trainers will be created to reinforce positive messages and lifestyles. The capsules are targeted to all the population and will have a multimedia approach, using social media, local television, and radio. The educational campaign will also use a multimedia approach with paid media strategies in radio, television and digital media intended to promote the proper use of NAP benefits, prevent fraud, and promote healthy choices. The paid media messages will be reinforced with non-paid media strategies in TV, radio, print media and digital outlets.

Web-Site Enhancement

The ADSEF portal will have a section solely dedicated to nutrition education accessible to NAP participants and the general public. Events, educational videos, and recipes will also be shared through the website, promoting healthy choices and active lifestyles for a better wellbeing. The information prepared and shared in the portal will have updated nutritional information, and interactive activities for all family members with a links to other relevant sites. This link will also be available through a mobile application, that will be developed for those that do not have access to a computer but have a cell phone.

VIII. FY 2022 STRATEGIES

For Fiscal Year 2022, ADSEF will continue developing the following strategies.

Work Requirement (WOR) for the NAP

The Department of the Family started a four (4) phase Implementation process of the NAP Work Requirement in July 2021. Even though the WOR is not a NAP mandated program Puerto Rico has started off conversations with government agencies, FNS and stakeholders to begin with the early implementation of the WOR.

Puerto Rico's Work Requirement (PR-WOR) was designed using the SNAP's ABAWD work requirement model. Puerto Rico strategy is to provide eligible participants the opportunity of getting a job, an education or necessary trainings to help them enter the labor force. In addition, to increase labor force participation".

As part of the first phase ADSEF established an intra-agency committee which will serve as a governing body to design eligible participants work experiences and establish alliances with public and private sectors .

The Committee members are:

Secretary of the Department of the Family

Administrator for the Socioeconomic Development of the Family

Assistant Administrator for Programs, ADSEF

4 NAP Associate Directors

2 NAP Supervisors

1 TANF Program Representative

1 representative each of the following: Department of Labor, WIOA, AFFAF, NGO, and Private sector.

FNS Employment and Training Coordinator

As part of the planning phase ADSEF will complete the following strategies under this SPO:

- 1) Identify ABAWDS resulting from NAP participants' review process
- 2) ADSEF will coordinate with FNS, virtual trainings on WOR for NAP staff.
- 3) FNS will coordinate with ADSEF site visits to states' best practices on WOR's implementation.
- 4) ADSEF will start WOR first draft

VIII. FY 2022 STRATEGIES

For Fiscal Year 2022, ADSEF will continue developing the following strategies.

Puerto Rico NAP-Online Purchases Project (NAP-OLP)

The 2014 Farm Bill mandated USDA to conduct a pilot to test the feasibility and implications of allowing retail food stores to accept SNAP benefits through online transactions. This opportunity allowed households to make safe, secured, private, easy to use, in retail store online purchases. The project required that retailers provide similar support to that found for SNAP transactions. However, no benefits can be used to pay for fees of any type, such as delivery, service, or convenience fees. The goal of this project is to ensure that the foundational infrastructure necessary for running SNAP transactions online operates in a safe and secure manner.

During this FY 2022 SOP, ADSEF will encourage eligible food retailers to complete the NAP-OLP. In the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic, the method of shopping for groceries has evolved world-wide.

Retailers have re-invented their mechanisms to allow shoppers to perform their purchases through an online application to prevent the spread of the virus at conglomerated markets, so PR has not lagged. A great percent of our retailers had chosen to use online shopping as a new tool to provide safe and secured shopping for their customers. However, NAP participants have limited options when it comes to online shopping for food, since not many of the retailers that provide, this service are certified to accept the EBT benefits card. This affects directly the most vulnerable NAP populations exposing them to the virus because they must be physically present at a retailer in order to purchase food. Currently in Puerto Rico we have over 1.5 million NAP participants who receive the program's benefits. 25 % of this population are over 60 years old, being among the most vulnerable to become infected with the COVID-19.

Currently in Puerto Rico NAP participants just can order their products online, however they still cannot complete the payment process through the system yet. Since the project is still on a development and implementation process this stage has not been completed yet. Even though just certified retailers could implement this project, ADSEF is still developing the payment guidelines and certification process.

ADSEF, goal is to allow all EBT NAP card holders to perform online non-prepared food purchases full transactions, at ADSEF Certified Food Retailers. The retailer must guarantee that **no delivery or service fee** will be charged to the EBT NAP participant's benefits card. Program will be monitored by ADSEF's DIC.



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VIII. FY 2022 STRATEGIES (cont.-)

Call Center

ADSEF will establish a permanent call center to attend NAP participants and communities' questions on related to benefits, eligibility, reviews and others. In addition, in-takers will help complete NAP benefits applications and coordinate virtual appointments through TURNOS.PR with a case worker or program technician. This call center will eliminate the current 3.1.1.

TURNOS PR

ADSEF will continue with the implementation of the TURNOS PR implementation and trainings for staff. This is an application that will schedule participants appointments with case workers or NAP technicians. The program will be linked to ADSEF's on-line, and SIBIF applications.

ADSEF Digital

ADSEF will continue the implementation and trainings for this application. This is an improved and updated version of SIBIF. In addition to the online NAP applications, the program will allow caseworkers and technicians to revise cases, make changes, closeouts, request certifications and/or forms .

DEPARTAMENTO DE LA
FAMILIA

ADMINISTRACIÓN DE
DESARROLLO
SOCIOECONOMICO
DE LA FAMILIA



2022 NAP of State Plan of Operations
BUDGET



SPO NAP 2022

IX. BUDGET

For NAP 2022 Budget please refer to separate Excel Spreadsheets attached to this plan.



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X. Disclosure

Use or disclosure of information from applicant household records, exclusively for the program, shall be restricted to persons directly connected with the administration of enforcement of the provisions for the Nutrition Assistance Program, or with other Federal or federally aided means-tested programs.

XI. Non-Discrimination & Civil Rights

In accordance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (Public Law 88-352), section 11 (c) of the Food Stamp Act of 1977, as amended, the Age Discrimination Act of 1975 (Public Law-135), FNS instruction 113-1 and the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (Public Law 93-11, section 504) and all requirements composed by the regulation issues pursuant to these Acts by the Department of Agriculture to the effect that, no person in the United States shall, on the ground of race, color, national origin, sex, age and disability, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity in any program or activity conducted or funded by USDA, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be otherwise subject to discrimination under the Nutrition Assistance Program.

Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication for program information (e.g., Braille, large print, audiotape, American Sign Language), should contact the agency (state or local) where they applied for benefits. Individuals who are deaf, hard of hearing or have speech disabilities may contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339. Additionally, program information may be made available in languages other than English.

To file a program complaint of discrimination, complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form, (AD-3027) found online at: How to File a Complaint, and at any USDA office, or write a letter addressed to USDA and provide in the letter all of the information requested in the form. To request a copy of the complaint form, call (866) 632-9992. Submit your completed form or letter to USDA by:

mail: U.S. Department of Agriculture
Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights
1400 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C. 20250-9410;
fax: (202) 690-7442; or
email: program.intake@usda.gov.

This institution is an equal opportunity provider.



General Terms and Conditions

The state agency agrees to:

1. Administer the Nutrition Assistance Program in accordance with the responsibility assigned by the Omnibus Reconciliation Act of 1981, the federal regulations and instructions established by USDA, Food and Nutrition Service; and to implement the FNS - approved State Plan of Operation.
2. Expend 100 percent of the block grant funds, excluding carryover funds, established in response to OMB, Program Assessment Rating Tool.
3. Submit, on an annual basis, by July 1st of each year a State Plan of Operation for Nutrition Assistance Grant Funds.
4. Conduct an annual single audit of expenditures in compliance with the requirements in Part 3015 of 7 CFR of the Nutrition Assistance Program as required by FNS. The findings of such audit shall be reported to Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) no later than 120 days from the end of each fiscal year in which the audit is made as required by Section 285.4.
5. Submit to FNS for approval, amendment requests for any part of the Plan of Operations that is mandated by statute or regulation.
6. Monitor and report on any special project under the Nutrition Assistance Block Grant, which are administered by any agency other than the Department of Family.



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The Food Nutrition Service Agreement

The Food and Nutrition Service Agrees to:

1. Pay administrative costs in accordance with the Food Stamp Act of 1977, as amended, and with Federal Rules and Regulations (7 CFR, Part 285).
2. Carry out any other responsibilities delegated by the Secretary in the Food Stamp Act of 1977, as amended.

IN WITNESSES THEREOF, both parties hereto to sign this agreement in San Juan, Puerto Rico, on October 20, 2021



Carmen Gonzalez Magaz
Secretary
Department of the Family



Alberto Fradera Vazquez
Administrator
ADSEF

Patty Bennett
Administrator
Mid-Atlantic Region, FNS