§ 275.15 Data management.

(a) Analysis. Analysis is the process of classifying data, such as by areas of program requirements or use of error-prone profiles, to provide a basis for studying the data and determining trends including significant characteristics and their relationships.
(b) Evaluation. Evaluation is the process of determining the cause(s) of each deficiency, magnitude of the deficiency, and geographic extent of the deficiency, to provide the basis for planning and developing effective corrective action.

(c) Each State agency must analyze and evaluate at the State and project area levels all management information sources available to:

(1) Identify all deficiencies in program operations and systems;
(2) Identify causal factors and their relationships;
(3) Identify magnitude of each deficiency, where appropriate (This is the frequency of each deficiency occurring based on the number of program records reviewed and where applicable, the amount of loss either to the program or participants or potential participants affected by the existence of the deficiency, if applicable);
(4) Determine the geographic extent of each deficiency (e.g., Statewide/individual project area or management unit); and,
(5) Provide a basis for management decisions on planning, implementing, and evaluating corrective action.

(d) In the evaluation of data, situations may arise where the State agency identifies the existence of a deficiency, but after reviewing all available management information sources sufficient information is not available to make a determination of the actual causal factor(s), magnitude, or geographic extent necessary for the development of appropriate corrective action. In these situations, the State agency shall be responsible for gathering additional data necessary to make these determinations. This action may include, but is not limited to, conducting additional full or partial ME reviews in one or more project areas/management units or discussions with appropriate officials.

(e) Deficiencies identified from all management information sources must be analyzed and evaluated together to determine their causes, magnitude, and geographic extent. Causes indicated and deficiencies identified must be examined to determine if they are attributable to a single cause and can be effectively eliminated by a single action. Deficiencies and causes identified must also be compared to the results of past corrective action efforts to determine if the new problems arise from the causal factors which contributed to the occurrence of previously identified deficiencies.

(f) Data analysis and evaluation must be an ongoing process to facilitate the development of effective and prompt corrective action. The process shall also identify when deficiencies have been eliminated through corrective action efforts, and shall provide for the reevaluation of deficiencies and causes when it is determined that corrective action has not been effective.

(g) Identification of High Error Project Areas/Counties/Local Offices. FNS may use quality control information to determine which project areas/counties/local offices have reported payment error rates that are either significantly greater than the State agency average or greater than the national error standard of the Program. When FNS notifies a State agency that a “high error” area exists, the State agency shall ensure that corrective action is developed and reported in accordance with the provisions of §275.17. If FNS identifies a “high error” locality which a State agency has previously identified as error-prone and taken appropriate action, no further State agency shall be required. If a State agency’s corrective action plan fails to address problems in FNS-identified “high error” areas, FNS may require a State agency to implement new or modified cost-effective procedures for the certification of households.


Subpart E—Corrective Action

§275.16 Corrective action planning.

(a) Corrective action planning is the process by which State agencies shall determine appropriate actions to reduce substantially or eliminate deficiencies in program operations and provide responsive service to eligible households.