

P-2114 Handling Returned Mail (1/1/25, B25-02)

Included Programs:

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|--|---|--|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Health Care | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 3SquaresVT | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> General Assistance |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Long Term Care | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Reach Up | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Essential Persons |
| | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Fuel Assistance | |

This procedure addresses how to handle All Programs mail returned to the Application Document Processing Center (ADPC).

1. The ADPC generally processes the returned mail with the following designations:

- **Temporarily Away:** The original documents are remailed to the client at the updated address.
- **Forwarding Mail:** (e.g. Returned with new address, returned for a better address/address not viewable or complete)

- The ADPC re-mails the original documents to the client at the updated address.
- The envelope and first page of notice are scanned to the case file.

- **Non-Forwarding Mail** (e.g. Undeliverable/address unknown)

- The envelope and first page of notice are scanned to the case file.

2. For 3SquaresVT, Reach Up, Fuel Assistance, General Assistance, and Essential Persons programs, use the following procedures:

- Returned mail with no forwarding address from initial application or recertification application.

- The case is closed for reason whereabouts unknown.

- This procedure only applies to returned mail with no forwarding address from initial or recertification applications.

3. For Fuel Assistance programs, use the following procedures:

- The Fuel benefits will be held until the fuel information at the new address is updated.

- Alternate Reporter returned mail should follow the following process:

- **Forwarding Mail:**

- Update the mailing address. Send a Verification Request for fuel only and request the client contact ESD, "ESD had received returned mail. Call the Benefit Service Center to inform us of changes." If no response to the Verification Request, the case is closed for reason non-cooperation. Do not close any other program.

- **Non-Forwarding Mail:**

- Check to see if the address matches the most recent correspondence with the client. Send a Verification Request for fuel only with a Change Report Form. Enter a case note indicating the returned mail and when the Change Report is due. If no response or if Change Report Form is returned undeliverable, the case is closed fuel due to non-cooperation. Do not change the address to "whereabouts unknown". Do not close any other program.

4. For the 3SquaresVT program, use the following procedures:

- Alternate Reporter returned mail should be noted in a future case note and remain on the case until the next review.

- **Forwarding Mail**

- Do not send a Verification Change Request Notice. Update the mailing address. Create a future case note to verify the change at the next interim report or recertification, whichever comes first.
- If the new address is out of state, this is considered an unclear change and the action would be taken at the next interim report or recertification.

- **Non-Forwarding Mail:**

- If Undeliverable/address unknown, do not send a Verification Change Request Notice. Create a future case note to verify the change at the next interim report or recertification, whichever comes first.

5. For the Reach Up programs, use the following procedures:

- Alternate Reporter returned mail should be noted in a future case note and remain on the case until the next review.

- **Forwarding Mail:**

- Do not send a Verification Change Request Notice. Update the mailing address. Create a future case note to verify the change at the next interim report or recertification, whichever comes first.
- Out of State address:
 - Update the mailing address to the reported address. Send a Verification Change Request Notice for Reach Up only and request the client contact ESD, "ESD had received returned mail. Call the Benefit Service Center to inform us of changes." Enter a case note indicating the returned mail and when the Verification Change Request Notice is due. If no response to the Verification Change Request Notice, you may close Reach Up non-cooperation. Do not close 3SquaresVT or 3Squares in a SNAP.

- **Non-Forwarding Mail:**

- Undeliverable/address unknown - Do not send a Verification Change Request Notice. Create a future case note to verify the change at the next interim report or recertification, whichever comes first.

6. For the General Assistance program, use the following procedures:

- Alternate Reporter returned mail should be noted in a future case note and remain on the case until the next review.

- **Forwarding Mail:**

- Do not send a Verification Change Request Notice. Update the mailing address. Create a future case note to verify the change at the next interim report or recertification, whichever comes first.

- **Non-Forwarding Mail:**

- Undeliverable/address unknown - Do not send a Verification Change Request Notice. Create a future case note to verify the change at the next interim report or recertification, whichever comes first.

7. For the Health Care and Long-Term Care programs, use the following procedures:

- Health care's returned mail is received at the Application & Document Processing Center (ADPC) and forwarded to the health care units. Returned mail will fall into one of three categories for processing within the health care units:

- Mail with an **In-State** Forwarding address
- Mail with an **Out-of-State** Forwarding address
- Mail with **NO Forwarding address**
- If able to, health care units will update a client's case record with the new address provided from the USPS. When not able to, health care units will attempt to outreach clients via phone, text message when possible and verification notice to confirm the address. A 'good faith' effort is made to contact the client, which includes allowing at least 30 days for the client to respond. If there is no response, termination of coverage may occur.
- Alternate Reporter returned mail should be noted in a future case note and remain on the case until the next review.