

## .02 Optional NA Participants

[REVISION 45](#)  
(01/01/17 - 12/31/17)

Participants not required to be in the same budgetary unit as other persons who live in the home may request to be considered in separate NA cases.

The PI may verify two or more separate NA budgetary units with any one of the following documents:

- A completed and signed [official application](#) that includes a listing of all persons who purchase and prepare their food separately from the PI's NA budgetary unit.
- A completed and signed Separate Household Status (FA-255) form.
- A completed and signed Separate Household Statement (F002) notice.
- A [participant statement](#) verifying who in the PI's home purchases and prepares food separately from the PI's NA budgetary unit.

Separate NA budgetary units must be verified when any of the following occur:

- New application interview.
- Renewal interview when any of the following are discovered:
  - Change of residential address
  - Change in the budgetary unit
  - Change in persons residing in the home
  - Verification of separate NA budgetary units is not in the [case file\(g\)](#)
- There is a reported change in any of the following:
  - Residential address
  - Budgetary unit
  - Persons residing in the home

Do not deny the application solely because the participant signs a statement claiming separate NA budgetary units when they must be considered one NA case. Provide the PI an opportunity to apply for everyone who must be in the NA case together. (See [Mandatory NA Participants](#))

The following may be considered as separate NA budgetary units:

- Participants who live together and who purchase and prepare their food separately.
- Participants who are unable to purchase and prepare their own food when both of the following apply:

The participant has a disability that prevents them from purchasing and preparing food.

The participant has others purchase and prepare their food separately for them.

- Parents and adult children, age 22 and over, when they live together and purchase and prepare their food separately.

**NOTE** When currently receiving benefits, consider adult children eligible for separate NA case status the month after the month of their 22nd birthday.

- Brothers and sisters, 18 and over, not living with their parents when they purchase and prepare their food separately.
- Participants residing in separate dwellings on the same property. These participants may purchase and prepare their food together and still be considered separate NA budgetary units.
- A child or sibling may be living in a separate dwelling or vehicle on the property of parents or siblings. The separate dwelling or vehicle may be considered the primary residence of the child or sibling for as long as the child or sibling does not use the facilities in the parents' home. When the separate dwelling is their primary residence, they may be considered a separate NA budgetary unit.

**EXCEPTION**

Separate NA budgetary units cannot be allowed when the child or sibling uses the bathroom or kitchen within the home of the parent or sibling on a regular basis.

- Migrant families living in a camp setting who purchase and prepare their food together but live in separate dwellings.
- Native American families living on the reservation who purchase and prepare their food together but live in separate dwellings.
- The PI has the option to include or not include a foster child or adult in the budgetary unit. When not included, the foster child or adult cannot be a separate NA budgetary unit. Consider the foster care child or adult as a [boarder](#). For more information see [Foster Individuals-NA](#).
- An otherwise [mandatory NA participant](#) who works or attends school away from home may be considered a separate NA budgetary unit when both of the following have occurred:

The participant has been out of the home at least 30 consecutive calendar days.

The participant has established a permanent residence away from the budgetary unit (e.g. an apartment or house, not a motel).

NOTE Consider the separate residence of an otherwise mandatory NA participant questionable and verify the residence.

- Participants who are both elderly (60 or over) and disabled (and their spouse) may normally purchase and prepare food with non-participants and be allowed as a separate NA budgetary unit. For this to occur, the following conditions must be met:

The elderly and disabled participant must be unable to purchase and prepare meals because of either of the following:

- A permanent disability. (See [Elderly or Disabled NA Participants](#) for permanent disability requirements)
- A non-disease related, severe, permanent disability. (See [Medically Qualified Sources\(g\)](#))

When the participant has no documentation from [SSA](#) or [VA](#), disability may be verified by a statement from a [medically qualified source\(g\)](#).

The income of the others living with the elderly and disabled participant must be at or less than [165% of federal poverty level](#). This does not include the income of the elderly and disabled participant and their spouse.

The elderly and disabled participant must cooperate in obtaining all required verification for those with whom they live. This includes income verification.

**WARNING**

For disabled participants or those required to purchase or prepare food as a group see [Residents of Institutions-NA](#), [GLA](#), and [Drug and Alcohol Treatment Centers](#))

Participants may be forced to live in a public or private shelter to protect themselves from abuse. When this occurs, they are considered a separate NA case. Key SH in the PT field on SEPA.

The SH Participation Code allows the abused participant to receive NA in the same month that they received NA in another case when they resided with the abusive person. The residential address is the PO Box of the shelter, or when no PO Box, the local office. (See [Domestic Violence Emergency Shelters](#))