

How to read the Combined Manual (CM)

The Combined Manual (CM) was developed to provide a complete, authoritative, concise set of program provisions. It gives a single policy reference for MFIP, SNAP, MSA, GA, HSP, and RCA. Also included are emergency programs.

The size of each section is limited. Size limitations require that some topics are split into related sections or sub-sections. Because of this, the CM makes extensive use of cross-referencing.

The 1st page of each chapter gives a general overview of the chapter's contents, this section is called the "general provisions". It provides an introduction to the chapter and outlines the material covered by the sections in the chapter.

Many sections have general provisions at the beginning which apply to all programs, unless program headings say, "No provisions", as noted below.

Separate program headings may also contain:

- Additions to the general provisions.
- Exceptions to the general provisions. The word EXCEPT or EXCEPTION will be in capital letters.
- "Follow general provisions." This means the general provisions fully describe the provisions of the individual program and there are no additional provisions for that program.
- "Follow (name of another program above)." This means the program's provisions are the same as the other program named.

Where a program's provisions say to follow the provisions of another program, the CM may say "this program" to indicate it refers to the program for which you are reading the provisions. For example, GA says "Follow MFIP", and the MFIP provisions say "a person receiving assistance from this program...". "This program" means MFIP if you are reading it for MFIP provisions, but it means GA if you are reading it for the GA provisions.

- "No provisions." This indicates that the section topic (including the general provisions) does NOT apply to that program.

ALWAYS read BOTH the general provisions and the program provisions to understand the complete policy on that topic for any program.

Chapter 31 (Non-Citizen Guidance)

This chapter is formatted to minimize cross-referencing and hold information needed to determine eligibility based on immigration status in one CM location.

When an eligibility worker receives a case involving one or more non-citizen unit members, they should start by going through the steps in the Roadmap for Non-Citizen Cases found in Guides and Handouts. The roadmap will lead workers to Chapter 31 to help them determine eligibility based on immigration status or classification for all programs:

- Sections 0031.01 - 0031.27 are titled and organized based on immigration statuses or classifications that are treated similarly for the purposes of public benefits eligibility.
 - Sub-sections provide information specific to each immigration status or classification.
 - Each section includes a chart showing program eligibility, factors to consider, and relevant cross-reference links for the specific immigration status or classification.
 - Any unique circumstances or considerations are also noted in the sections.

- Sections 0031.30 - 0031.42 are titled and organized based on processes related to non-citizen eligibility.