

E. Qualifying Quarters of Work

1. Determining the qualifying work quarters for noncitizens

- (A) Qualifying quarters of work can only be credited to Lawful Permanent Residents (LPRs). An LPR can work to get the quarters or receive credits from their spouse or parents. Qualified noncitizens who do not have their INS status adjusted to LPR must become one before they can get credits for the quarters of work.
- (B) To calculate qualifying work quarters, count the noncitizen's own work quarters, quarters worked by a parent when the noncitizen was under age 18 (including quarters worked before the noncitizen was born), and quarters worked by the noncitizen's spouse during their marriage. To get credit for a spouse's work quarters, the marriage must not have ended in divorce.
- (C) Quarters occurring after January 1, 1997, do not count if the noncitizen or the person who worked the quarter received SNAP, Medicaid (except emergency medical), SSI or TANF during the quarter. Use BEIN screens for SSI receipt-ELGR for TANF and Medical history. SCEH indicates SNAP history for only the past three years. However, most SNAP recipients also receive medical.
- (D) Verify 40 qualifying work quarters for noncitizens by one of the following methods:
 - (1) Accessing the Social Security Administration's (SSA's) Quarters of Coverage History System (QCHS);
 - (2) Verifying work income and calculating the appropriate quarters using SSA's methodology; or
 - (3) A combination of both.

Alien Status: [461-120-0125](#)

2. Using QCHS

- (A) When verifying work quarters through QCHS, access the system through TPQY. A *Consent for Release of Information* ([SSA-3288](#)) must be completed and signed by each person whose work history is being accessed and has not signed the SNAP application. The QCHS response will be the TPQY Qualifying Quarters History screen. It will indicate quarters that can be credited by the following codes: A, C, D, F, G, J, M, R, S, X or *. When the client does not qualify for a quarter of coverage, the response will be N.
- (B) For example, a client's TPQY Qualifying Quarters History screen could show the following:

1986	NNNN	1990	AAAA	1994	CCCC
1987	NAAC	1991	AAAA	1995	CCCC
1988	NNNN	1992	AANN	1996	NNNN
1989	NNAA	1993	CCCC	1997	NNNN

- (C) This response verifies 27 quarters of coverage. The client would not be eligible unless they could either verify additional wages for the periods showing no coverage, or they could be credited with additional quarters from a relative (a spouse, or a parent while they were under age 18).
- (D) When quarters of coverage are questionable, the code will be # or Z. If the client is not eligible without these quarters, do one of the following:
- (1) For a Z that is 1977 or earlier or a #, refer the case to the SSA Office of Central Records Operations (OCRO) for investigation. Complete a *Request to Resolve Questionable Quarters of Coverage (QC)* (SSA 512) (paper only) or other written request with the client's name, SSN, date of birth, year or years in question and a return address. Send it with a copy of the TPQY Qualifying Quarters History output to:

SSA, OCRO
P.O. Box 17750
Baltimore, MD 21235-0001

In 45 days another TPQY request will show updated information. If there has been no update within 60 days, call 800-775-7802 (SSA-OCRO, Earnings Discrepancy).

- (2) For a Z that is 1978 or later, or when the client claims there are missing quarters, the client (or the person whose quarters are being verified) must complete a *Request for Correction of Earnings Record (SSA-7008)*. They must write "Welfare Reform" at the top of the form. They must verify the earnings with documents such as W-2s, pay stubs, a tax return, or an employer statement. Mail the form and verification to:

SSA, OCRO
P.O. Box 17752
Baltimore, MD 21235-0001

If the client has no documentation of the work performed, they should contact their local SSA office or call 800-772-1213 to arrange an appointment.

- (E) If the client claims they used more than one SSN or allowed other people to use their SSN, they must contact their local SSA office or call 800-772-1213 to set up an appointment. Give them a copy of their TPQY Qualifying Quarters History record and advise them to take it and any proof of earnings they may have to the SSA appointment.

- (F) When a client disagrees with the TPQY Qualifying Quarters History record and SSA gives the client documentation to verify that they are investigating the record, SNAP can be approved for up to six months. Advise the client that if SSA’s investigation does not result in 40 work quarters to verify their eligibility, the benefits received pending verification will be an overpayment. Report all clients certified for SNAP pending verification in this manner, to the SNAP Program Analyst in the DHS Policy and Budget Section.
- (G) When a consent form cannot be completed because someone refuses to complete it or cannot be located, SSA cannot release information on work quarters. In that case, accept the client’s reasonable declaration of the other person’s work quarters.
- (H) On the SSA response, also note any information given about a client’s eligibility for SSI, because from January 1, 1997, to the present, if the client received SSI during the quarter, the quarter does not count.

3. Calculating quarters using SSA methodology

- (A) Because of the lag time for processing employer information through SSA, their system will not have information available to verify quarters of coverage for the most recent two-year period. Workers use the SSA methodology to calculate quarters of coverage for this period, and for any period of time the client verifies income from work that is not included in SSA’s record. SSA would not have the income information for child care or housekeeper work performed in a private home, for example, if the employer failed to pay Social Security taxes.
- (B) In order for quarters of work to count, it is not necessary for the client to have paid into the Social Security system. Instead, it is necessary that they earned enough for a quarter to be credited.
- (C) Use the verification sources from the *Verifying Client Information* worker guide ([MP-WG#2](#)) at the end of this manual, to verify earned income for periods not verified by SSA’s records. Acceptable sources include pay stubs, W-2 forms or tax records.
- (D) Once income has been verified, use the following to determine qualifying quarters:

If the year is:	Credit 1 quarter for at least this amount	Credit 2 quarters for at least this amount	Credit 3 quarters for at least this amount	Credit 4 quarters for at least this amount
1978	\$250	\$500	\$750	\$1,000

If the year is:	Credit 1 quarter for at least this amount	Credit 2 quarters for at least this amount	Credit 3 quarters for at least this amount	Credit 4 quarters for at least this amount
1979	\$260	\$520	\$780	\$1,040
1980	\$290	\$580	\$870	\$1,160
1981	\$310	\$620	\$930	\$1,240
1982	\$340	\$680	\$1,020	\$1,360
1983	\$370	\$740	\$1,110	\$1,480
1984	\$390	\$780	\$1,170	\$1,560
1985	\$410	\$820	\$1,230	\$1,640
1986	\$440	\$880	\$1,320	\$1,760
1987	\$460	\$920	\$1,380	\$1,840
1988	\$470	\$940	\$1,410	\$1,880
1989	\$500	\$1,000	\$1,500	\$2,000
1990	\$520	\$1,040	\$1,560	\$2,080
1991	\$540	\$1,080	\$1,620	\$2,160
1992	\$570	\$1,140	\$1,710	\$2,280
1993	\$590	\$1,180	\$1,770	\$2,360
1994	\$620	\$1,240	\$1,860	\$2,480
1995	\$630	\$1,260	\$1,890	\$2,520
1996	\$640	\$1,280	\$1,920	\$2,560
1997	\$670	\$1,340	\$2,010	\$2,680
1998	\$700	\$1,400	\$2,100	\$2,800
1999	\$740	\$1,480	\$2,220	\$2,960
2000	\$780	\$1,560	\$2,340	\$3,120
2001	\$830	\$1,660	\$2,490	\$3,320
2002	\$870	\$1,740	\$2,610	\$3,480
2003	\$890	\$1,780	\$2,670	\$3,560
2004	\$900	\$1,800	\$2,700	\$3,600
2005	\$920	\$1,840	\$2,760	\$3,680

If the year is:	Credit 1 quarter for at least this amount	Credit 2 quarters for at least this amount	Credit 3 quarters for at least this amount	Credit 4 quarters for at least this amount
2006	\$970	\$1,940	\$2,910	\$3,880
2007	\$1,000	\$2,000	\$3,000	\$4,000
2008	\$1,050	\$2,100	\$3,150	\$4,200
2009	\$1,090	\$2,180	\$3,270	\$4,360
2010	\$1,120	\$2,240	\$3,360	\$4,480
2011	\$1,120	\$2,240	\$3,360	\$4,480
2012	\$1,130	\$2,260	\$3,390	\$4,520

(E) In addition, to determine quarters prior to 1978:

- (1) Assign one credit for each calendar quarter where the client earned at least \$50 (including agricultural wages for the years 1951 through 1954);
- (2) For agricultural wages during 1955 through 1977, assign a credit for each \$100 earned (limited to four credits per year);
- (3) Assign four credits for each taxable year where the client's net self-employment income was at least \$400.

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