

For: FSA Employees

**Electronic Forms (eForms) Processing**

Approved by: Deputy Administrator, Management



**1 Overview**

**A Background**

eForms are a component of the Federal Government’s eGov effort; one of the Presidential Initiatives enacted to streamline operations and increase efficiency using computers and the World Wide Web (www). The Government Paperwork Elimination Act requires all Federal departments to provide individuals or entities the option to submit information, transact business, and maintain records online.

eForms enables registered users to submit completed eForms electronically. Many forms can be completed and submitted online; however, some forms **must** be printed, personally hand-signed in ink, and submitted to the local USDA Service Center by mail or FAX.

**B Purpose**

This notice:

- explains the eForms process
- identifies eForms resources
- provides eForms guidance.

**C Contacts**

If additional information is needed, contact the appropriate office as follows.

Employee Location	Contact
County or State Office	State eGov Coordinator.
National Office	Ragh Singh by either of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• e-mail at <b>ragh.singh@wdc.usda.gov</b></li> <li>• telephone at 202-720-7094.</li> </ul>

<p><b>Disposal Date</b></p> <p>October 1, 2007</p>	<p><b>Distribution</b></p> <p>All FSA employees; State Offices relay to County Offices</p>
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## 2 Submitting, Receiving, and Processing eForms

### A Obtaining eAuthentication User ID and Password

To use eForms, users **must** obtain a Level 2 eAuthentication user ID and password. This process is available on line at <http://www.eauth.egov.usda.gov/eauthCreateAccount.html>.

### B Submitting eForms to Service Centers

After users have received their Level 2 eAuthentication user ID and password, they can submit eForms to any USDA Service Center. Users may also attach external files such as scanned documents, spreadsheets, etc. to eForm submissions.

Unique confirmation numbers are assigned to every submission (package), enabling users to track the status of their submission.

**Note:** Whether users are submitting 1 form, or a group of forms with external documents attached, it is called a “package”. Packages are identified by system-assigned confirmation numbers enabling online tracking.

The eForms web site at <http://www.sc.egov.usda.gov/eforms/mainservlet> provides useful site demonstrations and general eForms information.

**Note:** The eForms web site explains that anyone may browse, complete, or print any of the eForms available to the public by clicking the “Browse Forms” button. However, if users want to submit their completed forms online, he/she **must** have a valid Level 2 eAuthentication user ID and password.

### C Generating eForms

All eForms:

- are identified by their form number
- include a short description
- include an instruction page.

Detailed instructions are available for all eForms. It may be helpful to print the instructions to use while completing eForms. All eForms are fillable (unless otherwise indicated in the eForms instructions for a particular form) and Section 508 compliant.

Users can open, save, edit, close, and submit eForms they complete. The save option **does not** save the eForm to the user’s PC; it is saved to the eForms Central Web Server. eForms can **only** be accessed by the initiating user. Before eForm submission, users can revise the information on the eForms Central Web Server at any time.

## 2 Submitting, Receiving, and Processing eForms (Continued)

### C Generating eForms (Continued)

Users **must** CLICK “Submit” to send the completed eForms and attachments to the Service Center of their choosing. Clicking “Submit” links the user to Office Information Profile (OIP) data. To direct their submission, users a map of the United States is displayed and **must** select a “State” and “County” from the map.

After selecting the desired Service Center, users may attach additional forms, enter comments, and provide their e-mail address. User’s e-mail address is **not** required but will greatly improve service.

A screen is displayed asking users to confirm submission of their package to a Service Center for processing and to attest that the information is correct. All documents listed are forwarded to the Service Center as 1 package.

**Note:** Users **cannot** modify a package once it has been submitted. To make a change the user **must** revise and resubmit the package to the Service Center.

### D Checking the eForms Web Site for Packages

All employees are advised to check the eForms Work Queue at <https://formsadmin.sc.egov.usda.gov> for user packages. E-mail notification of waiting eForms packages is inconsistent; therefore, office managers **must** designate a staff member to check the eForms Work Queue daily. The Work Queue will list packages sent to their Service Center. Everyone identified as a specific Agency employee in an office can access all items sent to that office.

The eForms Work Queue web site includes a User Guide, Training Guide, help, contact, and frequently asked questions assistance.

Before a package can be **Accepted, Redirected, or Returned**, the documents **must** be accessed, printed, and reviewed for completeness. A unique confirmation number, user name, and date will be printed on each document. Service Center employees are **not** able to modify any information submitted. Packages will move to **Pending** status after the documents have been reviewed for completeness.

### E Accepting Packages

After reviewing the user’s package and verifying that the documents have been completed correctly, the package should be accepted by clicking on the “Accept” button linked to that specific package.

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### 2 Submitting, Receiving, and Processing eForms (Continued)

#### E Accepting Packages (Continued)

**Accepting a package does not imply that the user has been approved or has been deemed eligible to receive any assistance;** it **only** acknowledges that the office has received a complete package and that processing of the request can begin.

Accepted packages are forwarded to the Accepted folder in the eForms Work Queue.

FSA employees shall redirect packages that have been erroneously submitted to the wrong Service Center Office. To **redirect** a package, select the appropriate user and package and CLICK “Redirect” button. When redirecting a package, select the correct Service Center and Enter the reason for the redirection.

**Note:** If users provide an e-mail address, users will receive an automatic notification about the revised processing office.

#### F Returning Packages

FSA employees **must** return packages when if the user has **not** filled out an eForm correctly or completely. To **return** a package, pull-up the appropriate user and package, and CLICK “Return” button. The employee returning the package **must** explain in detail the reason the package is being returned and provide their name, Agency, and telephone number.

#### G Upcoming Feature - Employees Creating Packages

A feature allowing employees to send partially completed applications to Agency users is being developed. This would allow the user to enter specific information and return the package to the Service Center, thereby increasing accuracy and efficiency.

### 3 Online Reports and General eForm Policies

#### A Service Center Reports

This table lists 4 online reports that each Service Center can view to monitor and track eForms activity.

Report	eForms Activity
Volume Statistics	All eForms activity for the Service Center.
Open Items	All packages sent to the Service Center that need to be accepted, redirected, or returned.
Processing Statistics	The average length of time a package is opened in the queue.
Redirect Statistics	How many users are being redirected and how often.

**3 Online Reports and General eForm Policies (Continued)**

**B Electronic Signature**

eForms submitted online have been “electronically-signed” and no other signature is required. For **most** programs, eForms have the same validity as manually signed forms.

**Note:** For processes that require 2 signatures; the eForms eFiling system does **not** accommodate 2 electronic signatures.

**Example: FLP Guarantees**, where loan officer and borrower signatures are required, the:

- loan officer’s signature is submitted electronically
- lender is responsible for submitting a “hard-copy” of the application signed by the borrower.

This is required by 2-FLP, subparagraphs 69.5 B, 70 A, and 73 B **before** FSA will issue a loan guarantee.

When a package is received online, the documents included in the package **must** be processed in the traditional manual/legacy manner and handled according to existing program regulations.

**C eForms Listing**

Employees can access and print a list of FSA eForms that may be accepted for electronic signature from the FSA Employee Forms Intranet web site at <http://165.221.16.90/dam/ffasforms/currentforms.asp>.

This table provides the steps to view or print the list.

Step	Action
1	Select “Yes” from the drop-down box next to the “Electronic Signature Accepted” text.
2	Leave all other fields blank. CLICK “Submit”.
3	A list will be displayed of all forms approved for electronic signature.
4	To print the list, CLICK “File” from the browser menu, then CLICK “Print”.

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### 4 State and County Office Action

#### A State Office Action

SED's shall appoint a State eGov Coordinator. State eGov Coordinators **must**:

- monitor status of the eForms service **daily** to ensure that packages are processed in a timely manner
- train new employees in using eForms.

**Note:** The State eGov Coordinator can monitor eForms activity for the entire State, county by county.

#### B County Office Action

County Offices **must**:

- become familiar with the eForms user process
- access the eForms Work Queue once every workday
- review each item in a package for completeness and determine the next appropriate action
- print all forms and attachments included in the eForms package
- process accepted eForms in the traditional manner and according to Agency policy for that program
- if the correct Service Center **cannot** be found in eForms when redirecting a package, FAX or mail a printed copy of the eForms to the correct Service Center.

5 Quick References

A Quick Reference Guide

Following is a list of references and where to find them.

What	Where to Find It
eForms Employee Policy and User's Guide (updated June 17, 2002).	<a href="https://formsadmin.sc.egov.usda.gov">https://formsadmin.sc.egov.usda.gov</a> CLICK "User's Guide"
Checking the Work Queue for packages and view online reports.	<a href="https://formsadmin.sc.egov.usda.gov">https://formsadmin.sc.egov.usda.gov</a>
Web site to find, complete, and submit eForms and to access site demonstration.	<a href="http://forms.sc.egov.usda.gov/eforms/mainservlet">http://forms.sc.egov.usda.gov/eforms/mainservlet</a>
Local Registration Authority (LRA) training.	<a href="http://www.eauth.egov.usda.gov">http://www.eauth.egov.usda.gov</a> CLICK "LRA Login"
Web site for users to signup for an eAuthentication Level 2 account.	<a href="http://www.eauth.egov.usda.gov/">http://www.eauth.egov.usda.gov/</a> CLICK "Create An Account"
For LRA's to take users to Level 2 after identity proofing.	<a href="http://www.eauth.egov.usda.gov">http://www.eauth.egov.usda.gov</a>
Complete Service Center Information Management System linking process.	<a href="https://scimslinkmgr.sc.egov.usda.gov">https://scimslinkmgr.sc.egov.usda.gov</a> CLICK "HELP"
FSA Security Help Desk to reset eAuthentication password.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• e-mail at <a href="mailto:eauthhelpdesk@usda.gov">eauthhelpdesk@usda.gov</a></li> <li>• telephone at 800-457-3642</li> </ul>
USDA user statement	<a href="http://UserStatement.usda.gov">http://UserStatement.usda.gov</a>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• USDA user statement demonstration</li> <li>• Representative Link Manager System (RLMS)</li> <li>• RLMS user display</li> <li>• complete RLMS process.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="http://userstatement.usda.gov/Demo/">http://userstatement.usda.gov/Demo/</a></li> <li>• <a href="https://aegean.sc.egov.usda.gov/Representatives/DelegationMaint/findrep.asp">https://aegean.sc.egov.usda.gov/Representatives/DelegationMaint/findrep.asp</a></li> <li>• <a href="https://aegean.sc.egov.usda.gov/representatives/logdisplay/regrept.asp">https://aegean.sc.egov.usda.gov/representatives/logdisplay/regrept.asp</a></li> <li>• <a href="https://aegean.sc.egov.usda.gov/Representatives/DelegationMaint/findrep.asp">https://aegean.sc.egov.usda.gov/Representatives/DelegationMaint/findrep.asp</a> CLICK "HELP"</li> </ul>