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Food Stamp Program Operations Study

State and Local Computer Matching Operations

United States Department of Agriculture

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STATE AND LOCAL COMPUTER MATCHING OPERATIONS

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This report is the result of Phase II of the Computer Matching portion of the Food Stamp Program Operations Study (FSPOS). For purposes of this study, a computer matching system is defined as the routine and automated access of client-related information. This information is used by agencies to verify food stamp eligibility and benefit amounts. The Phase I Census of State Agencies generated a profile of state-level computer matching activities in each of the 53 state agencies, including the District of Columbia, Guam and the Virgin Islands. A complete description of computer matching systems developed and made available to state and local agencies was documented in the report "State-Level Computer Matching Activities in the Food Stamp Program (FSP): Results of a State Census".

While over 240 distinct systems were identified as a result of the Phase I interviews, a critical gap existed for a thorough understanding of computer matching in the Food Stamp Program. Specifically, the gap involved those operational procedures which describe computer matching activities at the local agency level. The Phase II Survey of Local Agencies sought to document local agency policies and procedures. The knowledge gained as a result of Phases I and II is to be used as the mechanism for, a) assessing the full extent of computer matching in the FSP and to contribute to an understanding of the dynamics of the relationship between the state and local food stamp agencies and b) identifying sites with computer matching practices which may be considered exemplary and suitable for documentation in Phase III of the Food Stamp Program Operations Study.

Phase I of the FSPOS, conducted in mid-1986 consisted of a series of interviews with state-level staff in 53 state food stamp agencies and produced reports in each of six food stamp operations areas: Automated Certification Systems, Monthly Reporting and Retrospective Budgeting, Quality Control, Job Search, Claims Collection and Computer Matching. The Phase II survey of 191 local agencies involved data collection during October and November of 1986 in the Claims Collection and Computer Matching areas. The third phase of the study involves intensive assessments of selected sites, and will focus on documenting policies and practices which may be considered exemplary.

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This report presents the results of the Computer Matching portion of Phase II of the Food Stamp Program Operations Study. It is based on results of a survey of local food stamp agencies (FSAs) conducted to document the use of computer matching in local food stamp programs. The major findings are summarized here.

THE EXTENT OF COMPUTER MATCHING IN LOCAL FSAS

In general, the survey of local FSAs confirmed the general pattern of the extent of computer matching identified in the earlier state Census Report. The primary findings about local use of computer matching are:

- The 172 sample FSAs used 325 distinct computer matching systems, as of late 1986, an average of 4 to 5 different systems per FSA. (775 total systems in use in the 172 FSAs.) Only one FSA reported conducting no computer matching for food stamp recipients.

- Although applicant matching is becoming more prevalent, in 26 percent of the local FSAs, no front-end matching was being done in late 1986. In contrast, only one FSA was not conducting ongoing matching.

- The most common data sources used for matching are unemployment insurance files (33 percent of all FSAs), wage records (32 percent of all FSAs), SSI benefits (19 percent of all FSAs), SSA benefits (15 percent of all FSAs), and AFDC files (12 percent of all FSAs). This confirms the national pattern identified in the earlier report.

- Twelve percent of the FSAs have locally-developed computer matching systems, which usually link local property, tax or school records.

- In terms of the purpose for which the computer matching systems are used, twelve percent of the systems are used in the agencies for front-end matching only, 43 percent are used for ongoing matching only, and 46 percent are used for both purposes.

CHARACTERISTICS OF EFFECTIVE MATCHING SYSTEMS

Respondents in each of the 172 local FSAs were asked to describe their two most effective front-end matching systems and their two most effective ongoing matching systems. The more significant operational characteristics of those matching systems considered to be effective by local administrations are summarized as follows:

- On-line systems are clearly preferable to batch systems for front-end matching and there is some indication that on-line systems are becoming increasingly important for on-going matching.

- Local staff have primary responsibility for initiating front-end matching, even when using batch matching systems. Although the state plays a larger role in initiating ongoing matching, there is some indication that for many effective ongoing systems, local staff initiate matches.

- Effective systems are somewhat more likely to perform matches on a more frequent basis than other systems. About 90 percent of the effective front-end on-line systems are used for immediate or daily matching; 44 percent of effective front-end batch systems are used for daily or weekly matching; and over-half of the effective on-going batch systems are used for monthly matching.

- About 30 percent of the effective systems have prioritization policies to target certain cases with discrepancies for subsequent follow-up activities. For front-end matching, expedited service cases with discrepant information are often reviewed before other applicants. For ongoing matching, priority is placed on active cases, cases with relatively high benefit levels, and cases with recent employment or earnings identified.

KEY OPERATIONAL ISSUES RELATED TO MATCHING

Federal regulations clearly specify that cases with discrepancies between the case record information and "information items" in the match data base must be verified and resolved. Cases with discrepancies are commonly referred to as "hits." However, although all local respondents used the term "hit," there is some variation in its definition. For about half of the

matching systems, the standard discrepancy definition was used, but the broader definition ("any case with any information in the matched data base") was used in relation to nearly half the systems. For a few systems, narrower definitions, based on case prioritization policies, were used.

Such variations could potentially affect the number of discrepancies on which subsequent review or other actions are taken. However, at least for active cases, this does not seem to be a serious issue, since nearly all FSAs follow up on all active cases identified through matching. But about 16 percent of all FSAs do not pursue discrepancies if the case is inactive when the match information is received. This means that the potential amount of overissuances that might be recouped is reduced.

Nearly all FSAs take some case action on discrepancies within 30 days. The most common methods for reconciling discrepant information identified through computer matching are: review of case files or application forms, telephone calls to the applicant or recipient, in-office interviews with the applicant or recipient, home visits and contacts with a third party (e.g., employers). Home visits are used much less frequently for resolving front-end match discrepancies. The vast majority of discrepancies, however, can be resolved by reviewing the case file.

With very few exceptions, local FSAs routinely record computer matching information in hard copy case records. About 20 percent of the FSAs also enter information about computer matching onto an automated case record certification system.

At the time of the survey, local FSAs were beginning to implement the IEVS regulations. There was some concern about the duplication of effort involved in conducting both regular wage matches and Social Security wage matches and about federal follow-up regulations that some local administrators feel are too stringent. The primary concern at the local level, though, was that IEVS is increasing the workload of eligibility staff.

I. INTRODUCTION

This report describes the results of a series of interviews with local food stamp agency staff concerning the extent to which computer matching systems are used. This survey of local agencies was conducted as part of the second phase of the Food Stamp Program Operations Study (FSPOS) conducted by Mathematica Policy Research, Inc., under contract to the Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) of the U.S. Department of Agriculture, with the Urban Institute as a subcontractor. Claims collection focuses on the other topic areas covered in this phase of the study. Interviews in that area serve to augment the claims information gathered through earlier state-level interviews. The results of the Claims Collection Component can be found in a companion report.

This introductory chapter first provides a general overview of computer matching and defines several key terms used in the report. Then, in Section B, the goals of the Phase II local survey on Computer Matching (CM) are outlined. A brief discussion of the computer matching issues of particular interest to researchers is also presented in Section B. In Section C, the data collection methods are described, including the sample design used for selecting the 191 local agencies, the types of respondents interviewed at each agency and the interviewing methods used.

A. COMPUTER MATCHING: BACKGROUND, DEFINITIONS AND OVERVIEW

Computer matching is the automated verification of client-reported information against internal or external data files to which an agency has access. These data files range from employment or unemployment insurance benefit files to public assistance benefit files and records from banks and local government agencies at which certain assets such as cars and boats are registered.

Since the mid 1970s state welfare agencies have been conducting some form of computer matching to corroborate client information or to detect discrepancies in information. The original purpose (and still the main purpose) was to identify individuals who were applying for or receiving Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC) but had unreported wages that would make them ineligible for welfare or reduce their benefits. By the

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entered onto a computer file (e.g., tape or disk), that file is then matched to another file, and the results of the match are received either on a new file (e.g. tape or disk) or on a hard copy computer print-out.

The process of computer matching involves certain operational activities. For food stamps, computer matching has three general purposes: (1) verifying eligibility and benefit amounts, (2) investigating payment errors, and (3) substantiating information to be used in prosecution. The matching can take place at intake to verify the eligibility of new applicants, at recertification to verify the continuing eligibility of current recipients, or at some other periodic interval (e.g., monthly or quarterly) to detect any inconsistencies in information on ongoing current cases. The computer matching process essentially is the initial match across data files, followed by the full range of subsequent follow-up activities, such as fraud prosecution, administrative disqualification, and claim collections.

The survey on which this report is based represents an attempt to examine the activities at the local level. The role of computer matching in certification,

The identification of computer matching systems used in local FSAs expands on the information collected from state agencies in Phase I of the study. That is, the local survey was primarily designed to (1) determine which of the systems already identified by the states are used in local agencies and (2) document any other matching systems that might be in use, e.g. local level systems.

The second objective is to document specific operational features of those matching systems that the local respondents considered to be most useful. In addition to documenting routine features such as mode of access, data sources and frequency of match, several specific operational issues were of particular interest. These include, (1) how a "hit" is defined, (2) methods for investigating discrepancies, (3) the extent to which information on matching and subsequent actions are maintained for specific cases, and (4) the status of IEVS implementation.

Operational procedures, such as type of access to the match information (batch or online), and whether or not the matches are initiated by state or local staff, timing of the match, match follow-up policies, including time limits and prioritizing mechanisms in the local agencies were of interest to researchers in this phase of the study.

The operational definition of a "hit" was of particular interest since it could determine which cases are targetted for further action. The state survey in Phase I of this study found that there is no single consistent definition of a "hit" resulting from computer matching. The definition most commonly used by federal officials refers to any cases where the client-reported information is different from information in the data file matched. However, some agencies have broader definitions than this and some have more restrictive definitions. The broader definition includes any case for which any information was identified on the external data file, regardless of whether that information differs from what the client reported.

In contrast, the more restrictive definition of a hit is related to agency targetting policies. That is, an agency may place priority on certain types of cases (e.g., high benefit amounts and discrepant income information) or to cases with certain prey-specified levels of income (e.g., at least $1000 earnings in a given quarter) or discrepancy amounts (e.g., at least $100 difference between the client-reported income and the employer-reported income on the wage reporting system). Thus, an important part of the local survey was to determine how agencies define a "hit" and to determine the presence of targeting policies.

The survey was conducted at approximately the same time that the Income Eligibility Verification System (IEVS) regulations were to have been implemented by state agencies. Although the study was not designed to determine the effects of IEVS, researchers were able to gauge the operational adjustments made in response to IEVS by including two open-ended questions in the survey. The IEVS regulations require that public assistance programs and unemployment agencies exchange information with each other and to obtain unearned income data from the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) and other income and wage data from the Social Security Agency (SSA) and from state wage and unemployment insurance files. Certain time frames for decisions on actions to be taken as the result of matches were included in the regulations.

Local agency structure as it relates to computer matching was also documented by the survey, including the type of staff identifying and reconciling discrepancies, the steps or methods involved in reconciling those discrepancies and the collection of overbalanced identified by matching. The availability of case-level data in case files or on case management systems was elicited as well as aggregate program-level data on computer matching.

After initially identifying all matching systems in use in the agency, local respondents were asked to rank each system in terms of effectiveness and importance to the agency. Although it was not possible to quantitatively measure system effectiveness, respondents were asked to use their professional judgement to identify which of their systems were considered most useful. To guide them in making this determination, the interviewers explained that two indicators of the most effective front-end matching systems are (1) those leading to the most denials of ineligible applications and (2) those leading to the most adjustments to incorrect benefit issuance authorizations. A primary indicator of the most effective on-going matching systems is those that produce the greatest reduction in the error rate.

Information was subsequently collected about the two most effective front-end matching systems and the two most effective ongoing systems in each local FSA, as perceived by the respondents. The following procedure areas were addressed: (1)the specific methods used in processing a match; (2)the activities related to case follow-up; and (3) the time frames associated with such follow-up. The primary reason for limiting the operational detail to the two most effective systems was to reduce the burden on the local respondents, while still allowing researchers to (1) determine which types of systems local staff feel are most

useful, and (2) identify characteristics of those systems considered most useful.

The following outline briefly indicates the type of information which was addressed by the Phase II survey of local agencies. The full instrument appears in the Appendix.

- o System Documentation
  - A. Identification of Systems Used at Local Agencies
    1. State-developed matches
    2. Locally developed matches
  - B. Identification of Most Effective Systems at the Local Agencies
    1. Front-end
    2. Ongoing
  - C. Key Features of the Most Effective Systems
    1. Purpose of the Match
    2. Type of Access
    3. Timing of the Match
    4. Data Sources Used
  - D. Hit Definition
  - E. Investigation of Discrepant Cases
  - F. Collection of Overissuances
- o Tracking and Monitoring
  - A. Organizational Structure of the Local Agency
  - B. Reporting to the Case Management Unit
  - C. Management Reporting Systems on Matching
  - D. Time Required to Complete Follow-Up on cases
- o Data Availability
  - A. Maintenance of Matching Information
  - B. Magnitude information on match follow-up activities
  - C. Summary Management Reports on Matching

C. DATA COLLECTION METHODS

This section summarizes the interview methods used, the sample design and the type of respondents for the local CM survey.

Interview Methods

The interviewing methods for Phase I and Phase II were similar in that structured interview instruments were developed after extensive review of data and information already available from the FNS files and earlier research. Following a review by FNS of the draft instrument, a pre-test was conducted with local agencies in New Jersey, South Carolina and Utah. The staff in these agencies were helpful and the pre-test resulted in several revisions to improve clarity and completeness.

The interview respondent for the survey was generally the director of the local agency or a supervisor from the income maintenance unit. In contrast to the state level interviews where it was necessary to speak with more than one individual (i.e. someone at the state policy level and someone who had actually participated n the development of the computer matching systems), the local level interviews were handled by the agency staff member most familiar with matching policies and procedures in the local FSP. Of the 172 local agencies where surveys were completed, 150 (87 percent were conducted with one respondent and 22 (13 percent were conducted with two or more respondents. The interviews in the computer matching area, all conducted by telephone, generally lasted about thirty to forty minutes. Nineteen of the local agencies originally selected for the study were not able to participate in the survey, generally because of staff and resource constraints, resulting in a 90 percent completion rate.

Although the CM instrument consisted primarily of structured response questions, the interviewing method involved discussion of each question and probing for clarification of the responses. Completed interviews were reviewed by the senior project researcher responsible for the topic. These reviews identified apparent inconsistencies among interview responses and answers which, based on other information provided, appeared to reflect interpretation of interview terminology that departed from the interview intent. As the interviews proceeded, these reviews also identified the need for further clarification of the intent of specific questions and their interpretation in the context of particular system characteristics. These reviews prompted

the preparation of "question clarification" statements distributed to interviewers to guide them in future administration of particular interview questions. Interviewers then contacted respondents to clarify or confirm responses and to probe further to resolve any inconsistencies.

Sample Selection

The sample of 191 local FSAs was drawn from a universe of approximately 2900 local agencies. The population of local FSAs nationally was stratified by state in order to 1) provide some confirmation of the approach used at the local level in states with substantial local variation and 2) to improve the efficiency of the sample estimates of the approaches used in the states with substantial local variation. The FSA sample is a probability sample with the probability of selection of each project area proportional to its size (participating households) within each stratum.

The overall efficiency of the sample was further enhanced by allocating most of the sample to the strata with substantial local variation in FSP operations. On average, two local FSAs were chosen in each state with minimal local variation among state agencies and five local FSAs were chosen in each state with substantial local variation. However, after a complete review of the results of state interviews it became necessary to make adjustments to the sampling plan. Specifically, California and Texas had more local variation than originally estimated, thus three local sites were chosen in each of those states.

Type of Respondent

In conducting the Phase II survey interviews, the nature and level of information provided by the respondents was different than that of the Phase I Census interviews. In the computer matching interviews at the state-level, many but not all of the respondents had either a data-processing background or a state policy perspective and as such were familiar with regulations and policy and somewhat less familiar with the "hands-on" aspects of computer matching of food stamp clients. In the local-level interviews, respondents were, of course, extremely knowledgeable on the subject of local matching procedures and operations, yet understandably vague in some areas of policy (e.g., state policies and procedures on matching). Given the objectives of the study as stated in Section A of this chapter, the type of respondent at the local level seems entirely appropriate and is mentioned only to highlight the contrast between the local and state surveys in this study.

D. ORGANIZATION OF THE REPORT

As discussed above, the purposes of the local survey were (1) to identify and describe matching systems in use in local food stamp agencies, (2) to document how key matching procedures are carried out for systems considered to be the most useful, and (3) to examine certain aspects of computer matching that are of particular policy interest. Therefore, questions focused on systems, procedures and key topics of interest to the Food and Nutrition Service. This report discusses and documents: (1) all matching systems coordinated or administered by the state agencies, and used in the local agencies, and (2) additional matching systems which were developed and used by the local agencies. The primary focus of the analysis centers on those matching systems perceived to be the most effective by the local respondents.

Chapter II describes the extent of computer matching in the local FSP and touches on the total number of systems in use, data sources matched, locally developed systems and the uses (purpose) of all match systems in the local FSAs. Chapter III presents a more detailed discussion of local procedures and mechanisms that govern the use of effective match systems. Chapter IV discusses the key topics relevant to computer matching policy; including organizational responsibilities for key computer matching activities, reconciliation methods used, local interpretations of the term "hit", the availability of data on computer matching in the local agencies and local reactions to the IEVS regulations. Detailed tables on computer matching in each agency and the distribution of data bases accessed appear in Appendix A; the Survey Instrument is in Appendix B.

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This chapter presents information on all of the computer matching systems in use in late 1986 in the 172 local FSAs surveyed. This discussion naturally includes computer matching systems coordinated and developed by the state agencies. However, many respondents in local agencies also identified matching systems that they use which were developed at the local agency level. These locally-developed matches are included in the summary descriptions.

The chapter first enumerates all matching systems in use in the sample FSAs, then provides descriptive information on the nature of these systems in terms of data sources matched, state versus locally-developed matches, and the purpose of the matches (whether or not the matches are used on applicants or current food stamp recipients or both).

A. TOTAL NUMBER OF SYSTEMS IN USE

The interviews with local staff in the sampled FSAs identified that in 1986 these 172 agencies used a total of 325 distinct computer matching systems. Appendix Table A lists all computer matching systems in use in each of the sampled agencies; on average, each local FSA uses four or five different matching systems.

As discussed in Chapter I, Phase I of this study consisted of a telephone interviews with of all states to identify state-developed or state-coordinated matching systems in use as of the summer of 1986. That census found that there were 248 different matching systems available. The current survey of local FSAs was conducted in October and November of 1986. It was expected that most of the locally-used systems would be those developed by the state agency; and in fact, 231 of the 325 systems in use in the sampled local agencies (71 percent) had been previously identified through the state census.

However, as indicated in Table II.1, another 66 state matching systems were described by the local respondents. That is, in the four months between Phase I and Phase II of this study, perhaps as many as 66 new state matching systems were implemented across the 48 states included in the local survey. This new development undoubtedly reflects state responses to the new IEVS regulations which went into effect in October 1986. In fact, of the newly identified state matches 7 are titled IEVS matches and the information we have on the other newly identified state matches indicates that at least 30 of these matches use data bases required by the IEVS regulations including matches against public assistance

Table II.1

Administrative Status of Distinct Matching Systems Used in 172 Local FSAs

State Match Identified Through State Interviews	231	71%
State Match Identified Through Local Interviews	66	20%
Locally-Developed Match	28	8.6%
Total Distinct Systems	325	100%

files, unearned income files and files from the Social Security Administration. The pattern also confirms the rapid proliferation of computer matching activities over the past seven years.

In addition, 28 of the 325 systems identified in the local agencies (8.6 percent of all systems) were locally-developed, usually accessing local data bases (this is discussed further below).

As was found in the state survey, local FSAs generally use multiple computer matching systems. Only one local agency (in Ohio) reported no computer matching for food stamps. More than half of all local FSAs were using between three and five different matching systems to verify client-reported information, and over one-quarter of all FSAs are using between six and nine different matching systems. This system utilization breakdown is presented in Table II.2.

B. DATA SOURCES MATCHES

Data sources accessed by matching systems are a particularly important aspect of computer matching systems. The earlier report on this project which presented the findings from the state census indicated that although twenty-five different sources of information are routinely used for computer matching, the most frequent data sources matched for the FSP nationally are wage and unemployment insurance records. About 30 percent of the matching systems identified as a result of the state census access these two types of information.

Not surprisingly, the same types of data sources were identified in the local survey; the twenty-five categories of data are described on Table II.3. (A complete summary of the extent to which each data source is used in the sample of local FSAs appears in Tables B-1 through B-3 in the Appendix; and the five most frequently accessed data sources in the 172 local FSAs are listed in Table II.4.) As expected, unemployment insurance files and wage records are the most common data sources. Unemployment files are accessed by 33 percent of the systems in local FSAs and wage records are accessed by 32 percent of the systems. (These categories overlap in the sense that many of the computer matching systems access both wage and unemployment insurance data, as illustrated in Appendix Table A).

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Table II.2

Number of Computer Matching Systems in Use, in Sampled Local FSAs

No. of Systems	No. of Agencies	% of Agencies
0	1	.6%
1 - 2	29	16.9%
3 - 5	93	54.1%
6 - 9	49	28.5%
	172	100.0%

Median Number of Computer Matching Systems per Local FSA: 4.0

Table II.3

Sources of Data Matched by State and Local FSAs

STATE WAGES FILES: These files contain quarterly information from employers detailing the amount of wages paid to their employees who are in jobs cover by Unemployment Insurance (UI). The reporting system is usually administered by the state employment security agency (e.g., the Department of Employment Security or the Department of Labor); in some states similar information is maintained by tax agencies (e.g., Department of Revenue).

UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE FILES: The state employment security agencies also administer the UI system. Each employment security agency keeps records of who receives unemployment insurance and the amount of the payments issued.

SOCIAL SECURITY ADMINISTRATION WAGE FILES: Unlike the UI wage and benefits data which are handled at the state level, Social Security information comes from federally administered data systems. Wage or earnings files are created from the main Social Security Administration (SSA) data files on individuals.

SSA SELF-EMPLOYMENT FILES: These files, like the SSA wage files, are created from SSA's data files on individuals who report self-employment.

SSA BENEFIT FILES: SSA benefit files are composed of Title II, or Old Age, Survivors, Disability and Hospital Insurance (OASDHI) benefits which include: retirement, survivor, and disability benefits, as well as eligibility for Medicare Parts A and B. Matching on this data base is referred to as the Beneficiary Data Exchange, or BENDEX. For purposes of this report the first three categories, which consist of dollar amounts, are referred to as SSA Benefit files. The last category, Medicare is referred to as a separate data source.

SUPPLEMENTAL SECURITY INCOME BENEFIT FILES: SSA also maintains the Supplemental Security Income (SSI) files which include all individuals who are entitled to SSI and the amount they are entitled to receive monthly. When matching on this data source, the system is referred to as the State Data Exchange or SDX.

TAX FILES: These may be state or county tax files. State files include all sources of income and/or interest income. This is analogous to the Internal Revenue Service's Form 1040 of income and Form 1099 of interest income. County tax files usually consist of property tax information.

BANK RECORD FILES: These files contain either the savings account or checking account balance an individual has in a bank on a given day.

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DEPARTMENT OF MOTOR VEHICLE FILES: These files, maintained by the Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) in each state, contain the owner's name and the make, model, and year of every vehicle registered in the state. It also contains the vehicle's serial and license number.

AID TO FAMILIES WITH DEPENDENT CHILDREN (AFDC) FILES: AFDC is a federally-supported, state/county administered program created by Title IV-A of the Social Security Act for families in need. These files (either state or locally maintained) contain the names and benefit amounts of all persons receiving benefits from the AFDC program.

GENERAL ASSISTANCE (GA) FILES: General Assistance is a generic term used to comprise all state and local programs of continuing or emergency income assistance. These programs are legislated, designed and funded at the state and local level. This assistance is available to individuals who are not eligible for federally-supported assistance programs like SSI and AFDC. Like the AFDC files, these files contain the names and benefit amounts of all persons receiving benefits from the program.

MEDICAID FILES: These state/local files contain names of individuals participating in Medicaid, a federally supported medical program for the needy.

MEDICARE FILES: These federal SSA files contain names of individuals eligible for Medicare Parts A and B, a federal medical program that accompanies social security benefits.

INTERNAL REVENUE SERVICE INTEREST INCOME FILES (1099): These IRS

WORKERS COMPENSATION FILES: These files contain those individuals who have received workers compensation insurance benefits.

OTHER EMPLOYMENT FILES: These files contain either information about an individuals employment history/status, such as state employees, or individuals participating in employment programs in the state (e.g., Job Training Partnership Act programs).

STATE NON-ASSISTANCE FILES: This is a miscellaneous category of state files. It is composed of vital statistics files, lottery files, and other state and local files.

FOOD STAMP FILES: State/local files are maintained on all food stamp participants. These files are often checked to ensure food stamp applicants and recipients do not participate in the program more than once either by receiving benefits through a second household or through applying in a second county.

OTHER STATE ASSISTANCE FILES OTHER THAN THOSE PREVIOUSLY IDENTIFIED: This is another miscellaneous category which contains state assistance files. It contains child support enforcement files, the state supplement to SSI and other assistance files.

FEDERAL FILES: These files contain other information maintained by a federal agency, such as federal employee or retirement information.

Table II.4

Most Frequently Accessed Data Sources
Used in Local FSA's

Data Sources	% of Systems
UI Files	33.1%
Wage Records	31.8%%
SSI Benefits	19.2%
SSA Benefits	14.5%
AFDC Files	11.7%

Note: See Appendix B-1 for a complete list of the extent of data sources accessed by matching systems in local FSAs.

The percentages presented in the above table sum to greater than 100% because some systems access multiple data sources. This largely occurs when wage and unemployment files are accessed by the same system. See Appendix A for the extent of multiple data source access.

C. PURPOSE OF MATCH SYSTEMS USED BY LOCAL AGENCIES

As described in the previous chapter, matching may be conducted at various points in the food stamp operations process. Front-end matching refers to matching conducted on new FSP applicants and ongoing matching refers to matching on active FSP participants. The use of front-end matching compared to ongoing matching within an agency can have different results. For example, the more direct benefits of front-end matching are (1) the prevention of overissuances which may otherwise have occurred and (2) the prevention of ineligible households from receiving food stamps. Ongoing matching serves primarily to verify changes in income or wages which may affect continued food stamp eligibility and payments.

Although applicant matching is becoming more prevalent, based on the earlier state census conducted in this study, in 44 (26 percent of the 172 local agencies sampled, no front-end matching was being conducted on applicants in late 1986. For those agencies that do conduct front-end matching, on average 2-3 systems are used. In contrast, ongoing matching is almost always used; in all the local agencies sampled, with the exception of one Ohio office, ongoing matching is routinely conducted. At the local level, an average of four computer systems are used in the sampled agencies for ongoing matching. It should also be noted that 77 percent of the local FSAs (132 agencies) use three or more systems to conduct ongoing matching, providing further evidence that most FSAs are matching on a variety of data sources. Tables II.5A and II.5B show this distribution of matching systems across the 172 sample local FSAs for front-end matching and for ongoing matching.

Of the distinct systems used in the sample FSAs, 38 (11.7 percent are used for front-end matching only, 138 (42.5 percent are used for on-going matching only and 149 (45.8 percent are used for both front-end and on-going matching. Table II.6 illustrates this breakdown.

D. LOCALLY-DEVELOPED MATCHING SYSTEMS

Most local agencies use the computer matching systemscoordinated and developed by the state. As already noted, however, many local FSAs have developed their own local matching systems which typically use local-level data bases. Locally-developed matches are presented as part of the total match schedule in Appendix-A and are denoted by the abbreviation "LD-".

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Table II.5

A. Number of Front-End Matching Systems Used by Sampled Local Agencies

No. of Systems	No. of Agencies	% of Agencies
0	44	25.5
1	40	23.2
2	28	16.2
3	22	13
4	16	9.3
5	13	7.5
6	6	3.5
7	2	1
8	1	.5
Total FSAs	172	100.0%

Median Number of Front-End Matching Systems per Local FSA: 2.0

B. Number of Matching Systems Used By Sampled Local Agencies

No. of Systems	No. of Agencies	% of Agencies
0	1	1%
1	16	9%
2	23	14%
3	33	19%
4	36	21%
5	24	14%
6	18	10%
7	10	6%
8	6	3%
9	4	2%
10	1	1%
Total FSAs	172	100.0%

Median Number of Ongoing Matching Systems per Local FSA: 4.0

Table II-6

Purpose of Distinct Computer Matching Systems in Local FSAs

Purpose	No. of Systems	% of Systems
Front-End Matching Only	38	11.7%
On-going Matching Only	138	42.5%
Both Front-End and On-going Matching	149	45.8%
Total Distinct Systems	325	100%

From the sample of 172 local FSA's, 28 locally-developed computer match systems were identified in 21 agencies. Twelve percent of the sampled FSAs had at least one local level computer matching system. Generally, the data bases used by these systems are local property, school or tax records, but at least one system (in Bell County, Kentucky) has been designed to extract more detailed employment information than that available from the regular state wage reporting system.

The data sources used in the locally-developed matching systems identified can be summarized as follows:

- ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE MATCH (9 systems) This match checks other county files for participation and benefits from other assistance programs including AFDC, General Assistance, Medicaid or any combination of participation in these programs.

- MISCELLANEOUS MATCHES (7 systems) These matches access various traditional data sources including child support records, motor vehicle files (driver's license and SSN match), as well as a few more unique files, such as local apartment records which contain rent level and household size of all rental households in a community.

- PROPERTY TAX MATCH (6 systems) This data source includes local deeds, heir property, local/county property tax records, property value, address and tax information (also called Resource Check).

- DUPLICATE PARTICIPATION (5 systems) This type of match checks for participation in Food Stamp programs in other local offices within the county or local jurisdiction. Food Stamp disqualification matches are included in this category.

- SCHOOL RECORDS MATCH (1 system) This match involves review of local school records for information such as name and address of any legal guardian.

A breakdown of the location of these 28 locally-developed matches in the 21 local FSA's is provided in Table II.7, and the purpose of these matches are summarized in Table II.8. Nearly half are used for both front-end and ongoing matching, about one-quarter are used for front-end only, and one-quarter for ongoing only.

Table II.7

Location and Number of
Locally-Developed Computer Matching Systems

Local FSA	Number of Local Systems
Maricopa Co., CO	1
Boulder Co., CO	1
Pueblo Co., CO	1
Bibb Co., GA	1
Allen Co., IN	3
Marion Co., IN	1
Wayne Co., IN	3
Cherokee Co., KS	1
Bell Co., KY	3
Berrien Co., MI	1
Hennepin Co., MN	1
Hinds Co., MS	1
New York, NY	1
Craven Co., NC	1
Forsyth Co., NC	2
Halifax Co., NC	1
Haywood Co., NC	1
Philadelphia, PA	1
Richland Co., SC	1
Salt Lake City., UT	1
Milwaukee Co., WI	1
Total Locally-Developed Systems	28

Table II.8

Purpose of Locally Developed Systems

Purpose	No. of Systems	% of L.D. Systems
Front-End Only	8	28.6%
Ongoing Only	7	25.0
Both Front-End and On-going	13	46.4
Total Local Systems	28	100.0%

E. SUMMARY

In general, the survey of local FSAs confirmed the general pattern of the extent of computer matching identified in the earlier state Census Report. The primary findings about local use of computer matching are:

- The 172 sample FSAs used 325 distinct computer matching systems, as of late 1986, an average of 4 to 5 different systems per FSA. Only one FSA reported conducting no computer matching for food stamp recipients.

- Although applicant matching is becoming more prevalent, in 26 percent of the local FSAs, no front-end matching was being done in late 1986. In contrast, only one FSA was not conducting ongoing matching.

- Twelve percent of the matching systems are used for front-end matching only, 43 percent are used for ongoing matching only, and 46% are used for both purposes.

- The most common data sources used for matching are unemployment insurance files (33 percent of all FSAs), wage records (32 percent of all FSAs), SSI benefits (19 percent of all FSAs), SSA benefits (15 percent of all FSAs), and AFDC files (12 percent of all FSAs). This confirms the national pattern identified in the earlier report.

- Twelve percent of the FSAs have locally-developed computer matching systems, which usually link local property, tax or school records.

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In this chapter, the focus of discussion shifts from all matching systems identified (described in the previous chapter) to those systems considered by local respondents to be most useful or effective. A matching system may be used in all local offices within a state, but its effectiveness and the procedures followed may vary across local agencies. Since this portion of the analysis is concerned with procedural mechanisms in use in local FSAs, it is necessary to examine all systems considered effective for each FSA. Therefore, the discussion in this chapter also shifts from examining distinct systems (in the previous chapter) to discussing all systems considered to be effective.

The general procedural aspects of matching systems addressed in this chapter include the type of computer access with which an agency conducts the match, whether or not the match is initiated by state or local staff, and the timing of the match. Each of these aspects is discussed in terms of the purpose for which the match system is used (i.e., front-end or ongoing matching).

A. PERCEPTIONS OF EFFECTIVENESS

Respondents were asked to rank their matching systems on the basis of each system's usefulness in detecting information which leads to denial of applications and corrections in the issuance amounts (for front-end matching) and in producing the greatest reductions in the error rate (for ongoing matching). Respondents ranked all their front-end matching systems and all their ongoing matching systems on these criteria.

In order to efficiently document the procedural aspects of effective computer matching in the local agencies, the respondents were asked a series of questions about their two most effective front-end and two most effective ongoing systems. If only one or two systems were used, procedural details were obtained on those. This means that the 542 systems described in this chapter represent those systems considered most useful of all the systems available in each FSA (i.e., effective relative to the alternatives available). In some cases where only one or two systems are used, they are technically considered most effective because they are the only systems available. The total number of effective front-end matches identified is 216 and the total number of effective ongoing match systems is 326.

As mentioned previously, the respondents for this survey included directors of local offices, caseworkers or caseworker supervisors. In each case the respondent(s) were familiar with the operation of the systems and the effectiveness of the systems in determining eligibility and benefits. Questions specifically addressed match initiation (on-line vs. batch access, local vs. state initiation), and follow-up procedures (time limits and prioritizing of cases to be followed-up). Because the persons interviewed were asked to describe policies and procedures about only their two most effective systems, the information that follows provides insight into the nature of systems and procedures which constitute effective computer matching.

B. COMPUTER ACCESS FOR EFFECTIVE MATCHING SYSTEMS FRONT-END MATCHING

TABLE III.1 describes the type of computer method used to access the data in those systems considered to be effective for front-end matching. Over 70 percent of the effective front-end systems use on-line processing. Because of the technical and logistical differences between on-line and batch processing, the benefit of on-line processing is clear: on-line access allows immediate verification to be conducted in the local offices. The sooner the computer check occurs, the more efficient the application and eligibility determination process will be. Conducting the match at the time of application also allows the caseworker to clarify or reconcile differences with the applicant immediately.

The state census in Phase I of this study indicated that about 35 percent of all front end matching systems have on-line access. Thus, at least from a local perspective, it would appear that on-line matching systems are preferable to batch systems for conducting computer matching on applicants. This may suggest that providing more local on-line access to data bases should increase the effectiveness of front-end matching.

Ongoing Matching

Table III.2 summarizes the types of access to ongoing matching systems considered effective. In direct contrast to the on-line access found for effective front-end matching, about 70 percent of the effective ongoing match systems use batch processing. Clearly, from a local perspective, on-line direct access is not necessary for effective matching on clients already certified to receive food stamps.

Table III.1

Method for Accessing Data
In Effective Front-End Computer Matching Systems

Type of Access	No. of Systems	% of Systems
Online	156	72.2%
Batch	60	27.7
	216	100.0%

Table III.2

Methods for Accessing Data
In Effective Ongoing Computer Matching Systems

Type of Access	No. of Systems	% of Systems
On-line	99	30.4%
Batch	227	69.6%
Total	326	100.0%

Nevertheless, about 30 percent of those ongoing systems considered effective have on-line access. This is higher than might have been expected based on the state census, which indicated that only about 15 percent of all ongoing matching systems can be accessed on-line. The local responses may suggest that to some extent on-line systems are becoming increasingly important for ongoing matching as well as for front-end matching.

C. MATCH INITIATION (BY STATE OR LOCAL STAFF) FOR EFFECTIVE SYSTEMS

This section describes the level at which matching is initiated for those systems considered most effective. As already noted, matching can either be initiated by the state agency, generally on a routine schedule, or by local staff. Because many offices now have computer terminals, those systems with on-line access are obviously more likely to allow local staff to initiate matching. There is, however, as discussed below, more variation for batch systems.

Front-end Matching

Local staff initiate matches for about 75 percent of the effective front-end matching systems. As can be seen from Table III.3, as expected, local staff directly initiate matching on all but one of the effective on-line systems. The one exception was a Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) match conducted by state staff in North Carolina at the request of local staff (described by New Bern respondents). In all other cases, effective front-end online matching is initiated through computer terminals in the local offices.

A different and somewhat interesting pattern exists foreffective front-end batch matching. It was expected that matching with most of the batch systems would be initiated by the state office. In fact, for about half of the effective batch systems that are used for front-end matching, the match is initiated by local staff. This means that local staff request that the state conduct a match on new applicants, either by notifying the state agency in writing, by phone, or by means of a terminal.

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Table III.3

Level Initiating Effective Front-End Matching Systems, by Type of Access

Level Initiating	On-line		Batch	
	No. of Systems	No. of Systems	No. of Systems	No. of Systems
Local FSA	153	99.3%	31	51.7%
State FSA	1	.7	27	45.0%
Both State & Local	--	--	2	3.3%
Total	154	100.0%	60	100.0%

Thus, it seems clear that, with the most useful systems, local staff have substantial responsibility for initiating front-end matching even when using batch matching systems.

Ongoing Matching

Table III.4 describes the levels that initiate matching for the effective ongoing matching systems. It is obvious that state agencies have much more responsibility for initiating ongoing matching than for initiating front-end matching. For over 80 percent of the effective ongoing matching systems state agency staff either initiate and/or conduct the match. This, of course, makes intuitive sense since ongoing matching is more likely to be done centrally on the entire caseload at periodic intervals (discussed below).

However, 18 percent of the effective batch systems and 98 percent of the effective on-line systems allow local staff to initiate the match for ongoing cases. In some situations (3 percent of the effective batch systems) both state and local staff can initiate matches. Thus, although the state plays a larger role in initiating ongoing matching than front-end matching, there is some indication that for many of the effective ongoing systems, local staff initiate matches.

D. TIMING OF THE MATCH WITH EFFECTIVE SYSTEMS

To some extent, whether or not local staff initiate matching will at least partly be affected by how frequently matching is to be done. This section discusses the timing and frequency of matching for the systems considered effective.

Front-end Matching

It is generally assumed that on-line matching should be more efficient for conducting matches on new applicants because FSP workers can conduct the match at the point of application. As expected, nearly 90 percent of the front-end on-line matching systems considered effective do conduct the match either at the time of application, or later the same day, this compared to about 80 percent of all front end on-line systems conducting immediate or daily matching, as identified in the State Census. Table III.5 indicates that 53 percent of the effective front-end on-line matching systems are used to conduct matching immediately at application, and 35 percent of the systems

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Table III.4

Level Initiating Effective Ongoing Matching Systems, by Type of Access

Level Initiating	On-line		Batch	
	No. of Systems	No. of Systems	No. of Systems	No. of Systems
Local FSA	97	97.9%	35	15.4%
State FSA*	2	2.0	186	81.9%
Both State & Local	--	- -	6	2.6 %
Total	99	100.0%	227	100.0%

Table III.5

Timing of Effective
Front-End On-line Matching

TIMING	NO. OF SYSTEMS	% OF SYSTEMS
Immediately	81	52.6%
Daily	53	34.5
Weekly	6	3.9
Before Cert. Interview	6	3.9
Immed. Prior to Certification	6	3.9
Info. not Available	2	1.2
Total Systems	154	100.0%

are used to conduct matches on a daily basis for all new applicants that day. Daily front-end on-line matching typically means that intake workers submit groups of applications to a data clerk who then actually accesses the system and conducts the computer match.

The most common frequency of match for effective batch front-end systems is monthly (36 percent). However, as summarized in Table III.6, 44 percent of the effective batch front-end systems are used for daily or weekly matches (compared to about 27 percent of all front-end batch systems nationwide that are used this frequently); 26 percent of the effective batch systems are used to conduct daily matching, and another 18 percent are used for regular weekly matching on new applicants.

Thus, even batch matching systems can be adapted to allow early matching on new applicants. That is, lack of on-line capabilities need not preclude agencies from conducting early front-end matching.

Ongoing Matching

Ongoing matching refers to any match conducted on active food stamp recipients. Unlike front-end matching, there is no simple way to define ongoing matching in terms of when a match is performed. Ongoing matching can be done at many different points in the FSP process and at various intervals. Tables III.7 and III.8 summarize the timing followed by effective ongoing matching systems. There is some duplication in these tables, since about 13 percent of the systems are used at multiple points in time. (See Appendix Tables C.1 and C.2). For example, five batch systems are used for both monthly and quarterly matching, five others are used to match all cases quarterly and at recertification, and six are used to match all cases monthly and at recertification.

Despite the overlapping frequencies, a few patterns are obvious. Table III.7 indicates that on-line matching systems are primarily used at recertification, at the discretion of the eligibility worker or for investigation purposes (e.g., pursuing possible claims to recoup overissuances). In many cases the same data bases and on-line terminals are used for both front-end and ongoing matching, since about half of all on-line systems are used for both purposes. In contrast, as shown in Table III.8, batch systems are most commonly used to conduct monthly and quarterly matches on the entire caseload. Nearly half of the effective ongoing batch systems are used to conduct

Table III.6

Timing of Effective
Front-End Batch Matching

TIMING	NO. OF SYSTEMS	% OF SYSTEMS
Daily	16	25.8
Weekly	11	17.7
Monthly	22	35.5
Biweekly	4	6.5
Irregularly	4	6.5
Quarterly	3	4.8
Info. not available	2	3.2
Total Systems	62	100.0

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Table III-7

Timing of Matches with
Effective On-going Online Systems
in Local FSAs

TIMING	NO. OF SYSTEMS	% OF SYSTEMS
Monthly	3	3.0%
Recertification	92	92.9
EWs Discretion	63	63.6
Investigations	60	60.6
Changes in Employment	5	5.0
Changes in House-Hold Status	1	1.0

Note: Timing categories are not mutually exclusive. Detailed tables showing the combinations or multiple intervals at which matching is conducted can be found in

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Table III.8

Timing of Effective
On-going Batch Matching Systems
in Local FSAs

TIMING	NO. OF SYSTEMS	% OF SYSTEMS
Daily	10	4.4%
Weekly	9	4.0
Biweekly	1	.4
Monthly	106	46.7
Quarterly	83	36.6
Annually	4	1.8
Recertification	33	14.5
EWs Discretion	22	9.7
Investigations	9	4.0
Changes in Circumstances	1	.4

Note: Timing categories are not mutually exclusive. Detailed tables showing the combinations or multiple intervals at which matching is conducted can be found in Appendix Table C-2.

matches on a monthly basis, and over one-third are used to conduct matches on a quarterly basis.

Thus, effective batch systems for ongoing matching appear to be used for routine monthly or quarterly matching of the entire caseload, and effective on-line systems are used primarily at recertification or for investigative or discretionary purposes.

E. FOLLOW-UP PROCEDURES USED WITH EFFECTIVE MATCHING SYSTEMS

Follow-up policies refer to established procedures which govern the specific actions to be taken by FSAs when client-reported information is different from the information identified as a result of the computer matching. This section discusses the time allowed for completing the follow-up process and policies for prioritizing certain cases for follow-up activity.

Time Limits

The IEVS regulations require that FSAs follow-up on discrepant information items within 30 days of the receipt of the match information. Regular FSP regulations require that initial certification for food stamps be completed within 30 days of the application. Although the regulations on computer matching are intended to ensure that certification is not delayed because of matching, local respondents indicated that certification is in fact contingent upon the results of computer matching; about 20 percent of the batch processing systems considered effective for front-end matching were described in this way. In an operational sense, then, the two processes are closely linked in many offices.

In addition, as summarized in Table III.9 state or local policies have been established that require all discrepant information to be followed-up within a certain time frame for 60 percent of the effective front-end systems and 68 percent of the effective ongoing systems. By far, the most common time limit set by the agencies is 30 days from the date of application, the date of recertification or the date when the match information is received, whichever is relevant (sixty-one percent of the effective front-end systems that have time limits and 42 percent of the effective ongoing systems that have time limits require follow-up within 30 days). Most of the other systems that have time limits established require that follow up be

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Table III.9

Time Limits for Following-Up on Cases That Require Further Action as Identified Through Computer Matching In Local FSAS

Time Limit	Effective Front-End Systems		Effective On-going Systems	
	No.	%	No.	%
45-120 days from date of application, re-certification or receipt of information	4	1.9	39	12.0
30 days from date of application, re-certification or receipt of information	78	36.1	94	28.8
16-29 days from date of application, re-certification or receipt of information	14	6.5	20	6.1
10-15 days from date of application, re-certification or receipt of information	23	10.6	63	19.3
1-9 days from date of application, re-certification, or receipt of information	11	5.1	7	2.1
No time limit reported	86	39.8	103	31.6%
	216	100.0%	326	100.0%

completed in less than 30 days (ranging from one to 25 days) after receipt of information, application or recertification.

Thus, about two-thirds of the matching systems considered effective are accompanied by policies that require that all discrepant information be followed-up within 30 days of the receipt of the information, application or recertification.

Prioritization of cases to be Followed-Up

An increasingly important issue in computer matching policy concerns how to determine which cases should be pursued for further clarification or follow-up when discrepancies are identified. As already discussed, in many states there are written policies and procedures for such activity, including reviewing case records or calling the recipient or an employer.

A state or local agency may also direct (formally or informally) that the staff proceed with the appropriate follow-up activities or all discrepancies, but that some cases should be reviewed first. For example, administrators might feel that it is beneficial to the agency to place priority on those cases most likely to involve a possible fraud case, a benefit overissuance, or an inappropriate eligibility determination. Or cases with the largest discrepancies or high benefit authorizations may be handled first. Other types of prioritizing might be based on certain characteristics of the cases, such as the need for expedited service, or cases which appear to require the most time for the worker to verify.

The prioritizing mechanisms associated with the matching systems identified as most effective by the local respondents, and summarized in Tables III.10 and III.11, include:

- Amount of Benefit Authorization. Prioritization on the basis of benefit authorization means that larger Food Stamp issuance amounts are handled first.

- Amount Exceeding Specified Discrepancy Level. Prioritization on this basis means that cases which exceed an established discrepancy amount are handled first.

Table III.10

Prioritization of Cases for Effective Front-end Matching

	Systems
Expedited Cases	22
Amount of Benefit Authorization Only	5
Amount Exceeding Discrepancy Range Only	2
Active/Inactive Status Only	9
Age of Application Only	5
Cases with Reported Income	1
Amount of Benefit Authorization, Amount Exceeding Discrepancy Range, and Active/Inactive Status	4
Amount Exceeding Discrepancy Range and Active/ Inactive Status	3
Amount of Benefit Authorization, Active/Inactive Status PA/NPA Status	2
Active/Inactive Status and Age of Application	4
Active/Inactive Status and Presence of Recent Work History	1
	58

Table III.11

Prioritization of Cases for Effective Ongoing Matching

	Systems
Amount of Benefit Authorization Only	8
Amount Exceeding Discrepancy Range Only	3
Active/Inactive Status Only	28
Larger Wages or Income, Unreported Income Only	10
Due Date for Recertification Only	6
Source of Match Information Only	2
Cases Receiving Unemployment Insurance Only	2
Amount of Benefit Authorization and Amount Exceeding Discrepancy Range	2
Amount of Benefit Authorization, Amount Exceeding Discrepancy Range, and Active/ Inactive Status	1
Amount of Benefit Authorization, Active/Inactive Status	2
Amount Exceeding Discrepancy Range and Active/ Inactive Status	6
Amount of Benefit Authorization and Active/ Inactive Status	5
PA/NPA Status and Larger Dollar Amounts	1
Active/Inactive Status and Larger Wage Categories	6
Amount Exceeding Discrepancy Range and Cases Difficult to verify	2
Amount Exceeding Discrepancy Range, Active/ Inactive Status and Larger	2
Amount of Benefit Authorization and Active/Inactive Status and Larger Wage or UI Benefit Categories	2
	88

- Active/Inactive Status. Established policies enable workers to differentiate by case status and to pursue active cases first.

- PA/NPA Status. Policies are differentiated by public assistance and non-public assistance case status; PA cases are typically handled first.

- Expedited Service Status. Expedited service cases are handled first.

- Other prioritization factors include placing priority on the following: cases of willful violation, cases where the client is potentially employed and/or cases which may be difficult to verify.

As indicated in Table III.10 and III.11, the cases most likely to receive priority based on ongoing computer matching results are, first, those that are still active at the time the information is received, second, those with recent employment or earnings, and third, those with relatively high FSP benefit levels. Presumably, active cases are a priority because any overissuances discovered as a result of the follow up activities can be recovered through the claims and recoupment processes; recoupment on inactive cases may be considerably more difficult. Similarly, high benefit cases may be considered a priority because they may result in relatively higher program savings.

Similarly, expedited service cases are given priority for subsequent follow-up activity resulting from front-end matching in about 10 percent of the effective front-end systems. That is, FSAs review expedited service cases with inconsistent information before all other cases, presumably to correct inaccurate benefit issuances as soon as possible, since expedited cases are certified immediately.

The most common prioritization factor associated with ongoing matching is active/inactive status (28 of 88 systems with prioritizing for ongoing matching). Cases with high earnings or income reported by the match source is the second most common factor.

Several agencies have developed prioritization procedures based on multiple factors. The most common combinations in effective systems are (1) amount of benefit authorization and amount exceeding a certain discrepancy level combined with active/inactive status, (2) active/inactive status and age of the application, (3) the amount exceeding a set

discrepancy range and active/inactive status, and (4) high wages and active inactive status.

Some respondents also described other procedures (other than time limits or prioritizing) which are used for following-up on cases that require further action as a result of the matching. Although much greater detail on the follow-up process will be documented in Phase III of the study, a few of the other procedures mentioned can be noted here. In some New York agencies, the cases with discrepancies are "frozen" by the state on the central computer, so that no benefit calculations can be made concerning the client until the discrepancy has been resolved. In some Texas agencies, duplicate hard copy reports are made of the discrepancies; one of the copies is kept in a supervisor's control file and another is given to the worker in order to resolve the discrepancy. Additionally, in Michigan, the automated certification system can be coded to identify cases with negative action so that in the event the individual reapplies, the reason for the negative action can be easily identified.

Prioritizing is assumed to be an effective way to manage agency workload and the flow of information resulting from computer matching, particularly in agencies with high caseloads. The discussion in this section suggests that about 30 percent of the systems considered effective have prioritization policies in effect. Phase III of the study will focus on this issue in more detail by documenting effective prioritizing mechanisms in selected local agencies.

F. COMMENTS ON EFFECTIVE DATA SOURCES

As discussed in Chapter II, about 30 percent of all matching systems identified in the sampled local agencies access wage and unemployment insurance data. Yet, of the systems considered to be effective, over half access these data. As shown in Table III.12, 50 percent of the effective matching systems access unemployment insurance files, and 44 percent to 49 percent access wage records. In contrast, however, there is some indication that Social Security files (SSA and SSI data) are considered somewhat less useful by the local respondents, since a smaller proportion of the most effective systems access these files when compared to all systems available.

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Table III.12

Most Frequently Accessed Data Sources
for Computer Matching Systems in Local FSAs

DATA SOURCE	FRONT-END MATCHING SYSTEMS		ON-GOING MATCHING SYSTEMS	
	All FEM Systems n=346	Effective FEM Systems n=216	All OGM Systems n=692	Effective OGM Systems n=326
UI files	132 (38.2%)	109 (50.4%)	238 (34.4%)	162 (49.6%)
Wage records	117 (33.8%)	94 (43.5%)	230 (33.2%)	160 (49.0%)
SSI records	67 (19.4%)	35 (16.2%)	138 (19.9%)	49 (15.0%)
SSA records	43 (12.4%)	19 (8.7%)	107 (15.5%)	38 (11.6%)
AFDC files	51 (14.7%)	32 (14.8%)	78 (11.3%)	32 (9.8%)
Other assistance files	36 (10.4%)	23 (10.6%)	47 (6.8%)	21 (6.4%)
FS Duplicate Participation	26 (7.5%)	20 (9.2%)	48 (6.9%)	6 (1.8%)

G. SUMMARY

The more significant operational characteristics of those matching systems considered to be effective by local administrations can be summarized as follows:

- On-line systems are clearly preferable to batch systems for front-end matching and there is some indication that on-line systems are becoming increasingly important for on-going matching.

- Local staff have primary responsibility for initiating front-end matching, even when using batch matching systems. Although the state plays a larger role in initiating ongoing matching, there is some indication that for many effective ongoing systems, local staff initiate matches.

- Effective systems are somewhat more likely to perform matches on a more frequent basis than other systems. About 90 percent of the effective front-end on-line systems are used for immediate or daily matching; 44 percent of effective front-end batch systems are used for daily or weekly matching; and over-half of the effective on-going batch systems are used for monthly matching.

- About 30 percent of the effective systems have prioritization policies to target certain cases with discrepancies for subsequent follow-up activities. For front-end matching, expedited service cases with discrepant information are often reviewed before other applicants. For ongoing matching, priority is placed on active cases, cases with relatively high benefit levels, and cases with recent employment or earnings identified.

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The survey of local food stamp agencies addressed several important operational issues related to computer matching. Four issues are discussed in this chapter: (1) agency responses to the federal regulations concerning discrepancies and time limits for match follow-up, (2) organizational responsibilities for key functions related to matching, (3) the availability of program data on case actions taken as a result of matching, and (4) local reactions to the IEVS regulations.

A. IDENTIFYING AND RECONCILING DISCREPANCIES

Federal regulations explicitly specify that FSAs should verify and reconcile all discrepancies identified through computer matching; that is, any discrepancies in information in the case record and "information items" in the data base matched. This is the federal definition of a "hit."

Case actions must be completed within 30 days of the receipt of the match information. Case action, as specified in the regulations, includes: (1) a review of the match information and comparison with the information in the case file, and (2) contact with the household and with collateral contacts in an effort to resolve discrepancies. If the agency has difficulty verifying information needed to reconcile discrepancies, the 30-day time limit can be waived, but for no more than 20 percent of the information items obtained from the data sources, and all case actions must be completed either at the time the collateral contact is made or in conjunction with the next case action (e.g., recertification), whichever is earlier.

As already discussed, there is considerable variation in how these federal regulations are operationalized. This section discusses how local agencies define a "hit", what types of reconciliation methods are used, and the extent to which follow-up actions are taken.

Definition of a "Hit" and Screening Mechanisms

Although the federal regulation indicates that a hit means any case with discrepant information identified, there is some variation in how local agencies define a hit, even though every respondent used the term "hit." At one extreme, many FSAs define a hit as any case with any information identified on a matching data base; at the other extreme, a few define a hit as a case with a

discrepancy that exceeds a certain specified level. The latter definition is in fact a screening mechanism that is used to focus on those discrepancies most likely to lead to a corrected (reduced) benefit authorization amount.

The variations in how FSAs define a "hit", as reported by the local respondents are listed below:

- Any case with any information appearing on a data base accessed by the matching system

- Any case where the self-reported information is different from (discrepant) information appearing on a data base accessed by the matching system.

- Any case where a discrepancy is identified and the case meets some minimum threshold criterion (e.g., income was at least $500 for the quarter checked).

- Any case where a discrepancy is identified and the discrepancy exceeds some minimum amount (e.g., a discrepancy of at least $100 in income between what the participant reported and what was identified through the match).

The second definition is the one generally accepted by the federal agency. Since state and local policies about follow-up refer to actions or reviews of cases identified as "hits", definitional variations will mean variations in the number of cases subject to subsequent actions. The first definition of a hit is the broadest and would mean that the local FSA would be required to check all cases that appear on the data base matched, not just those with discrepant information. In fact, this may be necessary for some batch matches that produce print-outs of information on all cases matched. In order to identify which cases have discrepant information, all cases must be reviewed. The second definition refers to all cases with any discrepancy identified. Presumably many of the discrepancies can be easily reconciled by reviewing the case file and/or speaking to the recipient; those that cannot be easily resolved are to be subject to collaterol contacts. The third and fourth definitions are the most specific, and agencies using these definitions reportedly limit follow-up to those cases exceeding some pre-specified level of income or discrepancy.

The definition an agency uses may partly reflect the degree of technical sophistication of the matching system or the FSP as a whole. Agencies that use the more

restrictive definition are screening to identify those cases that are most likely to result in either adjusted benefit authorization amounts, changed eligibility status, or recaptured benefits from past over-issuances. Sophisticated computer matching systems might automatically calculate the discrepancy to allow the most problematic cases to be easily identified; and the most sophisticated systems might incorporate discrepancy or threshold factors to more efficiently identify cases with overissuances and possible fraud.

Table IV.1 summarizes the definitions of a "hit" associated with those systems considered effective by local respondents. For about half of the systems, the discrepancy definition is used. For about half of the front-end systems, though, the broader definition is used (any case with any information that appears in the matched data base); and for a few systems, particularly ongoing systems, the narrower definitions are used. It is important to repeat that this survey was administered in late 1986; thus the definitions reported were those in effect at that time. It may be possible that since that time, most agencies have begun following the federal definition of a hit.

The fact that a large number of systems use the broad definition of a "hit" ("any case with any information") may indicate that the results of the match are not provided in a form that allows staff to easily identify those with discrepancies without reviewing all cases. For example, it is likely that the match system prints the factual data about the clients matched and then a worker must actually review the information and compare it to reported information. From an operational perspective, then, it would make sense to "count" the number of cases that have to be reviewed and not just the number with discrepancies; both types of cases require some staff time.

A somewhat higher percentage of the ongoing matching systems than front-end systems use threshold and discrepancy criteria (6 to 9 percent of the systems), suggesting that some states may have incorporated these screening criteria into their computer matching systems. In contrast, very few of the front-end systems include discrepancy codes (1 to 3 percent of the systems) and none considered minimum threshold factors. This may reflect the fact that many of the front end matches are conducted online and the eligibility worker has access to all the information available on the data file.

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Table IV.1

Variations in the Identification of Cases to be Followed-up

FRONT-END MATCHING SYSTEMS	
Any case with any info. on the matching system	107 (49.5%)
Any case with any discrepancy	104 (48.1%)
Any case with minimum income identified by the match	0
Any case with a discrepancy exceeding some minimum amount	5 (2.3%)
Total systems	216 (100%)
ON-GOING MATCHING SYSTEMS	
Any case with any info. on the matching system	122 (37.5%)
Any case with any discrepancy	176 (54.1%)
Any case with minimum income identified by the match	7 (2.1%)
Any case with a discrepancy exceeding some minimum amount	18 (5.5%)
Information not Available	2 (.6%)
Total systems	325 (100.0%)

B. METHODS USED TO RESOLVE DISCREPANCIES

As already noted, federal regulations specify that the information received and the discrepancies identified as a result of computer matching be resolved through contact with the households and or collateral contacts. As summarized in Tables IV.2 and IV.3, the five most common methods for reconciling discrepant information identified through computer matching are (1) review of case files or application forms, (2) telephone calls to the applicant or recipient, (3) in-office interviews with the applicant or recipient, (4) home visits, and (5) contacts with a third party (usually an employer). The tables also indicate the number and percent of local FSAs that report using each reconciliation method, and the average percentage of discrepancies generally subjected to each method.

The relative extent to which each review method is used is about the same for both front-end and ongoing matching, with the exception of home visits. The primary action taken is to review case files and forms; such reviews are used by nearly all FSAs and for nearly all discrepancies. Over 70 percent of the FSAs conduct telephone interviews with the recipients and nearly 90 percent interview recipients in the office, but the average percentage of cases subjected to these types of actions is considerably less than for case reviews. This implies that the vast majority of discrepancies can be identified by simply reviewing the case, a point which is addressed below.

However, home visits are used by 32 percent of the agencies conducting front-end matching and by 74 percent of those conducting ongoing matching. This is the only significant difference in reconciliation methods by type of match. The difference is perhaps due to the fact that more of the front-end matching is done at application or soon after, and the applicant is probably easier to contact. There may be longer time lapses between agency contacts with ongoing active cases. In either case, only about 13 percent of the discrepancies require home visits to reconcile differences in those agencies that conduct home visits.

C. STAFF RESPONSIBILITIES FOR RELATED FUNCTIONS

Computer matching procedures help identify client-reported information that may be different from information on file at other agencies or programs. In many cases, resolving the discrepancy may simply require updating information or

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Table IV.2

Methods Used for Reconciling
Discrepant Information Identified
Through Front-End Matching in Local FSAs

	Front-end Matching		Average Percentage of Discrepant Cases For Which This Reconciliation Method Is Used
	# of FSAs with FEM	% of FSAs with FEM	
Case file/form review	123	96.1%	95.6%
Telephone interviews	92	71.9	28.3
In-office interviews	111	86.7	52.8
Home visits	41	32.0	13.1
Third-party contacts	103	80.5	52.4

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Table IV.3

Methods Used for Reconciling
Discrepant Information Identified
Through Ongoing Matching in Local FSAs

Average Percentage of	# of FSAs with OGM	% of FSAs with OGM	Discrepant Cases For Which This Method Is Used
Case file/form review	170	99.4%	97.5%
Telephone interviews	126	73.7	33.5
In-office interviews	152	88.9	50.2
Home visits	126	73.7	13.4
Third-party contacts	150	87.7	55.0

documentation received from the client. In some cases, however, the information obtained as a result of a match requires adjusting the benefit authorization amount or even recouping past over-issuances. Thus, the computer matching process involves more than just conducting the actual match.

The three major processing activities which occur in an agency after receipt of match information are: (1) identifying whether there are any inconsistencies in information, (2) reconciling the inconsistencies, and (3) determining whether there has been an actual overissuance.

Table IV.4 summarizes where responsibility for these three functions lies organizationally in the sample of local FSAs surveyed. It is clear that local eligibility workers have the primary responsibility for identifying discrepancies, reconciling discrepancies and determining whether an overissuance has occurred. This suggests that despite the high level of automation inherent in computer matching, local line staff are generally required to review most (if not all) the information and take subsequent case action if necessary.

In 66 percent of the local FSAs that have on-going computer matching, eligibility workers are responsible for identifying inconsistencies in applicant/recipient information. Since most state agencies maintain computer files on which active FS cases are matched, respondents in 28 percent of these local FSAs indicate that the state matching office identifies inconsistencies, often automatically with a special computer program. Once a case has been identified, however, local eligibility workers in about 90 percent of the FSAs are responsible for reconciling the information and determining whether an overissuance has occurred. Thus, generally eligibility workers are responsible for performing these functions, although in about 5 to 6 percent of the local FSAs, a local investigative unit or a fraud unit is responsible for reconciliation and determination of overissuance amounts.

Local eligibility workers have even more responsibility for front-end matching, presumably because so much of the matching on applicants occurs at the time of intake at the local level. In 81 percent of the local FSAs that conducted front-end matching at the time of the survey, line workers were responsible for identifying inconsistencies, and in nearly all the agencies with front end matching these staff reconcile the discrepancies and determine overissuances (96 and 92 percent respectively).

Table IV.4

Functional Responsibilities for Matching-Related Activities in Local FSAs

	Identifying Cases Which Require Follow-Up		Reconciling Problem Cases		Determining Overissuance	
	FSAs re: FEM	FSAs re: OGM	FSAs re: FEM	FSAs re: OGM	FSAs re: FEM	FSAs re: OGM
Eligibility Worker	104 (81.3%)	112 (65.5%)	123 (96.1%)	156 (91.2%)	118 (92.2%)	153 (89.5%)
Eligibility Supervisor	3 (2.3%)	4 (2.3%)	— (0.0%)	1 (0.6%)	3 (2.3%)	3 (1.8%)
Local Investig. Unit	1 (0.8%)	4 (2.3%)	2 (1.6%)	7 (4.1%)	3 (2.3%)	7 (4.1%)
Local Fraud Unit	– (0.0%)	– (0.0%)	– (0.0%)	2 (1.2%)	– (0.0%)	3 (1.8%)
Local Claims Unit	1 (0.8%)	2 (1.2%)	2 (1.6%)	4 (2.3%)	3 (2.3%)	5 (2.9%)
State Matching Unit	17 (13.3%)	48 (28.1%)	– (0.0%)	– (0.0%)	– (0.0%)	2 (1.2%)
Other Local Unit	4 (3.1%)	11 (6.4%)	1 (0.8%)	3 (1.8%)	– (0.0%)	– (0.0%)
Not available	– (0.0%)	– (0.0%)	– (0.0%)	– (0.0%)	1 (0.8%)	1 (0.6%)
Total Applicable FSAs	128 (100.0%)	171 (100.0%)	128 (100.0%)	171 (100.0%)	128 (100.0%)	171 (100.0%)

NOTE: Column numbers may total more than the applicable number of FSAs since a few local FSAs in the sample have more than one unit responsible for a function depending on which matching system is used. The percent of all applicable FSAs (i.e., all those FSAs with front-end matching and all those FSAs with on-going matching) appears in parentheses below the number of applicable FSAs in each category.

Past research has suggested that the primary costs of computer matching are for staff time related to following up on information, reconciling discrepancies and initiating subsequent case actions. This local survey suggests that the matching-related costs may be different for front-end versus ongoing matching. For front-end matching, much of the cost is associated with actually conducting the match, especially if the matching is done on-line. However, for ongoing matching a larger portion of costs are probably associated with following up on discrepancies, investigating, establishing claims to recover overissuances, and perhaps initiating legal actions. Thus, from a cost-efficiency perspective, front-end matching should involve lower staff costs, even though it may require more of an eligibility worker's time.

Clearly as a case progresses from initiation of the match and through the initial processing activities, costs to the agency will rise. Once a discrepancy is identified, the eligibility worker will follow-up on the information provided as a result of the match. Potentially several sources will be consulted to determine the accuracy of the client reported data. Costs will rise as the case requires specialists or anti-fraud investigators to verify the accuracy of the information presented. Should the information be inaccurate, benefits will need to be adjusted, the recoupment and restitution process must begin. Finally, should the case be referred to an administrative disqualification hearing, or to the court system, the costs will rise further. Thus, depending on what tasks are included within the computer matching process, costs attributed to matching could be relatively high. As Greenberg and Wolf document, a major portion of computer matching costs occur in the latter stages when specialized activities are required for relatively few cases.

The amount of time spent on matching-related activities was not addressed in this survey, but will be one of the issues examined in the final phase of the study. One would expect, however, that the processing time related to computer matching will vary depending, in part, on the extent to which follow-up activities require staff to directly contact participants or third parties, and the proportion of cases that must be reconciled. The local survey did address the various methods used to follow up cases identified by a match (reconciliation methods) and the proportion of cases that require subsequent action, as discussed in the above section.

Extent of Follow-up Required

The extent of follow-up which is required as a result of computer matching is influenced by a number of factors. For example, there is variation in the way agencies target and screen cases that will be subjected to further review. Nevertheless, it is clear that nearly all FSAs follow-up on all the new and active FSP cases identified through matching. As shown in Table IV.5, 88.3 percent of the FSAs report that they follow up on 100 percent of the cases identified by front-end matching and 84.2 percent follow up on 100 percent of the active cases identified by on-going matching. In contrast, however, nearly 16 percent of the FSAs do not follow up on any inactive cases (i.e., the client is no longer receiving food stamps during the time period covered by the match information.)

Although most FSAs do follow up on all active cases, in most instances, nothing more than a review of the case file information is needed to clarify or reconcile inconsistencies. For example, if a wage match was done and a case that had not indicated employment was identified as having had earnings, the eligibility worker would first go to the case record file. Since the wage files typically are not available for several months after the end of quarter, the individual may have reported employment for the period covered by the match, but proof of unemployment at the time of certification was in the case file. No further reconciliation would be required on this case.

Although not addressed in the current survey, it is likely that the need for additional follow-up activities will be dependant on the type of match. For example, a wage match which identifies discrepancies in earnings or dates of employment often must be verified through telephone or written contact with an employer, rather than just contacting the recipient.

Respondents were asked to provide information on the percentage of active FS cases identified through a match that required further action beyond simply review the case record. As indicated in Table IV.6, there is evidence that the majority of cases do not require any further action by the FSA. About 11 percent of the respondents were not able to estimate this percentage, but 15 percent said that 90 to 99 percent of the matches do not require any further action, and over 60 percent of the respondents estimated that over 50 percent of all the cases identified through a match do not require any further action.

The discussion above suggests that most FSAs do follow up on all active cases identified through computer matching,

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Table IV.5

Proportion of FSP Cases Identified by Computer Matching
That are Followed Up by Local FSAs

Proportion of Cases Followed up	Front-end Matching Cases (FEM)		On-going Matching Cases (OGM)			
			Active Cases		Inactive Cases	
	# of FSAs with FEM	% of FSAs with FEM	# of FSAs with OGM	% of FSAs with OGM	# of FSAs with OGM	% of FSAs with OGM
100%	113	88.3%	144	84.2%	36	21.1%
90 - 99%	7	5.5	10	5.8	—	0.0
70 - 89%	3	2.3	9	5.3	3	1.8
50 - 69%	2	1.6	3	1.8	4	2.3
30 - 49%	-	0.0	1	0.6	1	0.6
10 - 29%	-	0.0	-	0.0	5	2.9
1 - 9%	-	0.0	2	1.2	2	1.2
0%	-	0.0	-	0.0	27	15.8
Not available	3	2.3	2	1.2	93	54.4
Total FSAs	128	100.0%	171	100.0%	171	100.0%

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Table IV.6

Proportion of Active (Ongoing) Cases Identified
by Computer Matching That Require
No Further Action by Local FSAs

Proportion of Active Cases Requiring no Further Action	Number of FSAs with OGM	Percent of FSAs with OGM
90 - 99% of cases identified	25	14.6%
70 - 85% of cases identified	33	19.3%
50 - 65% of cases identified	37	21.6%
25 - 45% of cases identified	25	14.6%
10 - 20% of cases identified	17	9.9%
Less than 10% of cases identified	15	8.8%
Not able to estimate	19	11.1%
Total systems with ongoing matching	171	100.0%

and that in most cases, the inconsistencies can be easily reconciled by reviewing the case record information.

D. AVAILABILITY OF FSA DATA ON COMPUTER MATCHING

The earlier report on this study, which presented the results of a census of all state FSAs, indicated that states do not routinely and systematically maintain information about the number of cases subjected to different matches, the number of "hits," or the subsequent actions taken. The local survey, therefore asked local administrators about the availability of three types of information on computer matching: (1) information noted in the case file, (2) information included on an automated case (certification) system, and (3) aggregate management information reports. The purpose of these questions was to identify the nature of and extent to which information is maintained about specific cases subjected to matching in order to determine the feasibility of pursuing more intensive case level analysis in the final phase of this study.

Respondent's were asked whether the following information was recorded for each case: (1) whether the case was subjected to computer matching, (2) whether the case represented a "hit" (however the FSA defines hit), (3) whether the discrepancy was reconciled, and (4) subsequent actions taken as a result of matching information (e.g., was a claim established to recover overissuance amounts). Table IV.7 summarizes the availability of case-level information in local FSAs. With very few exceptions, FSAs do routinely record computer matching information in hard copy case records. In addition, about 20 percent of the FSAs also generally enter information about computer matching onto an automated case record (certification) system.

Regular aggregate summary reports are also maintained more often at the local level than at the state level. In 17 of the 128 FSAs that conduct front-end matching (13 percent), regular management reports are prepared, generally on a monthly basis, on the number of matches conducted and the number of cases on which follow up was required. Thirty-one percent of the FSAs that conduct ongoing matching maintain management summaries, usually on either a monthly or a quarterly basis. About half of the front-end matching management reports break out activity by assistance program (e.g., FS PA cases from NPA cases, AFDC only cases); and about 60 percent of the on-going matching reports provide such a breakout.

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Table IV.7

Availability of Case-Level Information
on Computer Matching in Local FSAs

	FRONT-END MATCHING		ON-GOING MATCHING	
	# of FSAs with FEM	% of FSAs with FEM	# of FSAs with OGM	% of FSAs with OGM
No matching info. routinely recorded in case files	1	0.8%	2	1.2%
Matching info. generally recorded in hard copy case records only	100	78.1	135	78.9
Matching info. generally entered on automated certification system and recorded in hard copy case records	26	20.3	33	19.3
N/A (Info. not avail. in the survey)	1	0.8	1	0.6
Total FSAs	128	100.0%	171	100.0%

Thus, although state agencies, at the time of the census survey, did not routinely maintain information about the number of matches conducted or the results of the matches, local FSAs routinely record information in case files. In addition, about one-third of the FSAs maintain regular management reports on on-going matching, although fewer prepare such reports on front-end matching. This suggests that the most realistic method for obtaining information on the extent and results of matching is to conduct systematic case record reviews.

E. LOCAL REACTIONS TO INCOME ELIGIBILITY VERIFICATION SYSTEMS (IEVS) REGULATIONS

The new IEVS regulations could have substantial impact on local computer matching activities. The comments and reactions elicited during the survey are primarily based on agency perceptions of the adjustments to be made in order to comply with the IEVS regulations. It should be noted here that the agencies' understanding of the new regulations was generally limited to the knowledge that IEVS would require matching on additional sources of information, matching on all children and all adult clients, and the perceived requirement that all hits must be followed up. At the time of the survey, 90 of the sample agencies (52.3 percent) reported that the IEVS regulations had not yet impacted their agency.

Negative local reactions to IEVS were consistent with the responses of state administrators in the Phase I survey. The primary concern raised about the IEVS regulations in the local survey was the requirement to match on duplicate sources of wage information (Social Security Administration and state employment agency wages). Matching on additional categories of clients, perceived as the required matching on all adults (including elderly recipients) was questioned by several respondents, presumably because they perceive that disabled and elderly recipients exhibit stable income patterns and that frequent matching would not yield any savings to the agencies. The increased workload brought about by the IEVS changes was a concern noted by 36 of 172 respondents (21 percent). Respondents indicated that staff increases would be necessary to comply with IEVS, since in the view of one respondent, "workers are already at the point of (workload) saturation". There were also several concerns about the timeliness of certain types of data sources, since many times, employer information from the wage match is outdated or is already known to the agency.

Positive reactions to IEVS were provided by several of the respondents. Some mentioned that IEVS would provide additional information with which to establish correct benefit amounts and that IEVS matching or awareness of IEVS matching will require clients to be more "alert and honest" during the application process. IEVS was also described as a tool to make clients aware that information is being checked. One individual mentioned that IEVS would be useful requirement once the technical "kinks" were worked out. One of the few agencies that had experienced at least one "round" of IEVS-required data matching mentioned that they observed a decrease in discrepancies since clients were aware that additional sources of information were being monitored.

In general, local reactions to IEVS were similar to the state reactions reported in the State Census Report. The currency of information on the data bases, the duplication between SSA wages and state employment agency wages, and the perceived stringent follow-up time limits were all mentioned by state and local respondents. At the time of the local survey, however, agencies were slightly further along in the implementation of IEVS and were primarily concerned about the increases in eligibility staff workload.

F. SUMMARY

Federal regulations clearly specify that cases with discrepancies between the case record and "information items" in the match data base must be verified and resolved. Cases with discrepancies are commonly referred to as "hits." However, although all local respondents used the term "hit," there is some variation in its definition. For about half of the matching systems, the standard discrepancy definition was used, but the broader definition ("any case with any information in the matched data base") was used in relation to nearly half the systems. For a few systems, narrower definitions, based on case prioritization policies, were used.

Such variations could potentially affect the number of discrepancies on which subsequent review or other actions are taken. However, at least for active cases, this does not seem to be a serious issue, since nearly all FSAs follow up on all active cases identified through matching. But about 16 percent of all FSAs do not pursue discrepancies if the case if inactive when the match information is received. This means that the potential amount of overissuances that might be recouped is reduced.

Nearly all FSAs conduct case reviews on discrepancies within 30 days. The most common methods for reconciling discrepant information identified through computer matching are: review of case files or application forms, telephone calls to the applicant or recipient, in-office interviews with the applicant or recipient, home visits and contacts with a third party (e.g., employers). Home visits are used much less frequently for resolving front-end match discrepancies. The vast majority of discrepancies, however, can be resolved by reviewing the case file.

With very few exceptions, local FSAs routinely record computer matching information in hard copy case records. About 20 percent of the FSAs also enter information about computer matching onto an automated case record certification system.

At the time of the survey, local FSAs were beginning to implement the IEVS regulations. There was some concern about the duplication of effort involved in conducting both regular wage matches and Social Security wage matches and about federal follow-up regulations that some local administrators feel are too stringent. The primary concern at the local level, though, was that IEVS is increasing the workload of eligibility staff.

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1/ "Report on Census of State Operations Study: Claims Collection, Final Report" Food Stamp Program Operations Study for the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Sharon K. Long.

2/ The results of Phase I of the Computer Matching component of the FSPOS are reported in Demetra Nightingale, Sue E. Poppink and Regina M. Yudd's, "Food Stamp Program Operation Study, Report on Census of State Operations: Computer Matching," The Urban Institute, February 1987.

3/ An example of a locally-developed computer match system is a school records match showing, in addition to school enrollment, any enrolled siblings of the student, the child's guardian and home address. This information may be useful for verifying household composition.

4/ Specifically, questions 6.00 and 6.01; "What has been the impact so far of implementing the new IEVS (Income Eligibility Verification System)?", and "How useful is the requirement to follow-up on 100 percent of hits? What impact will this have on your operations and on the usefulness of matching?"

5/ As discussed in Chapter 1, in this report a computer matching system is defined by the following criteria: (1) it is conducted on a regular basis or a routine schedule (as opposed to a special or one time only match) and (2) it is conducted by an automated process (as opposed to a manual matching process).

6/ Within a state, the state agency typically makes matching systems available to all local agencies within that state. Appendix Table A indicates that there were a total of 775 computer matching systems in the 172 local agencies. This represents 325 distinct systems when the use of one state-developed system by several substate agencies is counted as one distinct system.

7/ For further discussion on the operational adjustments to IEVS, see Chapter IV.

8/ David Greenberg and Douglas Wolf, Using Computers to Combat Welfare Fraud: The Operation and Effectiveness of Wage Matching (Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 1986), p. 81-93.

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APPENDIX A
COMPUTER MATCHING SYSTEMS USED IN THE SAMPLE FSAs

The sources of identification of the matching systems listed in this appendix are coded in the following manner:

SM- A state-developed or state-coordinated match which was previously identified through state-level interviews.

LI-SM- A state-developed or state-coordinated match which was <u>not</u> previously identified through state-level interviews.

LD- A match developed by the local agency using locally-generated data bases.

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APPENDIX TABLE A

ALABAMA

MATCH	BIBB	ETOWAH	FRANKLIN	MOBILE	MORGAN
SM-1		X	X	X	X
SM-2	X	X	X	X	X
LI-SM-1	X	X			
LI-SM-2					X
LI-SM-3					X
LI-SM-4					X
LI-SM-5					X

SM-1 Department of Industrial Relations - Batch
SM-2 Department of Industrial Relations - Online
LI-SM-1 SDX Online
LI-SM-2 IEVS Wages
LI-SM-3 IEVS Unemployment Insurance
LI-SM-4 IEVS Supplemental Security Insurance
LI-SM-5 IEVS Aid to Dependant Children

Note: The Department of Industrial Relations in the state of Alabama is the state agency which maintains information on wage and unemployment compensation benefits.

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ARIZONA

MATCH	MARICOPA	NAVAJO
SM-2	X	X
SM-4	X	X
SM-5	X	X
LD-1	X	

SM-2 Beneficiary Data Exchange Online
SM-4 Base Wage Online
SM-5 Unemployment Insurance Online
LD-1 Expenses Exceeds Income

ARKANSAS

MATCH	CLAY	PHILLIPS
SM-1	X	X
SM-2	X	X
SM-4	X	X
SM-6		X
LI-SM-1		X

SM-1 Employment Security Division (ESD) recipients
SM-2 ESD - applicants
SM-4 Child Support Enforcement - DEFRA Refunds
SM-6 ESD/ACES Online
LI-SM-1 IEVS Match

CALIFORNIA

MATCH	LOS ANGELES	SAN BERNADINO	SAN JOAQUIN
SM-1	X	X	X
SM-2	X	X	
SM-3	X	X	X
LI-SM-1			X
LI-SM-2			X
LI-SM-3			X

SM-1 Integrated Earnings
SM-2 Disqualification FS Recipients File
SM-3 Interest Income File
LI-SM-1 Lottery Match
LI-SM-2 Payment Verification
LI-SM-3 Inmate Match

COLORADO

MATCH	BOULDER	DENVER	GUNNISON-HINSDALE	PUEBLO
SM-1	X	X	X	X
SM-2	X	X	X	
SM-3	X	X	X	
SM-4	X		X	X
LI-SM-1				X
LD-1	X			
LD-2				X

SM-1 Wage Data Match
SM-2 State Data Exchange
SM-3 COIN Client Oriented Info. Network
SM-4 CUBS - CO Unemployment Benefit System
LI-SM-I Cross County Duplicate Participation
LD-1 Automated Master File
LD-2 In-County Duplicate Participation

DELAWARE

MATCH	NEW CASTLE	SUSSEX
SM-1		X
SM-2	X	X

SM-1 Department of Labor Batch
SM-2 Department of Labor Online

FLORIDA

MATCH	DADE	POLK
SM-1	X	X
SM-2	X	X
SM-3	X	X

SM-1 Income Verification System
SM-2 Duplicate Participation Match
SM-3 FS/AFDC Match

GEORGIA

MATCH	BIBB	COLQUITT	FULTON	MADISON
SM-1	X	X	X	X
SM-2	X	X	X	
SM-3	X	X	X	X
SM-4	X	X	X	
LD-1	X			

SM-1 Labor
SM-2 Beneficiary Data Exchange
SM-3 State Data Exchange
SM-4 Online Vital Statistics
LD-1 Master Indexing System

Note: The Master Indexing System in Bibb County Georgia is an in-house system designed to extract AFDC files and Medicaid records on food stamp clients.

HAWAII

MATCH	HONOLULU	MAUI
SM-1	X	X
SM-2	X	X
SM-3	X	X
SM-4	X	X
SM-5	X	

SM-1 Wage-SSA
SM-2 Bank
SM-3 Quarterly Unemployment Insurance Benefits (UIB)
SM-4 Online UIB
SM-5 Department of Motor Vehicles

ILLINOIS

MATCH	GREENE	(S. SUBURBAN)	ENGLEWOOD	GARFIELD	ASHLAND
SM-1		X		X	
SM-2		X		X	
SM-3				X	
SM-6		X		X	
SM-7	X	X	X	X	X
SM-8	X	X	X	X	X
SM-9	X	X	X	X	X
LI-SM-1			X		
LI-SM-2				X	
LI-SM-3				X	
LI-SM-4					X
LI-SM-5					X
LI-SM-6					X

SM-1 Wage Batch
SM-2 Unemployment Insurance Benefits (UIB) Batch
SM-3 State Data Exchange
SM-6 State Employees
SM-7 Wage Online
SM-8 UIB Online
SM-9 Duplicate Participation
LI-SM-1 Bendex
LI-SM-2 Illinois Accts. Receivable
LI-SM-3 Duplicate Participation
LI-SM-4 Child Support
LI-SM-5 Bureau of Collections
LI-SM-6 Child and Family Services

The TIP program (LI-SM-1 through LI-SM-6) in use in the Cook Co. Ashland Office accesses these 6 data bases but is counted as 6 separate systems for this study.

INDIANA

MATCH	ADAMS	ALLEN	MARION	SCOTT	WAYNE
SM-1	X	X	X	X	X
SM-2			X	X	X
SM-3		X		X	X
SM-4		X	X	X	X
SM-5	X	X	X	X	X
LD-1			X		
LD-2					X
LD-3					X
LD-4					X
LD-5		X			
LD-6		X			
LD-7		X			

SM-1 Wage/Unemployment Insurance Quarterly
SM-2 Unemployment Compensation Monthly
SM-3 Wage/UCB Weekly
SM-4 Social Security Number Verification
SM-5 Beneficiary Data/ State Data Exchange
LD-1 Bureau of Motor Vehicles
LD-2 AFDC/FS (Allen County)
LD-3 Duplicate Food Stamp Participation
LD-4 Disqualified Member Check
LD-5 Child Support Records
LD-6 AFDC Records (Wayne Co.)
LD-7 Duplicate Certifications

IOWA

MATCH	IOWA	WEBSTER
SM-1	X	X
SM-2	X	X
SM-3	X	X

SM-1 Earnings
SM-2 Unemployment
SM-3 Beneficiary Data Exchange

KANSAS

MATCH	CHEROKEE	FRANKLIN	LINN	WICHITA	WYANDOTTE
SM-1	X	X	X	X	X
SM-2	X	X	X		
SM-3				X	
SM-4	X	X			X
SM-5					X
SM-6	X	X	X	X	X
SM-7	X	X	X	X	X
SM-8	X	X	X	X	X
LI-SM-1		X			
LD-1	X				

SM-1 Wage and Unemployment Compensation Batch
SM-2 Kansas Payroll
SM-3 Wichita School Enrollment
SM-4 Missouri Welfare
SM-5 Kansas City Taxes
SM-6 Wage and Unemployment Comp. Online
SM-7 Duplicate Participation
SM-8 Beneficiary Data Exchange
LI-SM-1 Child Support Enforcement
LD-1 Indian Commodities Match

KENTUCKY

MATCH	BELL	CARTER	HART	JEFFERSON	TODD
SM-1	X	X	X	X	X
SM-2	X	X	X	X	X
SM-3	X	X	X	X	X
SM-4	X	X	X	X	X
SM-5	X	X	X	X	X
LI-SM-1	X				X
LI-SM-2			X		
LD-1	X				
LD-2	X				
LD-3	X				

SM-1 State Data Exchange Batch
SM-2 AFDC Batch
SM-3 Unemployment Insurance Batch
SM-4 Wage Batch
SM-5 Online access to above four systems
LI-SM-1 IEVS
LI-SM-2 Disqualified Recipients File
LD-1 Driver's License/SSN Match
LD-2 Employer Data Match
LD-3 Detailed Employment Match

LOUISIANA

MATCH	CADDO	LINCOLN	ORLEANS	ST. TAMMANY	TANGIPAHOA
SM-1	X	X	X	X	X
SM-2	X	X	X	X	X
SM-3	X	X	X	X	X
SM-4	X	X	X		X
SM-5	X	X	X		X
SM-6	X	X	X		X
LI-SM-1			X		

SM-1 Department of Labor (DOL) Wage Batch
SM-2 DOL Unemployment Compensation Match
SM-3 Welfare Information System Batch
SM-4 State Data Exchange Batch
SM-5 Beneficiary Data Exchange Batch
SM-6 Online Access for above five systems
LI-SM-1 IEVS

MAINE

	LEWISTON	AUGUSTA
SM-1	X	X
SM-2	X	X
SM-3		X
SM-4	X	X
SM-5	X	X
SM-6	X	X
SM-7	X	X

SM-1 Unemployment
SM-2 Wage Quarterly
SM-3 Wage Daily
SM-4 Bank
SM-5 State Data Exchange
SM-6 Beneficiary Data Exchange
SM-7 Department of Motor Vehicles

	MARYLAND				
	ALLEGANY	BALTIMORE CITY	FREDERICK	MONTGOMERY	BALT. COUNTY
SM-1	X	X	X	X	X
SM-2	X	X	X	X	X
SM-3				X	X
LI-SM-1				X	

SM-1 State Wage Info. Collection (SWICA)
SM-2 State Unemployment Insurance (SUI)
SM-3 Beneficiary Data Exchange
LI-SM-1 District of Columbia Wage Match

MASSACHUSETTS

	ROSLINDALE	MALDEN
SM-1	X	X
SM-2	X	X
SM-3	X	X
SM-4	X	X
SM-5	X	

SM-1 Wages
SM-2 Unemployment Insurance
SM-3 Beneficiary Data Exchange
SM-4 State Data Exchange
SM-5 Bank Match

MICHIGAN

	BERRIEN	BRANCH	MACOMB	ST. CLAIR	WAYNE*
SM-1	X	X	X	X	X
SM-2	X	X	X	X	X
SM-3	X		X	X	X
SM-4					X
LI-SM-1	X	X	X	X	X
LI-SM-2			X	X	
LD-1	X				

SM-1 Beneficiary Data Exchange
SM-2 State Data Exchange
SM-3 Motor Vehicle
SM-4 BEER - Social Security Wage Record
LI-SM-1 Michigan Employment Services Commission
LI-SM-2 Client Information System
LD-1 County Property Tax Records

*** Fullerton/Jeffries Office of Wayne County

MINNESOTA

	CLAY	DAKOTA	HENNEPIN	RAMSEY	WASECA
SM-1	X	X	X	X	X
SM-2	X	X	X		X
SM-3	X	X			X
SM-4	X	X		X	X
LI-SM-1	X				
LD-1			X		

SM-1 Wage Quarterly
SM-2 Unemployment Compensation
SM-3 Social Security Number
SM-4 Duplicate Participation
LI-SM-1 Welfare Information System
LD-1 In-County Economic Assistance System

MISSISSIPPI

	ATTALA	HINDS	LOWNDES	MADISON	TISHOMINGO
SM-1	X	X	X	X	X
SM-2	X	X	X	X	X
SM-3	X	X	X	X	X
SM-4	X	X		X	X
SM-5		X			
LI-SM-1	X	X	X		
LI-SM-2			X		
LD-1		X			

SM-1 Beneficiary Data Exchange
SM-2 State Data Exchange
SM-3 Wage/Unemployment (UI) Quarterly
SM-4 UI Monthly
SM-5 UI Weekly
LI-SM-1 Duplicate Participation (Statewide)
LI-SM-2 Other State Duplicate Participation
LD-1 Duplicate Participation (Countywide)

MISSOURI

	BUCHANAN	JACKSON	LAFAYETTE	PETTIS	ST. LOUIS
SM-1	X	X	X	X	X
SM-2	X	X	X	X	X
SM-3	X	X	X		X
SM-4	X		X	X	X
SM-5	X	X	X	X	X
SM-6	X	X	X	X	X
SM-7	X		X	X	X
SM-9		X	X	X	X
SM-10		X		X	X
LI-SM-1		X	X		
LI-SM-2		X			
LI-SM-3				X	

SM-1 State Data Exchange
SM-2 Beneficiary Data Exchange
SM-3 Vital Statistics
SM-4 Lottery
SM-5 Employ. Security Interface (ESI) Batch
SM-6 ESI Online
SM-7 Department of Social Services
SM-9 Vital I-Birth
SM-10 Vital I-Death
LI-SM-1 Food Stamp Participation
LI-SM-2 Income Maintenance Participation
LI-SM-3 Bank Match

MONTANA

	CASCADE	LEWIS & CLARK
SM-1	X	X
SM-2	X	X
SM-4		X

SM-1 Wage
SM-2 Unemployment Compensation
SM-4 Beneficiary Data Exchange

NEBRASKA

	LEXINGTON	OMAHA	GRAND IS.	LINCOLN	SEWARD
SM-1	X	X	X	X	X
SM-2	X	X	X	X	X
SM-3	X	X	X	X	X
SM-4	X	X	X	X	X
SM-6	X			X	X

SM-1 State Data Exchange
SM-2 Beneficiary Data Exchange
SM-3 Unemployment Compensation
SM-4 Welfare Client Exchange
SM-5 IRS Match
SM-6 Duplicate Participation Match

NEVADA

	CLARK	RENO
SM-1	X	X

SM-1 Employment Security Match

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NEW HAMPSHIRE

	KEENE	DOVER
SM-1		X
SM-2		X
SM-3	X	X
SM-4	X	X
SM-5	X	X

SM-1 Wage
SM-2 Unemployment Compensation
SM-3 Beneficiary Data Exchange
SM-4 State Data Exchange
SM-5 Prescreen

NEW JERSEY

	BURLINGTON	CAMDEN	ESSEX	HUDSON	MIDDLESEX
SM-1	X	X	X	X	X
SM-2		X	X	X	X
SM-3	X	X	X	X	X
SM-4		X	X	X	
LI-SM-1	X	X	X	X	X
LI-SM-2				X	

SM-1 Wage Batch
SM-2 Unemployment Insurance Batch
SM-3 Wage Online
SM-4 Unemployment Insurance Online
LI-SM-1 Duplicate Participation
LI-SM-2 Wage/Unemployment Recertification Match

NEW MEXICO

	BERNALILLO	CIBOLA
SM-1	X	X
SM-2	X	X
SM-3	X	
SM-4	X	X
LI-SM-1	X	X
LI-SM-2	X	X
LI-SM-3	X	X
LI-SM-4	X	X

SM-1 Food Stamp Master File Batch
SM-2 Food Stamp Master File Online
SM-3 Arizona Quarterly
SM-4 AFDC Update
LI-SM-1 Benefits Data Exchange
LI-SM-2 Department of Motor Vehicles
LI-SM-3 State Data Exchange
LI-SM-4 Wage and Unemployment Match

NEW YORK

	BROOME	CORTLAND	ERIE	NEW YORK CITY
SM-1	X	X	X	X
SM-2	X	X	X	
SM-3				X
SM-4	X			X
SM-5	X			
LI-SM-1		X		
LD-1				X

SM-1 Comprehensive Income Tracking
SM-2 Resource File Integration (RFI)
SM-3 Overnight Clearance System
SM-4 Department of Motor Vehicles
SM-5 Quick Turnaround System
LI-SM-1 Duplicate Participation
LD-1 Benefit Match

NORTH CAROLINA

	CRAVEN	FORSYTH	HALIFAX	HAYWOOD	YANCEY
SM-1	X	X	X	X	X
SM-2	X	X	X		
SM-3	X	X	X	X	X
SM-4	X	X	X	X	X
LI-SM-1	X	X			
LD-1	X				
LD-2		X			
LD-3			X		
LD-4				X	
LD-5		X			

SM-1 Beneficiary/State Data Exchange
SM-2 Employment Security Commission Batch
SM-3 Department of Transportation
SM-4 Employment Security Commission Online
LI-SM-1 Financial Resources Match
LD-1 Property Match (Craven County)
LD-2 Property Match (Forsyth County)
LD-3 Property Match (Halifax County)
LD-4 Property Match (Haywood County)
LD-5 County School Record Match

NORTH DAKOTA

	CASS	EMMONS	GRAND FORKS	MOUNTRAIL	STUTSMAN
SM-1	X	X	X	X	X
SM-2	X	X	X	X	X
SM-3	X				
SM-4	X	X	X	X	X
SM-5	X	X	X	X	X
LI-SM-1					X

SM-1 Job Search - Wage
SM-2 Unemployment Insurance
SM-3 Worker's Compensation
SM-4 Beneficiary Data Exchange
SM-5 State Data Exchange
LI-SM-1 State Online Child Support

OHIO

	CUYAHOGA	DELAWARE	FRANKLIN	MAHONING	RICHLAND
LI-SM-1	X	X	X		X
LI-SM-2					X
LI-SM-3					X

LI-SM-1	AFDC/FS Concurrent Recipient Wage Match
LI-SM-2	AFDC/FS Concurrent Recipient Ohio University Employee Match
LI-SM-3	AFDC/FS Concurrent Recipient Ohio State Employee Match

OKLAHOMA

	CARTER	CUSTER
SM-1	X	X
SM-2	X	X
SM-3	X	X
SM-4	X	X
SM-5	X	X

SM-1 State Data Exchange
SM-2 Beneficiary Data Exchange
SM-3 Employment Security Commission/UI
SM-4 Employment Security Commission - Wages
SM-5 Welfare Enumeration

OREGON

	SPRINGFIELD	ALBANY	E.PORTLAND	W.EUGENE	COTTAGE GROVE
SM-1	X	X	X	X	X
SM-2	X	X	X	X	X
SM-3	X	X	X	X	X
SM-4	X	X	X	X	X
SM-5	X	X	X	X	X
SM-6	X	X	X		X
LI-SM-1	X				
LI-SM-2		X			
LI-SM-3			X		
LI-SM-4				X	

SM-1 Unemployment Commission Batch
SM-2 Quarterly Wage Batch
SM-3 Bendex/SDX
SM-4 Workers Compensation
SM-5 Child Support
SM-6 Food Stamp Disqualification
LI-SM-1 Client Maintenance System
LI-SM-2 Lottery Winnings Match
LI-SM-3 Duplicate Participation
LI-SM-4 ADC Grant Verification

PENNSYLVANIA

	LYCOMING	WESTMORELAND	CENTER PHILA.	OGONTZ	W. PHILA.
SM-1	X	X	X	X	X
SM-2	X	X	X	X	X
SM-3	X		X	X	X
LI-SM-1	X			X	
LD-1				X	

SM-1 Quarterly Wage & UC
SM-2 Daily Wage & UC
SM-3 Lottery
LI-SM-1 Bendex
LD-1 Duplicate Participation

RHODE ISLAND

	WARWICK	PROVIDENCE
SM-1	X	X
SM-2	X	X
SM-3	X	X
SM-4		X
SM-5		X

SM-1 Unemployment Compensation Benefits
SM-2 Temporary Disability Insurance
SM-3 New Hires
SM-4 AFDC
SM-5 Child Support Enforcement

SOUTH CAROLINA

	DARLINGTON	GEORGETOWN	NEWBERRY	ORANGEBERG	RICHLAND
SM-1	X	X	X		X
SM-2	X	X		X	
SM-3					X
SM-4	X		X	X	X
SM-5			X	X	X
LI-SM-1	X			X	
LI-SM-2				X	
LI-SM-3				X	
LI-SM-4					X
LI-SM-5					X
LD-1					X

SM-1 Employment Security Commission Batch
SM-2 Client Info. - Online
SM-3 National Disqualification
SM-4 ESC Online
SM-5 National Dis-Q Online
LI-SM-1 SDX
LI-SM-2 Bendex
LI-SM-3 Department of Motor Vehicles
LI-SM-4 Duplicate Participation - Border States
LI-SM-5 In-state Duplicate Participation
LD-1 Resource Check

SOUTH DAKOTA

	BENNETT	DAVISON
SM-1	X	X
SM-2	X	X
SM-3	X	X
LI-SM-1	X	X

SM-1 Bendex
SM-2 SDX
SM-3 Department of Labor Wage
LI-SM-1 Duplicate Participation

TENNESSEE

	DAVIDSON	SUMNER
SM-1	X	X
SM-2	X	X

SM-1 Clearinghouse - Batch
SM-2 Clearinghouse - Online

Note: Both clearinghouse systems in Tennessee are computer match systems in which users can access multiple data sources. These data sources include wages, unemployment insurance benefits, adult general assistance files, files from the state social services agency, and benefits paid by the Social Security Administration.

TEXAS

	DEWITT	SMITH	TARRANT
SM-1	X	X	X
SM-2	X	X	X
SM-3	X	X	X
SM-4	X	X	X
SM-5	X	X	X
LI-SM-1	X		
LI-SM-2		X	

SM-1 SDX/Bendex
SM-2 Employment Commission Weekly
LI-SM-1 Enumeration
LI-SM-2 Benefit Info. System (SAVERR)

Note: The Enumeration system attempts to verify or validate the Social Security Numbers of current food stamp recipients in DeWitt Co, Texas.

UTAH

	PRICE	SALT LAKE CITY
SM-1	X	X
SM-2	X	
SM-3	X	
SM-4	X	X
SM-5	X	X
SM-6	X	X
SM-7	X	
SM-8	X	
LD-1		X

SM-1 Wage
SM-2 Bendex
SM-3 Immigration and Naturalization Service
SM-4 Wage Online
SM-5 Unemployment Compensation Online
SM-6 Department of Motor VehWage Match)
SM-8 Unemployment Compensation Batch
LD-1 Local Apartment Check

Note: The Local Apartment Check allows the city to verify lease agreements, signatures, rental amounts and household size in major apartment buildings in Salt Lake City, Utah.

VERMONT

	ST. ALBANS	HARTFORD
SM-1	X	X
SM-2	X	X
SM-3	X	X
SM-4		X

SM-1 State Data Exchange
SM-2 Beneficiary Data Exchange
SM-3 Unemployment Compensation
SM-4 Numident

Note: The Numident system attempts to verify or validate the Social Security Numbers of current food stamp recipients or applicants.

	PULASKI	VIRGINIA HAMPTON	NORFOLK	CHARLOTTE
SM-1	X	X	X	X
LI-SM-1	X			X
LI-SM-2				X
LI-SM-3				X
LI-SM-4				X
LI-SM-5				X
LI-SM-6				X

SM-1 Virginia Employment Commission
LI-SM-1 Department of Motor Vehicles
LI-SM-2 VA Client Information System (CIS) Online
LI-SM-3 VA CIS Batch
LI-SM-4 SDX
LI-SM-5 Bendex
LI-SM-6 Child Support Enforcement

WASHINGTON

	BENTON	VANCOUVER	KING-RAINIER	PIERCE	SPOKANE
SM-1	X	X	X	X	X
SM-2	X	X	X	X	X
SM-3	X	X	X	X	X
SM-4	X	X	X	X	X

SM-1 Unemployment Commission
SM-2 Wage Discrepancy
SM-3 Disqualifications
SM-4 State Data Exchange

	WEST VIRGINIA	
	CHARLESTON	BECKLEY
SM-1	X	X
SM-2	X	X
SM-3	X	X
SM-4	X	X

SM-1 Employment Security - Wages
SM-2 Employment Security - Unemployment
SM-3 Workers Comp.
SM-4 Duplicate Participation

WISCONSIN

	BAYFIELD	DOUGLAS	MILWAUKEE	ROCK	SAUK
SM-1	X	X	X	X	X
SM-2	X	X	X	X	X
SM-3			X		X
SM-4	X	X	X		X
SM-5	X	X	X	X	X
SM-6	X	X	X	X	X
SM-7	X	X	X		
LI-SM-1			X		
LI-SM-2				X	
LI-SM-3				X	
LI-SM-4				X	
LI-SM-5				X	
LI-SM-6				X	
LD-1			X		

SM-1 Unemployment Compensation
SM-2 Beneficiary Data Exchange
SM-3 SSA Wages
SM-4 State Data Exchange
SM-5 Social Security Number Validation
SM-6 Multiple Cases
SM-7 Existing Case
LI-SM-1 Child Support Disregard ($50)
LI-SM-2 WI/Illinois UC match
LI-SM-3 WI/IL wage match
LI-SM-4 WI/IL welfare match
LI-SM-5 AFDC/SSI/FS match
LI-SM-6 General Assistance Work Relief

Note: The General Assistance Work Relief match checks for payments made to clients who may be general assistance recipients on a workfare-type program.

WYOMING

	CROOK	NATRONA	PARK	FREEMONT	CARBON
SM-1	X	X	X	X	X
SM-2	X	X	X	X	X
SM-3				X	

SM-1 Unearned Income
SM-2 Wage
SM-3 IRS

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APPENDIX B
DISTRIBUTIONS OF DATA BASES ACCESSED BY SAMPLE FSAs

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Appendix Table B-1
Data Bases Accessed by Front-end or Ongoing Computer Matching Systems Used in Local FSAs

Name of Data Base	Number of Systems	% of Systems Using Data Base
Wage	247	31.08
UI Benefits	257	33.01
SSA Wages	13	1.06
SSA Employment	14	1.08
SSA Benefits	113	14.05
SSI Benefits	150	19.03
Tax Files	8	1.00
Bank Files	8	1.00
DMV	26	3.03
AFDC	92	11.08
General Assistance	22	2.08
Medicaid	34	4.03
Medicare	12	1.05
1099 Taxes	1	0.01
Other Juris. Wage	6	.80
Other Juris. UI	5	.64
Other Juris. PA	8	1.00
SSA/SSN	19	2.05
Federal Disq.	13	1.06
Worker Comp.	11	1.04
Other Employment	12	1.05
Other Non-Asst.	56	7.02
FS Duplication	61	7.08
Other State Asst.	63	.81
Other Federal	3	.38
Total no. of Systems =	775	
Total no. of FSAs =	172	

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Appendix Table B-2

Data Bases Accessed by Front-end Computer Matching Systems Used in Local FSAs

Name of Data Base	Number of Systems	% of Systems Using Data Base
Wage	117	33.8
UI Benefits	132	38.2
SSA Wages	2	0.6
SSA Emply.	2	0.6
SSA Benefits	43	12.4
SSI Benefits	67	19.4
Tax Files	4	1.2
Bank Files	1	0.3
DMV	18	5.2
AFDC	51	14.7
General Asst.	14	4.0
Medicaid	23	6.6
Medicare	3	0.9
1099 Taxes	0	0.0
Other Juris. Wage	2	0.6
Other Juris. UI	2	0.6
Other Juris. PA	3	0.9
SSA/SSN	6	1.7
Federal Disq.	8	2.3
Worker Comp.	3	0.9
Other Employ.	5	1.4
Other Non-Asst.	26	7.5
FS Duplication	26	7.5
Other State Asst.	36	10.4
Other Federal	3	0.9

Total # of Systems = 346
Total # of FSAs = 128

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Appendix Table B-3

Data Bases Accessed by Ongoing Computer Matching Systems Used in Local FSAs

Name of Data Base	Number of Systems	% of Systems Using Data Base
Wage	230	33.2
UI Benefits	238	34.4
SSA Wages	13	1.9
SSA Emply.	14	2.0
SSA Benefits	107	15.5
SSI Benefits	138	19.9
Tax Files	7	1.0
Bank Files	8	1.1
DMV	20	2.9
AFDC	78	11.3
General Asst.	19	2.7
Medicaid	25	3.6
Medicare	12	1.7
1099 Taxes	1	0.1
Other Juris. Wage	5	0.7
Other Juris. UI	4	0.6
Other Juris. PA	6	0.9
SSA/SSN	16	2.3
Federal Disq.	8	1.2
Worker Comp.	11	1.6
Other Employ.	9	1.3
Other Non-Asst.	50	7.2
FS Duplication	48	6.9
Other State Asst.	47	6.8
Other Federal	3	0.4

Total # of Systems = 692
Total # of FSAs = 171

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APPENDIX C

DETAILED TABLES OF TIMING ASPECTS OF EFFECTIVE COMPUTER MATCHING

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Table C-1

Timing of Effective Ongoing Online Matching	No of Systems
At Eligibility Worker's Discretion and For Investigative Purposes	1
At Recertification and For Investigative Purposes	14
At Recertification & EW's Discretion	14
At Recertification, EW's Discretion and For Investigative Purposes	48
Monthly and at Recertification	2
At Recertification Only	17
At EW's Discretion Only	3
At State's Discretion	3

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Table C-2

Timing of Effective
Ongoing Batch Matching

	Systems
Daily Only	5
Weekly Only	2
Monthly Only	88
Quarterly Only	72
Annually Only	4
Recertification Only	15
At EW's Discretion Only	4
At State Discretion Only	2
Monthly and Quarterly	5
Monthly, Quarterly and at EW's Discretion	1
Monthly, Quarterly, and For Investigative Purposes	2
Quarterly, and at Recertification	2
Quarterly, at Recertification and at EW's Discretion and For Investigative Purposes	3
Recertification, Investigation Purposes, and EW's Discretion	2
Recertification and For Investigative Purposes	1
Quarterly and at EW's Discretion	1
Quarterly, at Recertification, and at EW's Discretion	2
Monthly and at Recertification	1
Monthly, Recertification and EW's Discretion	5
Weekly and at Recertification	1
Weekly and Monthly	1
Daily and Weekly	1
Daily, Weekly and Monthly	1