
Agricultural Worker Verification- Frequently Asked Questions

1. What is “principal employment”?

“Principal employment” is that which the patient declares is his/her primary occupation. Self-declaration is acceptable for purposes of documentation.

2. What is “agriculture”?

Agriculture means farming in all its branches, including horticulture, aquaculture, animal husbandry, packing and delivery to a location for sale or processing.

3. Why do I have to ask if a patient has established a separate home in order to work in agriculture?

If a patient or a member of his/her family is a migratory agricultural worker, health center staff need to be aware for two reasons: 1) to provide clinical treatment and plan for continuity of care as they may be in your area for only a short period of time; 2) in order to properly credit the health center with serving either migratory or seasonal agricultural workers, and therefore be accountable for migrant health funds.

4. What does it mean to “establish a temporary abode (home)”?

When a person and/or family leaves the area in which he/she lives to do agriculture work and must live somewhere other than in his/her home in order to do such work, that person is considered to have “established a temporary home”.

5. How is a seasonal agricultural worker defined?

A seasonal worker is someone who does not have to establish a temporary home in order to work in agriculture on a seasonal basis.

6. What does “seasonal basis” mean?

“Seasonal basis” means that the worker’s employment and income may fluctuate with changes in conditions and the kinds of agriculture that they are working in.

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7. Why do I have to ask if an agriculture worker has stopped traveling to do agricultural work?

A person who used to migrate to do agriculture as their principal employment and who cannot work in agriculture anymore because he/she is too old or is disabled, is considered a former migrant "farmworker". We recommend that they and their dependents be registered as "migrant" if they are there for only part of the year, or "seasonal" if they reside in your area year round.

8. If a patient is either a migratory or seasonal worker, and they have insurance, how do I register them?

Migrant or seasonal status indicates a designation of an individual as a member of a highly vulnerable population for which the health center receives special funding even if the patient is insured. An agricultural worker can have insurance and still be registered as an agricultural worker.

9. In a family where agriculture is the principle employment of at least one member, are all members of that family also classified as a farmworker?

Yes. Per PHS Definition obtained from the Health Centers Consolidation Act of 1996, Section 330(g) Public Law 104-299-Oct. 11, 1996):

Family:

(1) **In general.** The Secretary may award grants for the purposes described in subsections (c), (e), and (f) for the planning and delivery of services to a special medically underserved population comprised of--

(A) migratory agricultural workers, seasonal agricultural workers, **and members of the families of such migratory and seasonal agricultural workers who are within a designated catchment area;** and

(B) individuals who have previously been migratory agricultural workers but who no longer meet the requirements of subparagraph (A) of paragraph (3) because of age or disability and **members of the families of such individuals who are within such catchment area.**