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Field Operations Memo 2003-4
February 3, 2003

To: **Transitional Assistance Office Staff**

From: **Cescia Derderian, Assistant Commissioner for Field Operations**

Re: **Elimination of the State Supplemental Food Stamp Program (SSFSP) and BEACON Changes for Processing Noncitizens**

Overview

Budget shortfalls caused the Department to implement a funding reduction for the SSFSP in May 2002. Since then, eligible SSFSP participants received full benefits for July 2002, and partial benefits for August 2002. Because the Department has depleted all funding for the current fiscal year, the Department must formally shut down the Program.

This Field Operations Memo gives AU Managers procedures for processing noncitizen applicants and recipients impacted by the elimination of this Program. The memo discusses:

- BEACON Automated SSFSP Shutdown Activities;
- BEACON Changes and AU Manager Instructions for Processing Noncitizens;
- Notices to former SSFSP recipients; and
- An LOQC report comprised of AUs that were closed but not noticed because current noncitizen information requires review.

BEACON Automated SSFSP Shutdown Activities

At the close of business on Friday, January 24, 2003, the SSFSP was officially closed. **No AU Manager action is required to close impacted AUs/APs**. FS APs with a SSFSP indicator of *Yes* were closed. AUs comprised of all SSFSP APs were closed and sent an EBC notice. AUs comprised of both FS-eligible and former SSFSP APs were:

- Recalculated;
- Sent an EBC notice, if there was a change in food stamp benefit amount;
- Reclassified on the Noncitizen window as Legal FS Disqualified - *Yes*; and
  Note: The Legal FS Disqualified field replaces the State Food Stamps field.

BEACON Automated SSFSP Shutdown Activities (Continued)	• Identified on the Work Requirements window as:
	   ▪ Work Program Required: *No* with Required Status Reason: *Noncitizen Disqualified*;
	   ▪ FS ET Required: *No* with Required Status Reason: *Noncitizen Disqualified.*
	The Financial Tab of the EBC Results and the Results window will automatically display the new *Calculated AU Size* field. This field represents the AU size used to determine the final federal food stamp benefit amount in AUs comprised of both FS-eligible and former SSFSP APs.

AU Manager Instructions for Processing Noncitizens	Changes were made to several BEACON windows that impact the processing of noncitizens. When an re/applicant is a noncitizen, the AU Manager must review food stamp policy at 106 CMR 362.220 to ensure noncitizen information is correctly entered on BEACON so that the proper food stamp calculation is performed.

◆ *Legal Noncitizens Eligible for Federal Food Stamp Benefits:* These AU Manager instructions outline the procedures for processing legal noncitizens eligible for federal food stamp benefits.
  • Re/open the AU following routine procedures.
  • On the Noncitizen window:
    ▪ Enter the AP's noncitizen information including their INS Designation;
    ▪ Enter *No* to the prompt question (Is this person a legal noncitizen who is ineligible to participate in the Federal Food Stamp Program?) in the Legal FS Disqualified Field; and
    ▪ Fill in all other required noncitizen fields: Status, U.S. Entry Date, Section Reference, 40 Quarters Claimed, Alien Registration No., as appropriate.
  • On the Interview Wrap-up window, after all verifications are returned for the AU:
    ▪ Select the items (including noncitizen) to be authorized;
    ▪ Perform an EBC calculation; and
    ▪ Click on Authorization.

◆ *Naturalized Citizens:* If a naturalized citizen, *formerly known to BEACON* as a *noncitizen*, **reapplies**, the AU Manager must:
  • Reopen the AU following routine procedures.
  • On the Noncitizen window:
    ▪ Update the AP's INS designation to naturalized citizen;
    ▪ Answer *No* to the prompt question (Is this person a legal noncitizen who is ineligible to participate in the Federal Food Stamp Program?) in the Legal FS Disqualified Field; and
    ▪ Fill in all other required noncitizen fields, as appropriate.

AU Manager Instructions for Processing Noncitizens (Continued)

- On the Citizenship window:
    - Indicate that this AP is a *U.S. Citizen*; and
- On the Interview Wrap-up window:
    - select the items (including noncitizen) to be authorized;
    - Perform an EBC calculation; and
    - Click on Authorization.

◆ *Legal Noncitizens Ineligible for Federal FS Benefits:* These AU Manager instructions outline the procedures for processing legal noncitizens ineligible for federal food stamp benefits.
- On the Apply for Assistance window:
    - Select *No* in the Applying field for the ineligible noncitizen.
    - **Note:** If you select *Yes* in error, go to the AU Composition Results Window, highlight and select the AP(s) that is an ineligible noncitizen, and then enter the Inclusion Reason of *Deemor* with the Responsibility of *Noncitizen Disqualified*.
- On the AU Mandatory/Responsible window:
    - Enter the Inclusion Reason of *Deemor*; and
    - Enter the Responsibility of *Noncitizen Disqualified*.
- On the AU Composition Results window:
    - Select the AP's Ineligibility Reason of: *Ineligible Noncitizen;* and
    - Select the Reason Category: *Program Rules.*
- On the Work Requirements window:
    - Enter *No* in the Work Program Required field;
    - Enter *Noncitizen Disqualified* as the Required Status Reason;
    - Enter *No* in the FS ET Required field; and
    - Enter *Noncitizen Disqualified* as the Required Status Reason.
- On the Noncitizen window:
    - Enter the AP's noncitizen information including their INS Designation;
    - Answer *Yes* to the prompt question (Is this person a legal noncitizen who is ineligible to participate in the Federal Food Stamp Program?) in the Legal FS Disqualified Field; and
    - Fill in all other required noncitizen fields: Status, U.S. Entry Date, Section Reference, 40 Quarters Claimed, Alien Registration No., as appropriate.
- On the Interview Wrap-up window, after all verifications are returned for the AU:
    - Select the items (including noncitizen) to be authorized;
    - Perform an EBC calculation; and
    - Click on Authorization.

- Denying an AU for Ineligible Noncitizen Status
  - If an entire AU is found to be ineligible due to noncitizen status, the AU Manager must:

    - On the AU Composition Results window:
      - ✓ Highlight and select the AU being denied;
      - ✓ Select the Reason Category of *Program Rules* and the Reason of *Ineligible Noncitizen* for the AU or for the AU member(s).
    - On the Interview Wrap-up window:
      - ✓ Select the change to be authorized;
      - ✓ Select *Application/Reapp.Denial* in the Type field;
      - ✓ Perform an EBC calculation; and
      - ✓ Click on Authorization.

  This will generate an EBC denial notice informing the AU of their ineligibility for FS benefits because of their noncitizen status.

- Denying an AP for Ineligible Noncitizen Status
  - If an AU member(s) is found to be ineligible due to noncitizen status, the AU Manager must:

    - On the AU Composition Results window:
      - ✓ Highlight and select the AU member(s) being denied;
      - ✓ Select the Reason Category of *Program Rules* and the Reason of *Ineligible Noncitizen* for the AU member(s).
    - On the Interview Wrap-up window:
      - ✓ Select the change to be authorized;
      - ✓ Select *Application/Reapp.Denial* in the Type field;
      - ✓ Perform an EBC calculation; and
      - ✓ Click on Authorization.

  This denial will not generate a BEACON-generated notice. The AU Manager must manually deny the AP by:

    - ✓ Preparing an FSNL-2 manual denial form for the AU.
    - ✓ Writing *Ineligible Noncitizen* as the denial reason;
    - ✓ Using manual citation 362.220 and 365.520 on the FSNL-2; and
    - ✓ Mailing the FSNL-2 to the AU informing them of the AU member denial.

AU Manager Instructions for Processing Noncitizens (Continued)

◆ *Noncitizens with an Undetermined Noncitizen Status.* These AU Manager instructions outline the procedures for processing noncitizens who refuse/are unwilling to verify noncitizen status or who do not verify an illegal status.

   Important: AU Managers must enter *Undetermined* as the INS Designation on BEACON when a noncitizen refuses to submit documentation of noncitizen status. The AU Manager must not try to obtain documentation.

   • On the Apply for Assistance window:
      ▪ Select *No* in the Applying field for the ineligible noncitizen
   • On the AU Mandatory/Responsible window:
      ▪ Enter the Inclusion Reason of *Deemor*; and
      ▪ Enter the Responsibility of *Noncitizen Disqualified*.
   • On the AU Composition Results window:
      ▪ Select the AP's Ineligibility Reason of: *Ineligible Noncitizen;* and
      ▪ Select the Reason Category: *Program Rules.*
   • On the Work Requirements window:
      ▪ Enter *No* in the Work Program Required field;
      ▪ Enter *Noncitizen Disqualified* as the Required Status Reason;
      ▪ Enter *No* in the FS ET Required field; and
      ▪ Enter *Noncitizen Disqualified* as the Required Status Reason.
   • On the Noncitizen window:
      ▪ Select *Undetermined* as the AP's INS Designation; then
      ▪ Select *Active* for the Status field;
      ▪ Enter the date the applicant provides or the date of application as the Initial Date of Entry into the U.S.;
      ▪ Select any Section Reference from the drop down box; and
   Note: In a future modification, this information will be grayed out when *Undetermined* is selected.
      ▪ Answer *No* to the prompt question (Is this person a legal noncitizen who is ineligible to participate in the Federal Food Stamp Program?) in the Legal FS Disqualified Field;
   • On the Interview Wrap-up window, after all verifications are returned for the AU:
      ▪ Select the items (including noncitizen) to be authorized;
      ▪ Perform an EBC calculation; and
      ▪ Click on Authorization.
   • See Page 4 of this memo for instructions on denying the AU/AP for ineligible noncitizen status.

AU Manager Instructions for Processing Noncitizens (Continued)

◆ *Noncitizens Not Legally Residing in the U.S.* These AU Manager instructions outline the procedures for processing noncitizens who have verified an illegal noncitizen status.

Important: AU Managers may enter *Not Legally Residing* as the INS Designation on BEACON **only** if the noncitizen has verified this status with a Final Order of Deportation or other formal document proving an illegal status. See 106 CMR 362.240(B).

- On the Apply for Assistance window:
  - Select *No* in the Applying field for the ineligible noncitizen.
- On the AU Mandatory/Responsible window:
  - Enter the Inclusion Reason of *Deemor*; and
  - Enter the Responsibility of *Noncitizen Disqualified*.
- On the AU Composition Results window:
  - Select the AP's Ineligibility Reason of: *Ineligible Noncitizen;* and
  - Select the Reason Category: *Program Rules.*
- On the Work Requirements window:
  - Enter *No* in the Work Program Required field;
  - Enter *Noncitizen Disqualified* as the Required Status Reason;
  - Enter *No* in the FS ET Required field; and
  - Enter *Noncitizen Disqualified* as the Required Status Reason.
- On the Noncitizen window:
  - Select *Not Legally Residing* as the AP's INS Designation; then
  - Select *Active* for the Status field;
  - Enter the date the applicant provides or the date of application as the Initial Date of Entry into the U.S.;
  - Select any Section Reference from the drop down box;
  Note: In a future modification, this information will be grayed out when *Not Legally Residing* is selected.
  - Answer *No* to the prompt question (Is this person a legal noncitizen who is ineligible to participate in the Federal Food Stamp Program?) in the Legal FS Disqualified Field.
- On the Interview Wrap-up window, after all verifications are returned for the AU:
  - Select the items (including noncitizen) to be authorized;
  - Perform an EBC calculation; and
  - Click on Authorization.
- See Page 4 of this memo for instructions on denying the AU/AP for ineligible noncitizen status.

Notices to Former SSFSP Recipients

Notices will be mailed on a staggered basis beginning in February to former SSFSP recipients closed as a result of the elimination of the program. Certain former SSFSP recipients will be informed that they appear federally eligible effective April, 1, 2003 due to Farm Bill changes. Other SSFSP recipients will be simply informed of the program shutdown.

AU Managers will receive additional instructions for processing former SSFSP recipients potentially eligible for federal food stamp benefits.

LOQC Report

Approximately 154 AUs were placed on a report for LOQC review. These AUs contain APs with an SSFSP indicator of *Yes*, an INS Designation of Naturalized Citizen, Nonimmigrant or Not Legally Residing and may have incorrect noncitizen information on BEACON. LOQC will review and identify AUs needing correction.

Questions

If you have any questions, please have your Hotline designee call the Policy Hotline at 617-348-8478.