



MITT ROMNEY
Governor

KERRY HEALEY
Lieutenant Governor

Commonwealth of Massachusetts
Executive Office of Health and Human Services
Department of Transitional Assistance
600 Washington Street • Boston, MA 02111

RONALD PRESTON
Secretary

JOHN A. WAGNER
Commissioner

Field Operations Memo 2003-7
February 24, 2003

To: Transitional Assistance Office Staff
From:  Cescia Derderian, Assistant Commissioner for Field Operations
Re: Farm Bill 2002: 4/1/2003 Food Stamp Noncitizen Restoration

Background

Effective April 1, 2003, the Farm Bill restores food stamp eligibility to qualified noncitizens as defined in 106 CMR 362.240 who have lived in the United States for five years or longer.

The Department received a waiver from the U.S. Department of Agriculture to extend the processing timeframes on these AUs. Effective February 20, 2003, TAO staff may accept applications from AUs that are currently ineligible due to their noncitizen status but **may** be eligible on April 1, 2003 under the noncitizen restoration rule. These applicants must not be denied and told to reapply on April 1, 2003.

Overview

This field operations memo will discuss:

- Extended processing timeframes for re/applications under the Noncitizen Restoration Waiver;
 - 30 day processing of re/applications for Combination FS AUs;
 - Outreach to Former SSFSP AUs who appear eligible under the Noncitizen Restoration Rules; and
-

Extended Processing Timeframes for Re/Applications Under the Noncitizen Restoration Waiver

When a food stamp AU re/applies, **and is comprised of noncitizens who may all be eligible as of April 1, 2003**, AU Managers must follow the procedures below to process these re/application(s) accurately and timely. This waiver is effective for applications received on or after February 20, 2003. It ends March 31, 2003.

- ◆ AU Managers must:
 - 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:
 - Click on Selection and then Select All;
 - Click on EBC Results and then Calculate;
 - Highlight and select the record in the top of the window that shows the calculated amount of FS benefits;
 - **Change the Benefit Effective Date on the Update Tab to the AU's cyclical issuance date for April;**
 - Click on Authorization.
- ◆ Supervisors must:
 - Approve these re/applications as soon as they are ready to be approved; and
 - Use the chart below to ensure issuance of benefits effective the AUs cyclical date for April.

SSN	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Release Date	3/26	3/27	3/31	4/1	4/1	4/2	4/4	4/7	4/8	4/8

- Between April 15 and April 30, 2003, issue a supplemental benefit for the period of April 1, 2003 and the day before the AU's April cyclical issuance date.

Exception: AUs with social security numbers ending in **0** will not be owed a supplemental benefit.

**30 Day
Processing of
Combination
FS AUs**

Re/applications of combination AUs that contain both eligible members (citizens and/or legal noncitizens eligible for FS benefits) ***and*** ineligible noncitizen members must be processed in accordance with **regular 30 day processing time frames**. Ineligible noncitizen members who will become eligible under noncitizen restoration rules must be manually tracked and added to the AU effective April 1, 2003.

AU Managers must:

- ◆ Re/open the **FS-eligible** members by following routine procedures.
 - ◆ Process the **ineligible** noncitizen members by following the instructions below (these instructions apply to all ineligible noncitizen members regardless of potential 4/1/2003 eligibility.)
 - 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:
 - Enter the AP's noncitizen information including their INS Designation;
 - Answer the prompt question appropriately based on the noncitizen member status (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.
-

30 Day
Processing of
Combination
FS AUs
(Continued)

- On the Assessed Person Income and Assets window:
 - Enter the income and assets **for all APs including the ineligible noncitizens.**

Note: Based on the information in the noncitizen window, the appropriate FS calculation will be used.
 - On the Interview Wrap-up window, after all verifications are returned for the AU:
 - Select the items to be authorized;
 - Perform an EBC calculation; and
 - Click on Authorization.
 - Manually deny AP(s) ineligible due to noncitizen status by using an FSNL-2 (see instructions in Field Operations Memo 2003-4).
 - ◆ Set a reminder in the Notes for Tagged Section of BEACON to manually track noncitizen members of the AU who will become eligible on April 1, 2003.
 - ◆ Add the noncitizen member(s) as *applying* in the existing AU effective April 1, 2003.
 - On the AU Mandatory Responsible window:
 - Highlight and select the noncitizen from the record in the top of the window;
 - Select the *Yes* radio button in the Applying field; and
 - Click on Update.
 - On the AU Composition Results window, the previously recorded ineligibility reason of Ineligible Noncitizen will be grayed out since this AP is now applying for food stamp benefits.
 - On the Noncitizen Window:

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 Work Requirements window, for each AP being added to the AU:
 - Indicate the AP's FS/WP status by selecting the appropriate radio button in the Work Program Required field;
 - Select the Required Status Reason from the dropdown box;
 - Indicate the AP's FS/ET status by selecting the appropriate radio button in the FS ET Required field; and
 - Select the Required Status Reason from the dropdown box.
-

**30 Day
Processing of
Combination
FS AUs
(Continued)**

- On the Interview Wrap-up window:
 - Select the items to be authorized;
 - Perform an EBC calculation; and
 - Click on Authorization.

- On the Related Benefits window, after the AP(s) is added and the new food stamp benefit amount has been established for the AU:
 - Issue a supplemental benefit for the period between April 1, 2003 and the day before the AU's cyclical issuance date for April.

**Outreach to
Former SSFSP
AUs**

The attached notice will be sent to 702 former SSFSP AUs that appear eligible under noncitizen restoration rules effective April 1, 2003. These Outreach Notices will be generated on February 27, 2003.

The notice will tell the AU of potential eligibility under the noncitizen restoration rule. It will show the name, noncitizen status, status granted date and U.S. entry date for each AP in the AU. The notice encourages former SSFSP AUs to reapply using an enclosed simplified food stamp application form.

These application forms are marked *Farm Bill Restoration* on the bottom of the first page so that AU Managers can identify these AUs. On the Application window, AU Managers must select Farm Bill Restoration as the application source in answer to the question: *What is the source of this application?*

LOQC will assist TAOs with former SSFSP AUs who reapply under noncitizen restoration rules.

Questions

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

Attachment A

Important Notice - Read Carefully Este Mensaje Es Importante – Lea Cuidadosamente

{BEACON USER STREET ADDRESS}
{BEACON USER CITY, STATE, ZIP}

Massachusetts Department of Transitional Assistance

{RECIPIENT NAME}
{RECIPIENT ADDRESS}
{RECIPIENT CITY/TOWN, STATE, ZIP}

{RECIPIENT SSN}
{BEACON USER OFFICE NAME}

{MM/DD/YYYY}

Dear {GRANTEE}:

The Department ran out of funding for the State Supplemental Food Stamp Program for fiscal year 2003. Because state funding has not been restored, your State Supplemental Food Stamp Program benefits have been at zero since August 2002. The Department is now ending the State Supplemental Food Stamp Program (SSFSP).

Because of changes in the federal Food Stamp Program (FS) rules, you and /or members of your household who have been in the United States for five years or longer may be eligible for FS benefits beginning April 1, 2003. You may use the enclosed food stamp application form to apply for FS benefits. Bring in, mail or fax the completed application to your local DTA office. You may also apply at the local DTA office that handles your case.

The following is a list of SSFSP member(s) in your case who will be closed but may be eligible for FS benefits as of April 1, 2003. We have listed the following information on each person as it appears in our records: the noncitizen status, the date the status started, and the date of entry into the U.S.

Person	Noncitizen Status	Status Start	U.S. Entry Date
{AP NAME}	{STATUS}	{START_DATE}	{ENTRY_DATE}
{AP NAME}			
{AP NAME}			
{AP NAME}			
{AP NAME}			
{AP NAME}			
{AP NAME}			
{AP NAME}			

If the information we have listed is **NOT** correct, please contact your DTA office immediately. If you and/or a household member(s) became a U.S. citizen, you may be eligible for FS benefits. We will need proof of your current status. Your worker can help you figure out the status. It is a good idea to ask for help right away in case you need to get other information to show you and/or the other household member(s) is eligible.

If you have any questions about your case, you should call
{BEACON_USER_TAO_NAME} at {BEACON_USER_TAO_PHONE_NUMBER}.

You may ask for help from your local legal services office by calling:
{LEGAL_SERVICE_NAME} at {LEGAL_SERVICE_TELEPHONE}