

From the Hotline

Q. When does the 60-month TAFDC clock start?

A. For all adult recipients who were receiving TAFDC on December 1, 1996, the 60-month clock began on December 1, 1996, whether the recipient was exempt or nonexempt at that time. For individuals applying after December 1, 1996 the 60-month clock begins the first full month of assistance, again regardless of whether the recipient is exempt or nonexempt. For example, Mary Jones applied on March 24, 1997. The first month of her 60-month clock is April 1997.

The 24-month clock begins when a recipient becomes nonexempt. Continuing the above example, when Mary Jones applied, she was exempt. She lost her exemption in October 1997. Her first full month as a nonexempt recipient was November 1997. Her 60-month clock started in April 1997 and her 24-month clock started in November 1997.

Remember, once the 60-month clock starts, it runs continuously. The 24-month clock may start and stop depending on the recipient's status and whether the case is open or closed. See 106 CMR 203.200.

Note: A non-legally liable grantee, such as an aunt or grandmother, coded action reason 17 with a SAVE Code A since December 1996 or since he or she began receiving TAFDC, does not have a 60-month clock. However, any change in action reason or SAVE code starts the 60-month clock. Again, remember, once the 60-month clock is started, it cannot be stopped or interrupted.

Q. I have a case with a 17-year-old dependent child who is not participating in his required ESP Educational Component. He is the only dependent in the case. Do I close the entire case?

A. No. The dependent child is sanctioned and the cash benefits are reduced by an amount equal to the dependent child's portion of the assistance grant. The grantee, if otherwise eligible, is an assistance unit of one until the dependent child reaches his or her 18th birthday.

Q. I have a teen parent in the custody of DSS who is receiving Social Security benefits for herself. DSS is not making any payments to this teen nor is she receiving any foster care payments. The teen and her baby are living in a TLP. How do I handle this case?

A. Both the teen and her baby are eligible for TAFDC as an assistance unit of two. All of the teen's Social Security income is unearned income and is countable in determining the grant.

Q. I have a TAFDC recipient whose second disability exemption request was approved by Disability Evaluation Services (DES). While DES was reviewing the disability claim, the recipient was nonexempt. What date do I use to adjust the 24-month clock and issue retroactive benefits?

A. The date the recipient requested the disability exemption or the disability onset date as determined by DES, whichever is later. (Note: Clocks should always be adjusted as soon as possible once you are aware that an adjustment is required.)

See the *Disability Determination Guide*, pages 8 and 12.