



DEVAL L. PATRICK
Governor

TIMOTHY P. MURRAY
Lieutenant Governor


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

JUDYANN BIGBY, M.D.
Secretary

JULIA E. KEHOE
Commissioner

Field Operations Memo 2010-43
September 10, 2010

To: Transitional Assistance Office Staff

From:  John Augeri, Assistant Commissioner for Field Operations

Re: The ARRA \$25 Weekly Unemployment Compensation Payment Update

Overview

The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (ARRA), also known as the Economic Stimulus Package, included a provision that authorized an additional \$25 per week in unemployment compensation (UC) benefits to eligible claimants. However, the ARRA \$25 weekly UC payment was not reauthorized under the Unemployment Compensation Extension Act of 2010; therefore, this payment has ended for some claimants.

Based on information received from the Division of Unemployment Assistance (DUA), claimants with a claim date later than May 23, 2010 are not eligible to receive the ARRA \$25 weekly UC payment. However, claimants with claim dates of May 23, 2010 and earlier will continue to receive the ARRA \$25 weekly UC payment through week ending December 11, 2010.

Purpose of Memo

This Field Operations Memo informs staff about:

- the automatic recalculation of TAFDC and SNAP cases with UC income on file and claim dates later than May 23, 2010;
 - procedures for entering UC income going forward;
 - updated information on the UC Hotline and the UC screen; and
 - the review and processing of retroactive payments for cases affected by this change.
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**Recalculation
of Cases**

On August 25, 2010, MIS recalculated all active cash and SNAP cases with UC income on file and claim dates after May 23, 2010. For cash cases, the UC income on file was reduced by a monthly figure of \$108.33 because based on claim dates, these households were no longer receiving the ARRA \$25 weekly UC payment. Recalculated cash cases have most likely see an increase in the TAFDC grant amount unless other concurrent case activity counteracted this reduction.

**Entering UC
Income**

On August 25, 2010, a Special Procedures e-mail (2010-4) was issued advising staff of the changes effecting the \$25 ARRA weekly UC payment.

Case managers were instructed:

- **not to add the \$25 ARRA weekly UC payment to the claimant's Weekly Pay Rate if the claim date was after May 23, 2010.**
- **to continue to add the ARRA \$25 weekly UC payment to the claimant's Weekly Pay Rate as outlined in Field Operations Memo 2010-02, if the claim date was May 23, 2010 or earlier.**
- **to continue to enter the claim date.** In BEACON 3.0, the Start Date is now the Status Date on the Other Income Status page. Enter the claim date in the Status Date field.

BEACON will continue to count the ARRA \$25 weekly UC payment for TAFDC cases with claim dates of May 23, 2010 and earlier. BEACON will no longer disregard the ARRA \$25 weekly UC payment for SNAP cases with claim dates after May 23, 2010; therefore it is critical that case managers follow the procedures above when entering UC income in BEACON to ensure the correct calculation of benefits.

The UC Screen

Effective September 7, 2010, the information displayed on the DUA screen has been corrected. These improvements include the following changes.

1. An asterisk (*) next to the amount paid to the client means that this client is receiving the additional \$25 ARRA weekly UC payment.
 2. Six biweekly payment periods are now displayed in the payment history for each client.
 3. More space has been added between titles and subtitles to allow for easier reading of the data displayed on the screen.
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DUA Hotline

Since the data on DUA screen has been corrected, the DUA Hotline is now inaccessible to DAT staff.

**Retroactive
Payments for
Some TAFDC
Households**

MIS has identified a small number of active, closed and denied cases that appear to have been adversely affected because we continued to count the ARRA \$25 weekly UC payment even though the claimant had a claim date after May 23, 2010.

The Centralized Eligibility and Processing Unit (CEP) at Central Office will review the cases which MIS has identified. As part of their review, they will issue supplemental benefits as necessary and annotate the BEACON Narrative. Any case that was closed or denied because we inadvertently counted the ARRA \$25 weekly UC payment, will be (re)opened. CEP will annotate the BEACON Narrative and an e-mail will be sent to the TAO director with information related to the (re)opening.

Questions

If you have any questions, please have your Hotline designee call the Policy Hotline.
