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Field Operations Memo 2006-45
September 26, 2006

To: **Transitional Assistance Office Staff**

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

Re: **EA Assistance Units: Residential Facility Window Changes**

Background	Effective with Increment 2.1.20, changes were made to the BEACON Residential Facility window to provide more complete shelter placement information on EA assistance units.
BEACON Residential Facility Window	The changes to the *Residential Facility window* include the number of units the EA AU is occupying and new start and exit reasons. Both of these changes are found on the same window, the *Residential Facility* window. A new field, *Number of Shelter Units*, has been added to the window to collect information on the number of units (rooms) the family will be occupying while in the shelter. The interview question for this field reads, "How many shelter rooms are being occupied by this family?" Based on the size of the family, the family may occupy more than one unit. This information and the information in Block 21 of the SSPS Invoice must be identical. Some of the current *Homelessness Start Reasons* and *Exit Reasons* have been deleted, and new reasons were created. Page two of this memo identifies old Homelessness Start and Exit Reasons and the reasons that have replaced them. Current Homelessness Start and Exit Reasons not identified on this chart remain the same.

**BEACON
Residential
Facility
Window
(continued)**

The following chart shows the modifications to the Start and Exit Reasons.

Old Reason ….	New Reason ...
Severe Medical Reasons	· *Medical Reasons*
Eviction	· *Eviction – nonpayment of rent* · *Eviction – other*
	· *Health/safety – domestic violence*
Found Permanent Placement	· *Perm placement – sub housing (subsidized)* · *Perm placement – unsub housing (unsubsidized)*
Moved to another shelter	· *Switch shelter- no fault* · *Switch shelter – 20 mile rule* · *Switch shelter – noncompliance*
Ineligible for EA; Terminated; Voluntarily left	· *Term from EA – noncompliance* · *Term from EA- cat ineligible* · *Term from EA – 6 mo. ended* · *Abandoned Placement*

The seven old reasons were removed as selections from the dropdown box and the 13 new reasons are added. The old deleted reasons will be retained in the data warehouse. As the new Homelessness Start Reasons and the Exit Reasons are more specific than the old reasons, a system-generated update to a new reason could not be achieved in all instances, without compromising the accuracy of the reason. The following shows the changes to the Reason fields that will appear on the Residential Facility window:

Homelessness Start Reasons:
- *Severe Medical Reasons* - changed to *Medical Reason*;
- *Eviction* – will be left blank.

Exit Reasons:
- *Found Permanent Placement* - will be left blank;
- *Moved to Another Shelter* - will be left blank;
- *Ineligible for EA* - will be left blank;
- *Terminated* - will be left blank; and
- *Voluntarily Left* - will be left blank.

Review of the Residential Facility Window

By 11/30/2006, the AU Manager or Homeless Coordinator must review the information on the *Residential Facility* window for each EA AU currently placed in shelter. While on the *Residential Facility* window, the two fields can be checked concurrently to ensure accurate information on the window. The AU Manager or Homeless Coordinator must:

- Highlight and select the EA AU's current placement;

- Correct the information on the number of rooms (units) if the family is occupying more than one room (unit). Information on the number of rooms the family is occupying may be found on the most recent SSPS invoice for this shelter or the most recent placement notice for this shelter that was sent to the TAO by the Central Office H&HS Unit. To change the number of rooms (units), highlight and select the current placement without an exit date, go to the unit field, delete the number one numeric value and enter the correct numeric value for the number of rooms (units);

- Correct the information in the Homelessness Start Reason if it is <u>blank</u>. The blank entries appear only for those EA AUs whose reason for homelessness had been "eviction" and another reason needs to be entered. A description of the reason for homelessness can be found on the BEACON Narratives Tab. This description should provide sufficient detail to distinguish between the two choices that describe "eviction":

  · *Eviction – nonpayment of rent*
  · *Eviction – other*

  Contact the EA AU if there is no information or the information on the BEACON Narratives Tab needs clarification to select the appropriate start reason. If it is determined that none of these two reasons appropriately describes the homelessness start reason, use the dropdown box to select the correct homelessness start reason.

  Until a new Homelessness Start Reason is entered, exit information can not be processed on the EA AU.

BEACON Residential Facility Window (continued)	Other changes to the *Residential Facility* window impact the Exit Reasons. If the Exit Reason was changed to a new reason, the prior Exit Reason on the window will be blank. The old deleted reasons will be retained in the data warehouse and the most recent exit reason will be added into the Outline Field on the *Residential Facility* window with the next BEACON increment scheduled for November 18. See *Outline Field on Residential Facility Window* later in this memo. **The AU Manager or Homeless Coordinator is not required to correct any Exit Reason that was changed to a blank.**
New EA AUs and the Residential Facility Window	For EA AUs entering shelter, all fields on the *Residential Facility* window must be completed, including a numeric value of one through nine to indicate the number of rooms (units) the family is occupying while in the shelter and clicking on the Start Reason dropdown box to select the appropriate reason for the EA AU's shelter placement. Information on the number of rooms the family is occupying may be found on the most recent SSPS invoice for this shelter or the most recent placement notice for this shelter that was sent to the TAO by the Central Office H&HS Unit. Information about the reason for the homelessness is obtained during the application interview.
Reminders	AU Managers or Homeless Coordinators are reminded about the following issues related to the *Residential Facility* window:

- *The <u>only time</u> the radio button for "In Residential Facility" may be changed from Yes to No is when the residential placement did not occur, such as the <u>AU was never placed in that residential facility</u> therefore, the entry was incorrectly made. The residential facility data must be eliminated from the record.* Changing Yes to No and updating the data completely removes the residential facility information from BEACON data history.

  The radio button must remain "Yes" if the EA AU was placed in that facility, even if the EA AU does not appear at the designated placement. The button remains "Yes" when the EA AU moves from the shelter, is transferred from the shelter or is terminated from shelter. **Information related to a move, a transfer or a termination of shelter is entered in the Exit Date and Reason fields on the *Residential Facility* window**;

- Carefully enter the Start Date of the shelter placement. An incorrect date, especially the year, adversely impacts the "length of stay" information for the EA AU that is reported out of BEACON. A start date entered as 1/9/2006 instead of 9/1/2006 makes the shelter stay 234 days longer than it really is;

Reminders (continued)

- When the EA AU is moving from one shelter to another shelter, the following actions must be taken:
  - Highlight and select the family's current shelter placement from the information box;
  - Enter the date of the last night the EA AU spent in the shelter in the Exit Date field;
  - Select the Exit Reason from the dropdown box (example: Switch shelter – 20 mile rule);
  - Click on the Update button and the message, "The Update was successful" will appear;
  - Click the Clear button to enter the new shelter information;
  - Click on the "Yes" radio button in the "In Residential Facility" field;
  - Enter the date the EA AU entered the new shelter in the Start Date field;
  - Select the Start Reason from the dropdown box;
  - Click on the popup box next to Facility Name and the Resource Search window will appear;
  - Select the shelter into which the family is moving from the Resource List popup;
  - Select the Residential Facility Type from the dropdown box; and
  - Click on the Add button and the message, "The Add was successful" will appear.

  Note: **Do not change** the radio button for "In Residential Facility" to "No."

- When the EA AU's shelter benefits are terminated, the following actions must be taken:
  - Highlight and select the family's current shelter placement from the information box;
  - Enter the date of the last night the EA AU spent in the shelter in the Exit Date field;
  - Select the Exit Reason (example*:* Perm placement-unsub housing (unsubsidized)); and
  - Click on the Update button and the message, "The Update was successful" will appear.

  Note: **Do not change** the radio button for "In Residential Facility" to "No."

Outline Field on Residential Facility Window

With the next BEACON increment scheduled for November 18, the Homelessness Exit Reasons will be added to the Outline Field on the Residential Facility window. The Outline Field is the white box on the window that shows the history of the shelter placements, including the facility, start date, facility name, type of facility, exit date and entered date.

Questions

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

If you need help correcting an incorrect entry, please call Customer Support Services at 617-348-5290.