

## From the Hotline

**Q.** A father came into our office this morning applying for TAFDC. He recently won the Massachusetts State Lottery and slightly over two months ago, he received a check for \$7,000. He claims that because of back bills and other responsibilities, he was unable to save any of this money. He says that all of the income was spent. If this is true, should I still be considering this income? Is there a lump sum income amount I can enter on BEACON?

**A.** No, you would not enter a lump sum income amount on BEACON. Although the money from this father's lottery winnings is a lump sum payment, the regulations concerning lump sum income do not apply to applicants. Policy on lump sum income may only be used with TAFDC *recipients*. (Refer to 106 CMR 204.240 for more details on lump sum income.)

However in the situation you described, it is still important to ask the father how much of the money is still available or accessible. For example, it is possible that a portion of the payment was spent on a countable asset, such as a car or life insurance policy. Refer to 106 CMR 204.120 for policy concerning countable assets in TAFDC.

Also, remember that when an applicant receives a large sum of money prior to application, it is important to determine whether or not regulations concerning the transfer of income and/or assets apply. Refer to 106 CMR 204.135 for more details.

**Q.** Since the individual described in the question above is also applying for food stamp benefits, how is the lump sum treated in the Food Stamp Program?

**A.** Lump sum payments in the Food Stamp Program are treated as an asset in the month received. (Refer to 106 CMR 363.230.) Since the individual received the payment over two months ago, the payment itself would not be considered an asset. However, you would still want to determine whether or not the applicant is categorically eligible as well as whether or not he has access to other countable assets that were acquired as a result of the lump sum payment. Information on countable assets in the Food Stamp Program is found in the regulations at 106 CMR 363.130.

It is also important to determine whether or not food stamp regulations concerning the transfer of assets apply. Refer to 106 CMR 363.150 for details.

## FYI

### BEACON Help Revisions

The following is a list of Help windows that have been added or revised.

#### Added:

Web Applications

#### Revised:

Completed Referrals  
EA AUs in Shelters Within  
Last Two Months

ESP AUs Requiring an  
Appointment  
Monitor Participation  
Youngest Child Turns 6

## FYI

### Department Banking Change

Effective in February, 2004, all Department of Transitional Assistance bank accounts will be transferred from Fleet Bank to Sovereign Bank. Recipients who receive cash assistance by check will be notified of the change on their check remittance advice. To find the nearest branch to cash a check a recipient can call **Sovereign at 1-877-768-1145, option # 6.**