

A third accomplishment, and one that continues to unfold, is that of our continued progress in welfare reform. Over the past few years, we have moved thousands of adults each year into the workforce. We have expanded the participation requirements on families needing assistance in an effort to engage them in activities that put them on a course to economic independence. We've invested additional resources in supports to low-income families. These are the right investments to make as we continue down this path to serve more adults and move more families into the world of work.

These accomplishments—and many others—have been achieved during very challenging times. I will never forget the many individuals who left DTA, either through early retirement or layoffs, due to the cuts suffered in our administrative account. I'll never forget the staff who donated their personal leave time to save fellow employees' jobs. And although we certainly miss those who left, it has also forced us to reexamine the way we handle our business. Successes in redesigning our business practices (consolidation of SSI cases and implementation of the Food Stamp CAP, for example), enhancements in our mission-critical BEACON system and reorganization of functions in Central Office are also significant accomplishments we all deserve to celebrate.

This past week, I visited with employees in one of our local offices. I left that office invigorated by the ideas, commitment, and hard work shown by this local DTA team as we discussed their approach to serving families and individuals from their surrounding communities. It also reminded me of how lucky I've been over these past four years to be part of such an incredible family of smart, dedicated, committed, and hard-working state employees. There are no better. Thank you for these past four years. Thank you for the privilege of being your Commissioner.

Sincerely,



John Wagner, Commissioner

From the Hotline

The second question and answer in "From the Hotline" (April 2006) has been removed from the on-line version. The corrected version is below.

- Q.** An individual came into our office today applying for the funeral and burial payment. When I asked if she owned any assets, she verified that she has \$700.00 in a savings account. How do I treat this asset?
- A.** In this case, the assets available from the individual or her husband must be deducted from the maximum allowable cost of the funeral and burial. While the funeral and burial costs may not exceed \$1,500.00, the Department will pay the balance after any available assets have been deducted, up to \$1,100.00. In this case, our Department would pay \$800.00 in a funeral/burial benefit. For more information on treating countable assets when paying funeral and burial expenses, refer to additional examples located in *A User's Guide: Transitional Assistance Programs and BEACON*, pages IV-D-2 and IV-D-3.

Q. A woman came into our office today to apply for TAFDC and food stamp benefits. She is a naturalized citizen. I realize that if a client is a U.S. citizen by birth, then his or her foreign-born child may also be a U.S. citizen, but could a foreign-born child of a *naturalized* citizen also be a U.S. citizen?

A. Yes, a foreign-born child of a naturalized citizen, including a foreign-born adopted child, may be a U.S. citizen as long as certain requirements are met.

For more information on citizenship requirements in the TAFDC Program, refer to 106 CMR 203.670.

For more information on citizenship requirements in the Food Stamp Program, refer to 106 CMR 362.210.

Q. A noncitizen came into our office today applying for food stamp benefits. He is currently a Legal Permanent Resident, but when he entered the country on February 1, 2003, he was originally paroled for one year. I realize that this applicant is currently an

ineligible noncitizen and that he must reside in the United States as a qualified noncitizen for five years before he can be considered eligible for food stamp benefits. However, my question is: when did this individual's five-year period begin and when does it end?

A. Since this individual became a qualified noncitizen when he was paroled for a one-year period, his five-year period began on February 1, 2003 and will end on January 31, 2008.

From the Forms File

Revised Forms

09-375-0406-05

09-376-0406-05 (S)

FS-USR-2 (Rev. 4/2006)

Universal Semiannual Reporting (USR) Income Guidelines Form

The Categorical Eligibility USR AU Gross Monthly Income Standard has been revised to reflect the increase in the Federal Poverty Level Guideline.

02-559-0406-05

02-560-0406-05 (S)

DVWR (Rev. 4/2006)

Request for a Waiver of TAFDC Program Requirement(s) Due to Domestic Violence

02-569-0406-05

02-561-0406-05(S)

DVW (Rev. 4/2006)

Notice of Approval or Denial of Domestic Violence Waiver from Certain Program Requirements

Language has been removed that is no longer applicable to the domestic violence process from the *DVWR* and *DVW* forms.

Revised Brochures

09-070-0406-05

09-079-0406-05 (S)

FSP-INFO (Rev. 4/2006)

How to Get Food Stamp Benefits

The Income Standard for households with children under 19 or a pregnant woman living alone has been revised to reflect the increased Maximum Gross Monthly Income Standard.