

From the Hotline

Q. I have a TAFDC AU that used EA for rent arrearage less than 12 months ago. The grantee is now requesting EA for temporary emergency shelter. Is she eligible for temporary emergency shelter?

A. Yes, if otherwise eligible. Regulation 106 CMR 309.020(K) states that an EA assistance unit may not be authorized to receive EA benefits more than once in a 12-month period unless the assistance unit needs temporary emergency shelter benefits and the EA benefit received within the past 12 months was an EA rent arrearage payment. Also see *EA User's Guide: Emergency Assistance, SSI Special Benefits and BEACON*, page 1-2.

Note: Due to a court order, 106 CMR 309.040(A) contains a grayed-out section that states the same policy, but also states not to implement it at this time. Until the court case is settled, please follow 106 CMR 309.020(K) for this particular situation.

Q. Can the cost of a cell phone be considered a utility allowance deduction in the Food Stamp Program?

A. Yes. The cost of a cell phone can be considered the basic service for one telephone.

Q. Are the costs of prepaid calling cards an allowable utility allowance deduction in the Food Stamp Program?

A. No. One-time deposits cannot be included. A deduction shall be allowed only in the month when the expense is billed or otherwise becomes due. There is no bill or due date for a prepaid calling card.

Q. With new five-year periods beginning for some of our TAFDC clients, I would like the 60-day job search period clarified. A nonexempt client reapplies for TAFDC benefits and is already working 20 hours per week. After 60 days the job ends. Is the client now entitled to the 60-day job search period?

A. The 60-day job search period starts from the date of application, whether the client is working or not. This client is not entitled to the 60-day job search period now that the current job has ended.

Q. On the Cooperation tab of the Absence window, I must select "yes" or "no" to "child-support-cooperation." Does this child support cooperation question relate to the absent parent or the client?

A. This section collects information on the client's willingness to cooperate with child support. Use the "yes" radio button if the recipient is willing to cooperate or the "no" radio button if the recipient is not willing to cooperate. If "no" is selected, the Good Cause section will become available. Follow the procedures in *A User's Guide: Transitional Assistance Programs and BEACON*, Chapter XIII-G, for processing the good cause claim or the refusal to cooperate.

