



Transitions

February 2016

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From the DTA Policy Procedure Mailbox

If you have any questions on this column or other policy and procedural material, please have your manager or supervisor email the **DTA Mailbox**. For more information on teen parent requirements and eligibility, refer to 106 CMR 203.600 et seq.

Q. 1. Are there special rules for determining the income eligibility of teen parents?

A. 1. Yes. The Federal Poverty Guidelines (FPG) are used to determine TAFDC financial eligibility for teen parents under age 18 whose parents are not on TAFDC. The combined monthly earned and unearned income of the parent(s) of the teen parent is compared to 200 percent of the FPG. That portion of the earned and unearned income from the parent(s) of the teen parent that exceeds 200 percent of the FPG for the appropriate household size is deemed towards the teen parent's filing unit.

Q. 2. Where do I find the updated FPG for 2016?

A. 2. To view the FPG on DTA's intranet site, go to <http://www.mass.gov/eohhs/gov/departments/dta/>, and select the Program Eligibility Charts and Tables link on the Key Resources side bar.

Q. 3. How do I enter the teen parent's deemed income in BEACON?

A. 3. To enter the teen parent's deemed income in BEACON, refer to the Online Guide, TAFDC topic, Program Nonfinancial Requirements book, Teen Parents chapter and Income from the Parent(s) of a Teen Parent Under Age 18 page.

Q. 4. Must teen parents be referred to a Self Sufficiency Specialist (SSS)?

A. 4. Yes. All teen parents who are heads of household, whether parenting or pregnant, will receive case management services from SSSs. When the teen parent has:

- completed a new application
- completed a reevaluation or
- a change in their work requirement,

a BEACON pop-up message will appear stating: "This client appears to need a Self-Sufficiency Specialist. Speak to your supervisor about transferring the case." The client will appear in a view entitled AUs with Recommended Job Title, in Daily Priority Actions, which is visible to the Self-Sufficiency Specialist and TAO management team.

SSSs will review each client's circumstances and help them develop a strategy to overcome barriers. This will require more specialized knowledge and specialized resources available to teen parents, such as those provided by the MA Department of Children and Families. For more information, refer to the TAFDC topic, Services book, Self Sufficiency chapter, Self Sufficiency Specialist Duties page.

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From the DTA Policy Procedure Mailbox *(Continued from Page 2)*

Q. 5. Are certain teen parents required to live in Teen Parenting Program (TPP) facilities?

A. 5. Yes. A teen parent and her child may be required to live in a TPP when:

- the teen parent is homeless or cannot live at home with her parent(s) because domestic violence, abuse, neglect, substance abuse, or other extraordinary circumstances in the home is confirmed by a Department of Children and Families (DCF) assessment,
- there is no adult relative age 20 or older or legal guardian with whom the teen parent can live and
- the teen parent does not meet the qualifications for living independently. Refer to 106 CMR 203.640 for more details.

Q. 5. My teen parent has an undetermined noncitizen status. Is she eligible for a child care referral? What if a teen parent has SSI income, is she eligible?

A. 5. Teen parents who have an undetermined noncitizen status and are required to attend school or perform community service may receive a child care referral so that their children who are receiving a TAFDC grant are appropriately cared for. The same is true for teen parents in receipt of SSI who are required to attend school.

Also, a client who is an ineligible noncitizen but able to legally work, may participate in an ESP activity, even if he or she is exempt from the TAFDC work program. For example, an LPR who is not in the grant but has less than 5 years of status, may participate in a CIES program and receive ESP support services, since the Department's aim for our TAFDC client is employment and this client can reasonably be expected to achieve this outcome. For more information on ESP support services, refer to 106 CMR 207.210(A).

Diversity Quote

Diversity is not focused on how we differ, it's about embracing one another's uniqueness.

Ola Joseph

Online Guide Transmittals

SNAP – Designation of the Heating and Cooling Standard Utility Allowance (HCSUA)

Online Guide Transmittal Update 2016-7
SNAP

This Online Guide Transmittal provides clarifications about the Standard Utility Allowance (SUA), including:

- how to complete the SUA page;
- how households receive the Heating/Cooling SUA;
- the differences between H-EAT and LIHEAP;
- how clients become eligible for H-EAT benefits; and
- the importance to accurately document client utility responsibility.

BEACON assigns the appropriate SUA based on responses to utility questions and information received from the Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD). Case managers must **not** answer Yes to any utility question if the household does not report paying for that expense. **If questions are answered incorrectly, the household will not be selected for the H-EAT program and will likely be responsible for an overpayment.**

SNAP: Processing of Expedited and Ongoing Benefits with One Wrap

Online Guide Transmittal Update 2016-9
SNAP

BEACON Build 48.2, deployed on January 4, 2016, implemented systems changes that made it possible to issue expedited benefits and ongoing benefits with a single wrap-up **if** all verifications are provided. This Online Guide Transmittal updates procedures about the single wrap process by emphasizing that it is not always appropriate to use the single wrap process, even when all verifications have been received. The updated page also addresses what a case manager should do when the single wrap process is used inappropriately.



Online Guide Transmittals

Voluntary Consent to Release Information

Online Guide Transmittal Update 2016-10
Cross Program

This Online Guide Transmittal informs staff of the purpose of the VARI-OI and how it differs from the Image I0 and Image I0A forms that are used to authorize an assisting person role.

A Voluntary Consent to Release Information (VARI-OI) form is used to obtain a client's approval for release of information about his or her case to a person or organization. The form is typically used when:

- the case manager needs to establish collateral contact to verify information pertinent to the client's case; or
- the client has requested the case manager to communicate with a third party about his or her case.

SNAP – ABAWD Work Program Requirement Clarifications

Online Guide Transmittal Update 2016-12
SNAP

This Transmittal advises staff of several changes in the ABAWD Chapter of the Online Guide, including:

- a new page entitled ABAWD Reporting Requirements that clarifies the reporting requirements of ABAWD clients subject to Simplified Reporting rules;
- a new page entitled Entering and Removing ABAWD Work Program Sanctions that details the BEACON steps to address manual sanctions;
- the ABAWD Work Program Requirements Overview page that was updated to explain how clients may regain eligibility after using three countable months;
- the Work Requirements Screening page which clarifies that screening questions must be reviewed during application, recertification, and address changes;
- the *ABAWD Work Program Requirement Medical Report* form page that was updated to advise staff of the ability to print a BEACON-generated *ABAWD Work Program Requirement Medical Report*. Additional methods of verifying medical exemptions are listed;
- the Community Service page that was updated to advise staff of the procedures related to monitoring community service participation;
- the *Request for ABAWD Work Program Exemption* forms and Entering ABAWD Work Program Data pages which explain that exemption status must not be updated until verification of exemption is received;

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Online Guide Transmittals *(Continued from Page 5)*

- the ABAWD Work Program Exemptions page advises staff of the Refugee Training Program Participant exemption. This page also explains that Employment and Training specialists may also assign a 15% exemption to clients meeting certain criteria;
- the ABAWD Work Program Sanctions page explains the impact of each sanction level for noncompliance; and
- The ABAWD Work Program-Waived Areas page now lists two additional towns and zip codes that are exempt from the ABAWD WP requirement due to unemployment rates.

EAEDC: Temporary Protected Status Page Update

Online Guide Transmittal Update 2016-13
EAEDC

This Online Guide Transmittal advises DTA staff that updates have been made to the Temporary Protected Status (TPS) page and other TPS information.

Note: The deadline for eligible nationals of Yemen (and people without nationality who last habitually resided in Yemen) to register for Temporary Protected Status (TPS) is **Tuesday, March 1, 2016**. The TPS designation for Yemen runs from September 3, 2015, through March 3, 2017.

From the Forms File

New Forms

09-323-0116-05

09-324-0116-05(S)

ABAWD WPPR

ABAWD Work Program Participation Report

The *ABAWD Work Program Participation Report* is completed by clients that are not exempt from the ABAWD Work Program Requirements and are not complying by working or participating in a qualifying E&T component.

09-328-0116-05

09-329-0116-05(S)

ABAWD WPE HS (01/2016)

Request for ABAWD Work Program Exemption Supplement For homeless people ages 18 to 49

The *Request for ABAWD Work Program Exemption* form can be given or mailed to clients to aid them in reporting possible exemptions.

Revised Forms

16-025-0216-05

16-026-0216-05(S)

Image-10A (Rev. 2/2016)

Request to Choose Someone to Be My Agency Representative for My SNAP Benefits

This form has been revised to now include a Note section at the bottom of the form. Please destroy existing supplies of this form and use the revised version.

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From the Forms File *(Continued from Page 7)*

Based on suggestions from the Forms and Notices workgroup, the above form has been revised. Please destroy existing supplies of this form and use the revised versions.

02-550-0116-05

02-551-0116-05(S)

HLS-1 (Rev. 1/2016)

Request for Heightened Level of Security

15-205-0116-05

15-206-0116-05(S)

LDSC (Rev. 1/2016)

Learning Disability Screening Form

02-860-0116-05

02-861-0116-05(S)

TAFDC App Info-1 (Rev. 1/2016)

TAFDC Applicant Information

TAFDC-GCMS (Rev. 2/2016)

02-720-0216-05

Good Cause Medical Statement

The change to the TAFDC-GCMS clarifies language for the client regarding time-limited benefits.

Revised Brochure

18-825-0116-05

18-826-0116-05 (S)

EBT-TB (Rev. 01/2016)

Electronic Benefit Transfer (EBT)

The *Electronic Benefit Transfer* brochure has been revised and reformatted. Please destroy existing supplies of this brochure and use the revised version.

TAO Meeting Notes