



Transitions

February 2018

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Quality Corner for SNAP

This month we will review an active error that occurred in a Public Assistance (PA) SNAP case.

Incorrect Legal FS Disqualified Coding

On February 22, 2017, a household of four completed a TAFDC and SNAP reevaluation. The grantee was a noncitizen with a status of Undetermined and all three children were U.S. Citizens. For TAFDC eligibility, the grantee was ineligible, one child was an ineligible SSI recipient of \$765.40 per month, one child was an ineligible family CAP child, and one child was eligible to receive TAFDC benefits. All verifications were submitted timely and the case was processed. The household was approved for \$388.00 in TAFDC and \$511.00 in SNAP benefits.

During the August 2017 Quality Control (QC) review, it was determined that the case manager had selected Yes to the Legal FS Disqualified question for the grantee with a status of Undetermined. As a result, the grantee was not included in the SNAP calculation and the TAFDC income was disregarded causing an overpayment of \$85 in SNAP benefits.

What is the Correct Procedure?

Clients with a noncitizen status of Undetermined must be excluded from the assistance unit, but they are part of the filing unit and their income and assets must be counted in their entirety toward the remaining household members. Therefore, for a client with a status of Undetermined, the selection should be No to the Legal FS Disqualified question so that BEACON will calculate SNAP benefits correctly.

The Legal FS Disqualified field poses the question: "Is this person a Legal Noncitizen who is ineligible to participate in the Federal Food Stamp Program?" A Yes and No radio button is available to capture the answer to this question. Unless the answer to both parts of the question is Yes, the selection must be No. In other words, if the response to the Legal Noncitizen part of the question is Yes, but the response to is ineligible to participate in the Federal Food Stamp Program? Is NO, the selection on the page must be No.

The answer to the Legal FS Disqualified question determines the way SNAP benefits are calculated. When Yes is selected, BEACON performs the two-part calculation outlined at 106 CMR 364.600 (C). When No is selected, the client is excluded from the household but their income and assets are counted toward the remaining household members.

Online Guide Transmittals

Cross Programs: Assisting Person Roles Clarification

Online Guide Transmittal 2018-7

This Transmittal advises staff of updated Online Guide content pertaining to Group Home clients and the establishment of the Authorized Representative role by authorized Group Home staff.

SNAP: Outreach to Former SNAP Clients

Online Guide Transmittal 2018-8

In an effort to support residents of Massachusetts by reducing barriers to program access and ensuring that people are informed of their right to apply for benefits, the Department is completing targeted outreach to former SNAP clients to notify them of potential eligibility.

The initial phase involves collaboration between DTA and contracted SNAP Outreach Partners. through a mailing to former SNAP clients notifying them of potential eligibility, ways to apply for SNAP, and contact information for the Outreach Partner that serves their area.

The intent is for Outreach Partners to follow-up by phone to assist with the application process and answer questions about SNAP.

Cross Programs: Updates Regarding 2017 Hurricane Evacuees

Online Guide Transmittal 2018-9

This Transmittal is to advise staff of:

- FEMA payments that are non-countable for DTA programs;
- the upcoming TSA deadline; and
- FEMA Helpline contact information.

Cross Programs: USCIS Naturalization and Citizenship Certificate Redesign Pilot

Online Guide Transmittal 2018-11

This Transmittal advised staff that, on January 22, 2018, the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) launched a 10-day pilot to issue redesigned naturalization and citizenship certificates in certain areas of the country (none in Massachusetts). If the pilot is successful, USCIS will begin to issue the new certificates nationwide in the future.

Online Guide Transmittals

TAFDC and EAEDC: Cash Cases With Potential Earnings

Online Guide Transmittal 2018-12

In an ongoing effort to ensure program integrity and client access, DTA has developed a method to utilize and process wage information received via data matches with the Department of Unemployment Assistance, Department Of Revenue, and Equifax Workforce Solutions' subscription employment verification service called "The Work Number."

This Transmittal advises staff of updated procedures for processing this match data in updated Online Guide pages.

SNAP: Verifying Legally Obligated Child Support

Online Guide Transmittal 2018-13

This Transmittal advises staff of updated Online Guide content pertaining to:

- the use of a lockbox bill or other DOR documentation as acceptable verification; and
- a new chart outlining verification of legal obligation payment.

Cross Programs: Federal Mileage Rate (2018)

Online Guide Transmittal 2018-17

This Transmittal advises staff of the new federal mileage rate for 2018, which is 54.5 cents. This new amount of 54.5 cents must be used when calculating allowable transportation costs to be used as a medical or dependent care expense.

SNAP: Reorganization of Income Chapters in the Online Guide

Online Guide Transmittal 2018-18

This Transmittal advises staff of four new Online Guide pages which consolidate the content captured in several pages that were removed. There is no policy or procedural changes being made with these updates.

Cross Programs: Dates No Longer Needed on Self-Declarations

Online Guide Transmittal 2018-19

This Transmittal advises staff of updated Online Guide content pertaining to Self-declarations. While requiring a signature, self-declarations no longer need to be dated by the client to be accepted, as all documents are electronically date stamped by fax machines, office MFD's and DTA Connect. If dropped off in a TAO, the self-declaration is manually date stamped.

From the Forms File

New Form

VARI-OI (S) (2/2018)

Voluntary Consent to Release Information

The Spanish *Voluntary Consent to Release Information* (VARI-OI) is now available. Document Production will send out an initial supply of this form to the TAOs.

TAO Meeting Notes