



Commonwealth of Massachusetts
Executive Office of Health and Human Services
Department of Transitional Assistance
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Field Operations Memo 2001-13
March 8, 2001

To: Transitional Assistance Office Staff

From:  Joyce Sampson, Assistant Commissioner for Field Operations

Re: BEACON Stress Test

Background

To evaluate response time, user capacity and time needed to complete various activities on BEACON for TAO and Central Office Staff, the morning of March 14, 2001 has been designated to "Stress Test" Increment 43 of BEACON. MIS has obtained additional equipment to improve response time from the previous "Stress Test."

While the "Stress Test" is taking place, every effort must be made to conduct regular TAO business. At no time should client access to AU Managers be denied.

There will be two tests in the TAOs. What follows is the schedule of activities to be worked on during the two tests. All activities must end by noon of March 14, 2001. **At no point during the stress test hours should users log out of BEACON.**

Test One: Normal Business Hours to 10:00 a.m.

All AU Managers should access BEACON at the beginning of normal business hours of the TAO. Test One "View" activities must be conducted between normal business hours and 10:00 a.m.

After accessing BEACON, the AU Manager must:

- click on the Transitional Assistance Office Group icon;
- click on the TAO Office Explorer icon;
- select "View" from the menu bar;

**Test One: Normal
Business Hours
to 10:00 a.m.
(continued)**

- select and access the following Views from the “Daily Priority Actions” Group:
 - ♦ Conversion Benefit Discrepancies,
 - ♦ Documents Sent for Past Week,
 - ♦ Eligibility Explorer Interviews in Progress,
 - ♦ Interview Wrap-up - Pending Authorization,
 - ♦ Interview Wrap-up - Pending Release,
 - ♦ Interview Wrap-up - Rejected Authorization,
 - ♦ Missed Interviews,
 - ♦ Monthly Reporting Status,
 - ♦ Outstanding Participation Forms,
 - ♦ Pending Applications,
 - ♦ Pending Applications Assigned to Another TAO, and
 - ♦ Reevaluation in Progress;

- select and access the following view from the “Assistance Unit Lists” Group:
 - ♦ Active by Grantee Name;and

- select and access the following view from the “ESP Assistance Units” Group:
 - ♦ Active Component Activities.

Note: In this section, when accessing views, the list of chosen AUs will appear in the field on the right-hand side of the Office Explorer window.

Most AU Managers are not required to record the results of this test.

Stop Test One Activities at 10 a.m., **even if all activities have not been completed.** AU Managers should **leave the BEACON Application open until the beginning of TEST TWO. DO NOT EXIT OUT OF BEACON.**

While Test One is taking place, one TAO Supervisor and one AU Manager in each TAO will monitor actual response time between windows in the selected activities and record the results in the appropriate sections of the View.123 form.

- The AU Manager should **print** the View.123 form found in S:/BEACON 2 Pilot Forms/Stress Test.

- The TAO Supervisor should measure the response time on BEACON from the moment an AU Manager clicks on and selects a View until the View is displayed (for accuracy, a watch with a second hand should be used to measure response time).

**Test One: Normal
Business Hours
to 10:00 a.m.
(continued)**

- The TAO Supervisor should write the response time on the **printed** View.123 form.
 - The TAO Supervisor should return the completed form to the Implementation Manager.
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**Test Two:
10:00 a.m. to
Noon**

Test Two "Interview" activities must be conducted between 10:00 a.m. and noon.

Pre-selected Supervisory Units must work on *selected* pilot activities. The Implementation Manager will determine which pilot activity each AU Manager will work on.

Note: Test Two requires 35 percent of each TAO's AU Managers' and TAO Supervisors' participation. The remaining AU Managers and TAO Supervisors should conduct normal TAO business.

The following pilot activities must be worked on and, *if possible*, completed during this time period:

- Complete one application (**For this activity, AU Managers should not select "real" applications pending in PACES or any created in BEACON. They should create new applications.**);
- Complete one reapplication (**For this activity, AU Managers should select an AU closed on BEACON**);
- Complete one reevaluation (**For this activity, AU Managers should select an AU active on BEACON**); and
- Complete selected AU maintenance activities from the BEACON Pilot Activities Checklist.

AU Managers participating in Test Two will complete the Activity.123 form. AU Managers should **print** the Activity.123 form found in S:/BEACON 2 Pilot Forms/Stress Test. The **printed** form should include:

- the activity performed (task);
 - the name/SSN of the grantee;
 - actual time it was started (start time);
 - actual time it was completed (end time); and
 - comments.
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**Test Two:
10:00 a.m. to
Noon (continued)**

Each TAO Supervisor will compile the results for his or her unit on one **printed** Activity.123 form, recording the results of the AU Managers who participated in Test Two. Return the completed form to the Implementation Manager.

While Test Two is taking place, one TAO Supervisor and one AU Manager in each TAO will monitor actual response times between windows in the selected activities and record the results in the appropriate sections of the **printed** Interview.123 form (found in S:\BEACON 2 Pilot Forms\Stress Test).

- The AU Manager should **print** the Interview.123 form found in S:/BEACON 2 Pilot Forms/Stress Test.
- The TAO Supervisor should measure the response time on BEACON from the time an AU Manager clicks on the "Next" or "Finish" button until the next screen is displayed (for accuracy, a watch with a second hand should be used to measure response time).
- The TAO Supervisor should record this information on the **printed** Interview.123 form and note the button (either "Next" or "Finish" used).
- The TAO Supervisor should return the completed form to the Implementation Manager.

**TAO Supervisor
Responsibilities**

During Test One and Test Two, the TAO Supervisor must:

- coach AU Managers through the various activities;
 - ensure AU Managers are working on their designated Test Two Pilot activities;
 - the selected TAO Supervisor must monitor response time between windows and record the results on the **printed** View.123 and Interview.123 forms; and
 - review the View.123, Interview.123 and Activity.123 forms for completeness and return them to the Implementation Manager.
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**Implementation
Manager
Responsibilities**

The Implementation Manager must:

- ensure all AU Managers are performing Test One “View” activities;
- ensure that one AU Manager and one TAO Supervisor are performing the timing activities for Test One “View” activities;
- determine which Supervisory Units will perform the Test Two pilot activities, which pilot activities each AU Manager in that unit will work on and ensure that 35 percent of AU Managers and TAO Supervisors are performing Test Two “Interview” activities;
- ensure that one AU Manager and one TAO Supervisor are performing the timing activities for Test Two “Interview” activities;
- using the **online forms**, submit: (1) one completed View.123 form for Test One for the TAO, (2) one completed Activity.123 form for Test Two for the TAO which combines the results from all AU Managers participating in the timing of Test Two and (3) one completed Interview.123 form; and
- e-mail all completed forms to the BEACON Action Center and the Regional Director by close of business on March 16, 2001.

**Instructions for
Completing
BEACON Stress
Test Forms
Online**

To complete the *View.123* and *Interview.123* forms **online**, the Implementation Manager must:

- access the forms at S:\BEACON 2 Pilot Forms\Stress Test;
- data-enter the appropriate information in the yellow cells (no columns, rows or cells should be added to or removed from these forms);
- enter the Office and Worker fields, as appropriate, replacing “TBD” with the TAO and AU Manager name(s); and
- enter the time taken to complete the specific activity in the following format: “HH:MM:SS.”

Example: If an activity took one minute and 27 seconds to complete, enter this as 00:01:27 in the yellow cell after the appropriate activity.

The *Activity.123* form has not changed since the first “Stress Test.”

**Central Office
User
Responsibilities**

While the Stress Test is occurring, Central Office Users will also log into BEACON and participate. As with the TAO Users, all activities must end by noon on March 14, 2001 and at no point during the Stress Test hours will Central Office Users log out of BEACON. All Central Office Users will access BEACON at the beginning of the normal business hours and will complete BEACON work activities for the specific Central Office Unit.

Questions

Policy-related questions should be referred by your Hotline designee to the Policy Hotline at (617) 348-8478. Systems-related questions should be referred to Customer Services at (617)-348-5290.
