

From the Hotline

If you have any questions on this column or other policy and procedural material, please have your Hotline designee call the **Policy Hotline at 617-348-8478**.

Q. My client applied for TAFDC today, February 3rd. She recently stopped working and received her last pay from work on January 27th. Do I count this earned income in determining her eligibility or grant amount?

A. No. If this client is not currently employed and has received her last pay before her application date, then do not count the income she received prior to the date of application in determining her eligibility or grant amount. Case managers must ask if the client will be receiving any additional pay (such as for vacation time or unused sick time). If the client is eligible to receive any of this additional income, the case manager must tell the client that the additional income must be accessed and the income must be counted. See 106 CMR 702.920 for more information on initial determination of eligibility and grant amount.

Q. A mother applying for SNAP benefits is married and employed part-time. Her husband is unemployed and has been for two years. Recently, the husband resumed his job search, and the couple is requesting a dependent care expense deduction. Even though the husband is job searching and is not currently working, can I deduct their dependent care expenses?

A. Yes. Their appropriate deductible expenses are the actual dependent care costs necessary for this husband and wife to accept or continue employment, comply with the SNAP Employment and Training Program (SNAP E&T) requirements or attend training or education in

preparation for employment. See 106 CMR 364.400(D) for more information on the dependent care deduction in SNAP. Also, remember that dependent care expenses are only verified prior to initial certification when questionable. See 106 CMR 364.450(B) for more information on verifying other deductible expenses.

Q. I took an application today from a woman applying for SNAP benefits. She reports being unemployed for almost two years and currently has no income. She has verified a shelter expense of \$850 per month. Should I request additional information and verification before approving her for SNAP benefits because she has expenses beyond her means?

A. If during the application interview your SNAP applicant indicates that she is not meeting her expenses, for example, she is behind on her rent or she has incurred credit card debt to pay her expenses, then the usual rules for verifying deductible expenses still apply. See 106 CMR 364.450 for more information on verifying deductible expenses at initial certification in SNAP. If the applicant is meeting her expenses with no apparent income, or there are other questionable details in the case, additional verification may be required.

NOTE: When TAFDC or EAEDC applicants with living expenses that exceed their income have not been meeting their expenses, no additional verifications are required, unless there are other questionable details regarding the case. See 106 CMR 701.410 for more information on verifications in the TAFDC and EAEDC programs.