

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 SNAP client is self-employed. How do I verify his earnings?
- A.** Self-employment income is verified by business records, tax returns and other appropriate documents showing gross earned income as well as the total business expenses associated with this income. See 106 CMR 363.210(G) for more information.
- Q.** My SNAP client has recently become self-employed. How do I verify his earnings?
- A.** If a client has been self-employed for less than a year, the income is averaged over the period of time that the business has been in operation and the monthly projected amount for the coming year. If there is insufficient information to make this projection, then the household may be certified for less than one year, until the business has been in operation long enough to establish a longer projection of earnings. See 106 CMR 365.960(D) for more information.
- Q.** When verifying a client's self-employment earnings and associated business expenses, must I require that the client furnish the most recent available tax return as verification?
- A.** The appropriate document to verify self-employment earnings is dependent upon the circumstances. A client's annual or quarterly tax return is often an accurate means of verifying self-employment income information. However, if the self-employment income amount reported on the tax return does not reflect the household's current and actual circumstances because the household has recently experienced a substantial increase or decrease in business, then the self-employment income amount must be based on anticipated earnings. See 106 CMR 365.970(B) for more information.
- Q.** On my client's recent Universal Semiannual Report (USR), he indicated that he started his own business. Can this client continue on USR?
- A.** No. If your client is self-employed, then he is considered an exception to the USR requirement. Other USR exceptions include:
- households on TAFDC Monthly Reporting;
 - households with a related TAFDC extension;
 - households receiving TBA SNAP benefits;
 - households containing a person who is SNAP work program required; or
 - households in which all adult members are elderly or disabled and have no earnings.
- See 106 CMR 366.110(C) for more information on SNAP USR exceptions.