



Transitions

June 2018

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Quality Corner for SNAP

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

Failure to Follow-Up

On November 27, 2017, a household of two submitted a SNAP application. The grantee had terminated wages of \$2124.52 for the cyclical month, rent of \$134 per month, and the household was eligible for the Heating/Cooling Standard Utility Allowance (HCSUA).

During the December 2017 Quality Control (QC) review, it was determined that the case manager failed to remove the terminated income record timely. The terminated income was applied correctly to the November 7 through December 6 cyclical period but was not removed for the following December 7 through January 6 cyclical period. This resulted in an under-issuance of \$337 in SNAP benefits.

What's a Case Manager to do?

The case manager should create a follow-up action to end the terminated income record once benefits have released and the income is no longer counted. This will ensure the client receives the accurate benefit amount over the rest of the certification period.

Online Guide Transmittals

TAFDC and EAEDC: Clarification of Procedures for Non-citizen Verification and Application/Reevaluation Signature Requirements

Online Guide Transmittal 2018-36

All valid applications and reevaluations must contain the applicant/client's signature. By signing the document, an applicant/client attests to the truthfulness and accuracy of their responses.

This Online Guide Transmittal advised staff that:

- clients may sign their name anywhere on the signature page;
- verification of citizenship is permanent even when it is self-declared;
- case managers must check SAVE at every application and reevaluation and print the results for all noncitizens in a case; and
- noncitizen applicants have the option of not being included in the case.

SNAP: SNAP-Ed Website

Online Guide Transmittal 2018-37

The SNAP-Ed website was created to educate and encourage SNAP clients to live a healthier lifestyle. The main focus of the website is to inform clients of the benefits of physical activity, how to eat healthy, and how to shop for healthy food choices while on a budget.

TAFDC: Exchange of Child Support Requirement Information

Online Guide Transmittal 2018-38

Effective immediately, staff must not mail, fax, or email DOR/CSE child support requirement documents: T-A34/36 forms, NFL-14 forms, Massachusetts birth certificates, etc. The information contained on those forms is available in BEACON and is shared as part of the weekly interface process.

This Transmittal advises staff about revisions to the Online Guide regarding the exchange of child support requirement information.

EAEDC: Noncitizens

Online Guide Transmittal 2018-39

Department policies and procedures require verification of citizenship status prior to the issuance of benefits. The criteria for an eligible noncitizen varies for each DTA program. EAEDC noncitizens must verify their immigration status and meet eligibility requirements as defined in 106 CMR 703.440 to determine their noncitizen status for eligibility purposes.

EAEDC noncitizen information in the Online Guide has been condensed and updated to provide clarification of eligibility requirements and streamline information.

Online Guide Transmittals

TAFDC: Automating the Transportation Benefit

Online Guide Transmittal 2018-40

TAFDC clients who are participating in an ESP activity (including employment) and have an approved EDP are eligible to receive a monthly Transportation benefit of \$80. The process of currently delivering the benefit to clients relies on a manual process and is time-consuming for case managers.

Effective July, 2018, the \$80 Transportation benefit will be issued automatically each month for eligible TAFDC clients.

Cross Programs: Verification Updates

Online Guide Transmittal 2018-41

The *Verification Checklist (VC-1)*, *Pending Denial Notice*, INT-1, and INT-2 are the Department generated documents that inform clients of the proofs needed to determine eligibility and benefit amount. Scheduled for production in July, 2018, several BEACON modifications and verification notice changes will be made. These changes will provide additional clarity for clients on how to provide proofs, and better identify some examples of verifications that they may provide.

This Online Guide Transmittal advises staff of updates to all the verification related notices, (The VC-1, *Pending Denial Notice*, INT-1, and INT-2) as well as updates to the Online Guide Verification chart.

Cross Programs: Suspected Living Above Means (SLAM) Procedural Clarifications: SUA Exclusion

Online Guide Transmittal 2018-42

The purpose of this Transmittal is to advise staff of revised Online Guide content that excludes Standard Utility Allowance (SUA) values when determining a SLAM circumstance.

Cross Programs: Household Misfortune Q & A

Online Guide Transmittal 2018-43

SNAP policy allows for the replacement of food lost during a household misfortune such as a fire, flood, loss of electricity, equipment malfunction (refrigerator or freezer) or other circumstances. Any SNAP client may request replacement SNAP benefits because of a misfortune that is restricted to their household or because of a more widespread misfortune that has impacted a town, county, state or region.

This transmittal advised staff of a new Q & A page that was created to provide further guidance on household misfortune replacement benefit requests.

Online Guide Transmittals

Cross Programs: Earned and Unearned Income Procedures

Online Guide Transmittal 2018-44

This transmittal advised staff of new pages, restructuring of existing pages, and the addition of clarifying examples to simplify earned and unearned income procedures. These revisions included the separation of specific self-employment topics into standalone pages.

Established procedures remain unchanged with the exception of:

- earned income from corporation business types now being entered as wages into BEACON and no longer being entered as self-employment income for SNAP, TAFDC, or EAEDC. Procedures remain the same for any other income received from this source, the most common being dividend income.
- SNAP only clients who are paid in cash but have no business expenses are no longer considered self-employed; this income is now entered as wages into BEACON

Cross Programs: DTA Connect Updates

Online Guide Transmittal 2018-45

DTA Connect has been effective in providing clients access to time-sensitive information quickly. As such, the Department has and will continue to make enhancements to the DTA Connect platform to support both clients and staff.

To that end, the web application data sheet was updated to allow staff to use split screen functionality to view web application data sheets while in the BEACON workflow.

In addition, effective July 1, 2018, the DTA Connect web portal at www.DTAConnect.com will allow clients to identify their *Interim Report* and *Recertification* forms when uploading. Also, applicants who apply online and establish an account on the client portal will be able to upload documents immediately.

Cross Programs: Assisting Clients who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing

Online Guide Transmittal 2018-46

DTA is required and committed to effectively serve all applicants and clients regardless of disability. This includes clients who are Deaf or hard of hearing. To better serve our Deaf or hard of hearing clients, 5 TAOs are now able to provide Video Remote Interpreting (VRI) services. In addition, the Online Guide has been updated. A job aid and the Disability Resource Guide have also been updated. Three new flyers have been created to assist Deaf or hard of hearing clients when they arrive at a TAO.

Online Guide Transmittals

SNAP: Updated Recertification Procedures for Waived Households and Clarifications on Unclear Information

Online Guide Transmittal 2018-47

The recertification interview may be waived for households where all adult members are elderly and/or federally certified as disabled with no earned income. To reinforce this concept new recertification procedures are being introduced for waived households that submit a *Recertification* form with missing pages or incomplete sections. Additional guidance is being issued to clarify procedures for handling unclear and significantly conflicting information between reporting periods.

SNAP: SNAP Work Requirement Medical Report form

Online Guide Transmittal 2018-49

This Transmittal advises staff that references to the *SNAP Work Requirement Medical Report* form have been updated throughout several Online Guide pages. Previously, this form was referred to as the *SNAP Work Program Requirement Medical Report* form.

SNAP: Updates to Medical Expense Procedures

Online Guide Transmittal 2018-50

This Transmittal advises staff of the following updates to the Online Guide:

- Documents from Housing Authorities are now acceptable verifications of medical expenses for households when all members are eligible for a medical expense deduction. Instructions on how to enter this information has been added.
- A Medical Expense Example page was created.
- Costs associated with Emotional Support and Therapy Animals are allowable.
- An Excel spreadsheet was added to help calculate transportation costs for medical and dependent care expenses.

From the Forms File

New Flyers

Communication Options for DTA Clients who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing (CommOptsDHH-1) (6/2018)

VRI Options for Deaf and Hard of Hearing Clients (VRIOptsDHH) (6/2018)

Why Are You Here Today? (WhyYouAreHere) (6/2018)

The 3 new flyers are to be used when assisting clients who are Deaf or hard of hearing. Refer to Online Guide Transmittal Update 2018-46 for more information. Document Production will send out an initial shipment of these flyers to the TAOs. The Spanish versions will soon be available.

Revised Form

15-042-0618-05

CTC (Rev. 6/2018)

Checklist for Transfer Cases

The *Checklist for Transfer Cases* form is used by both the transferring and receiving TAOs and also has a section for the transferring TAO to review for missing and or pending actions. Document Production will send out an initial shipment of this form to the TAOs.

Obsolete Poster

26-200-1011-05 (E)

26-201-1011-05 (S)

SNAP-AH Poster (10/2011)

Do you need help applying for SNAP/Food Stamps?

The *Do you need help applying for SNAP/Food Stamps?* poster is now obsolete. Please remove copies from TAO waiting areas and destroy all copies.

TAO Meeting Notes