# Transitions

March 2014

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## Quality Corner

This month we will review an error caused by the incorrect use of a Standard Utility Allowance (SUA). We will also review a negative error caused by an invalid denial.

### Incorrect Standard Utility Allowance

The first case reviewed was a Non Public Assistance (NPA) SNAP household was a 49-year-old disabled client who lived alone. At reapplication, the client reported that he received $823 per month in Retirement, Survivors and Disability Insurance (RSDI) benefits. His rent was $560 and he did not pay for any utilities.

Quality Control (QC) determined that the case was processed using the heating/cooling SUA of $608 although the SNAP application form clearly indicated that the client did not pay for any utility expenses separate from his rent. Using the incorrect SUA type caused the household to receive a monthly allotment of $189. This was an overpayment of $134 for the review month.

### What's a Case Manager to Do?

Case managers must be careful when extracting information from an application, recertification or interim report for case processing. The SUA type used was incorrect.  Supervisors must ensure that the information entered by the case manager for supervisory sign-off is correct by checking the application, recertification or interim report forms and any documentation provided. For more information on preventing errors, refer to Quality Corner of February 2008 entitled *Keys to Preventing Errors*.

### Invalid Denial

in the second case, the client reapplied for SNAP benefits on August 2, 2013. A face-to-face interview was conducted on August 19, 2013. On the day of the interview, a verification checklist was issued to the client with a due date of August 29, 2013. On September 3, 2013 (Day 30 was a Sunday and Day 31 was a holiday), the case was denied for failure to provide verification. When processing the denial, the case manager suppressed the BEACON-generated denial notice.

Quality Control determined this was an invalid denial and negative error because the client was not notified of the denial.

### What's a Case Manager to Do?

The case manager should not have suppressed the BEACON-generated denial notice. A client whose application is denied must be sent a notice informing the client that the application has been denied and the reason for the denial. The denial notice also informs the client of the right to request a fair hearing if the client disagrees with the Department's decision. For more information on the denial notice for SNAP applications, see 106 CMR 361.700(B).

## Training Corner

# EDM/myWorkspace Resource Quick Reference Guide

**Training Materials**:

(All EDM/myWorkspace training materials are available on the *Electronic Document Management (EDM)* page located on the *Policy Online* homepage.)

**DTA myWorkspace (MWS) User Guide**
Available at: http://dtaonline/refrence/curpol/edm/mws%20user%20guide-012914.pdf.

**DTA myWorkspace Case Manager Training**
Available at: http://dtaonline/refrence/curpol/edm/case-manager%20trainee.pdf.

**DTA myWorkspace Clerical Training**
Available at: http://dtaonline/refrence/curpol/edm/clerk-trainee%20guide.pdf.

**Electronic Document Management FAQ (Frequently Asked Questions)**
Available at: http://dtaonline/refrence/curpol/edm/dta-edm%20faqs.pdf.

**Job Aids**:

**Opening and Using Multiple Internet Explorer Windows**
Available at:
http://dtaonline/refrence/curpol/edm/opening%20and%20using%20multiple%20ie%20windows%20.pdf.

**Window Snapping**
Available at: http://dtaonline/refrence/curpol/transitions/13/dec/dec.pdf.

**Operations Memos**:

(All EDM/myWorkspace Operations Memos are available on both the *Electronic Document Management (EDM)* and *Operations Memos* splash pages located on the *Policy Online* homepage.)

**2013-61 Electronic Document Management – Release 1**
Description: provides information regarding the implementation of EDM and DTA myWorkspace (MWS) to facilitate the centralized scanning and distribution of postal mail. Available at: http://dtaonline/refrence/curpol/fo/13/61.pdf.

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# Training Corner *(Continued from Page 3)*

**2014-3 EDM Release 1 – EDMC Mail Facility Processing Responsibilities**
Description: advises staff of the EDMC mail clerk responsibilities and the relationship of DTA myWorkspace to the EDM process.
Available at: http://dtaonline/refrence/curpol/fo/14/3.pdf.

**2014-3A EDM Release 1 – DTA myWorkspace Functionality**
Description: describes the MWS functionality.
Available at: http://dtaonline/refrence/curpol/fo/14/3a.pdf.

**2014-3B EDM Release 1 – DTA Clerical Staff Responsibi**lities
Description: describes the DTA clerical role upon receipt of the digitalized documents.
Available at: http://dtaonline/refrence/curpol/fo/14/3b.pdf.

**2014-3C EDM Release 1 – Case Manager and Central Office Business Unit Responsibilities**
Description: provides case managers and Central Office Business Unit staff with guidance for processing tasks retrieved from MWS.
Available at: http://dtaonline/refrence/curpol/fo/14/3c.pdf.

**2014-26 Electronic Document Management (EDM) Release 1.1**
Description: describes enhancements for DTA myWorkspace (MWS) that took effect on March 24, 2014.
Available at: http://dtaonline/refrence/curpol/fo/14/26.pdf

**Multimedia:**

**EDM/myWorkspace Training Sessions PowerPoint**
Available at: http://170.154.109.59/refrence/curpol/edm/dta-tao-training-presentation.pdf

**Electronic Data Management Poster** (English)
Available at:
http://170.154.109.59/refrence/curpol/edm/edm%20staff%20poster%20eng%200114.pdf.

## 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. 1.** My TAFDC client's name in BEACON is Jessica Barry. She recently appeared on a Social Security Administration (SSA) match with a discrepancy type *Listed Under Another Name*. I looked into the case record and noticed that the client signed her name as Jessica Barry and there's no indication of any alternate name. "Howard," is the surname the Registry of Motor Vehicles (RMV) has on file for my client and neither of her children has this surname. I sent her a VC-1 for identity and SSN verification. Yesterday, this client left me a phone message saying that she is confused because her last name has always been Barry. Can I let my client know the last name that the RMV has on file?

**A. 1.** No. DTA staff is prohibited from revealing identifying information that may be about other individuals. The client must provide verification of her SSN. Also, she should be advised that the Department needs to use the legal name on file with SSA as her primary name in BEACON. If the client has provided satisfactory verification but a discrepancy remains, make a referral to the Fraud Investigations and Data Matching (FIDM) Unit for further review and remember to disposition the match.

**NOTE:** Remember that client information can only be accessed and used to carry out work-related assignments. See Legal Memorandum *Confidentiality of Personal Information*, issued April 25, 2013, on DTA Online, under Administrative Memos, for more information.

**Q. 2.** My EAEDC client wants to be referred to as Thomas Lee Nguyen, but he has an SSA match with a discrepancy type *Listed Under Another Name* and an Identity match that displays Lee Nguyen as his full name. How can I honor my client's request and also comply with DTA procedures?

**A. 2.** Explain to your client that DTA must use his name exactly as it appears with SSA. Clients with a name preference that differs from SSA can have any additional names or nicknames entered as either a middle name (if this applies) or entered in the Alternate Names field on the Assessed Person page. In this case, for alternate name type, select "Known by." (Alternate name types include: Married, Maiden, Name at Birth, Alias, Known by and Prior Marriage.) Also, remember that the SSA match and the Identity match are separate matches with information coming from different sources (SSA and RMV). Consequently, they must be dispositioned separately. For more information on how to disposition these two matches, refer to Operations Memo 2014-11 *BEACON Identify Match* and Operations Memo 2014-12 *Failure to Verify Social Security Administration Data*.

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## From the Hotline *(Continued from Page 5)*

**Q. 3.** My TAFDC client requests that I use her birth surname Brown, but she has an SSA match with a discrepancy type *Listed Under Another Name*. I sent her a VC-1 for identity verification and she was able to send me a copy of her birth certificate indicating Brown as her surname at birth.

When I told her the surname Brown is discrepant with the name SSA has, she explained that she recently went through a divorce and is asking that I use her birth surname, instead of her married name. Can I continue using her birth surname?

**A. 3.** On BEACON, this client will be able to use her birth surname as her last name only after it has been changed at SSA. If your client chooses to not use her married name, then she must change her name at the Social Security Administration first. In the meantime, her birth surname should be entered in the Alternate Names field on the Assessed Person page. In this case, for alternate name type, select "Maiden."

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## Diversity Quote

**It is time for parents to teach young people early on that in diversity there is beauty and there is strength.**

**Maya Angelou**

# Operations Memos

## SNAP – Mandatory SNAP Employment and Training (E & T) Program

SNAP

Operations Memo 2014-20

On March 3, 2014, the Department modified BEACON to allow for the enrollment of all clients who are mandatory participants or voluntary participants in the SNAP Employment and Training (E&T) Program. This mandatory program applies to all nonexempt household members between the ages of 16 and 59. All nonexempt household members must register and comply with the SNAP E&T requirements. Exempt household members can also volunteer to participate in the E&T Program.

The purpose of the memo is to inform staff about:

- mandatory SNAP E&T Program requirements for all nonexempt case members;
- changes to the BEACON Work Requirements-FS Page and a data-fix to support the enrollment of certain previously exempted clients;
- the SNAP E&T exemption reasons;
- enrolling mandatory and volunteer participants in SNAP E&T through BEACON;
- instructions on Self-Directed Job Search;
- where to find the acceptable good cause reasons for nonparticipation of mandatory participants; and
- instructions on how to disqualify a client for nonparticipation and how to remove an expired disqualification.

## TAFDC, EAEDC and SNAP – New York State Match

All

Operations Memo 2014-21

The Department's Program Integrity Unit currently matches with the Public Assistance Reporting Information System (PARIS) on a quarterly basis to identify any clients in Massachusetts who are or were receiving assistance at the same time in another state.

In an ongoing effort to enhance program integrity, the Department has begun directly matching with the New York State Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance (OTDA) on a **monthly** basis. The New York State Match is considered verified upon receipt, enabling the Department to act immediately on the data.

The purpose of this Operations Memo is to:

- inform staff of the New York State Match interface capabilities available to the Department;
- explain the match interfacing process automated for active cases;
- advise staff about a new match tab in BEACON for pending clients; and
- provide instructions for processing the New York State Match for pending cases.

# Operations Memos

## TAFDC, EAEDC and SNAP – Limitations on Program Eligibility

All

Operations Memo 2014-22

Certain unlawful activities restrict the eligibility of clients for the TAFDC, EAEDC and SNAP programs. Based on program type, a series of questions must be asked of applicants and clients (hereafter referred to as clients):

- at application and reapplication;
- at reevaluation and recertification; and
- when a new member is added to the household.

If a client answers Yes to any of the questions, additional pages will open to capture additional information about the client. Effective with BEACON Build 46.2, implemented on March 17, 2014, for all household members age 16 or older, the new Eligibility Limitations questions must be asked. The purpose of this Operations Memo is to advise staff about the Eligibility Limitations functionality changes in BEACON. This Operations Memo obsoletes Operations Memo 2012-30.

## Program Integrity Checklist Overview

All

Operations Memo 2014-23

As a part of the Department's ongoing efforts to strengthen program integrity, enhancements continue to be made to the BEACON system. Effective with BEACON Build 46.2, implemented on March 17, 2014, the Department will begin implementing the first phase of the Program Integrity (PI) Checklist.

The primary focus of the PI Checklist project is to reengineer how matches are processed in BEACON. Current processes and procedures require staff to manually review, evaluate and verify any external data before dispositioning a match.

The PI Checklist will integrate and automate many of these steps, reducing the time necessary to process matches. In addition to providing a single location that summarizes the status of external data, the PI Checklist will ensure that external data have been reviewed and appropriate action taken when authorizing benefits or determining ongoing eligibility.

The purpose of this memo is to:

- introduce the Program Integrity Checklist project;
- advise staff of changes to the Client Search page; and
- inform staff of upcoming enhancements.

## Operations Memos

### TAFDC, EAEDC, and SNAP: Enhancements to External Agency Match Processing

All

Operations Memo 2014-24

Effective with BEACON Build 46.2 implemented on March 17, 2014 the Department automated the processing of data received through the Earned Income Match with the Department of Revenue (DOR) and the Social Security Number (SSN) Match with the Social Security Administration (SSA). This automation is part of a larger Department initiative to be implemented at a future date.

The purpose of this memo is to inform staff about:

- the new automated process for Earned Income and SSN matches;
- the new DOR Employment Verification Notice and SSA Verification Notice; and
- case manager responsibilities in handling match responses.

### TAFDC: Work Program Sanction Edits

TAFDC

Operations Memo 2014-25

A Single State Audit review found that some TAFDC clients who were not complying with the work program requirements had not been sanctioned in accordance with Department regulations. This error has been due in part, to sanctions not being removed correctly from all required pages which prevents the automated sanction process from functioning as intended. Edits have now been made made on BEACON to assist case managers with this process.

Effective with BEACON Build 46.2, implemented on March 17, 2014, additional hard edits took effect to ensure that sanctions are fully removed and the automated sanction process continues. These edits include the following:

- If a Level 4 Work Program (WP) sanction exists with a status of Pending or Sanctioned, and the case manager attempts to remove the EFRC (Eligibility Factor Reason Code), upon clicking Save, Next or Finish, a hard edit will require that the case manager cancel from the page and go to the Sanction page to remove the WP sanction. Once the Sanction page is completed (i.e. sanction removal reason entered) the associated AU and AP level WP sanctions will be automatically removed on the AU Composition Results page.
- A new hard edit will prevent Interview Wrapup, when Interview Wrapup request for a Level 3 or Level 4 Work Program sanction is deleted if the EFRC and/or the Sanction have not been removed. The edit will display for both manually entered and batch-created WP sanctions. A message will instruct the case manager to go to the Sanction page to remove the sanction. Once the sanction page is completed, the new functionality outlined above will automatically remove the WP sanction reason(s) on the AU Composition Results page.

## Operations Memos

- For reapplications and reinstatements, a new message will direct staff to remove an existing WP sanction from the Sanction page. Once the sanction page is completed, the new functionality outlined above will automatically remove the WP sanction reason(s) on the AU Composition Results page.

### Electronic Document Management (EDM) Release 1.1

All
Operations Memo 2014-26

On January 31, 2014, DTA implemented Electronic Document Management (EDM), Release 1. It is anticipated that periodically, between major releases, enhancements will be added and possible fixes will be made.

On March 24, 2014, a number of enhancements for DTA myWorkspace (MWS) took effect. This memo describes those enhancements. Additional guidance for users based on best practices is also included in this memo.

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## State Letter

### TAFDC and EAEDC – Changes to Funeral and Burial/Final Disposition Reimbursement Rules

TAFDC and EAEDC
State Letter 1368

This State Letter transmits the following changes to the TAFDC and EAEDC programs:

Massachusetts General Laws, chapters 117A, 118 and 118A allow the Department to pay for funeral and final disposition expenses up to $1100 for impoverished decedents, regardless of the actual expenses. Per amendments to these statutes included in the FY '13 state budget, the Department may now pay up to $1100, provided the actual expenses do not exceed $3500.

This material is effective March 28, 2014.

## From the Forms File

### New Form

*18-883-0314-05*
*EBT-CC-Info Flyer (S)(3/2014)*
*Save More of Your Cash Benefits!!*

The Spanish version of the *Save More of Your Cash Benefits* flyer is now available from Document Production at Schraffts.

### New Poster

*TAO Office Closing Poster*
*TAO Office Closing Poster (Spanish)*

A *TAO Office Closing* poster is now available from Document Production at Schraffts.

### Revised (EDM Related) Forms

The following forms have been revised as part of the Electronic Document Management (EDM) project. Please recycle prior versions of these forms and use the revised versions.

*02-014-0314-05*
*02-183-0314-05(S)*
*INT-1 (Rev. 3/2014)*
*Verification Letter*

*02-065-0314-05*
*02-184-0314-05 (S)*
*INT-2 (Rev. 3/2014)*
*Additional Time Letter*

*09-164-0314-05*
*09-165-0314-05 (S)*
*SNAP-JS (Rev. 3/2014)*
*SNAP/ET Job Search Declaration*

*09-150-0314-05*
*SSI/SNAPA-1 (Rev. 3/2014)*
*SSI SNAP Benefits Reapplication Form*

*02-070-0314-05*
*VW-1 (Rev. 3/2014)*
*Voluntary Withdrawal*

*18-034-0314-40*
*CA/DD (Rev. 3/2014)*
*Direct Deposit*

# TAO Meeting Notes