



Transitions

May 2014

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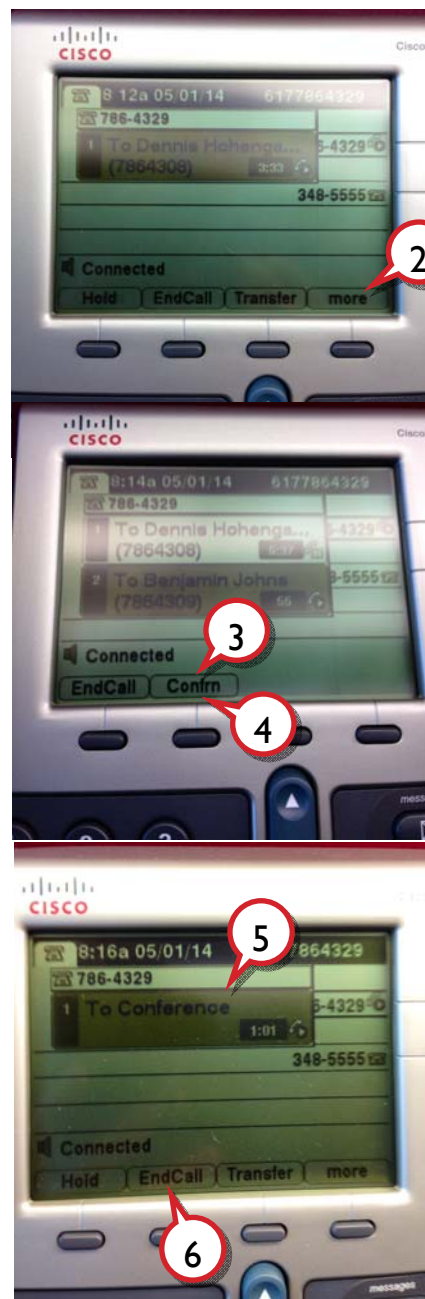


Training Corner

How to Make a Conference Call

You can have a conference call with up to six people using the phone right on your desk.

1. Dial the first person's phone number as you normally would.
2. After connecting with the first person, press the **more** soft key. Let the person know they will be put on hold briefly as you add additional people to the conference call.
3. Press the **Confrn** soft key to open a new line and call your second person. *Your first person is placed on hold.*
4. When the call is answered by the second person, press the **Confrn** key again. This adds the person to the conference call. You can now talk to both parties at the same time, or repeat these steps to add additional callers (up to six parties including yourself and five others).
5. When all parties have been added to the conference call line, you will see their names replaced with the text **To Conference**.
6. Press the **EndCall** soft key or hang up when finished with the call.



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 SNAP client is getting recertified this month (June, 2014) and she has been participating in H-EAT. Since H-EAT was not run in the month of April, what should I do with this client's utility expenses at recertification?

A. 1. Until further notice, leave this client's case with the full heating/cooling SUA. BEACON will pick up this case and determine continued eligibility for H-EAT in the fall, when the new H-EAT run and new procedures are in place.

Q. 2. My TAFDC client was evicted and is now living with a friend until she can find an apartment of her own. My client is not paying any rent. Should I deduct the income-in-kind rent amount from my client's payment standard?

A. 2. Yes. For details on the appropriate TAFDC income-in-kind values, see 106 CMR 204.510(B) for more details.

Also remember that in calculating this client's SNAP benefit amount, even though this client is not paying rent, her total monthly expenses need not reach or exceed \$143 for her to receive the SNAP homeless shelter/utility deduction. Any self-declared contribution amount from this client that goes towards her friend's utility bills is sufficient verification to qualify for the deduction. For more information on the SNAP homeless shelter/utility deduction, refer to 106 CMR 364.400(F). For more information on verifying shelter and utility costs in the SNAP and TAFDC Programs, refer to Operations Memo 2010-29.

Q. 3. My TAFDC client lives in government-subsidized housing and all of her rent is covered by her subsidy. Should I deduct the income-in-kind shelter amount for this client?

A. 3. No. Per 106 CMR 204.250(U), federal and state housing subsidies are noncountable income in the TAFDC Program and therefore the income-in-kind value for shelter is not deducted.

Note: Federal and state housing subsidies are noncountable income in the EAEDC Program as well. See 106 CMR 321.250(U).

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From the Hotline *(Continued from Page 3)*

Q. 4. My EAEDC cash-only client is living with a friend until he can find an apartment of his own. My client is not paying any rent. Should I deduct the income-in-kind shelter amount for this client?

A. 4. It depends.

- If this individual is paying zero shelter costs and states he is homeless, the Homeless indicator on the Address page should be checked. This will give the client Living Arrangement D Standard of Assistance and will calculate the SNAP benefits for a homeless individual. See 106 CMR 321.420(D) for details.
- If the individual is paying zero shelter costs and states he is NOT homeless, the Homeless indicator should NOT be checked. This will give the client Living Arrangement A's Standard of Assistance and will calculate the SNAP benefits for an individual who is not homeless. See 106 CMR 321.420(A) for details.
- If the individual is paying zero shelter AND utility costs and states he is NOT homeless, the Homeless indicator should NOT be checked but In-Kind income must be entered on the Other Income page. This will give the client Living Arrangement A's Standard of Assistance minus In-Kind income and will calculate the SNAP benefits for an individual who is not homeless.



Operations Memos

Date of Discovery for TAFDC, EAEDC and SNAP Benefit Fraud/Overpayment Referrals

All

Operations Memo 2014-35

This Operations Memo instructs case managers on assigning an accurate Date of Discovery for benefit fraud/overpayments when creating an Accounts Receivable (AR) Fraud/Overpayment Referral in BEACON. The date of discovery is defined as the date the overpayment has been verified or the date the household ultimately fails to respond to or satisfy an overpayment inquiry. Three date of discovery examples and information on where to find instructions on how to create a fraud/overpayment referral are provided in the memo.

EAEDC: 2014 Rest Home Public Per Diem Rate Changes

EAEDC

Operations Memo 2014-37

The Executive Office of Health and Human Services (EOHHS), working through the Center for Health Information and Analysis (CHIA), issued new public per diem rates for Massachusetts rest homes, effective June 1, 2014. Additionally, rest homes were approved for a special per diem rate, effective May 1, 2014 through May 31, 2014. This Operations Memo:

- advises staff of new Massachusetts rest home public per diem rates; and
- informs staff about the automated recalculation of clients' EAEDC benefits, using the updated rates.

Operations Memos

Conversion from GED to High School Equivalency Test (HiSET) Testing and Vouchers

TAFDC

Operations Memo 2014-38

Massachusetts has replaced the existing GED test with the High School Equivalency Test (HiSET). TAFDC clients wishing to obtain a high school equivalency certificate will do so through the HiSET. HiSET will cover the same five test areas (Language Arts Reading, Language Arts Writing, Mathematics, Science and Social Studies as the GED). Massachusetts is not honoring scores for the GED where the full battery was not passed by the student.

Effective with the issuance of this memo, the Employment Services Program General Educational Development Voucher (ESP-29) must not be issued. This voucher is not recognized for HiSET. The new *HiSET Voucher for Full Battery* (ESP-40) and *HiSET Voucher for Individual Tests* (ESP-41) forms must be used. TAFDC clients who wish to have the Department pay for the HiSET are not able to register for the test without the voucher. TAFDC clients who register without a DTA-issued voucher number will not be reimbursed.

This Operations Memo:

- informs DTA staff about the Commonwealth's conversion to the HiSET for high school equivalency certificates;
- provides procedures for TAFDC clients requesting a test voucher; and
- introduces the new *HiSET Voucher for Full Battery* (ESP-40) and *HiSET Voucher for Individual Tests* (ESP-41) forms.



From the Forms File

New Forms

17-400-0514-05

ESP-40 (5/2014)

ESP-HiSET Voucher for Full Battery

17-401-0514-05

ESP-41 (5/2014)

ESP-HiSET Voucher for Individual Tests

Operations Memo 2014-38 introduced the new *HiSET Voucher for Full Battery* (ESP-40) and *HiSET Voucher for Individual Tests* (ESP-41) forms. TAFDC clients who wish to have the Department pay for the HiSET are not able to register for the test without the voucher. These forms replace the *Employment Services Program General Educational Development Voucher* (ESP-29).

Obsolete Form

17-020-1198-24

ESP-29 (Rev. 11/98)

ESP-General Educational Development Voucher

This form is now obsolete. Please refer to Operations Memo 2014-38 for more information and discard copies of the ESP-29.

Diversity Quote

The highest result of education is tolerance.

Helen Keller

TAO Meeting Notes