



Commonwealth of Massachusetts
Executive Office of Health and Human Services
Department of Transitional Assistance
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Field Operations Memo 2000-26
September 7, 2000

To: Transitional Assistance Office Staff

From:  Joyce Sampson, Assistant Commissioner for Field Operations

Re: Expansion of Food Stamp Earnings Waiver

Introduction

The Department is currently operating under a United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) waiver of the face-to-face interview for certain assistance units (AU) with earnings. Field Operations Memo 99-12 provides information and instructions regarding the Food Stamp Earnings Waiver process.

USDA has approved the Department's request to expand the Food Stamp Earnings Waiver process. AUs subject to the Food Stamp Earnings Waiver process may now report changes on their recertification by mail form or at their annual face-to-face recertification instead of within 10 days. These cases are no longer subject to the mandatory change reporting rules at 106 CMR 366.110.

NOTE: Despite this waiver, if a recipient reports a change or if the Department becomes aware of a change during the certification period, the AU Manager must act on the change in a timely manner.

**Changes to the
FS Earnings
Waiver Process**

All information necessary to complete a recertification including residence, household composition, earned income, unearned income, expenses, assets and changes is captured on the Recertification Form for Households with Earnings (FSP-RCF, 9/2000).

The only other change to the process described in Field Operations Memo 99-12 is that recipients with earnings must send in **eight weeks** of pay stubs. ***This will ensure that the most accurate earnings amount is used in the food stamp calculation.***

Expansion of the Food Stamp Earnings Waiver will:

- 1) exempt AUs participating in the Food Stamp Earnings Waiver process from mandatory change reporting rules;
- 2) reduce error in the third month of the certification period if the AU Manager correctly acts on information/changes reported on the FSP-RCF form or at the face-to-face recertification; and
- 3) eliminate the need for NPA Monthly Reporting systems for earnings cases currently used in some TAOs.

CAUTION: It is important that all food stamp eligibility rules are applied since no changes are required during the three-month certification period. Be sure to establish cases correctly since this is the basis on which Quality Control errors will be determined.

Questions

If you have any questions, please have your Hotline designee call the Policy Hotline at (617) 348-8478.
