



Commonwealth of Massachusetts
Executive Office of Health and Human Services
Department of Transitional Assistance
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Field Operations Memo 2010-31
June 18, 2010

To: Transitional Assistance Office Staff
From:  John Augeri, Assistant Commissioner for Field Operations
Re: BEACON 3.0 Implementation

Overview

BEACON 3.0 is scheduled to be deployed on June 28, 2010. All BEACON 2.0 data will be converted to BEACON 3.0 over the weekend of June 25, 2010. Statewide training for all BEACON 3.0 users began on April 21, 2010 and has continued throughout the months of May and June. Staff are expected to complete all BEACON 3.0 practice exercises received from the Training Unit prior to implementation on June 28, 2010. Additional hands-on training has been provided at the PC labs in Boston, Worcester and Holyoke beginning May 17th, and continuing through June 1st for staff requesting additional assistance with BEACON 3.0.

Purpose

The purpose of this memo is to ensure that all staff are fully informed of any pertinent information they will require prior to conversion, and to introduce the *Conversion Tracking Form* (Attachment A) and the *DTA has a new computer system flier* (Attachment B).

Pre-Conversion

To ensure a successful deployment in all DTA offices, TAO Managers must make certain that staff complete all BEACON 3.0 practice exercises received from the Training Unit by June 24, 2010. Staff should also review the BEACON 3.0 flashes which have been developed by the Training Unit. TAO coverage should be provided to allow staff enough time to complete these exercises.

**Pre-Conversion
(continued)**

On Friday, June 25, 2010 case managers will be required to take paper applications because BEACON 2.0 will not be available. TAO staff should be prepared to conduct business without BEACON 2.0 access. All work completed on Friday June 25, 2010 must be data entered into BEACON 3.0 on Monday June 28, 2010 for processing.

On May 28, 2010, TAO Directors received an email providing them with posters and flyers to inform clients of delays due to the BEACON 3.0 conversion. Posters should be displayed in the waiting rooms. Also case managers should provide each visiting client with a flyer so that they will understand the reason why paper applications are being taken and why certain requests will be unable to be completed on June 25, 2010.

Note: The EBT card issuance system will also not be available on Friday, June 25, 2010. Emergency Cards must only be provided to an active client who is unable to access the benefit over the conversion weekend.

The Conversion Tracking Form has been developed by Central Office to be used by case managers to note all case actions taken on June 25, 2010. Case managers must retain this form until BEACON 3.0 is available. On June 28, 2010, case managers must input case actions listed on *The Conversion Tracking Form* into BEACON 3.0, as appropriate.

Post Conversion

To access BEACON 3.0 for the first time, post conversion, all users will be required to sign-in using their WEL ID as the User Name and enter their Employee ID number as the password. After initial sign-in, users will be prompted to change their password.

Each new BEACON 3.0 password must contain:

- at least 8 characters
- a minimum of one upper and lower case character
- a minimum of one number
- a minimum of one special character; e.g. %, *, etc.

Note: BEACON users who require a password reset should contact the Systems Help Desk.

DTA staff should attempt to resolve any BEACON 3.0 issues with the assistance of their supervisors, User Acceptance Testing (UAT) volunteers, managers, and Systems Help Desk Liaisons before calls are made to the Systems Help Desk. Only if the issues cannot be resolved by the aforementioned staff, should the issue(s) be escalated to the Systems Help Desk.

Post Conversion (continued) Beginning June 28, 2010, and continuing each morning for as long as necessary there will be a daily 9:00 a.m. conference call for TAO and Central Office managers. The purpose of these calls is to raise and address any BEACON 3.0 issues that are being encountered by staff.

Processing Applications/ Reapplications

On June 25, 2010, when taking (re) applications, case managers must:

- Inform the applicant that the system for taking applications is unavailable. Until the information is entered on BEACON 3.0 on or after June 28, 2010 no benefits will be issued.
 - Complete the paper BEACON Request for Assistance (RFA-1) for **all** applicants requesting Cash or SNAP benefits. This will establish the application date.
 - If an applicant qualifies for expedited SNAP benefits, schedule an appointment to complete the application within seven days of the applicant submitting an adequate application. This will meet expedited processing timeframes.
 - If an applicant requests an Immediate Needs benefit, a paper BEACON application (TAB A-1) must be completed. If the person appears cash eligible, a manual SSPS invoice must be issued in accordance with instructions found later in this memo. For Immediate Needs eligibility rules see: 106 CMR 702.125 (F).
 - If an applicant does not qualify for expedited SNAP benefits or does not request Immediate Needs, schedule an appointment no later than July 2, 2010 to complete the application.
 - Annotate all (re) applications on the *Conversion Tracking Form* (Attachment A), include an annotation for any application which qualifies for expedited SNAP benefits. These applicants **must** be scheduled for an appointment within seven days of the date of application to ensure timely expedited processing.
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Immediate Needs On June 25th, use the cash calculation worksheet located in the S-Drive in the folder named “calcs for s drive” to determine income eligibility for the requested program. For rules governing financial eligibility, see: 106 CMR 204.200 through 290 for TAFDC, 106 CMR 321.200 through 321.290 for EAEDC and 106 CMR 363.200 through 363.230 for SNAP. For rules governing counting assets, see: 106 CMR 204.100 through 204.140 for TAFDC, 106 CMR 321.100 through 321.140 for EAEDC, and 106 CMR 363.100 through 363.150 for SNAP.

If an applicant for cash benefits requests an Immediate Needs benefit, the case manager must:

- inform the applicant that the system for issuing any benefits for immediate needs is unavailable and will be processed on Monday, June 28, 2010;
- complete an SSPS invoice (as FMCS will be available) to authorize the Immediate Needs benefit; and
 - ♦ if the case was established on BEACON prior to June 25, 2010 have data-entry staff enter the completed SSPS invoice to obtain a control number; or
 - ♦ if the case was not established on BEACON prior to June 25, 2010, data-entry staff will enter, in the Control Number box, the following: “SD TAO number”, (e.g., SD 410).
Reminder: A control number is required on an SSPS invoice before a vendor can be paid.
- annotate any Immediate Needs benefits issued, on the *Conversion Tracking Form*.

Example: Samantha Smith applies for TAFDC and SNAP on June 25th, but is ineligible for expedited SNAP benefits. Samantha states she needs food in her house. The case manager must complete a TABA-1. Samantha appears to be otherwise eligible for TAFDC. As Samantha requested food the case manager must issue an SSPS invoice for food. Annotate this action on the *Conversion Tracking Form*.

**Day 7 Expedited
SNAP
Benefits or
Day 30 Initial
SNAP
Benefits**

Since BEACON 2.0 will be unavailable on June 25, 2010, SNAP applications for expedited and regular benefits may be out of *Tompkins* compliance. If day 7 falls on June 25, 2010, case managers must process the benefit no later than June 24, 2010. If day 30 falls on June 25, 2010, case managers must approve the application no later than June 24, 2010. If day 30 falls on June 25, 2010, the application cannot be denied until Monday, June 28th. Under no circumstances can the application be denied on June 24, 2010 as the denial will constitute a Negative Error.

**Reinstating
Cases
Within 30 Days
of Closing**

On June 25, 2010, for any former TAFDC or EAEDC case closed within 30 days prior to that date but will be reinstated, the case manager must:

- have the former client sign an RFA-1 to record the reinstatement;
- inform the former client that the system is unavailable and that the information will be entered onto BEACON on or after June 28, 2010;
- inform the former client that all benefits for which he or she is eligible will be received retroactive to the reinstatement date once entered;
- annotate any reinstatements to be processed on the *Conversion Tracking Form*; and
- ensure that all former clients requesting a reinstatement receive the *DTA has a new computer system* flier.

On June 25, 2010, if any former client requests that his/her case be reopened, and the client was removed or the case was closed within 30 days of the June 25th date for failure to provide verifications, the case manager must:

- determine what verification(s) are needed to reinstate the case; and
- make a photocopy of all verification(s) provided.

Former clients/cases closed within 30 days prior to June 25, 2010 for failure to provide verifications, if eligible, will be reopened retroactive to the day after the closing date, once BEACON 3.0 is in production. For rules governing eligibility, see: 106 CMR 702.160 through 702.240.

**Reinstating
Cases
Within 30 Days
of Closing
(continued)**

Former clients/cases closed within the 30 days prior to June 25, 2010 for a reason other than failure to provide verifications, if eligible, would be reopened effective the day they come into the TAO, once BEACON 3.0 is in production. For rules governing eligibility, see: 106 CMR through 702.170 through 702.240.

**Ongoing Case
Maintenance**

On June 25, 2010, if any client requests case maintenance (e.g., child care authorizations, ESP referrals, address change), the case manager must:

- inform the client that the system for processing these activities is unavailable and that the information will be entered onto BEACON on or after June 28, 2010;
 - make a photocopy of all verification(s) provided by the client;
 - annotate any actions on the *Conversion Tracking Form*; and
 - ensure that all applicants and clients receive the *DTA has a new computer system* flier.
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**Issuing
Temporary
MassHealth
Cards**

As FMCS will be available, NewMMIS will be available to issue temporary and or replacement MassHealth cards. For procedures to issue temporary cards or replacement MassHealth cards see Field Operations Memo 2008-51.

**Conversion and
the Division of
Hearings**

On June 25, 2010, if an applicant or client files an appeal for an action taken before conversion, the case manager must:

- give the applicant/client a stand-alone appeal form (DOH-10, Rev. 12/96), if requested;
 - inform the applicant/client that the Division of Hearings will track the appeal request; and
 - note this on the *Conversion Tracking Form*.
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Questions

If you have any questions, please have your designee call the Systems Help Desk at (617) 348-5290

DTA has a new computer system!

The Department of Transitional Assistance (DTA) has a new computer system called BEACON 3.0.

We will be converting to our new system on Friday, June 25, 2010.

As a result, all computer systems will not be available on **Friday June 25, 2010.**

No EBT Cards will be issued or replaced on **Friday, June 25, 2010.**

All systems will be up and running on Monday, June 28, 2010.

We apologize for any inconvenience.
Thank you for your patience.