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*Executive Office of Health and Human Services*  
**Department of Transitional Assistance**  
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**Field Operations Memo 2007-27**  
**April 20, 2007**

**To:** Transitional Assistance Office Staff  
**From:**  John Augeri, Assistant Commissioner for Field Operations  
**Re:** EA – S2H Toolbox Relocation Initiative

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**Overview**

The Department, in collaboration with the Housing Assistance Program (HAP) providers, scattered site providers and transitional housing providers will use EA funds to assist in the transition of EA homeless families from shelter into permanent unsubsidized housing. This program is called the *S2H (Shelter to Housing) Toolbox Relocation Initiative*, and it will provide a payment of \$6000 for the EA family to move from shelter into permanent unsubsidized housing. To be considered, the EA family must have been residing in a DTA temporary emergency shelter on or before February 28, 2007. This program started on April 9, 2007 when the providers began identifying EA families and will end on June 30, 2007.

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**Purpose of Memo**

This memo provides TAO staff with a description of the *S2H Toolbox Relocation Initiative*. It describes the roles of the Housing and Homeless Services (H&HS) Unit, the HAP providers, the scattered site providers, the transitional housing providers, the AU Managers and the Homeless Coordinators.

This memo also addresses the impact the *S2H Toolbox Relocation Initiative* and/or the standard *Toolbox* payment have on Food Stamps and TAFDC benefits.

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**S2H Toolbox  
Relocation  
Initiative**

The *S2H Toolbox Relocation Initiative* will provide \$6000 for an EA family to exit shelter and move into permanent, unsubsidized housing. This payment will be made directly to the landlord.

The *S2H Toolbox Relocation Initiative* has been developed for families who will be able to maintain their own unsubsidized housing unit. The program is completely voluntary. Once the family moves from shelter into the housing unit the EA benefits for the family will be terminated.

**Eligibility  
Criteria**

To be considered for the *S2H Toolbox Relocation Initiative*, the EA family must have been residing in a DTA temporary emergency shelter on or before February 28, 2007. The HAP providers, scattered site providers and transitional housing providers will consider the following:

- the EA family member(s) must:
  - be working full time, or if working part time, have the ability to increase his or her hours; or
  - have other sources of income such as SSI that will be sufficient to maintain the rent; or
  - be enrolled in a vocational educational training program that will likely lead to employment within 60 days; and
  - have a history of cooperation and/or participation in carrying out the terms of the EA family's Self-Sufficiency Plan; and
- the EA family will be expected to maintain their tenancy for at least 12 months.

**HAP Providers  
and Other  
Providers**

The HAP providers, scattered site providers and transitional housing providers will:

- identify families who, based on the provider's experience and expertise, will be able to maintain the placement for a minimum of 12 months;
- determine if the EA family meets the eligibility criteria for the *S2H Toolbox Relocation Initiative*;
- provide the H&HS unit with lists of EA families identified for the *S2H Toolbox Relocation Initiative*;
- negotiate with landlords to establish a 12-month lease for the families;
- manage the disbursement of the \$6000 on behalf of the EA family;

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**HAP Providers and Other Providers**

- provide stabilization services to the family for a minimum of 12 months after the tenancy begins; and
- submit all documentation to H&HS for processing that relates to the expenses incurred in securing the unsubsidized housing for the EA family.

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**TAO Staff Responsibilities**

As of April 9, the providers began sending lists of the EA families identified for the *S2H Toolbox Relocation Initiative* to H&HS. H&HS will email the list to the TAO's HAP Toolbox Liaison upon issuance of this memo.

If the AU Manager or Homeless Coordinator has an EA family who appears to meet the eligibility criteria and would be a good choice for this program but was not identified on the list or has an issue with any EA family identified on the list, the AU Manager or Homeless Coordinator must inform the TAO's HAP Toolbox Liaison. The TAO's HAP Toolbox Liaison must email Barbara Duffy (DTA) ([barbara.duffy@state.ma.us](mailto:barbara.duffy@state.ma.us)) with the information.

When the *S2H Toolbox Relocation Initiative* payment has been issued, H&HS emails the *HAP Services Payment Authorization* form to the TAO's HAP Toolbox Liaison. The AU Manager or Homeless Coordinator is responsible for:

- ensuring that all verifications needed for a change of address and new shelter expenses have been received;
  - updating the information in BEACON, including but not limited to:
    - entering the new address, type of housing and shelter expenses;
    - for a TAFDC AU, reviewing and updating the information on the Work Requirements window, and completing ESP referrals, if necessary;
    - deleting the in-kind deduction for a TAFDC AU;
    - entering the shelter exit date and reason (permanent placement-unsubsidized housing) on the Residential Facility window;
    - entering the EA AU termination reason (alternative feasible housing) on the AU Composition Results window;
    - completing the request on Interview Wrap-up, clicking on the selection, clicking on EBC Results, calculating EBC Results, and authorizing the change;
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**TAO Staff  
Responsibilities  
(continued)**

- annotating the BEACON Narratives tab to indicate a \$6000 *S2H Toolbox Relocation Initiative* payment was made on behalf of the EA family and the family's new address; and
- completing the NFL-9 termination notice for feasible alternative housing, including the new address and the manual citation, 106 CMR 309.040(F)(1)(e).

**Additional  
Payments:  
Relocation  
Benefit and/or  
Toolbox  
Payment**

In addition to the \$6000 *S2H Toolbox Relocation Initiative* payment, an EA family who is a TAFDC AU may also be eligible for the \$1,000 TAFDC relocation benefit. The family must meet the requirements described in 106 CMR 705.350. The relocation benefit is issued by the AU Manager or Homeless Coordinator as specified in Field Operations Memo 98-52.

The EA family may also be eligible for the standard *Toolbox* payment of up to \$2000. The *Toolbox* payment is issued by the HAP provider as specified in Field Operations Memo 2005-24A.

**Impact of *S2H  
Toolbox and/or  
Toolbox* on  
Food Stamps  
and/or TAFDC  
Benefits**

For Food Stamps, any *S2H Toolbox Relocation Initiative* or *Toolbox* payment made directly to the vendor for rent must be excluded as income.

- If the rent is fully paid, the Food Stamp recipient must not be allowed a shelter expense deduction.
- If the rent is partially paid, the Food Stamp recipient will be allowed a shelter expense deduction for the portion of the rent he or she pays.
- The Food Stamp recipient is eligible for the utility expense, if he or she is responsible for paying a utility cost separate from the rental amount.

For TAFDC, any payment from the *S2H Toolbox Relocation Initiative* or the *Toolbox* is considered noncountable income. If a payment(s) is made on behalf of the TAFDC recipient, no income-in-kind should be deducted in calculating the TAFDC grant. Additionally, as long as the TAFDC recipient pays at least \$1 for rent, he or she is eligible for the rent allowance when the recipient does not live in state or federally subsidized housing.

**AU Becomes Homeless or Applies for EA Benefits**

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Stabilization services to help the EA family maintain the housing will be provided to the EA family for the first 12 months. The HAP provider, scattered site provider or transitional housing provider, and staff from F.O.R. Families will provide stabilization services. Stabilization services include, but are not limited to, budgeting and counseling services, referrals to community programs, and landlord or utility company advocacy.

If the family is at risk of becoming homeless within 12 months after receiving *S2H Toolbox Relocation Initiative*, the AU Manager or Homeless Coordinator must immediately advise the TAO's HAP Toolbox Liaison of the AU's current situation. The TAO's HAP Toolbox Liaison must email Barbara Duffy (DTA) ([barbara.duffy@state.ma.us](mailto:barbara.duffy@state.ma.us)) with the information. H&HS will contact the appropriate provider regarding the current situation. If the housing cannot be maintained, the family may be eligible for EA shelter benefits if 12 months have elapsed since the last day shelter was paid for by the Department. If 12 months have not elapsed, the family is not eligible for EA benefits and a reapplication for shelter benefits must be denied.

**Questions**

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

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