

From the Hotline

If you have questions on this column or other policy or procedural material, please have your Hotline designee call the **Policy Hotline at 617-348-8478**.

The questions below concern expanded categorical eligibility for NPA food stamp households. More information on this topic is also available in Field Operations Memo 2008-27.

- Q.** Are elder or disabled households that receive a disability benefit (SSI, RSDI, VA) subject to a gross income test in the determination of food stamp eligibility?
- A.** No. Elders (age 60 or over) or clients who receive disability benefit (SSI, RSDI, VA disability benefit) do not have a gross income test in the determination of **food stamp benefit eligibility**.
- Q.** Why is there a 200% Gross Monthly Categorical Eligibility Income Standard for elder and non-SSI Disabled households?
- A.** USDA requires that the 200% Gross Monthly Income Standard be used to determine whether

or not an elder or non-SSI disabled household is **categorically eligible**.

- Q.** Can an 18-year-old who lives alone be considered categorically eligible for food stamp benefits?
- A.** Yes. Receipt of the *Help for Those in Need: A Resources Brochure* will confer categorical eligibility on this adult.
- Q.** Given the recent changes that expand categorical eligibility for NPA food stamp households, why was my Department of Mental Health (DMH) client recently denied food stamp benefits for exceeding gross income limits?
- A.** DMH involvement with a client does not always mean that the client meets the Food Stamp Program definition of a disability. Although your client was residing in a DMH facility, she was not elderly, neither was she receiving a disability-related benefit and therefore did not meet the Food Stamp Program special rules for disabled clients as outlined in 106 CMR 361.210.

Field Operations Memos

Department Obligations under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)

TAFDC

Field Operations Memo 2008-35

The Department has certain obligations towards applicants and clients under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. Section 504 makes it illegal for public agencies receiving federal funds to discriminate against individuals with disabilities. Title II of the ADA prohibits discrimination on the basis of disability by states and government entities.

Generally, the Department must provide an individual equal opportunity to participate in or benefit from its programs.

This memo reminds TAO staff about:

- current ADA policies; and
- TAO Accommodation Teams used for handling and reviewing ADA-related issues, including requests for ADA accommodations.

This memo reinforces and adds to information TAO staff have received in the mandatory ADA training.

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