

## Quality Corner

This month we will discuss two types of problems that have been recent sources of error: Child Support Deductions and Food Stamp Work Registration.

### Child Support Deduction

In a recent error, an AU closed and reopened. After the opening, the GRT-1 screen showed a child support deduction – money paid by the household in child support to someone else: code D in the Asset Block (Block 10). While verification of the child support deduction is required, it was not done. Instead, the deduction amount remained from a prior stay on TAFDC when it was appropriately allowed. In addition, the AU Manager knew the father was no longer working, and therefore was unable to meet his obligation.

### What Can An AU Manager Do?

The system does not ‘zero out’ previous deduction amounts when an AU closes. When the AU reopens you MUST verify that there is an obligation and that payments are being made prior to authorizing the deduction. Failing to do so will result in an incorrect payment. If there is no longer an obligation or if no payments are being made, ‘zero out’ the amount of the previous deduction.

It is also important to note that recipients are only allowed this deduction if the payments are being made. This is different from SUA and shelter deductions where the deduction is allowed even if the payment (rent, for example) is not made but only incurred.

### Food Stamp Work Registration

Prior to the most recent recertification a 17-year-old dropped out of school. Because he was no longer exempt from Food Stamp Employment and Training, a new work registration form, completed by the head of the household, had to be signed for all members in the household. In addition, the 17-year-old must participate in the job search program or show good cause for not participating. This MUST be documented in the AU record. Because he is not yet 18, there is no required ABAWD activity.

### What Can An AU Manager Do?

At EVERY change in circumstances (for example, age changes, changes in food stamp employment and training exemption, disability determination, and pregnancy) be sure to complete a new work program registration to be signed by the head of the household. When required, include participation information in the AU record. When not required (by good cause), include documentation of that in the AU record. Remember, work registration forms must be completed, signed and included in the AU record.

These two problems are more common and contribute more to the error rate than you might think. The first error alone represents more than \$200,000 in food stamp benefits issued incorrectly.

