



*Commonwealth of Massachusetts
Executive Office of Health and Human Services
Department of Transitional Assistance*

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Commissioner

**Online Guide Transmittal 2021-66
August 18, 2021**

To: Department of Transitional Assistance Staff
From: Sarah Stuart, Associate Commissioner for Change Management
Re: COVID-19: TAFDC - Pandemic Emergency Assistance Payments

Overview

As part of The American Rescue Plan Act of 2021, a Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) Pandemic Emergency Assistance fund was established. Massachusetts is using this money to issue a one-time payment of \$683.02 to children and pregnant individuals who received a TAFDC payment in the month of July 2021. This includes cases that are now closed with limited exceptions such as cases that closed due to death.

TAFDC families do not have to do anything to receive this payment. It will be issued to each family via the same benefit issuance mechanism their monthly TAFDC benefits are issued. Pandemic Emergency Assistance funds are not considered countable income or assets for SNAP, TAFDC, and or EAEDC. **The Pandemic Emergency Assistance Payment is a one-time payment issued to specific household members. Case managers must not issue a supplement.**

Purpose

The purpose of this Online Guide Transmittal is to advise staff of the Pandemic Emergency Assistance funds being issued to children and pregnant individuals who received a TAFDC payment in the month of July 2021. The payment will be issued August 19, 2021.

Communication On August 19, 2021, the following text message and DTA alert notified clients in eligible households of the TANF Pandemic Emergency Assistance funds. “Due to COVID-19, you are getting a one-time special cash benefit. Check your balance on DTA Connect or by calling the number on the back of your card.” This text message and DTA alert was sent in English, Spanish, Portuguese, Haitian Creole, Vietnamese and Chinese based on the language on file. Those with HLS or who have affirmatively opted-out of text messaging and alerts from DTA were excluded. The Text message was sent regardless of the phone type listed on BEACON.

Additionally, a notice was mailed to communicate this change, and upon issuance of these funds, the following batch narrative entered for all assistance units receiving this payment:

“A onetime Pandemic Emergency Assistance payment has been issued in the amount of \$683.02 for XX eligible members of this household.”

Questions If you have any policy or procedural questions, after conferring with the appropriate TAO personnel, please have your Systems Information Specialists or TAO management email them to DTA.Procedural Issues.

Systems issues should be directed to the Systems Support Help Desk.
