



Commonwealth of Massachusetts
Executive Office of Health and Human Services
Department of Transitional Assistance
600 Washington Street • Boston, MA 02111

DEVAL L. PATRICK
Governor


TIMOTHY P. MURRAY
Lieutenant Governor

JUDYANN BIGBY, M.D.
Secretary

DANIEL J. CURLEY
Commissioner

Operations Memo 2011- 60
December 15, 2011

To: Department of Transitional Assistance Staff

From:  **Stephanie Brown, Assistant Commissioner for Policy, Program and External Relations**

Re: **SNAP- Out-of-State Accessing of SNAP Benefits**

Overview

It has recently come to the attention of the Department that a number of SNAP households have been accessing their SNAP benefits electronically through Electronic Benefit Transfer (EBT), for over 90 days, in out-of-state locations. This is an indication that the households may no longer reside in Massachusetts.

On November 16, 2011 the Department's Data Matching Unit (DMU) sent notices (see Attachment A) to 940 SNAP households, identified as consistently using their benefits out-of-state, requesting that they provide verification of current Massachusetts residency within ten days of the notice date. Failure to respond to the notice will result in an automatic batch closing of the SNAP household, with the reason "No longer a MA Resident."

Purpose

This memo advises TAO staff that a large number of these households will be sent closing notices during the week of December 12, 2011 and describes case manager responsibilities regarding these households.

Case Manager Responsibilities

The notices sent by the DMU will not appear in BEACON. Households were instructed to respond to the DMU within 10 days of the notice date. If the household failed to respond, reported that they were no longer living in Massachusetts or did not provide sufficient verification of Massachusetts residency, the DMU will initiate a closing and complete a BEACON Narrative annotating the closing reason "No Longer a MA Resident."

**Case Manager
Responsibilities
(continued)**

Since the closing notices for these households will list the case manager's telephone number, it is expected that case managers will experience an increase in telephone inquiries.

The DMU's Out-of-State closing report will be emailed to the Directors in the affected TAOs after the publication of this memo. The report is sorted by the:

- Grantee SSN,
- Grantee last name,
- Grantee first name,
- TAO number,
- TAO name,
- Case manager's last name and
- Case manager's first name.

Note: Bay State CAP clients were included in the November 16, 2011 noticing (Attachment A). However, closings will not be executed on Bay State CAP cases as they are not mandated to notify DTA of a change of address. The DMU will contact the Social Security Administration about Bay State CAP households with these out-of-state transactions.

Households pending to close with the closing reason "No Longer a MA Resident" can have the closing deleted if the client provides sufficient verification of current Massachusetts residency. A household whose case has closed must file a new application for benefits and provide sufficient verification of Massachusetts residency. When a client provides verification of residency, it must be faxed to the DMU at 617-889-7847. Case managers can also refer clients to the DMU at 1-877-703-7186. All appeals generated by the closing will be handled by the DMU.

The DMU will now handle all out-of-state reports for Cash and SNAP and TAOs will no longer have to perform this function.

Questions

If you have any questions, please have your Hotline designee call the Policy Hotline.

Dear {Client Name}

Our records indicate that you have been using your benefits outside of Massachusetts during the past several months. You need to provide us with verification that you still reside in Massachusetts. You must provide this verification within 10 days of receiving this notice or your case will be closed.

If you are no longer a Massachusetts resident, you may apply for benefits in the state in which you reside.

You may fax your verifications to (617) 889-7847 or mail to the address below:

Department Transitional Assistance
Fraud Investigation and Data Matching Unit
600 Washington Street, 5th Floor
Boston, Massachusetts 02111

Examples of verification you may provide include:

- Current Lease
- Current Utility Bills
- Mortgage Statement
- School verification of children

You do not need to call your worker to resolve this issue. If you have questions or have trouble reading or understanding this notice, please call 1-877-703-7186.

Please indicate if any of the following apply to you:

- Close my case because I no longer reside in Massachusetts
- I no longer need benefits; please close my case