



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


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**Operations Memo 2014-44 A
July 10, 2014**

To: Department of Transitional Assistance Staff

From:  **Anne O'Sullivan, Acting Assistant Commissioner for Policy, Program and External Relations**

Re: TAFDC – Updated Orientation PowerPoint Presentation and TAFDC Orientations

Overview

A key component of the TAFDC program is engaging clients in work-related activities to move families with dependent children to self-sufficiency. The Department is committed to connecting applicants and clients (hereafter referred to as clients) with the resources and supports necessary to successfully transition to financial stability.

Field Operations Memo 2007-45 introduced staff to the Orientation Session PowerPoint presentation as a mandatory application activity. Field Operations Memo 2010-12 updated this presentation and related procedures.

Purpose of Memo

This Operations Memo reminds staff that Orientation Sessions are mandatory at application and follow-up activities, including when it is determined that the client's compliance with the Work Program needs to be reevaluated. The PowerPoint presentation has been updated and, among other topics, includes:

- a new introduction;
 - Work Program Requirements and Sanctioning overview;
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Purpose of Memo (continued)

- available Employment Services Program (ESP) activities;
- ESP Support Services; and
- information on the value of establishing Child Support orders and availability of the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC).

The revised PowerPoint presentation will be available with the issuance of this Operations Memo. This Operations Memo is being reissued to indicate that additional languages are now available.

Obsolete Memo

Operations Memo 2014-44: *TAFDC – Updated Orientation PowerPoint Presentation TAFDC Orientations* is obsolete.

Orientation PowerPoint Presentations Overview

The PowerPoint presentation is mandated as an application activity to ensure that all TAFDC clients receive important information in as timely and as uniformly a way as possible. These orientations are intended to supplement and complete the application interview by giving clients critical information regarding their rights and responsibilities as well as benefits and services that they are now eligible for or for which they may be eligible.

Orientation PowerPoint presentations are available in English, Spanish, Vietnamese, Arabic, Somali, Haitian Creole, Brazilian Portuguese and Khmer.

IMPORTANT: Refer to Operations Memo 2013-11: Department Interpreter Services Procedures to procure translation services for clients who do not speak English.

Orientation PowerPoint Presentations: for Applicants Waiting Area Staff Responsibilities

When applying for TAFDC, clients must be provided the *TAFDC Applicant Information* form (Attachment A) by the clerk, Waiting Area Coordinator or other designated staff. The client should be asked to complete this form while waiting to be interviewed by his or her case manager. This document will help the client and case manager determine what services he or she may need to find a job that will lead to economic self-sufficiency.

IMPORTANT: Clients who have been closed (for a reason other than a Work Program sanction) and reopened within six months are not required to view the Orientation presentation unless they have not previously viewed it. Grantees who are not eligible to participate in ESP are not required to view the Orientation presentation.

**Orientation
PowerPoint
Presentations:
for Applicants
Case Manager
Responsibilities -
In-Office Interviews**

The client must view the Orientation presentation on the case manager's computer during the application interview. The case manager must be available to answer any questions the client may have.

During the application interview, the case manager must show the client the Orientation presentation unless the client viewed it within the past six months. Each TAO has the Orientation presentation, located on Policy Online under "Orientation Presentations." No other Orientation presentation should be used. The case manager must:

- ensure that the sound on the case manager's computer is *not* muted and is not at a level to distract co-workers and clients in the immediate vicinity;
- click on Policy Online;
- click on Orientation Presentations;
- select the Orientation presentation with the correct language for the applicant; and
- while the Orientation presentation is being shown, review the *TAFDC Applicant Information* document (Attachment A) for completeness.

Once the Orientation presentation is completed, the case manager must:

- enter the date the client viewed the Orientation presentation in the "Orientation Date" field on the TAFDC tab of the Work Requirements page on BEACON;
- ask the client if s/he has any questions related to the orientation information viewed on the Orientation presentation;
- review the *Applicant Information* form with the client to determine what, if any, activity the client should enroll in; and
- provide an ESP referral accordingly.

Reminder: Due to the confidential and sensitive nature of information available on case managers' computers, case managers must be present during the client's viewing of the Orientation presentation.

At the completion of the application, the client must be given an application packet. The application packet includes: the printed Orientation presentation, program brochures, the Your Right to Know brochure and local ESP provider information.

The case manager would then process the application following established procedures.

**Orientation
PowerPoint
Presentations: for
Applicants
Case Manager
Responsibilities -
Home Visits**

TAFDC clients may require a home visit to complete an application. Any request for a home visit must be processed by the TAO Director or designee who will determine the appropriateness of the home visit request and if appropriate assign the application to a case manager following established TAO protocol.

If a home visit is required as part of the application process, the assigned case manager will:

- schedule the home visit;
- print out the Orientation PowerPoint presentation and bring it, the application packet and the *TAFDC Applicant Information* form along with all other application materials to the application interview;

Note: To print the Orientation PowerPoint presentation the case manager must click on Policy Online and:

- ✓ click on Orientation Presentations;
 - ✓ select the (Print PDF) PowerPoint presentation with the correct language for the applicant; and
 - ✓ click on “File” and click on “Print” to print out the Orientation presentation;
- take the client’s application following established procedures;
 - have the client fill out the *TAFDC Applicant Information* document;
 - have the client review the paper Orientation presentation;
 - discuss any questions the client may have regarding the information on the Orientation presentation; and
 - review the *TAFDC Applicant Information* form with the client to determine what if any, activity the client would like to enroll in.

The case manager would then process the application following established procedures.

**Orientation
PowerPoint
Presentations**
TAFDC Group
Orientations

TAFDC Group Orientation Sessions will be organized by the TAO's Full Engagement Worker (FEW). The Group Orientation Sessions may include:

- introduction of FEWs and their role;
- group viewing of the Orientation presentation and issuance of a printed copy;
- review of time-limited benefits and banking time;
- summary of available ESP activities in the area;
- local ESP providers;
- benefits to gaining employment; and
- overview of support services.

TAFDC Group Orientation Sessions are an important opportunity for Department staff to connect clients with services to support the client's transition to self-sufficiency.

**Orientation
PowerPoint
Presentations**
FEW
Responsibilities

The FEW will host a minimum of two TAFDC Group Orientation Sessions per week. TAFDC clients will be invited to attend these sessions using the *TAFDC Group Orientation Appointment* (Attachment B) letter. Both work program required and non-work program required clients will be encouraged to take advantage of these Group Orientation Sessions.

If a work program required client, who is not participating in an approved ESP activity, does not keep the group appointment and he or she has used the 60-day work search period, he or she **must** be referred to community service immediately to meet the work program requirement. If the work program required client does not keep the appointment and he or she has not used the 60-day work search period, follow procedures in Field Operations Memo 2004-16.

Policy

TAFDC 106 CMR 203.400 and 106 CMR 207.000, et seq.

Questions

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



Massachusetts Department of Transitional Assistance

TAFDC Applicant Information

Please answer these questions as best as you can. The answers will be used to help decide the best activity for you.

Name _____ SSN _____

Phone Number _____ Date _____

1. What grade did you finish in school?

2. When did you last work? Where did you last work?

3. What are some jobs you have had in the past?

4. What are some skills you have?

5. What things do you have a difficult time doing at work?

6. What jobs are you good at?

7. Do you need child care assistance?

8. What job or jobs would you like to have?

TAFDC Applicant Information (continued)

9. What training do you think you need to get a job?
10. What are some things that have stopped you from getting a good paying job?
11. Does your child(ren) have any serious issues that make it difficult for you to find or maintain a job (such as, health problems or social service involvement)?
12. Do you use public transportation to get where you need to be? Do you have public transportation nearby?

I need more information about or the following services/help to become self-sufficient:
Please check all that apply.

Education & Training

- high school/GED/ESOL
 to finish college
 to learn a trade, or specific job skills
 learning disability

Job Search/Job Placement

- to find a job or a better job
 to write a resume
 help to improve job interviewing skills

Transportation

- help with arranging a carpool
 help paying for gas or public transportation

Housing

- need to find stable/affordable housing

Domestic Violence

- referrals to services

Health

- Substance Abuse/Treatment
 physical or mental health issues
 physical, mental or behavioral issues of family member

Professional Attire

- for educational/training
 for work/job searching

Child Care/Parenting

- help paying for child care
 help finding quality child care

Personal/Budgeting/Finance

- understand the advantages of earnings and the effect on cash, Food Stamps and MassHealth benefits
 tax benefits once you start work
 money management recommendations

Legal

- CORI issues
 Court related fees/fines



Massachusetts Department of Transitional Assistance

Attachment B

TAFDC Group Orientation Appointment

Date _____

Dear _____

You have been scheduled for the TAFDC Group Orientation appointment on:

_____ at _____ at _____.
(Day/Date) (Time) (Location)

This meeting is being scheduled to give you important information about the work program requirement and DTA benefits and services. Attending this meeting can help you decide what work activity you would like to participate in. If you cannot attend this meeting, you need to call me and I will schedule you for another day and time.

_____ Telephone: _____
(Department Representative) (Department Representative Telephone Number)