

FYIs

Fuel Assistance 2014-2015

The Fuel Assistance Program begins accepting applications for fuel assistance on November 1, 2014.

TAOs will receive a supply of Fuel Assistance brochures in October for clients who are interested in applying for fuel assistance and in knowing how the program works. The brochure will also be available on our website at www.mass.gov/dta/fuelassistance.

Clients can obtain income verification letters to submit with their Fuel Assistance application in the following ways:

- Clients may use their My Account Page (MAP) screen, which displays their case information. For more information on how clients can access MAP, see Field Operations Memo 2010-6 and Operations Memo 2012-41.
- Clients may use the Interactive Voice Response (IVR) telephone number to request an income verification letter. The IVR telephone number is 1-877-382-2363, and is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Clients will receive an income verification letter within five days at the mailing address identified in BEACON.
- Clients may visit a TAO to request an income verification letter. Clients who visit a TAO to request an income verification letter must receive the letter before leaving the TAO. Clients who telephone their case managers requesting an income verification letter should be directed to use the IVR telephone number or to access MAP to print out their case information.

Each TAO was previously sent a poster advertising the availability of income verification letters through the IVR telephone number and MAP. Contact Schrafft's if a new poster is needed in your office.

Department of Children and Families (DCF) Quarterly Clothing Allowance and TAFDC Teen Parents

DCF quarterly clothing allowance payments to teen parents are considered noncountable income in the TAFDC Program as they are a contribution that provides for a portion of the teen parent's needs. See 106 CMR 204.250(AA) for more information.

Remember, however, individuals receiving state or federal foster care maintenance payments as well as the DCF quarterly clothing allowance are ineligible for TAFDC benefits. (Refer to 106 CMR 204.305(E) for more information.) As long as the DCF quarterly clothing allowance is the only DCF payment issued to the teen parent, he or she is not considered in receipt of state or federal foster care maintenance payments and may be approved for TAFDC, if otherwise eligible. To verify the type, amount and frequency of DCF payments, a current statement from DCF indicating these details is required.

For SNAP purposes, the DCF quarterly clothing allowance payment is considered countable unearned income. See 106 CMR 363.220(B) for more details on SNAP unearned income. This is a SNAP rule change based on a recent clarification from USDA. Please note that the SNAP information in the original version of this FYI from November 2011 is no longer applicable.