

## Quality Corner

Two recent Quality Control errors highlight problems that have been presented here before, but bear repeating. The first involves Universal Semiannual Reporting and the second, child support payments made by a recipient.

### **Universal Semiannual Reporting**

At her most recent certification in September 2002, the head of the household reported that one of her daughters moved out of her home. Unfortunately, the AU manager left the daughter in the FS AU. Several months later, the daughter returned to the household, with earnings.

AUs were recently converted from Quarterly Reporting to Universal Semiannual Reporting. Under the Semiannual Reporting process, if AU Managers complete the most recent certification correctly, recipients are not required to report certain changes – for example, changes in household composition. In this case, however, because the AU manager did not remove the daughter from the AU at the certification, the AU was not correct.

#### What Can an AU Manager Do?

Universal Semiannual Reporting potentially is a great benefit to the recipient (who will not have to report all changes), to the AU Manager (who will not have to recertify as often), and for the error rate (which will have fewer errors from unreported changes). If the certification is not correctly completed, however, Universal Semiannual Reporting will be ineffective in reducing errors. Comprehensive interviewing and the accurate input of new information are essential if these AUs are to be correct.

### **Child Support Payments**

A parent in the FS AU has children from another relationship and the father is required to pay child support to these children. He did not report the support expense at the most recent certification, even though he makes regular payments. When the Quality Control reviewer asked him if he had such expenses, he reported them immediately.

#### What Can an AU Manager Do?

In any AU with children from a previous relationship, be sure to ask if anyone is paying child support. It is an allowable expense and provides

more food stamp benefits to the family. When following the BEACON application screen, the language is somewhat hidden, since it asks, “Does anyone in the household have support expenses?” without specifying child support. While we work on having the language improved, please make sure to note that this question includes child support payments made by members of an AU. (See *A Users Guide: Transitional Assistance Programs and BEACON*, Chapter XIV, page G-1 for examples of situations where the Support Expenses window should be completed.)

### **No New Section 8 Vouchers**

All  
Field Operations Memo  
2003-12

Effective immediately, the Regional Housing Authorities through DHCD will not issue any **new** Section 8 vouchers. HAP providers are aware of this change and are increasing their effort to locate affordable housing. At this time, this ruling does not impact anyone who has already secured housing with a Section 8 voucher or anyone who has a Section 8 voucher but has not leased an apartment. Advise all applicants and recipients about this freeze on the availability of vouchers.