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- A.** Yes. Always complete the overpayment section for all affected categories of assistance, even on fraud referrals. If you are unsure of the overpayment amount on a fraud referral, then remember to at least indicate the categories of assistance where you believe the recipient violated program rules and potentially was overpaid.
- Q.** Once I submit my fraud referral, where will it go?

**A.** All BEACON referrals (Fraud, Overpayment, Agency Error, and Aid Paid Pending) are received by the Fraud and Overpayment Referral Screening Unit. (FORS). This unit is referred to as “CEO” on the BEACON windows. It is a unit under Fraud Investigations and Recoveries. FORS may send a referral to the Fraud Investigation Unit (formerly known as the Administrative Disqualification Unit - ADU) or the Bureau of Special Investigation (BSI).

The majority of fraud referrals are sent to the Fraud Investigation Unit for an investigation and administrative disqualification hearing.

- Q.** Whom can I contact if I have a question about a fraud referral or an Intentional Program Violation (IPV)?
- A.** Call the Fraud and Overpayment Referral Screening Unit (FORS) at 617-348-5669 if you want to correct or complete a rejected referral.

## Quality Corner

This month we will review two NPA errors. One involves an able-bodied adult (ABAWD), and the other involves household composition in a mixed household.

### Unemployed Adult

A client applied for FS benefits on September 1, 2004 and reported that she was receiving Unemployment Compensation (UC) benefits. Receipt of the UC benefits made her exempt from the FS Work Requirements. Shortly after the FS AU was established, she received her last UC check dated September 19<sup>th</sup>. BEACON received Unearned Income match information in October which confirmed that the UC check of September 19 was the client’s last check and the remaining balance of UC benefits was zero.

At initial certification, the AU was put on Universal Semiannual Reporting (USR) with a certification period of August 8, through February 4, 2005. Since the client’s UC benefits stopped on September 19, 2004, she was then subject to the FS Work Requirements. The AU Manager did not delete the UC benefits until the client reported the change in December. Consequently, there was an under-issuance for October and November.

## What's an AU Manager to Do?

This client should not have been placed on USR since her UC benefits would have been exhausted approximately two weeks after the date of application. Subsequently, the client became an ABAWD and was subject to the FS Work Program as of October 2004.

When processing a new or ongoing AU that reports UC benefits or has UC match information, the AU Manager must follow through by asking the TAO designee to do an online inquiry on the Division of Unemployment Assistance's (DUA) system. Be diligent when reviewing UC information, pay attention to pay dates, the UC benefit amount and the balance left to be paid. This information is critical to accurate case processing.

To avoid an error, the AU Manager should have:

- Performed a *What If* calculation, counting the UC benefits from the date of application through the end of the September 2004 certification month;
- Established the AU beginning the certification month of October and allowed a three-month certification period; and
- Informed the client of her responsibility under the FS Work Program rules, since she would soon become an ABAWD.

## Household Composition in a Mixed Household

In the review month, the client was receiving NPA food stamps for herself, one child born in July 2004, and a niece (for whom she was receiving child support).

In June 2004, the client applied as a pregnant woman, and at the time of the review, she was receiving TAFDC and FS benefits for herself. After the child was born, the AU Manager requested verifications for the child so the baby could be added to the TAFDC and FS AUs. On September 16, 2004, the AU Manager submitted a closing because the client failed to provide the requested verifications. On September 24<sup>th</sup>, the closing was pulled, and the FS AU (which still included the niece and her child support) remained open. Quality Control found a letter in the AU record dated September 10, 2004, which indicated that the niece was no longer in the home and child support was no longer being received.

## What's an AU Manager to Do?

Before the AU Manager initiated the closing on the AU, the client had already verified that her niece was no longer in the home and the child support was no longer being received. The AU Manager had recorded the information in the Narratives Tab but failed to establish a transaction to remove the niece and the child support income. Consequently, when the closing was pulled, the AU was in error because the niece and the child support continued to be a part of the FS benefit calculation. If a separate transaction to remove the niece and her income had been initiated before the action to close the AU, the error could have been avoided.

“If you treat an individual as he is, he will stay as he is, but if you treat him as if he were what he...could be, he will become what he...could be.”

Johann Wolfgang von Goethe

