



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


JANE SWIFT  
Governor

WILLIAM D. O'LEARY  
Secretary

CLAIRE MCINTIRE  
Commissioner

**Field Operations Memo 2001-32 C**  
**August 6, 2001**

**To:** Transitional Assistance Office Staff

**From:**  Cescia Derderian, Acting Assistant Commissioner for Field Operations

**Re:** BEACON Release 2.0 Post-Conversion Procedures

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**Background**

Field Operations Memo 2001-32 A provided pre-conversion procedures and informed TAO Staff that during the conversion period, all PACES, FMCS, BEACON Release 1.0 and PRISM information would be converted.

Field Operations Memo 2001-32 B informed TAO Staff about procedures for processing applications, reapplications, issuing day 7 expedited or day 30 food stamp benefits and Immediate Needs benefits during the conversion period.

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**Purpose of Memo**

This Field Operations Memo informs TAO Staff about procedures to follow when BEACON Release 2.0 is in production. It also provides a prioritized list of initial activities pended during the conversion period. These activities must be completed by the AU Manager once BEACON Release 2.0 is in production.

While these activities are being completed, every effort must be made to conduct regular TAO business. At no time should client access to AU Managers be denied.

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**Overview of Initial Activities**

What follows is a list of initial activities to be completed during the post-conversion period:

**Activity 1 (Page 5 of this memo)**

Resolving the Conversion Benefit Discrepancies Views.

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**Overview of Initial  
Activities  
(continued)**

**Activity 2 (Page 7 of this memo)**

Entering negative transactions onto BEACON that had been entered on PACES, but did not release by close of business August 9.

**Activity 3 (Page 8 of this memo)**

Entering Monthly Reports returned in August and not entered on PACES (prioritized according to SSN ending number order: 0 through 9).

**Activity 4 (Page 9 of this memo)**

Approving/denying cash and food stamp AUs:

Approve/Deny AUs due Day 30, 45 or 75 for cash.

Approve/Deny AUs due Day 7 or 30 for FS.

Open FS after expedited or initial food stamp benefit period.

**Activity 5 (Page 10 of this memo)**

Reinstating eligible AUs closed within the last 30 days.

**Activity 6 (Page 11 of this memo)**

Removing Sanctions/Extending Good Cause:

Adding a person or reopening an AU for "cured" sanctions/proof of good cause brought in during conversion.

**Activity 7 (Page 12 of this memo)**

Entering new applications/ reapplications taken during conversion:

Deduct Immediate Needs (SSPS) Cash

Payments from future benefits.

**Activity 8 (Page 13 of this memo)**

Entering ESP Referrals and Child Care Authorizations (requires face-to-face interviews to complete the ESP workflow).

**Activity 9 (Page 14 of this memo)**

Entering case maintenance.

**Activity 10 (Page 15 of this memo)**

Rescheduling appointments for EA applications that could not take place during conversion.

**Activity 11 (Page 15 of this memo)**

Disposition of Appeals.

**Activity 12 (Page 16 of this memo)**

Performing the Address Validation Process.

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**Supports for  
Post-Conversion  
Activities**

AU Managers must use the following supports once BEACON is in production:

- the *PACES Cases Pending Report* will be available on ViewDirect;
- the “Pre-conversion Tracking Form” (2001-32 A, Attachment A) should have been used to list actions that could not be entered onto PACES before conversion; and
- the “Conversion Tracking Form” (2001-32 B, Attachment A) should have been used by AU Managers to list activities that occurred, services that were requested and benefits that were issued during the conversion period.

These supports will be referenced for the appropriate activities in this memo.

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**ARTS Report  
Availability**

As stated in Field Operations Memo 2001-32 A, ARTS cannot be used for data entry by TAOs after August 9.

ARTS will be available for “**Inquiry Only**” mode beginning on August 14.

ARTS Reports for the month of August (Central Office Uploads) will be available and **must** be run beginning September 4, 2001.

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**TAO Staff  
Responsibilities**

During the post-conversion period, TAO Staff are responsible for all regular day-to-day activities and the following:

**TAO Directors:** Overseeing that all activities listed on the Attachments to Field Operations Memos 2001-32-A, 2001-32-B, the *PACES Cases Pending Report* and all activities in this memo are completed timely.

**Implementation Managers:**

Reviewing completed AU activities, receiving from AU Supervisors any problems reported on BEACON and calling these problems in to the Customer Service Center.

**AU Supervisors:** Ensuring timely authorization of approved benefits and remaining coaches for their units.

**AU Managers:** Activities listed in the remaining sections of this memo.

**Data Entry Staff:** Entering SSPS vouchers not entered during conversion to get control numbers (can only be completed once AUs established on BEACON) and other duties as identified by the TAO Director.

**Resource Coordinators:**

Entering residential facilities information in the resource file and determining that other resources have accurately converted from the Legacy systems.

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**Activity One:  
Resolving  
Conversion  
Benefit  
Discrepancies**

The first post-conversion activity is Resolving Conversion Benefit Discrepancies Views.

**Resolving the conversion benefit discrepancy will prevent the client being issued an incorrect benefit amount and the need for additional work being done by the AU Manager (e.g., issuing a supplemental payment for an underpayment, initiating recoupment for an overpayment).**

For all AUs listed on the Conversion Benefit Discrepancies View, the AU Manager must **resolve** the discrepancy using the steps below:

Open Eligibility Explorer and select:

- **the AU Inquiry Tab:** to review the Eligibility Group(s) created during the conversion process and to view specific client/AU membership information;
- **the Results Tab:** to view the last (PACES) benefit amount;
- **the Interview Tab:** to view the Interview Wrap-up window. The Interview Wrap-up Selection window will display a request with the status of Pending Authorization. (This request was created by the Conversion EBC process when the PACES Benefit Amount and BEACON Benefit Amount were discrepant.)

From the Interview Wrap-up window:

- select the Request with a Status of Pending Authorization;
- click on the EBC Results push button;
- select the AU in the Interview Wrap-up EBC Results window to view the BEACON benefit amount calculated by the Conversion EBC process; and
- click on the Financial Tab to view the details of the calculation.

Using the information from these screens, modify the data in BEACON so that the BEACON benefit amount is correct. Other tools to use to resolve the discrepancies on BEACON Release 2.0. are: detailed notes and screen prints completed during the pilot to determine the steps taken to resolve earlier benefit discrepancies and instructions in *A User's Guide*, issues of *BEACON Today* (specifically #33), Policy Online, Field Operations Memos 2000-28, 2001-7, 2001-7A and Training material.

**BEACON will continue to pay the old (PACES) benefit amount until the discrepancy is resolved or a *calculation affecting benefit eligibility is authorized, whichever occurs first.***

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**Activity One:**  
**Resolving**  
**Conversion**  
**Benefit**  
**Discrepancies:**  
*Special Notice*  
*Instructions*  
**(continued)**

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**AU Managers and TAO Supervisors SHOULD NOT authorize any EBC Results for discrepant AUs until the benefit discrepancy is resolved.** If an eligibility calculation is authorized prior to the conversion benefit discrepancy being resolved:

- BEACON will automatically check the Notice Suppress indicator on the Interview Wrap-up window and display a message that states: "Because this is the first EBC Result calculated on a converted AU with a conversion benefit discrepancy and the BEACON Benefit Amount is not equal to the PACES Benefit Amount, the Notice Suppress indicator has been checked. Please send a manual notice for this action."
- If this informational message appears, it is preferable to cancel out of the authorization, resolve the discrepant data and re-authorize the EBC Calculation. If this cannot be done while adhering to Department timeframes, the manual notice **MUST BE** issued, but may contain erroneous grant information.
- The AU Manager must complete the manual notice (Attachment A) to notify the client of the action. Give the original and one copy to the recipient. Keep a copy in the AU record.

**Note: If the conversion benefit discrepancy is not corrected before an EBC Result is authorized, BEACON will issue an *incorrect benefit amount*. The AU will no longer appear on the Conversion Benefit Discrepancies View. The AU Manager **MUST** correct the discrepancy and the erroneous information as soon as possible.**

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**Activity Two:  
Entering Negative  
Transactions**

The second post-conversion activity is entering negative transactions that had been entered on PACES, but did not release by close of business August 9.

AU Managers must:

- review the *PACES Cases Pending* report on View Direct and enter the negative transaction that did not release. This will create a request on the Interview Wrap-up window;
- enter negative transaction **by the dates listed on the AU Closing and Reduction Schedule of the AU Processing Third Quarter option of the Systems Procedures of Policy Online to affect:**
  - ♦ **the second cycle August cash benefit for SSNs ending in 0 through 8; and**
- suppress the BEACON-generated notice on the Interview Wrap-up EBC Results window by clicking on the Suppress Notice checkoff box, so the AU does not receive two notices. The 10-day pend period checkoff box must also be checked on the same window for the transaction to release timely.

**Note:** Clients received a PACES-generated notice informing them of the change in their benefits.

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**Activity Three:  
Entering Monthly  
Reporting AUs**

The third post-conversion activity is entering Monthly Reports returned for the August Report Month and not entered on PACES.

AU Managers must:

- for all AUs listed on the "Monthly Reporting Status" View, go to the Monthly Reporting window in the Program Administration workflow and enter the Monitor Types in the Monthly Report Return Status field;
  - then, use the following rules when processing the returned Monthly Report:
    - *if the client returned all the needed wages*, enter the client's **actual** income received and expenses, if applicable during the Budget Month (wages must be entered in accordance with "Case Processing" of the Systems Procedures of Policy Online); or
    - *if the client did not return all the needed wages or the Monthly Report is incomplete or inadequate*, a correction notice will be created as a result of entering the appropriate monthly reporting monitor types on the monthly reporting window. **Do not key in the previous budget month's income. That has already been converted and will be used in any subsequent calculation.**
  - enter non-income related changes reported on the Monthly Report on the appropriate windows;
  - go to the Interview Wrap-up Results window (once all reported changes and wages are entered) and click on the "Selection..." button;
  - from the Interview Wrap-up Selection window, select the Monthly Reporting checkoff box and the applicable income and expense sections checkoff boxes;
  - click on the "Close" button to return to the Interview Wrap-up Results window;
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**Activity Three:  
Entering Monthly  
Reporting AUs  
(continued)**

- click on the “EBC Results...” button, to access the Interview Wrap-up EBC Results;
- click on the “Calculate” button to recalculate eligibility;
- once calculated, click on “Close” to return to the Interview Wrap-up Results window; and
- click on the “Authorization” button to authorize the EBC Result. Depending on the authorization level of the AU Manager, this Authorization may appear on the Supervisor’s “Interview Wrap-up Pending Authorizations” View.

When the Interview Wrap-up Request receives the final authorization, the status of the request will change to “Pending Release.” When the request is released, the Monthly Report Tracking Status is set to “Worker Completed.”

For procedures to enter September and subsequent Monthly Reports, see *A User’s Guide*: Chapter XVI, Section F.

**Activity Four:  
Approving/  
Denying Cash  
and Food Stamp  
AUs**

The fourth post-conversion activity is approving/denying pending cash and food stamp AUs.

AU Managers must review:

- all pending cash and food stamp benefit AUs listed on the Pre-Conversion and Conversion Tracking forms; and
- the Pending Application View.

**Note: In addition to all pending applications, EA-only AUs will also be listed as pending applications.**

***All pending applications, including those that appear in the three special situations below, must be processed in accordance with Department procedures and timeframes.***

See *A User’s Guide*: Chapter IV for procedures to process an application.

**Note:** If Day 30 initial food stamp benefits were issued during conversion **OR** if expedited food stamp benefits were issued on PACES before conversion, the food stamp AU must be established on BEACON the day **after** the initial food stamp benefit period or the expedited food stamp period ends. This will prevent a double issuance of food stamp benefits.

**Example:** Mary Smith received initial food stamp benefits from August 10, 2001 to September 9, 2001. Her AU Manager must certify the food stamp AU beginning September 10, 2001.

**Activity Four:  
Approving/  
Denying Cash  
and Food Stamp  
AUs (continued)**

The following are three special situations with special processing instructions:

- *For applicants who reached day 30, 45 or 75 for cash and/or day 30 for food stamp benefits and returned outstanding verifications prior to and during conversion, the AU Manager must approve or deny the AU.*
- *For applicants who reached day 7 for expedited food stamp benefits during conversion but did not receive expedited food stamp benefits, the AU Manager must:*
  - ♦ make a determination on the expedited food stamp benefits;
  - ♦ issue expedited benefits, if eligible, by authorizing the benefits from the Interview Wrap-up window; and
  - ♦ continue processing the AU according to established 30-day timeframes.
- *For applicants who reached day 30, 45 or 75 for cash and/or day 30 for food stamp benefits but have not returned outstanding verifications, the AU Manager must:*
  - ♦ for cash AUs that reached day 30 during conversion and have **requested** an extension on the **paper** INT-1 and if otherwise eligible, generate an INT-2 with the correct “Day 45” date from BEACON;
  - ♦ for cash AUs that reached day 45 or 75 during conversion and/or food stamp AUs that reached day 30 during conversion, deny the application.

See *A User’s Guide*: Chapter III, Section D for procedures to request verifications and Chapter IX for procedures to deny AUs.

**Activity Five:  
Reinstating  
Closed AUs**

The fifth post-conversion activity is reinstating eligible AUs closed within the last 30 days.

The AU Manager must prioritize reinstatements according to the AU’s closing date using the “Conversion Tracking Form.” AUs closed the longest should be reinstated first:

- *For TAFDC and EAEDC AUs closed within the past 30 days for failure to provide verifications, reinstate AUs back to the closing date.*
- *For TAFDC and EAEDC AUs closed within the past 30 days for any other reason and **all** FS AUs closed within the past 30 days, reinstate AUs as of the date the client came into the TAO, if eligible.*

For procedures to reinstate AUs closed within 30 days, see *A User’s Guide*: Chapter XVI, Section G.

**Activity Six:  
Removing  
Sanctions/  
Extending Good  
Cause**

The sixth post-conversion activity is checking and taking appropriate action on the following views:

- Clients with Sanctions; and
- Clients with Expiring Good Cause Reasons.

Clients who brought in proof to “cure” sanctions during conversion must either be reinstated or have their AU reopened/reinstated.

**Note:** Reinstatement is only for AUs closed within the last 30 days. An RFA using the closed AU is required for AUs closed more than 30 days.

***To reinstate the sanctioned individual (closed fewer than 30 days):***

- go to the AU Mandatory/Responsible window and change the Applying radio button to “Yes.” The window will set the Responsibility to Ineligible/Add a Person;
- go to the AU Composition Results Sanctions tab and remove the existing sanction; and
- The following sections will be set to Requires Reedit:
  - Q&A Navigator Nonfinancial.
  - Q&A Navigator Income and Expenses.
  - Q&A Navigator Assets.
  - Interview Wrap-up.

When the Responsibility is “Ineligible/Add a Person,” Interview Wrap-up displays the “Add a Person to an Active AU” selection. EBC will treat the Responsibility of Ineligible/Add a Person as a Recipient who is Pending. These windows must be completed and all required verification must be provided before the client can be reinstated.

***To reinstate the sanctioned AU (closed fewer than 30 days):***

- go to the Reinstatement window of the Program Administration workflow;
- highlight and select each AU member requesting reinstatement; and
- click on Finish.

This will mark the remainder of the appropriate windows as requires reedit (a pointing finger). These windows must be completed and all required verification must be provided before the AU can be reinstated.

For detailed procedures to complete these workflows, see *A User’s Guide: Chapter VIII, Section F; Chapter IX; Chapter X; Chapter XVI, Section G and Chapter XVII.*

**Activity Six:  
Removing  
Sanctions/  
Extending Good  
Cause  
(continued)**

Clients who brought in proof of good cause during the conversion period must have their good cause period extended.

AU Managers must go to the Clients with Expiring Good Cause Reasons View (listed under Assessed Person Potential Changes). Clients will be listed alphabetically by grantee name, SSN, expiration date and good cause reason.

Clients with a good cause expiration date of August 14, 2001 should have their work processed first. Clients with a good cause expiration date of August 15, 2001 should have their work processed next, and so on.

For detailed procedures to enter an extension of good cause on the appropriate window, see *A User's Guide*: Chapter IX; Chapter XI, Section B; Chapter XII, Section A; and Chapter XIII, Section G.

**Activity Seven:  
Entering New  
Applications/  
Reapplications**

The seventh post-conversion activity is entering new applications/reapplications taken during conversion using the RFA-1 and/or TABA-1.

AU Managers should:

- use the "Conversion Tracking Form" to enter all pending applications taken during conversion. This must be prioritized according to the application date (the earliest application dates would be entered first). For procedures to complete an application, see *A User's Guide*: Chapter IV; and

**Note: When data-entering an application, the date of receipt on the Application window must be changed to the application date.**

- use the "Conversion Tracking Form" to enter all other benefits issued during conversion.

**Reminder:** Review the "Conversion Tracking Form" to determine if an FS AU qualified for expedited food stamp benefits. If a person qualified for expedited food stamp benefits, an appointment to complete the application should have been scheduled within seven days of the initial contact to meet expedited processing timeframes.

***If Immediate Needs Cash Payments were made using an SSPS voucher, this must be entered for deduction from future benefits.*** For procedures to deduct Immediate Needs, see Chapter XVI, Section H.

**Activity Eight:  
Entering ESP  
Referrals and  
Child Care  
Authorizations**

The eighth post-conversion activity is entering ESP referrals and child care authorizations. This activity requires face-to-face interviews.

AUs must be established before a face-to-face interview is conducted. If the AU has not been established, see “Activity Four” and “Activity Eight” sections of this Field Operations Memo for procedures to establish AUs.

For a list of AUs requiring ESP referrals and child care authorizations use the “Conversion Tracking Form” and check the following Views:

- EDPs Requiring an Interview within 45 Days;
- ESP AUs Requiring an Appointment;
- Youngest Child Turns 6;
- ESP Child Care AUs with Service Authorization Ending within 45 Days;
- Active EDPs with no Active Activity;
- EDPs Requiring Client Signature;
- Pending EDPs; and
- Pending ESP Referrals.

Since most of these are time-sensitive activities, priority **must** be given to scheduling interviews for the client:

- whose child care authorization is expiring;
- who is subject to the Work Program and must be referred to a component; and
- who has been approved for an extension and needs to be referred to an appropriate extension activity.

To process ESP referrals and child care authorizations, see *A User's Guide*: Chapter XII.

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**Activity Nine:  
Entering Case  
Maintenance**

The ninth post-conversion activity is entering case maintenance.

AU Managers must use:

- the "Pre-Conversion Tracking Form" to identify activities not subject to the 10-day pending period which could not be entered before conversion; and
- the "Conversion Tracking Form" to identify case maintenance activities reported during conversion.

These case maintenance activities must be prioritized and data-entered as follows:

- Address changes, adding dependents and crib and layette payments must be entered first.
- Enter any ESP Participation Reports received after August 9.

**Note:** ESP AUs will not be harmed for failing to return a participation report during the conversion month.

- All other case maintenance must be entered according to SSN ending numeric order 0-9 to affect the first benefit cycle after the month of conversion.

This will ensure timely issuance of accurate benefits.

As stated in Field Operations Memo 2001-32 A, no **cash** reevaluations should take place until October.

Additionally, clients who used 22 months of time-limited benefits **must** continue to be scheduled for an Exit Conference. Monthly reviews of extension AUs, NPA FS reevaluations and Monthly Income Expense Reports must continue to occur.

**Important:** Day-to-day services such as ongoing case maintenance, applications and reopenings must continue to be provided within established Department timeframes.

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**Activity Ten:  
Rescheduling EA  
Appointments**

The tenth post-conversion activity is rescheduling appointments for EA applications that could not be processed during conversion.

AU Managers must:

- schedule appointments to complete the EA application, giving the applicant 10 days to keep the appointment;
- enter the application on the Request for Assistance workflow, remembering to change the Date of Receipt to the **application date**; and
- conduct an Eligibility Explorer interview with the applicant.

While the EA interview must be conducted on BEACON, any benefits the client is eligible for must be issued through SSPS invoices.

See *A User's Guide: Chapter IV* and the *EA User's Guide: Emergency Assistance and SSI Special Benefits and BEACON* for procedures to process an EA Application.

**Activity Eleven:  
Disposition of  
Appeals**

The eleventh post-conversion activity is the disposition of appeals.

**Pending appeals did not convert to BEACON.**

Division of Hearings tracked these AUs.

AU Managers can keep their *PACES Cases Pending Report* to track all pending appeals.

Once an appeal decision is reached, Division of Hearings will notify the AU Manager of the decision by a special pre-conversion cc:mail message. The AU Manager must take the following action:

- if the client wins the appeal, the AU Manager would not need to take any action (there is no pending transaction to remove); or  
**Note:** If the AU was denied at application, appeals the decision and wins the appeal, the AU must be established. See Activity Four of this memo for procedures to establish an AU.
- if the client loses the appeal, the AU Manager must enter the change into BEACON, waive any pending period and suppress the Appeals language by checking off the appropriate boxes on the Interview Wrap-up EBC Results window (there is no pending transaction to release). Division of Hearings will send a notice of the appeal decision.

If you have any questions regarding pending appeals, call the Division of Hearings at 617-241-2500.

**Activity Twelve:  
Address  
Validation**

The twelfth post-conversion activity is the address validation process.

Addresses DO NOT have to be validated before performing other activities not impacting the Address window. However, once the Address window has been opened, the Address Validation/Match process MUST BE completed (unless canceling out of the window).

Before starting the Address Validation and Address Match process, the AU Manager must look at the following windows to *confirm* the information on the windows and *ensure* the information is accurate:

- Address;
- Household;
- Household Expenses;
- Standard Utility Allowance; and
- Utility Expenses.

**This is necessary because when performing the Address Validation/ Address Match process, not all information is prepopulated on the windows. It is important to know this information so the correct information can be reentered onto the appropriate windows.**

**As mentioned in *BEACON Today*, Issue 28, if it is determined by the AU Manager that a second eligibility group in the same household will have no programmatic impact on the first eligibility group, the AU Manager may choose to select New instead of Match on the Address Match window. This will not merge the AUs within the two eligibility groups into a single household. Household Merge is mandatory when household members are part of the same Food Stamp AU.**

Detailed procedures for this process can be found in *A User's Guide*, Chapter XIX, Section A.

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**Attachment A**

A supply of Attachment A will **not** be sent from Schrafft's. Copies must be made at each TAO.

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**Questions**

If you have any systems-related questions, please have your Implementation Manager contact the Customer Service Center at 617-348-5290.

Policy-related questions should be referred by your Hotline designee to the Policy Hotline at 617-348-8478.

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**BEACON Increase/Decrease Notice**  
*Massachusetts Department of Transitional Assistance*

Date \_\_\_\_\_

TAO \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_ SSN \_\_\_\_\_

Address, City & ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

This notice is to inform you that:

your cash grant is going to \$ \_\_\_\_\_ on \_\_\_ / \_\_\_ / \_\_\_ because \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**If you receive food stamp benefits:**

your food stamp benefits are going to \$ \_\_\_\_\_ on \_\_\_ / \_\_\_ / \_\_\_ because \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

The regulations used in reaching these decisions are 106 CMR \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

If you disagree with this decision, you have the right to a fair hearing. The reverse side of this notice contains important information about your hearing rights. To request a hearing, complete the reverse side of one copy of this notice.

\_\_\_\_\_  
AU Manager Signature

(\_\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_  
Area Code - Telephone

\_\_\_\_\_  
AU Supervisor Signature

(\_\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_  
Area Code - Telephone



**Notice of Request for a Fair Hearing**  
*Massachusetts Department of Transitional Assistance*  
 Division of Hearings  
 P.O. Box 167, Boston, Massachusetts 02112

**YOUR RIGHT TO APPEAL:** If you disagree with any action or inaction taken by the Department of Transitional Assistance (DTA), you have the right to appeal and receive a fair hearing before an independent referee. DTA must receive your request for a fair hearing no later than 90 days from the date on this notice. Exceptions to the 90-day time limit are: (1) you have 10 days to request a hearing on Emergency Assistance (EA) shelter benefits, (2) you have 30 days from the date of mailing of the notice by the Department of Revenue to request a hearing regarding the intercept of your state tax refund, (3) you may appeal the amount of your food stamp (FS) benefits at any time during your FS certification period, if you think you are not receiving the correct amount, (4) you have up to 120 days if DTA fails to act on your request for services, and (5) you have up to 120 days to appeal alleged coercive action or otherwise improper conduct or up to one year under certain specified circumstances.

**HOW TO APPEAL:** If you wish to request a fair hearing, send this page with the bottom section completed to:  
**DTA, Division of Hearings (DOH), P.O. Box 167, Boston, Massachusetts 02112 or fax to (617) 241-2535.** Please keep the copy for your own records.

**IF YOU ARE CURRENTLY RECEIVING ASSISTANCE, READ THIS BLOCK:** Your benefits will be continued until a decision is made on your appeal if DOH receives your appeal request within 10 days from the date on this notice. If you are appealing a FS issue, and your FS certification period ends before your appeal is decided, you will continue to receive the same FS benefits only until the end of your certification period. If you receive assistance during your appeal, but lose your appeal, DTA can recover from you the assistance to which you were not entitled. If you receive TAFDC time-limited benefits during an appeal, which you then lose, the months for which you have received assistance will subtract from your time-limited benefits. If you do not wish to continue to receive assistance during your appeal, check Box A below. If you do not receive benefits during your appeal, and you win your appeal, DTA will promptly correct any underpayment.

**WHEN THE HEARING WILL BE HELD:** You will be given at least 10 days' notice prior to the fair hearing of the date, time and place of the hearing to permit you time to prepare your case. Fair hearings on EA shelter benefits are expedited; you will be given at least two days' notice prior to the fair hearing of its date, time and place. If you wish to have a fair hearing scheduled sooner, check Box B below. If you have good cause for not being able to attend the fair hearing, please contact DOH at (617) 241-2500 or 1-800-882-2017 (TTY (617) 242-8654 or 1-800-532-6238, for the hearing impaired), before the hearing date, so that your hearing can be rescheduled. Failure to appear at the fair hearing without good cause may result in the dismissal of your appeal, except for the first scheduled hearing involving any aspect of the FS Program where good cause for rescheduling need not be demonstrated.

**YOUR RIGHT TO BE ASSISTED AT THE HEARING:** If you cannot speak English or understand it well or if you are hearing impaired and wish to have DOH provide an interpreter, please write that on this appeal request or call DOH at (617) 241-2500 or 1-800-882-2017, at least a week before the hearing. At the hearing, you may be accompanied by an interpreter, attorney, or other representative at your expense. You may wish to contact a local legal services office or community agency for assistance. Information about local legal services offices and other services provided by community agencies in your area can be obtained by contacting your local office. These agencies may provide advice or representation at no cost.

You or your representative may subpoena witnesses, present evidence and cross-examine witnesses. The referee must make a decision on all evidence presented at the fair hearing. You or your representative will be permitted to see your case file before the hearing. If you want to review your case file, schedule an appointment with your worker before the hearing.

**NONDISCRIMINATION NOTICE FOR CLIENTS:** Under federal and state law the Massachusetts DTA does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, sex, sexual orientation, national origin, religion, creed, age or disability. If you have any questions or concerns, we encourage you to contact the Director of Equal Opportunity, DTA, 600 Washington Street, Room 4039, Boston MA 02111, Tel. (617) 348-8490, (TTY (617) 348-5599 for the hearing impaired).

I, \_\_\_\_\_, hereby request a fair hearing before a referee of DOH.

- A. I do not wish to continue receiving the disputed amount of assistance during the appeal process.
- B. I request an expedited hearing.

The reason I wish to request a fair hearing is \_\_\_\_\_

Your Name (Print) \_\_\_\_\_ SSN \_\_\_\_\_  
 Address \_\_\_\_\_ Telephone ( ) \_\_\_\_\_  
 City/ZIP \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_  
 Your Signature \_\_\_\_\_  
 My authorized representative is: Name \_\_\_\_\_ Title \_\_\_\_\_  
 Address \_\_\_\_\_ City/ZIP \_\_\_\_\_  
 Telephone ( ) \_\_\_\_\_