



Transitions

June 2017

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Quality Corner

This month we will review an active error that occurred in a Non-Public Assistance (NPA) SNAP case.

Inadequate review of Student Eligibility

On June 13, 2016, a household of one returned a SNAP Recertification. The client was enrolled more than half-time at the University of Massachusetts, Boston. The client had previously verified her student status by submitting the Educational Income and Expense Form (EDUC-I) on March 1, 2016. The client previously met the student eligibility requirements due to working at least 20 hours per week. The client was still employed part-time at CVS, paid \$316 monthly in rent, and was eligible for the full SUA due to receipt of the H-EAT benefit. The case manager verified the earned income through the Work Number using the most recent bi-weekly wages which totaled \$881.79, and hours which totaled 66.61 hours for the month. The case was processed and the client was approved for \$184 in SNAP benefits.

During the Quality Control (QC) review, it was determined that the client was working an average of 16.65 hours weekly. The client was no longer meeting the student eligibility requirements. This resulted in a SNAP overpayment of \$184 as the grantee was ineligible for SNAP benefits.

What's a Case manager to Do?

Students enrolled at least half-time must meet student eligibility requirements to be eligible for SNAP benefits. One way to meet student eligibility requirement is to work a monthly average of 20 hours per week. In this case, the client did not work at least 20 hours per week and did not meet any other student eligibility requirement.

When earned income is verified by the Work Number, the employment information, including the hours and income, populate in BEACON upon selection of the external data. When the case manager selected the most recent bi-weekly wages and calculated the monthly income and hours, she should have reviewed the monthly hours to ensure the client was still meeting the student eligibility requirements through her work hours.

Online Guide Transmittals

Cross Programs: The Abandoned Appeal Process

Online Guide Transmittal 2017-54

When an appeal is abandoned, the Department must take action on what the client was appealing. To expand and elaborate on the Department's hearings and appeals process, BEACON procedures have been added to a new Cross Program page in the Online Guide associated with the Abandoned Appeals

This Online Guide Transmittal and new Online Guide pages advise DTA staff of the current policies and procedures regarding abandoned appeals.

TAFDC : Pre-Benefit Job Search (PBJs) and Pathways to Self-Sufficiency (PSS) BEACON Modifications

Online Guide Transmittal 2017-55

One of the Department's goals is to assist all clients in moving toward economic self-sufficiency to achieve an improved quality of life. Pathways to Self-Sufficiency (PSS) is the vehicle for reaching that goal. The following modifications have occurred to enhance the PBJs screening and the PSS assessment process.

- An additional appointment type of PSS Telephone Appointment is now be available, giving cash case managers the opportunity to conduct PSS Appointments over the phone;
- Cash supervisors can now indicate if a client attended or missed the TAFDC Orientation within the PBJs results tab. This will allow a case to be established even if the FEW is not in the TAO;
- So that cases can be processed timely, hard edits have been created to allow case managers to submit TAFDC reevaluations for clients if a PSS-EDP referral has been made, but has not yet been accepted;
- The Yes/No radio buttons on the Results tab of the PBJs Results page have been changed to check boxes; and
- Clients enrolled in an Education/ Training Activity or a Substance Abuse Program will now appropriately be coded as exempt from both the Work Ready Pre-Benefit Job Search and Initial Job Search requirement.

This Online Guide transmittal and updated Online Guide pages advise DTA staff about BEACON enhancements made to the PBJs and PSS pages.

Online Guide Transmittals

TAFDC :Work Requirement Change when Client is Being Processed at DES

Online Guide Transmittal 2017-56

Clients requesting a first-time exemption from certain TAFDC rules (work program, time-limited benefits) due to a disability, are presumed disabled during the 60-month period until or unless DES determines that the client is not disabled. A modification has been made to maintain the disability exemption for clients who provide proof of disability documents timely even if DES is still completing its review while the disability period expires.

This Online Guide Transmittal advises DTA staff of changes made to the TAFDC- First Time Claim of Disability Online Guide page and provides guidance on determining the disability exemption for these clients under DES review.

Cross Programs: Temporary Protected Status (TPS) Extension for Haiti

Online Guide Transmittal 2017-57

Temporary Protected Status (TPS) is an immigration designation granted by the Secretary of the Department of Homeland Security (DHS). TPS may be granted due to conditions in a country that temporarily prevent the country's nationals from returning safely, or in certain circumstances, where the country is unable to adequately handle the return of its nationals. Haiti currently has TPS due to the January 12, 2010 earthquake in that country.

On May 22, 2017, DHS extended the Temporary Protected Status (TPS) immigration designation for Haiti through January 22, 2018.

This Online Guide Transmittal:

- advises staff about the extension of TPS for Haiti;
- reminds staff about eligibility for foreign national with TPS; and
- reminds staff of resource materials available for all noncitizens.

Online Guide Transmittals

TAFDC: Learnfare – Scanned Document Types

Online Guide Transmittal 2017-58

Currently, documentation sent to DTA for the TAFDC Learnfare school enrollment and attendance tracking process is identified by the Document Processing Center (DPC) simply as Learnfare on the various scanned document drop-list selection menus in BEACON. With BEACON changes that were implemented on 06/19/2017, there are now 7 new specific Learnfare scanned document types.

This Online Guide Transmittal advises staff about:

- the 7 new Learnfare scanned document types available for selection in the drop-list menus of BEACON pages, such as the EDM Document Search page, Scanned Document Details page, the Document Coversheet page and other applicable pages; and
- a new page in the Learnfare chapter of the Online Guide entitled, Learnfare – Scanned Document Types. This new page identifies the new Learnfare scanned document types available for selection and the corresponding Learnfare form or notice.

Cross Programs: Fast Track Assistance Pilot

Online Guide Transmittal 2017-59

To improve customer service, and support staff in serving our clients, DTA has implemented the Fast Track Assistance Pilot in the Springfield TAO to service clients who are seen in-person. The Fast Track Assistance Pilot is a queuing system intended to:

- alleviate wait times;
- increase efficiency; and
- reinforce our relationship with clients.

FYIs

Participation and Attendance Form Data Entry - Yearly Update

The ESP Participation and Attendance Record (ESP-7 A) and the Participation and Attendance Record for Employment Ready Activities (ESP-7 B) forms, as well as other participation forms, are sent out to clients on the Monday before the last Saturday of the month, unless the Monday is a holiday; then it is sent Tuesday.

Case managers may enter the participation month’s returned ESP-7s on the Monitor Participation page up until the Friday before the last Saturday of the current month. However, these forms should be entered as soon as they are received by the case manager. The following dates are the last day of the month that ESP-7s may be entered on the Monitor Participation page for the month’s participation:

July 28, 2017 for June hours	January 26, 2018 for December hours
August 25, 2017 for July hours	February 23, 2018 for January hours
September 29, 2017 for August hours	March 30, 2018 for February hours
October 27, 2017 for September hours	April 27, 2018 for March hours
November 24, 2017 for October hours	May 25, 2018 for April hours
December 29, 2017 for November hours	June 29, 2018 for May hours

Important: Participation forms not entered by the appropriate Friday entry date above can be entered retroactively up to 6 months prior to the current participation month.

TAO Meeting Notes