



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

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Governor
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Field Operations Memo 95-33
November 1, 1995

Gerald Whitburn
Secretary
Joseph Gallant
Commissioner

TO: Local Office Staff
FROM: Joyce Sampson, Assistant Commissioner for Field Operations
RE: AFDC Control Group and TAFDC Application Process

Overview

Transitional Aid to Families with Dependent Children (TAFDC) is the new Welfare Reform program being implemented. When the federal government approved our waivers for welfare reform, they required certain conditions to test the validity of the assumptions and to measure the outcomes of the new program.

One of these conditions requires the Department to maintain an AFDC Control Group and a TAFDC Non-Control Group. The TAFDC Non-Control Group is comprised of the TAFDC Treatment Group and the TAFDC Experimental Group. (See Attachments A-1 and A-2 for definitions and a graph of these groups.)

The TAFDC Experimental Group will be compared to the AFDC Control Group in evaluating the welfare reform initiatives.

To measure the outcomes of the new program and to evaluate the welfare reform initiatives, all TAFDC and AFDC cases must be tracked; therefore, all TAFDC and AFDC cases must be established on the system immediately as active cases using Action Reason "03."

Prior to November 1, 1995, the system will identify and code current recipients into the appropriate groups. Local office staff will identify and code all cases being established on the system after November 1, 1995. (See Field Operations Memo 95-34 for instructions for applicants applying prior to November 1, 1995.)

Recipient Retains Designation

Once an individual has been correctly designated part of an AFDC Control Group, TAFDC Treatment Group, or TAFDC Experimental Group, whether as a grantee or as a dependent, he or she must continue with the same designation for as long as he or she is receiving assistance. This includes both new and reopened cases. It also includes cases established with a case identification number which subsequently obtain an SSN. This designation cannot be changed by either the worker or the recipient.

Example: The last two digits of Mrs. A's SSN are 22. Mrs. A and her two dependent children are therefore designated a TAFDC Treatment case. Mrs. A then gets a job in which she earns enough money to make her self-sufficient and her case is closed. A year later, Mrs. A's 18-year-old daughter applies for assistance. Although the last two digits of the daughter's SSN are 10, she is still designated a TAFDC Treatment case.

Local Office System for Identifying Appropriate Group

Local offices must establish a system to ascertain the group to which an applicant belongs and therefore which program criteria to use in determining eligibility. The chart (Attachment B) explains which applicants must meet the AFDC eligibility criteria and which applicants must meet the TAFDC eligibility criteria.

Systems Inquiry to Determine Previous Designation, if Any

To determine if an applicant, applying either as an eligible or ineligible grantee, has ever been designated (either as a grantee or a dependent) as a member of an AFDC Control Group, TAFDC Treatment Group, or TAFDC Experimental Group in their own case or in another case, access MMIS or FMCS (R select).

- Access either MMIS or FMCS (R select) using the applicant's SSN or case identification number.
- Determine if the applicant was previously ever a grantee or a dependent in any case.

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**Systems Inquiry
to Determine
Previous
Designation, If
Any (cont.)**

- If no, follow the instructions in "Determining the Group to Which an Applicant Belongs, If No Previous Designation." If yes, follow the instructions below.

Enter the previous case SSN or case identification number on PACES and check the program code field on the RECD screen.

- If the program code is "3", the applicant was previously assigned to the AFDC Control Group.
- If the program code is other than "3" **AND** there is an "X" in the field next to the program code field, the applicant was previously assigned to the TAFDC Experimental Group.
- If the program code is other than "3" and there is **no** "X" in the field next to the program code field, the applicant was previously assigned to the TAFDC Treatment Group.

Note: Once a grantee or dependent has been designated as a member of the AFDC Control Group, TAFDC Experimental Group or TAFDC Treatment Group, this designation cannot be changed. The new case, if otherwise eligible, must be opened using the same previously designated group.

**Determining the
Group to Which
an Applicant
Belongs If No
Previous
Designation**

If the applicant was never part of a designated assistance unit, use the following criteria to determine the group to which an applicant must be assigned.

- In an assistance unit with a single parent or grantee, the last two digits of the single parent's or grantee's SSN or case identification number determines which program criteria to use in determining the assistance unit's eligibility.
- In an assistance unit with two parents, the last two digits of the **younger** parent's SSN or case identification number determines which program criteria to use in determining the assistance unit's eligibility.

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Determining the Group to Which an Applicant Belongs If No Previous Designation (cont.)

- If a grantee (or the younger parent in a two-parent assistance unit) does not have an SSN, a case identification number must be assigned immediately. This is needed to determine whether the assistance unit will be in the AFDC Control Group, TAFDC Treatment Group, or TAFDC Experimental Group. The subsequent receipt of an SSN does NOT change the group designation.

Note: Local offices must designate case identification numbers (formerly known as facsimile numbers) in sequence and maintain an issuance log.

Establishing Group Designations

Establish **all** applicants immediately as active cases using Action Reason "03." This is vital to the tracking process and for obtaining essential data to be used in determining the effectiveness of the welfare reform program.

In addition to entering Action Reason "03", a Program Code is necessary to identify which program criteria are being used to determine eligibility.

- For the **AFDC Control Group**: Enter Program Code "3" in Block 44 (Pgm Cd) of the PID.
- For the **TAFDC Experimental Group**:
 - 1) Enter the appropriate Program Code in Block 44 (Pgm Cd) of the PID. **Do not use Program Code "3"**; and
 - 2) Enter an "X" in Block 16 (Multi Addr) of the PID. If an entry other than "A" is needed in the "Multi Addr" field, you must wait one day before changing the "A" code.

Note: Once an "X" is entered in the "Multi Addr" block, it will default to an "A" and the "X" will appear only on the PACES RECD screen located next to the "Pgm Cd" field.

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**Establishing
Group
Designations
(cont.)**

- For the **TAFDC Treatment Group**:
 - 1) Enter the appropriate Program Code in block 44 (Pgm Cd) of the PID. **Do not use Program Code "3"**; and
 - 2) Do **NOT** enter an "X" in Block 16 (Multi Addr) of the PID.

Note: Remember to replace the "03" Action Reason with an appropriate Action Reason when the case is approved.

**Medicaid for
Certain TAFDC
Applicants Who
Are Denied**

Another condition of the welfare reform waiver approval requires us to provide Medicaid to a TAFDC applicant who is denied, but who would have been eligible for AFDC if the AFDC criteria had been used to determine eligibility. This is based on the premise that if the applicant had been eligible for AFDC, he or she would have been eligible for and received Medicaid.

When denying a TAFDC applicant for a categorical reason, you must first review the case to determine if the applicant would have met the AFDC criteria.

If the applicant would have met the AFDC criteria, deny the case by completing a manual notice of denial and completing a PID with:

- an "E" transaction and NO entry in block 31, and
- using Action Reason 70 in block 33.

This will result in a system-generated MAOA notice and the case being MAOA'd.

If the applicant would NOT have met the AFDC criteria, deny the case by completing a manual notice of denial and completing a PID with:

- an "E" transaction and a "4" in block 31, and
- using Action Reason 70 in block 33.

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**Medicaid for
Certain TAFDC
Applicants Who
Are Denied
(cont.)**

This will NOT result in a system-generated denial notice and the case will NOT be MAOA'd.

Note: Cases denied for financial reasons will MAOA when appropriate.

**Food Stamps for
Certain
Applicants Who
Are Denied**

Any case that is denied TAFDC or AFDC cash benefits must be reviewed for NPA Food Stamp eligibility. If eligible for food stamps, the date of eligibility is the date of the original TAFDC or AFDC application if the applicant had been eligible for TAFDC, AFDC or NPA food stamps on that date.

Questions

If you have any questions, please have your Hotline designee call the Policy Hotline at (617) 348-8478.

DEFINITIONS

AFDC CONTROL GROUP

A group of cases selected to evaluate program changes under welfare reform. They are chosen on the basis of their social security number or case identification number. Cases selected for the AFDC Control Group will continue to be subject to the eligibility rules of the AFDC program. The outcomes of cases in the AFDC Control Group will be compared to the outcomes of cases in the TAFDC Experimental Group to measure the impact of the TAFDC program. Once appropriately assigned to the AFDC Control Group, recipients must remain in that group, even if a case closes and subsequently reopens, or if a dependent becomes a grantee.

TAFDC EXPERIMENTAL GROUP

A group of cases selected to evaluate program changes under welfare reform. They are chosen on the basis of their social security number or case identification number. Cases selected for the TAFDC Experimental Group will be subject to the eligibility rules of the TAFDC program. The outcomes of cases in the TAFDC Experimental Group will be compared to the outcomes in the AFDC Control Group to measure the impact of the TAFDC program. Once appropriately assigned to the TAFDC Experimental Group, recipients must remain in that group, even if a case closes and subsequently reopens, or if a dependent becomes a grantee.

TAFDC TREATMENT GROUP

All TAFDC cases other than those in the TAFDC Experimental Group. Cases in the TAFDC Treatment Group will be subject to the eligibility rules of the TAFDC program. Once appropriately assigned to the TAFDC Treatment Group, recipients must remain in that group, even if a case closes and subsequently reopens, or if a dependent becomes a grantee. These cases will not be tracked or measured to evaluate program changes under welfare reform.

TAFDC / AFDC Groups

**TAFDC
Rules**

Experimental Group

Treatment Group

**AFDC
Rules**

AFDC Control Group

**DESIGNATING AFDC CONTROL AND
TAFDC EXPERIMENTAL AND TREATMENT GROUPS
FOR APPLICANTS WITH NO PREVIOUS DESIGNATION**

IF the last two digits of the *SSN or case identification number are:	THEN the program criteria to use in determining eligibility are:	AND, if eligible, the assistance unit is designated as:
10 or 20	AFDC rules	AFDC Control Group
80 or 90	TAFDC rules	TAFDC Experimental Group
All Others	TAFDC rules	TAFDC Treatment Group

* In an assistance unit with a single parent or grantee, the last two digits of the single parent's or grantee's SSN or case identification number determines which program criteria to use in determining the assistance unit's eligibility.

In an assistance unit with two parents, the last two digits of the **younger** parent's SSN or case identification number determines which program criteria to use in determining the assistance unit's eligibility.