



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

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Commissioner

**Field Operations Memo 99-8**  
**April 2, 1999**

**TO:** Transitional Assistance Office Staff  
**FROM:** Joyce Sampson, Assistant Commissioner for Field Operations  
**RE:** Delayed Acosta Payments Issued in April 1999

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**Background**

When the payment of the current monthly support obligation from the noncustodial parent(s) exceeds the monthly TAFDC benefit amount (including vendor payments and/or recoupment), the TAFDC recipient is entitled to the difference. This difference is called an **Acosta** payment. An **Acosta** payment is based on the support payments from the noncustodial parent(s) from two months ago.

The Department has not issued **Acosta** payments to TAFDC recipients for the months of December, January and February. Some recipients may not be due payment(s) all three months.

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**Acosta Payments**

The Department will issue the three delayed **Acosta** payments to TAFDC recipients during April. The following is the schedule when each **Acosta** payment will be available to the recipients through EBT or direct deposit:

4/9/99 - **Acosta** payment for December 1998  
4/16/99 - **Acosta** payment for January 1999; and  
4/23/99 - **Acosta** payment for February 1999.

The regular **Acosta** payment for March 1999 was issued on 3/29/99. The regular **Acosta** payment for April 1999 will be issued on 4/30/99.

**Acosta  
Payments  
(continued)**

Each payment is identified on the CHEK screen as a type 3 payment. Payments are being issued separately to identify the specific month they relate to.

As of April 1999, *Acosta* payments will be issued the last week of the month.

**TAFDC  
Recipients**

- TAFDC recipients who receive a delayed *Acosta* payment, may not be eligible for each of the three delayed *Acosta* payments.
- An *Acosta* payment is noncountable income in determining the recipient's eligibility for food stamp benefits.
- The following notice will be sent each time one of the three delayed *Acosta* payments is issued in April. If the recipient is eligible for all three delayed *Acosta* payments, he or she will receive three notices.

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Commonwealth of Massachusetts  
*Acosta* Payments

If the noncustodial parent pays all or part of your current support obligation to the Department of Revenue in the month that it is due and the payment is more than your TAFDC benefits, you are owed the difference. This is called an *Acosta* payment. During April, the Department will issue *Acosta* payments. This is when the *Acosta* payments will be issued:

- on 4/9/99 - *Acosta* payment for December 1998
- on 4/16/99 - *Acosta* payment for January 1999
- on 4/23/99 - *Acosta* payment for February 1999
- on 4/30/99 - *Acosta* payment for April 1999

The *Acosta* payment for March 1999 was issued on 3/29/99.

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**ViewDirect  
DOR/CSE  
Acosta File  
Report Screen**

The ViewDirect DOR/CSE Acosta File Report screen lists the amount of each *Acosta* payment and the date of each payment. The DOR/CSE Acosta File Report alerts Transitional Assistance Workers to the possibility of income in excess of the TAFDC Eligibility Standards and to use the support payment information in determining the prospective eligibility of the TAFDC recipient. The information on this screen is updated each time an *Acosta* payment is issued.

Each “Acosta Amount” will have a specific “Payment Date” listed next to it for identifying the month in which the payment was made. For example, if the TAFDC recipient is issued the December *Acosta* payment, the March *Acosta* payment and the April *Acosta* payment, his or her name will be listed three times on the screen.

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**Impact of  
Acosta  
Payments on  
TAFDC  
Eligibility**

By 4/30/99, the *Acosta* payments due TAFDC recipients from December to April will have been issued. The ViewDirect DOR/CSE Acosta File Report screen shows the updated information on the day after the payment is issued. Therefore, by 5/3/99, this screen will reflect the most recent *Acosta* information. When there are two consecutive *Acosta* payments regular procedures require the Transitional Assistance Worker to enter the monthly support payments on a PACES worksheet. However, because three of the payments in April are retro *Acosta* payments, only the *Acosta* payments for March (3/29/99) and April (4/30/99) will be considered as current consecutive *Acosta* payments.

The Transitional Assistance Worker must:

- use the ViewDirect DOR/CSE Acosta File Report screen to identify the *Acosta* payment(s) issued to the TAFDC recipient(s);
- identify the recipients who received both the 3/29/99 March and the 4/30/99 *Acosta* payments. **If the TAFDC recipients receives the 3/29/99 March *Acosta* payment and the 4/30/99 April *Acosta* payment, there are two current consecutive *Acosta* payments and a PACES worksheet must be completed.**
- determine if the TAFDC case is active (no action is needed if the case is closed);

**Impact of  
Acosta  
Payments on  
TAFDC  
Eligibility  
(continued)**

- if the TAFDC case is active, review the ViewDirect Child Support Data screen for the current monthly support obligation amount and convert the obligation amount to a monthly amount as necessary (weekly obligation X 4.333 weeks); and
- enter the current monthly support payment amount from the noncustodial parent(s), up to the monthly support obligation amount(s), on the PACES worksheet as follows:
  - if the TAFDC case is subject to monthly reporting and a PACES worksheet has not been submitted this month, enter the current monthly support payment in the Special Income Type block, as code C when the PACES worksheet is submitted with any other income;
  - if the TAFDC case is subject to monthly reporting and a PACES worksheet has been submitted for this month, complete another PACES worksheet entering Txn Type P (for prospective calculation) along with the current monthly support payment in the Special Income Type block, as code C. This amount, in conjunction with any other earned or unearned income, is used in determining the eligibility of the TAFDC assistance unit; or
  - if the TAFDC case is not subject to monthly reporting, complete a PACES worksheet entering the current monthly support payment in the Special Income Type block, as code C.

PACES calculates the financial eligibility and sends the appropriate notice.

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**Questions**

If you have any questions, please have your Hotline designee call the Policy Hotline at (617) 348-8478. For system-related questions, call the Customer Service Center at (617) 348-5290.

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