Field Operations Memo 99-23
August 23, 1999

To: Transitional Assistance Office Staff

From: Joyce Sampson, Assistant Commissioner for Field Operations

Re: Food Stamp Work Program BEACON Implementation

Background

USDA mandated a change in the hours for participation for individuals meeting their FS/Work Program requirements by working at a community service site or combining work at a job and a community service site. These individuals must work at a community service site for a specified number of hours per month determined by dividing the monthly food stamp allotment by the minimum wage, up to a maximum of 23 hours per month. This change will be transmitted in State Letter 1179.

On August 23, 1999, BEACON Release 1.2 will be implemented in Transitional Assistance Offices. This release includes the change to the FS/Community Service participation hours described above. Under this release BEACON will:

- refer FS/Work Program clients to FS/Community Service sites specified by the worker;
- determine Community Service hours for clients in an active FS/Community Service component activity and notify clients of their required community service hours each month;
- send monthly participation forms to track FS/Work Program clients in an active component activity;
- warn/sanction FS/Work Program clients;
- refer FS/ET clients to job search vendors;

   Note: BEACON does not monitor or sanction FS/ET clients at this time.

- track FS/ET clients in self-directed job search; and
- list all FS/Work Program-exempt clients and FS/ET-exempt clients and allow the worker to enter the client's specific exemption reason.

Purpose of this Memo	This Field Operations memo:

    ▸ describes the report developed to identify ongoing clients subject to FS/Work Program requirements;

    ▸ contains instructions on how to activate ongoing FS/Work Program clients in BEACON; and

    ▸ informs workers of the key dates for BEACON implementation.

    Note: Workers will receive Chapter One of the new *Food Stamp Benefits Procedural Guide* on or about September 1, 1999, which provides detailed procedures for Food Stamp Work Requirements on BEACON.

Report

A report titled *Food Stamp Work Program Action Reasons for BEACON Implementation* is being shipped to Transitional Assistance Offices this week. The report lists Food Stamp Work Program required clients based on the following PACES coding.

05-   Case or household member approved, subject to Food Stamp Work Program and referred to work or Community Service or verifying an exemption/disability.

06-   Case or household member approved, subject to Food Stamp Work Program and working 20 hours per week.

07-   Case or household member approved, subject to Food Stamp Work Program and performing Community Service for a specified number of hours per month or combination work and Community Service for a specified number of hours per month.

08-   Case or household member approved, Food Stamp Community Service Program site unavailable or inappropriate candidate.

Workers must review clients listed on the report to ensure PACES coding is correct and take appropriate BEACON action according to the following instructions.

How to Activate an Employment Component Activity for Action Reason 06 and Working 07 Clients

If the client is currently working and subject to the Food Stamp Work Program, the worker must:

▸ enter employment information onto BEACON's Earned Income window;

▸ access the ESP Activity Disposition window;

▸ select the Employment Activity component;

▸ change the pending status to active; and

▸ specify the Planned Start/End dates.

Important: The Planned Start date must be 9/1/99.

How to Activate a Community Service Component Activity for Action Reason 07 Clients

If the client is currently performing Community Service, the worker must:

▸ access the ESP Referral Disposition window;

▸ click on the popup search button next to the "Activity" field to get the activity search list;

▸ click on FS/Community Service, choose "select" and FS/Community Service will appear in the "Activity" field;

▸ click on the popup search button next to the resource field to get a list of FS/Community Service resources;

▸ click on the client's Community Service site, choose "select" and the resource will appear in the field labeled "Resource";

▸ fill in the response date. If left blank the system will automatically fill in a 10-day response date.

> **Note:** This step is being done to activate the FS/Community Service component activity. These clients are already working at a community service site; therefore they do not have to verify community service placement.

▸ print the completed *Referral and Response* form from this window by clicking on **LOCAL** and selecting finish;

How to Activate a Community Service Component Activity for Action Reason 07 Clients (continued)	▸ file the referral in the case record; **Note:** This referral form will not be given to these ongoing AR 07 clients because they are already working at a community service site. ▸ immediately access the ESP Referral Disposition window; ▸ select the FS/Community Service Activity; ▸ change the pending status to accepted; ▸ click on update and choose "next" to access the Activity Disposition window; and ▸ change the status to active, which means the client is participating, and specify the Planned Start/End dates. **Important:** The Planned Start date must be 9/1/99.
How to Warn/Sanction Action Reason 05 Clients	*If the client refused to participate* and is not exempt, not working at a job and/or not working at a community service site, access the Work Requirement window and click on the *Client refused to comply with Work requirement/ESP requirement* box to initiate the warning/sanction process. **Important:** Until BEACON is programmed to automatically warn/sanction AR 05 cases, the worker must manually increase noncompliance months on BEACON each month by clicking on the *Client refused to comply with Work requirement/ESP requirement* box.
How to Enter a Compliance Reason for Action Reason 08 Clients	*If the worker determines there are no available FS/Community Service sites* in the area or the *that the client is not a qualified candidate* and is not exempt, not working at a job and/or not working at a community service site, enter "No FS/CS Site Available" or "inappropriate candidate" as the compliance reason on the BEACON Work Requirement window. This will automatically change the compliance status to "Meets." No participation forms will be generated and the warning/sanction will not be initiated.

Key Dates for BEACON Implementation	8/23/99-8/31/99- Workers must activate the Food Stamp Community Service component activity and/or Employment component activity for cases listed on the *Food Stamp Work Program Action Reasons for BEACON Implementation* report, if appropriate.

8/23/99-8/31/99- *Community Service Notification* form will be generated and sent to all clients whose Food Stamp Community Service component activity has been activated on BEACON. It will notify clients of their Community Service hours for September 1999, based on their food stamp allotment for August 1999.

9/15/99-9/30/99- *Community Service Notification* form will be generated and sent to all clients with an active Food Stamp Community Service component activity. It will notify clients of their Community Service hours for October 1999, based on their food stamp allotment for September 1999.

9/20/99- *Food Stamp Work Program Participation* form for September will be generated and sent to all FS/Work Program clients in an active Employment component activity, an active Food Stamp Community Service component activity or both an active Food Stamp Community Service component activity and an active Employment component activity. It will request pay stubs, the number of hours worked at a job, the number of hours worked at a Community Service site, signature of the recipient and the signature of the Community Service Site Staff person to verify the number of Community Service hours worked, if any.

10/12/99- *Food Stamp Work Program Participation* form for September is due back from clients.

Note: Workers have until 10/15/99 (three business days) to enter participation hours on BEACON and wages, if any, on PACES. After the third day, BEACON will begin the warning/sanctioning process.

Questions	Policy questions should be referred to the Policy Hotline at (617) 348-8478. Systems questions should be referred to the Systems Customer Support Services at (617) 348-5290.