



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

Argeo Paul Cellucci
Governor

FAX 99-155

William D. O'Leary
Secretary

Jane Swift
Lieutenant Governor

Claire McIntire
Commissioner

Field Operations Memo 99-34
December 9, 1999

To: Transitional Assistance Office Staff
From: Joyce Sampson, Assistant Commissioner for Field Operations
Re: Emergency Assistance Eligibility Standards Effective July 1, 1999

**Background for
EA Shelter
Eligibility
Standards**

Field Operations Memo 99-33 notified TAOs about the two EA eligibility standards: the EA Non-Shelter Standard and the EA Shelter Standard. If the AU's income is greater than the EA Non-Shelter Standard and the AU is requesting temporary emergency shelter benefits, then its income must be compared with the EA Shelter Standard. If the income is equal to or less than the Shelter Standard, the AU is eligible for temporary emergency shelter benefits. These changes are effective retroactive to July 1, 1999. This memo discusses the impact a July effective date will have on the Transitional Assistance Workers and Homeless Coordinators. This memo does not restate the regular EA procedures regarding EA forms, placement rules, etc. necessary for the AU to be placed in Department-approved family shelter.

**How the July
1999 Effective
Date Affects an
Assistance Unit**

An AU cannot be authorized temporary emergency shelter placement retroactive to July 1, 1999. Shelter placement cannot be provided for a time in the past. A shelter placement can be authorized for the present date forward.

Therefore, the July 1, 1999 effective date could have the following impact on an AU:

**Shelter Benefits
Denied on or after
7/1/99**

- **An AU was denied temporary emergency shelter benefits** on or after 7/1/99 because the income of the AU was greater than the TAFDC Eligibility Standard. If this AU contacts the TAO because it still needs temporary emergency shelter,
 - complete a new EA-6;
 - enter the AU's current income on the PACES CALC screen to

**How the July
1999 Effective
Date Affects an
Assistance Unit
(continued)**

- calculate the monthly income;
- compare the current monthly income with the EA Shelter Standard for an AU of its size; and
- review findings with the Transitional Assistance Supervisor.
- If the current monthly income of the AU is **greater** than the new EA Shelter Standard, the AU remains ineligible for shelter benefits. The Transitional Assistance Worker or Homeless Coordinator will:
 - complete an NFL-9, sending the original and one copy to the AU denying shelter benefits because the AU's income exceeds the EA Shelter Standard; and
 - file a copy of the NFL-9 in the case record.
- If the current monthly income of the AU is **equal to or less than** the new EA Shelter Standard and the AU meets the other EA requirements, shelter is to be authorized. The Transitional Assistance Worker or Homeless Coordinator will:
 - complete the EA-1 and select code "B" to indicate the EA Shelter Standard was used to determine eligibility;
 - begin the process to find a Department-approved family shelter placement;
 - complete an NFL-9, sending the original and one copy to the AU notifying the AU of its eligibility for temporary emergency shelter; and
 - file a copy of the NFL-9 in the case record.

**Shelter Benefits
Terminated on
or after 7/1/99**

- **An AU was terminated from temporary emergency shelter benefits on or after 7/1/99** because its income exceeded the TAFDC Eligibility Standard. If this AU contacts the TAO because it still needs temporary emergency shelter, the Transitional Assistance Worker or Homeless Coordinator will:
 - complete a new EA-6;
 - enter the AU's income at the time of closing on the PACES CALC screen to calculate the AU's monthly income;
 - compare that monthly income at the time of the closing to the appropriate EA Shelter Standard for an AU of its size; and
 - review the findings with the Transitional Assistance Supervisor.
- If the income of the AU at the time of closing is **greater** than the new EA Shelter Standard, the AU remains ineligible for shelter benefits. The Transitional Assistance Worker or Homeless Coordinator will:

**How the July
1999 Effective
Date Affects an
Assistance Unit
(continued)**

- complete an NFL-9, sending the original and one copy to the AU denying shelter benefits because the AU's income exceeds the EA Shelter Standard; and
 - file a copy of the NFL-9 in the case record.
- If the income of the AU at the time of the closing is equal to or less than the new EA Shelter Standard and the AU meets the other EA requirements, shelter will be provided as a continuation of the original EA authorization. The Transitional Assistance Worker or Homeless Coordinator will:
 - begin the process to find a Department-approved family shelter placement;
 - complete an NFL-9, sending the original and one copy to the AU notifying the AU of its eligibility for temporary emergency shelter benefits; and
 - file a copy of the NFL-9 in the case record.

As this is a continuation of the original EA 12-month period, another EA-1 **must not** be completed. The shelter benefits may be provided until the end of the of the original 12-month period, at which time the AU's eligibility for EA must be reviewed.

- If the AU is determined eligible for shelter based on its income at the time of closing but it reports an increase in income since the time of closing, the Transitional Assistance Worker or Homeless Coordinator must compare the current income amount to the new EA Shelter Standard. If the AU is determined ineligible for shelter benefits, the Transitional Assistance Worker or the Homeless Coordinator will:
 - complete an NFL-9, sending the original and one copy to the AU denying shelter benefits because the AU's income exceeds the EA Shelter Standard; and
 - file a copy of the NFL-9 in the case record.

If the AU reports an increase in income after it is placed in temporary emergency shelter, then the shelter benefits must again be terminated for income in excess of the EA Shelter Standard.

**Shelter
Termination
Pending or
Appealed**

- **An AU is scheduled for termination from temporary emergency shelter** because its income exceeded the TAFDC eligibility standard. If the termination is still pending or the AU filed an appeal and remained in shelter, the Transitional Assistance Worker or Homeless Coordinator must:
 - compare the amount of income on file with the EA Shelter Standard;
 - if the AU's income is greater than the EA Shelter Standard, the AU continues to be ineligible for shelter and no additional action is required. The appeal or pending termination will proceed as usual;
 - if the AU's income is equal to or less than the EA Shelter Standard, review the findings with the Transitional Assistance Supervisor;
 - if the Supervisor agrees with the findings, immediately call or fax the AU, Housing Search Worker and a staff person at the shelter with the information that the EA termination will be rescinded;
 - follow up with written notification by making a copy of the NFL-9 from the case record, writing "RESCINDED" on it;
 - send copies of the "RESCINDED" NFL-9 to the AU, Housing Search Worker and the shelter; and
 - file a copy of the "RESCINDED" NFL-9 in the case record.

The AU may withdraw the pending appeal but such action is not necessary.

As this is a continuation of the original EA 12-month period, another EA-1 **must not** be completed.

**Director
Responsibilities**

Without the code "B" on an EA-1, the case can not be tracked in SSPS. TAO Directors should track the name, SSN and size of the AU and notify Julie Noble on each Friday via cc:Mail of the number of AUs eligible for shelter, solely due to the new EA Shelter Standard, that are being manually tracked. At the conclusion of the AU's 12-month EA period, if shelter benefits are continued, complete another EA-1 with code "B" and the manual tracking stops.

Questions

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