



Transitions

January 2015

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Quality Corner

This month we will review an earned income error and an invalid denial.

Legal Ineligible Noncitizen with Earned Income

This NPA SNAP case was certified as an Annual Reporting case. The household consisted of one Legal Permanent Resident (LPR) parent, another parent and a child who were both United States citizens. The LPR parent was an ineligible legal noncitizen for SNAP purposes. At the time recertification, the ineligible noncitizen parent was working full-time. The earnings were entered on the Earned Income page in BEACON as non-countable for SNAP. Consequently these earnings were not counted in the SNAP benefit calculation. This caused a substantial overpayment error of \$347 for the review month. In fact, the household was categorically eligible for zero benefits.

What's a Case Manager to Do?

On the Earned Income page in BEACON, the case manager should have entered the earnings of the ineligible noncitizen parent as countable for SNAP. In addition, the answer to the Legal FS Disqualified question on the INS Designation page should be Yes. A Yes answer indicates to BEACON that the calculation for mixed households that include citizens/eligible noncitizens and legal noncitizens ineligible for SNAP must be used.

An incorrect selection on the Earned Income page, such as what occurred in this example, will cause an inaccurate calculation of income. This impacts both eligibility and benefit amount. It is also good practice for case managers to look at the Results tab and review the transaction that was just processed to see if the countable income and deduction(s) are consistent with the entries made.

For more information on the calculation of SNAP benefits for households with citizens/eligible noncitizens and legal noncitizens ineligible for SNAP, see 106 CMR 364.600(C).

Invalid Denial

A web application was received on August 18, 2014. On August 28, 2014, an appointment letter for a telephone interview, scheduled for August September, was sent to the client. On September 17, 2014 (day 30), the application was denied for failure to submit required verifications.

Based on the Interview page in BEACON, Quality Control (QC) determined that the client had never been interviewed. There was also no record of a Verification Checklist (VC-I) being sent on BEACON or the case record. Failure to send a VC-I (where necessary) before denying the application constitutes a negative error.

What's a Case Manager to Do?

SNAP applicants must be interviewed. The interview is commonly followed by a BEACON-generated VC-I informing the client of the proofs needed to complete the case for processing. If the client cannot be reached by telephone, you must send an appointment letter by mail to the client. In addition, if a client misses the first scheduled interview a *Notice of Missed Interview* (NOMI) must be sent. For more information on SNAP application processing, see Field Operations Memo 2006-30 and On-Line Guide, SNAP, SNAP Application Processing.



From the Hotline Index

A “From the Hotline” Index of the questions and answers written in *Transitions* during 2014 has been compiled below. The Index is intended to provide quicker access to policy and procedural information. Please remember that this Index explains policy/procedure as of the month/year in which the questions and answers were issued.

Emergency Aid to the Elderly, Disabled and Children Program		
Topic	Month	Related Procedure/Policy, 106 CMR:
Assets, retirement and pension	February	321.120(C)
Direct Deposit, Exception	December	321.120(B)(3)(a)
Fraud Investigation and Data Matching	March	Operations Memo 2014-11 and Operations Memo 2014-12
Fraud Investigation and Data Matching	July	Operations Memo 2014-36
Housing Subsidy	May	321.250(U)
Identity Match	March	Operations Memo 2014-11
Income, Countable, Unearned	February	321.210(B)
Income, Lump Sum	February	321.240
Income, Noncountable	May	321.250(U)
Legal Permanent Resident, Eligible Noncitizen status	April	320.620(A)
Living Arrangement A	May	321.420(A)
Living Arrangement D	May	321.420(D)
Noncitizen	April	320.620
Sanction, Direct Deposit	December	706.410(D)
Social Security Match	March	Operations Memo 2014-12
Verification	August	Operations Memo 2012-17

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**From the Hotline Index** *(Continued from Page 3)*

Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program		
Topic	Month	Related Procedure/Policy, 106 CMR:
Assets, Noncountable, Pension Funds	February	363.140(B)
Assets, Noncountable, Vehicles	September	363.140(D)
Benefit Effective Date	July	Operations Memo 2014-30
Categorically Eligible Households	February	365.180
Clothing Allowance, Department of Children and Families(DCF) Quarterly	September	363.220(B)
Continuous Enrollment (Student)	June	362.420
Customer Concern Tracking	July	Operations Memo 2014-43
Deductions, Homeless Shelter/Utility	May	364.400(F)
Disabled	October	361.210
Fault Determination	July	Operations Memo 2014-30
Fraud Investigation and Data Matching	July	Operations Memo 2014-36
Homeless Shelter/Utility Deduction	May	364.400(F)
Income, Countable, Unearned	September	363.220(B)
Income, Unearned, Certain Recouped Monies	November	363.220(C)
Lump Sum Payments, Nonrecurring	February	363.230(I)
Massachusetts Residency	August	362.100
Noncitizen, Legal Permanent Resident	April	362.220(B)
Noncitizen, Legal Permanent Resident	October	362.220(B)
Noncitizen,	October	362.240(F)

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**From the Hotline Index** *(Continued from Page 4)*

Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (continued)		
Topic	Month	Related Procedure/Policy, 106 CMR:
Nonhousehold Members	June	361.230
Program Integrity Checklist	July	Operations Memo 2014-36
Residency, verification of	August	362.120
Self –Declaration	May	Operations Memo 2010-29
Social Security Match	March	Operations Memo 2014-12
Student Eligibility	June	362.410
Verifications	August	Operations Memo 2012-17
Verifications, shelter and utility costs	May	Operations Memo 2010-29
Verifications, Medical Expenses	August	SNAP Medical Deductions Job Aid
Veterans and Active Duty Personnel	October	362.240(F)
Veteran’s Services Benefits	November	Operations Memo 2009-13

(Continued on Page 6)

**From the Hotline Index** *(Continued from Page 5)*

Transitional Aid to Families with Dependent Children		
Topic	Month	Related Procedure/Policy, 106 CMR:
Assets, countable	September	204.120(G)
Assets, countable pension and retirement	February	204.120(C)
Assets, vehicle	September	Operations Memo 2014-46
Calculation of Grant Amount	November	204.500
Department of Children and Families (DCF) Clothing Allowance for Teen Parents	September	FYI: "Department of Children and Families (DCF) Quarterly Clothing Allowance and TAFDC Teen Parents"
Direct Deposit	December	706.410
Domestic Violence, asset ownership exception	December	204.120(B)
Employment Services Program	September	Operations Memo 2008-53 A
Fraud Investigation and Data Matching	July	Operations Memo 2014-36
Housing Subsidy	May	204.250(U)
Identity Match	March	Operations Memo 2014-11
Income, In-kind	May	204.510(B)
Income, Lump sum	February	204.240
Income, Countable, Unearned	February	204.210(B)
Program Integrity Checklist	July	Operations Memo 2014-36
Sanction, Direct Deposit	December	706.410(D)
Shelter and Utilities, verification	May	Operations Memo 2010-29
Social Security Match	March	Operations Memo 2014-12
Teen Parent School Attendance	September	203.610

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**From the Hotline Index** *(Continued from Page 6)*

Transitional Aid to Families with Dependent Children Program (continued)		
Topic	Month	Related Procedure/Policy, 106 CMR:
Verification process	August	Operations Memo 2012-17
Verification, shelter and utilities	May	Operations Memo 2010-29
Work Program Requirement	September	Operations Memo 2008-53A
Young Parent Program (YPP)	September	207.140(C)



Online Guide Transmittals

Address Changes Reported to DTA by the Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD)

OLGT 2015-1
TAFDC

When a DTA family who is placed in an Emergency Assistance (EA) shelter/motel placement is moved, Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) staff will send a completed *DHCD to DTA Case Transfer Form* directly to the Electronic Document Management Center (EDMC). If the family is receiving SNAP benefits only, the scanned document becomes an Action (Process Scanned Document) that becomes part of the Processing Action Pool. Scanned *DHCD to DTA Case Transfer Forms* that are associated with active, pending or certain recently closed cash cases are made available in the Available/Reviewed Scanned Documents view for processing by the cash case manager.

The following page has been added to the Cross Program section of the Online Guide:
Address Changes Reported to DTA by DHCD

Topic: Cross Programs
Book: DTA/DHCD Address Changes
Page: Address Changes Reported to DTA by DHCD

2015 Social Security COLA for TAFDC, EAEDC and SNAP

OLGT 2015-3
All

Every year the Social Security Administration implements a Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA) for RSDI and SSI benefits. This COLA can affect TAFDC, EAEDC and SNAP benefits.

This book provides information about the implementation of the SSA COLA, describes the Streamweaver notices that will be sent to the affected households and provides local office staff with information on the 2015 Medicare Part B premiums, 2015 Medicare Part D deductibles and the 2015 Medex premiums.

The Following books/pages are being added.

Topic: Scheduled Mailings/Projects
Book: COLAs
Chapter: Annual SSA COLA
Page: Social Security Administration (SSA) Cost of Living Adjustment
Topic: Scheduled Mailings/Projects
Book: COLAs
Chapter: Annual SSA COLA

Online Guide Transmittals

Page: Medicare Part B
Topic: Scheduled Mailings/Projects
Book: COLAs
Chapter: Annual SSA COLA
Page: Medicare Part D
Topic: Scheduled Mailings/Projects
Book: COLAs
Page: MEDEX Changes

Change to the Massachusetts Minimum Wage

OLGT 2015-4
TAFDC

Effective January 1, 2015, the Massachusetts minimum wage increased from \$8.00 an hour to \$9.00 an hour.

This change impacts the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) calculation for TAFDC clients participating in a community service activity.

Topic: TAFDC
Book: ESP
Chapters: ESP – Non Competitive Integrated Employment Services
Subchapter: Community Service
Subchapter: FLSA
Page: FLSA/Community Service and FLSA with Child Support

Federal Mileage Rate Increases

OLGT 2015-7
SNAP

The new federal mileage rate of 57.5 cents must be used when calculating allowable transportation costs to be used as a medical deduction or a dependent care deduction.

The new mileage rate represents an increase when compared to last year.

Topic: SNAP
Book: Expenses and Deductions
Chapter: Dependent Care Expenses
Page: Federal Mileage Rate

Online Guide Transmittals

TAFDC and SNAP: Federal Poverty Guidelines - Updated for 2015

OLGT 2015-13

TAFDC and SNAP

The federal Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) Federal Poverty Guidelines (FPG), updated for 2015, are published in the Federal Register.

DTA uses the FPG to calculate the eligibility standards for the TAFDC and SNAP programs as follows:

- TAFDC: Income from the Parent(s) of a Teen Parent Under Age 18 (200 percent of the poverty guidelines); and
- SNAP: Gross Monthly Categorical Eligibility Income Standards (200 percent of the poverty guidelines).

The TAFDC and SNAP eligibility charts and tables affected by the FPG are posted at www.mass.gov/dta. To view the standards, select the Program Eligibility Charts and Tables link under Key Resources.

Effective February 1, 2015, BEACON will use the new standard amounts in the eligibility calculation for the aforementioned TAFDC and SNAP eligibility standards.

The following Online Guide book and page have been added to the Scheduled Mailing/Projects topic:

Topic: Scheduled Mailing/Projects

Book: Federal Poverty Guidelines (FPG)

Page: TAFDC and SNAP: Federal Poverty Guidelines

Diversity Quote

If we cannot end now our differences, at least we can help make the world safe for diversity.

John F. Kennedy

From the Forms File

Obsoleted Forms

02-185-0205-05

CTC-2-A (Rev. 2/2005)

Centralized TAFDC Office Transfer Checklist

25-440-0608-05

25-441-0608-05 (Spanish)

CTAFDC-T (Rev. 6/2008)

TAFDC Update - Centralized TAFDC Office

25-442-0608-05

25-443-0608-05 (Spanish)

CTAFDC-T/F (Rev. 6/2008)

TAFDC and Food Stamp Update - Centralized TAFDC Office

The Centralized TAFDC Office Transfer Checklist, TAFDC Update - Centralized TAFDC Office and TAFDC and Food Stamp Update - Centralized TAFDC Office are now obsolete. Discard all copies of these forms.

TAO Meeting Notes