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Quality Corner

This month we will review a negative error that occurred in a Non-Public Assistance (NPA) SNAP case due to an incorrect application date used when the Request for Assistance (RFA) was created.

Incorrect Application date used for Request for Assistance (RFA)

On August 8, 2016, a SNAP application was submitted to the Document Processing Center (DPC). The SNAP application became available as an action for a case manager on August 11, 2016. A worker-in-training created the RFA using an application date of August 11, 2016, completed the application interview, and issued a VC-I requesting earned income verification with a due date of September 12, 2016. On September 12, 2016, the case was automatically denied by BEACON for fail to submit the required verifications as the earned income verification was not provided by the client.

During the September 2016 Quality Control (QC) review, it was determined that the denial was incorrect. The SNAP application was submitted to DPC on August 8, 2016 and that is the date that should have been used as the application date when the RFA was created. The case subsequently denied on day 33 due to the incorrect application date.

What's a Case Manager to Do?

When an application becomes available for processing, case managers must always check the date the application is submitted to the DPC. The date an application is submitted to the DPC is the date that must be used when creating an RFA, not the date the RFA is created. Using incorrect application dates results in incorrect processing dates and can lead to incorrect denials.

Online Guide Transmittals

Cross Programs: Accommodation Decision Notices

Online Guide Transmittal 2017-12

The *Accommodation Decision Notice* (ADA-I-C) is BEACON generated and is used to inform a client of the status of his/her ADA accommodation request. The ADA-I-C notice includes details about the accommodation drawn from a free form text section in the Accommodation/Special Assistance tab. It is important that the ADA-I-C notice provides enough information for a client to understand the Department's decision, but also protects the client's privacy. This update reminds case managers to avoid recording unnecessary details about a client's disabilities and provides a procedure for translating free form text into Spanish when needed.

EAEDC: Proof of Verification of the SSI Application

Online Guide Transmittal 2017-13

As a categorical eligibility requirement for Elderly and Disabled EAEDC populations, clients must apply for SSI and cooperate in the SSI application, reapplication, and appeal processes. Certain individuals who will not meet basic SSI criteria are immediately denied and issued a form *SSA-L991* by SSA. Effective immediately, this form is considered an acceptable verification of the SSI application to SSA.

This Online Guide Transmittal and updated Online Guide pages advise DTA staff of the current policies and procedures regarding acceptable verification of the SSI application to SSA.

Cross Programs: Management of Original Documents Outside of the DTA Business Process

Online Guide Transmittal 2017-14

The Department manages all documents received via mail, fax and hand delivery through the Document Processing Center (DPC). After scanning, it is important to properly manage the original documents for the benefit of the client and to meet legal requirements.

This Online Guide transmittal advises staff of new Online Guide pages that provide:

- the requirements for the management of processed documents;
- procedures for returned mail; and
- all of the post office boxes and fax numbers for use by clients to mail and fax documents to DTA.

Online Guide Transmittals

Cross Programs: SSPS Payments – Online Guide Updates and Reorganization

Online Guide Transmittal 2017-15

Online Guide Transmittal 2016-58 advised staff of the reorganization and updating of Online Guide pages regarding the Special Services Payment System (SSPS). This Online Guide transmittal advises staff of additional updates to clarify BEACON procedures that are currently in use for SSPS.

SNAP: Federal Mileage Rates

Online Guide Transmittal 2017-16

The new federal mileage rate of 53.5 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 a decrease when compared to last year.

SNAP: Views

Online Guide Transmittal 2017-17 SNAP

Prior to the implementation of the redesigned business model in 2014, all case managers were expected to access BEACON views daily. With redesign, the view functionality for SNAP case managers no longer exists. The purpose of this Online Guide Transmittal is to advise staff that all Online Guide pages in the SNAP topic that previously referenced SNAP views are being removed.

Cross Programs: EBT Pilot Phase 2 Update

Online Guide Transmittal 2017-19

This Online Guide Transmittal introduces the *CAC Questions for EBT Card Replacement Pilot Tool*. The Tool is intended to be used by CACs to guide their interviews with clients subject to the pilot procedures.

Additional staff responsibilities are outlined in Online Guide Transmittal 2017-9.

Online Guide Transmittals

TAFDC and EAEDC: Cash Cases with Potential Earnings

Online Guide Transmittal 2017-29

As a result of a wage match with the Department of Revenue, DTA has information about certain TAFDC and EAEDC clients with potential earnings. These earnings may be known to DTA or may have been unreported.

This employment data needs to be processed by DTA cash staff. This Online Guide Transmittal advises DTA staff about procedures to use to process the list of cases that are impacted by these potential earnings.

State Letter

SNAP Nonfinancial Eligibility Standards

State Letter 1376

SNAP

This State Letter implements Executive Order 562 which instructed state agencies to simplify Massachusetts regulations where possible. State Letter 1377 simplifies the language in Chapter 362 of the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) regulations and also includes several minor technical corrections. This State Letter also:

- Clarified eligibility criteria for noncitizens with various immigration designations.
- Updated language for work requirements for Able-Bodied Adults Without Dependents.
- Added language from Public Law 109-270 to explain that community college students participating in a Perkins Career and Technical Education program meet student eligibility requirements.

This material was effective February 10, 2017.

From the Forms File

New Form

25-210-0217-05

Cash Intake Form

To promote consistency and streamline the intake process for TAFDC/EAEDC applicants statewide, field staff have recommended the creation of a standardized *Cash Intake Form*. Please see the FYI in February Transitions for more information about this form. The *Cash Intake Form* will be made available in more languages at a later date.

Revised Form

16-020-0217-05

16-022-0217-05 (S)

Image-10 (Rev. 2/2017)

Request to Choose Someone to Be My Authorized Representative

The change to the *Request to Choose Someone to Be My Authorized Representative (Image 10)* form removed the word 'application' from the SNAP Benefits section of the form.

Revised Brochure

18-825-0217-05

18-826-0217-05 (S)

EBT-TB (Rev. 2/2017)

Electronic Benefit Transfer (EBT)

The *Electronic Benefit Transfer (EBT)* brochure was revised. The revisions are: (1) removing the food stamp reference from the brochure title; (2) changing the number of free ATM withdrawals per calendar month from two to three; (3) homeless households are now be exempt from the photo requirement along with elderly, disabled, etc; and (4) the sentence: "Selling your Card or Benefits is illegal and can result from disqualifying you from benefits" was added to the Important Information about Replacing Your EBT Card section. Please discard old versions of the EBT brochure and use the revised version.

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From the Forms File *(Continued from Page 6)*

Revised Inserts

25-666-0217-05 (Khmer) (Rev. 2/2017)

25-677-0217-05 (Chinese) (Rev. 2/2017)

25-660-0217-05 (English) (Rev. 2/2017)

25-661-0217-05 (Spanish) (Rev. 2/2017)

25-662-0217-05 (Portuguese) (Rev. 2/2017)

25-663-0217-05 (Haitian Creole) (Rev. 2/2017)

25-664-0217-05 (Vietnamese) (Rev. 2/2017)

25-665-0217-05 (Russian) (Rev. 2/2017)

Community Information - How may we help you? Inserts

The *Community Information (CI-DTA) Income Eligibility Charts* were revised. Please discard old versions of these inserts and distribute the revised versions with the *Community Information (CI-DTA)* brochure.

09-618-0217-05 (Arabic) (Rev. 2/2017)

09-617-0217-05 (Khmer) (Rev. 2/2017)

09-616-0217-05 (Chinese) (Rev. 2/2017)

09-610-0217-05 (English) (Rev. 2/2017)

09-611-0217-05 (Spanish) (Rev. 2/2017)

09-612-0217-05 (Portuguese) (Rev. 2/2017)

09-613-0217-05 (Haitian Creole) (Rev. 2/2017)

09-614-0217-05 (Vietnamese) (Rev. 2/2017)

09-615-0217-05 (Russian) (Rev. 2/2017)

SNAP-BB - SNAP Income Standards Inserts

The *How to Get SNAP Benefits (SNAP-BB) Income Standards Charts* were revised. Please discard old versions of these inserts and distribute the revised versions with the *How to Get SNAP Benefits (SNAP-BB)* brochure.

Obsolete Form

18-840-1014-05

EBT-8 (Rev. 10/2014)

EBT Cash Assistance Recovery

18-842-0903-05

EBT-9 (9/2003)

EBT Card Fee Collection Form

These forms are now obsolete.



FYI

Cash Intake Form

To promote consistency and streamline the intake process for TAFDC/EAEDC applicants statewide, field staff have recommended the creation of a standardized Cash Intake Form. The Department has created a standardized *Cash Intake Form* which is available in Online Forms. As with all forms, **the use of any TAO created intake form is not acceptable.** TAO's must only use Department created forms.

It is important to remember that the intake form is **not** an application. Clients do not have to fill it out to apply for benefits. If after reviewing the completed form a client appears to be ineligible, the client still has the right and must be afforded the opportunity to apply.

The *Cash Intake Form* can be found by accessing Policy Online; Online Forms; Cross Programs; Cash Intake Form.

The *Cash Intake Form* will be made available in more languages at a later date.

Diversity Quote

Diversity is not focused on how we differ, it's about embracing one another's uniqueness.

Ola Joseph

TAO Meeting Notes