

# Hotline Focus



*q* For food stamp purposes do we count foster care payments?

*a* According to the policy in Section 361.240(F) of the *Food Stamp Policy Manual*, neither foster care children nor foster care adults are required to be included in the foster care household's food stamp household. A foster care household provides foster care to foster care children and/or adults. If foster care children and/or adults are not included in the household, the following shall apply:

1. No portion of the foster care payments shall be counted in determining the Food Stamp eligibility and benefit level of the foster care household; and
2. foster care children and adults are ineligible to participate in the Food Stamp Program as a separate food stamp household from the foster care household.

The foster care household has the option of including the foster care children and/or adults in its food stamp household; however, the foster care payments shall then be counted as unearned income in determining the food stamp eligibility and benefit level of the foster care household.

*q* Are foster care payments countable in AFDC?

*a* Foster care payments for children which are made to an AFDC applicant or recipient are noncountable in AFDC.

Adult foster care payments are countable income in AFDC. Federal regulations make no provision to exclude them.

Individuals for whom foster care payments are received are ineligible for AFDC.

*q* Are foster care payments countable in MA?

*a* Foster care payments for children are considered *noncountable* income provided they meet the requirements of Section 505.230(S) of the *Medical Assistance Policy Manual*. Adult foster care payments are considered room and board income and *are counted* in accordance with Section 505.210(D) of the *Medical Assistance Policy Manual*.

*q* My office receives SSI 1070 food stamp errors for batch numbers beginning with 8. On the summary sheet of the report, these cases are listed as belonging to region 8. What is region 8 and what should I do about these errors?

*a* Region 8 signifies food stamp cases handled by the SSI Food Stamp Demo Unit located at Central Office. The SSI Food Stamp Demo Unit receives its own 1070 report.

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for food stamp errors, and is responsible for making the corrections. Local offices receive the food stamp case errors for information only and no further action is required for the food stamp portion of the Cat 1 or Cat 3 case. Local offices continue to be responsible for handling the MA portion of the Cat 1 or Cat 3 case.

**Q** I have a monthly reporting case with five weeks of wages on the PACES GRT2 inquiry screen. This budget month has only four weeks. Should I zero out the fifth week of wages when I enter the new worksheet?

**A** No, since PACES divides the total income by the number of weeks entered on the worksheet to test eligibility, zeroing out the fifth week makes the eligibility test inaccurate. You should enter the new four weeks of earnings.

**Q** How do I set up a homeless case using the new multiple address code?

**A** Enter the local office post office box in block 12 (STREET) of Section II of the TD and enter code "M" in Block 16 (Multiple Address).

**Q** I submitted a PACES worksheet to take protective rent out of a recipient's budget two months ago but the landlord still hasn't received a rental payment. What did I do wrong?

**A** PACES and SSPS do not "talk to each other." You must complete two separate transactions, a worksheet to update the client record on PACES and an invoice or Protective Payment TD to update SSPS.

**Q** I have seen an AFDC applicant who is a married pregnant woman with no other children. How does PACES treat her husband's income?

**A** The husband should be listed as dependent "50" on both the TD and the worksheet. The filing unit size is 2. PACES will use his income to determine his wife's eligibility, but not grant amount if she is eligible. Once the baby is born, you must redetermine eligibility for the entire family, including the father.

**Q** The Post Office has told me that my recipient's check has been returned as undeliverable. Four days have passed and the check still does not show on the checks issued screen (CHEK) as undeliverable. What should I do?

**A** Consider the check lost or stolen and proceed with the usual check replacement procedure. Enter code "L" on the FCB1 screen. If the check is returned during the replacement process, Finance will enter code "F" on the FCB1 screen to override the FCB-1 process and reissue the check.