



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

William F. Weld
Governor
Argeo Paul Cellucci
Lieutenant Governor

Field Operations Memo 95-31-B
February 1, 1996

Gerald Whitburn
Secretary
Joseph Gallant
Commissioner

TO: Local Office Staff
FROM: Joyce Sampson
Assistant Commissioner for Field Operations
RE: Update to Field Operations Memo 95-31

Background

This memo is the second in a series of updates to Field Operations Memo 95-31 dated November 1, 1995. Until a TAFDC Reference Guide is issued, updates to Field Operations Memo 95-31 will continue to be issued in this format.

The changes described in this memo correspond to those issued in State Letter 1083 and 1085. It also includes the following procedural changes which did not require a policy change:

- A teen parent who applies for TAFDC or is scheduled for a transition review within 60 days of his or her 18th birthday meets the living arrangement requirement if the school attendance requirement is met.
- A teen parent who applies for TAFDC or is scheduled for a transition review within 60 days of his or her 20th birthday is not subject to the teen parent school attendance and living arrangement requirements.
- An EDP will remain in effect even if the teen parent has not completed the EDP by his or her 20th birthday.
- The descriptions of Codes V and W in block 97 have been clarified.

**Background
(Continued)**

- The definition of AR 17 has been updated.
- Program Code 0 is not limited to a system-generated code.
- Action Reason 03 cannot be used for TMA cases.
- When to use the TAFDC-5 is clarified.
- If a case is determined ineligible, be sure that all eligibility criteria have been explored before submitting a closing and notice of review. The date the supervisor signs off on the transition review is the completion date of the eligibility review and the date entered in TD BL 37.

Update

This memo reissues the entire Overview, Attachment A, Attachment I and Attachment K of Field Operations Memo 95-31. Remove these sections and insert the attached replacement sections.

This memo also reissues pages H-1 through H-12 and H-27 through H-28. Remove these pages from your memo and insert the attached replacement pages.

Questions

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



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**RE: Implementation of the Transitional Aid to Families with
Dependent Children (TAFDC) Program**

Overview

Earlier this year, the Governor and the Legislature passed a major welfare reform package. Because the legislation made major changes in the AFDC program, the Department was required to request a series of waivers of federal AFDC regulations from the federal Department of Health and Human Services, (HHS) which administers the AFDC program. Having received approvals from HHS, USDA and HCFA, the Department has now begun the implementation of its welfare reform program known as Transitional Aid to Families with Dependent Children (TAFDC) on November 1, 1995.

As part of the waiver approval, the Department had to establish a control group and a treatment group to evaluate the effectiveness of the welfare reform initiative. The current rules of the AFDC program will continue to apply to the control group while the new rules of the TAFDC program apply to the treatment group. The Department has assigned current AFDC cases to either the control or treatment group. The control group consists of:

- Two-parent households in which the younger parent's SSN or case identification number ends in the numbers 10 or 20; and
- All other households in which the grantee's SSN or case identification number ends in the numbers 10 or 20.

The remaining population is the treatment group. For measurement purposes some of this population was assigned to an experimental group.

The experimental group consists of:

- Two-parent households in which the younger parent's SSN or case identification number ends in the numbers 80 or 90; and
- All other households in which the grantee's SSN or case identification number ends in the numbers 80 or 90.

Based on the regulations used for the random selection process, 106 CMR 201.000, all current recipients received an advance notification of being placed in either the control group or the treatment (non-control) group. The notices describe the random selection process, eligibility for program benefits and right to appeal. In addition, the treatment group notice describes the new "Family Cap" rule and informs recipients that the Department will notify them of the date and time of their TAFDC eligibility review.

Once a case is assigned to either the control or the treatment group, this designation cannot be changed by either the worker or the recipient.

On 11/1/95 the Department began the phase-in of the TAFDC program for current recipients and immediate implementation for all new applicants. Notification letters were sent to AFDC recipients notifying them of the new TAFDC program. TAFDC is a program that provides assistance to families with dependent children with a focus on employment and self-sufficiency. The first group targeted for the transition to TAFDC was Teen Parents. Next will be employed recipients and unemployed parents cases (including those EAEDC recipients who were ineligible for AFDC based solely on the "100 hour" rule). Finally, the families whose youngest child falls into a prioritized age group will be phased in.

This memo provides application guidelines as well as the procedures required to implement the transition of affected AFDC recipients to the new program. As part of the TAFDC implementation and the name change of the MassJOBS program to the Employment Services Program (ESP), a *Systems User's Guide* Update will be issued shortly including: Volume 1, PACES and Volume 8, ESP. In the meantime, this memo contains the systems-related changes needed for the transitional review and application processes.

Highlights of Program Changes

2.75% Need and Payment Standard Reduction (106 CMR 204.405, 204.415, 204.425 and Attachment B)

Nonexempt assistance units will have their eligibility and grant determined based on a 2.75 percent decrease in the Need and Payment Standards at (re)application or at the time of their transition to TAFDC.

Eligibility for the \$30 and 1/3 or \$30 and 1/2 Disregards (106 CMR 204.280, 204.285 and Attachment B)

Nonexempt assistance units with earnings will receive the \$30 & 1/2 disregard from earnings for as long as they are receiving assistance and employed. Exempt assistance units will receive the \$30 & 1/3 disregard from earnings for as long as they are receiving assistance and employed.

Work Program (106 CMR 203.400 and Attachment C)

The grantee in a nonexempt assistance unit in which the youngest child in the assistance unit is of mandatory full-time school age (usually age six or first grade, whichever is later) and one parent in certain two-parent households in which the youngest child is under six is required to work a minimum of 20 hours per week. Such employment must commence within 60 days of a TAFDC application or the transition review. The work program requirement may be satisfied by employment of 20 hours per week, including working in the Full Employment Program or the Supported Work component. When the grantee does not get a job for at least 20 hours per week, the work program requirement may be satisfied by community service of 20 hours per week or a combination of employment and community service of 20 hours per week.

Employment Services Program (106 CMR 207.000 et seq. and Attachment D)

The Department administers the Employment Services Program, formerly known as the MassJOBS Program. The Employment Services Program (ESP) assists recipients through various ESP components to enable them to get and maintain a job.

Full Employment Program (106 CMR 207.180 and Attachment D)

The Full Employment Program (FEP) is an ESP component in which a grantee works full-time and receives wages from a FEP employer instead of a cash grant and food stamps. This grantee will receive a cash supplement if the FEP wages and other income for the month are less than the combined value of the TAFDC and food stamp benefits that the assistance unit would have received.

Family Cap (106 CMR 203.300 and Attachment E)

A TAFDC assistance unit will not receive an increase in cash assistance for a child born after the Family Cap date. There are limited exceptions where an additional dependent child may be included in the assistance unit.

Exemption Criteria (106 CMR 203.100 and Attachment A)

Assistance units may be exempt by meeting one of the exemption criteria. An exempt household is not subject to the 2.75 percent reduction in the Need and Payment Standards.

Two-Parent Households: Deprivation Factors

Unemployment - The 100-Hour Rule (106 CMR 203.550 and Attachment G)

To meet the deprivation factor for unemployment of one parent in a two-parent household in TAFDC, a dependent child is considered deprived of support when the parent who is the principal earner meets the work history requirements is unemployed or underemployed. The 100-hour employment rule has been eliminated. Underemployment exists even when the hours of employment are equal to or greater than 100 hours per month. The principal earner is considered underemployed when the principal earner is employed but the assistance unit continues to meet the financial eligibility requirements of the TAFDC program.

Incapacity (106 CMR 203.530, 203.540, 203.545 and Attachment F)

To meet the deprivation factor for incapacity in TAFDC one parent in a two-parent household must meet the medical and/or vocational standards.

These standards are similar to the EAEDC medical and vocational standards but the disability must have lasted or be expected to last 30 days, not 60 days.

Teen Parent Eligibility (106 CMR 203.600 - 203.640 and Attachment H)

A pregnant or parenting teen under age 20 must meet new school attendance requirements and live with a parent(s), an adult relative age 20 or older, a legal guardian or in an approved foster care placement or in a teen structured living program for the teen parent and his or her dependent child to be eligible for TAFDC. The financial eligibility determination and the grant calculation for a teen parent under age 18 who lives with his or her parent(s) and the teen parent's dependent child are different from those of AFDC.

Income from the Parents of a Teen Parent under Age 18 (106 CMR 204.236 and Attachment H)

The income of the parents of a teen parent under age 18 that exceeds 200 percent of the poverty level for a family of comparable size shall be deemed to the teen parent's filing unit.

Child Support Changes (106 CMR 203.700 - 203.790 and Attachment I)

A grantee and a teen parent who is not the grantee must cooperate and continue to cooperate in establishing paternity and establishing, modifying or enforcing a child support order by furnishing specific verifiable information about the absent parent unless he or she has good cause. When the grantee or a teen parent who is not the grantee does not furnish this information, he or she will be deemed not to have cooperated and be subject to a sanction.

Immunization (106 CMR 203.800 and Attachment J)

The Department requires all dependent children to be properly immunized. Failure to comply with this requirement will result in the ineligibility of the grantee unless there is good cause for noncompliance with the requirement.

Learnfare (106 CMR 203.900 and Attachment K)

A dependent child under age 14 must attend school regularly. A nondisabled grantee will be placed in a probation status when he or she fails to verify that each school-age dependent child under age 14 has met certain school attendance requirements. The dependent child may not have more than eight unexcused absences during the previous school quarter. If the dependent child has more than three unexcused absences during any month in the probation period, no assistance will be paid to the grantee on behalf of the dependent child for one month at a time until the dependent child has three or less unexcused absences in a month.

Increased Asset Limits (106 CMR 204.100 and Attachment L)

The asset limit for TAFDC is \$2500 per filing unit.

Countable Asset Value of Motor Vehicles (106 CMR 204.120, 204.140 and Attachment L)

These sections require that:

- The first \$5000 of the fair market value of one vehicle is noncountable.
- The fair market value of this one vehicle that exceeds \$5000 is a countable asset. The full fair market value of any additional vehicle(s) is countable.
- The fair market value is the price for which the vehicle will sell.
NOTE: Equity value (fair market value less legal encumbrances) is not used.

Lump Sum Income (106 CMR 204.120, 204.240 and Attachment M)

- The first \$600 of lump sum income is noncountable income in the month of receipt;
- Any amount that exceeds the \$600 is countable as lump sum income in the month of receipt; and
- Any portion of the noncountable \$600 retained in the month following the month of receipt is a countable asset.

Direct Deposit (106 CMR 204.550 and Attachment N)

If a grantee has an active account in a banking or financial institution, direct deposit of the TAFDC check is required unless the grantee meets one of the exemption criteria and the director or designee waives the direct deposit requirement, or the grantee is a battered victim and the batterer is co-holder of the account.

Expanded Computer Matches (106 CMR 202.320)

The Department will be matching our Recipient Masterfile with the Department of Youth Services and the State Computer Warrant Management System. The names, addresses and other applicable information concerning the whereabouts of any applicant or recipient with an outstanding default warrant for a felony punishable by incarceration in a state prison will be forwarded to the appropriate law enforcement officials.

Court Convictions for Fraud (106 CMR 206.305 and Attachment O)

A grantee convicted of felonious fraud against the TAFDC program for an amount of \$1,000 or more is permanently ineligible to receive TAFDC for himself or herself if the fraud was committed on or after 11/01/95.

However, if the ineligible grantee is a member of the filing unit, his or her income and assets are considered available to the assistance unit.

Recovery by Wage Assignment (106 CMR 206.295 and Attachment P)

Any judgment or order of the court requiring repayment to the Department, any overpayment established by administrative hearing or administrative disqualification hearing, or any voluntary agreement to repay an overpayment may include an assignment to the Department of a portion of the grantee's salaries, wages, earnings or other periodic income.

TAFDC Transition Process

Case Review Process

- Eligibility reviews will be scheduled for all non-control group AFDC recipients on a staggered basis. The review schedule will focus on specific target groups, such as teen parents, employed recipients, unemployed parent cases and families whose youngest child falls into a prioritized age group. Specific case characteristics will be used on PACES to generate a printout for each target group identified during the transition process.
- Each worker will receive a system-generated printout of the cases to be reviewed for transition to TAFDC. The printout will contain the name, SSN and address of each recipient. It will also have space available for annotation of appointment dates; action taken as a result of the review process; and codes required for each target group. The printout can be used as a tickler file to monitor recipients' compliance with scheduled appointments and to record case specific activities.
- Along with the system-generated printout, each worker will receive a corresponding set of facsimile TDs for use in the transition process. Each TD will have the most up-to-date case information available on PACES as of the run date of the printout. The facsimile TDs can serve as a guide to verifying information on file, such as grantees' SSNs and current dependent data. They will also minimize the number of data elements which must be entered by the worker and later key entered to complete the transition to TAFDC.

Worker Responsibilities:

- Review the printout and send each recipient an appointment letter (TP/TAFDC/AL) informing them of the date and time of his or her transition review. You must include with each appointment letter a TAFDC brochure about the TAFDC program. The TAFDC Program Brochure will introduce the recipient to the new program and help them to prepare for the interview. The first group to be reviewed will be the teen parents.
- Annotate the printout with the scheduled date of the transition interview for each recipient listed on the printout.

- When the worker becomes aware of a situation unique to the group being reviewed, (i.e., while reviewing the second target group, employed recipients, the worker discovers a teen parent who is included in another assistance unit), the worker must:
 - Add the recipient's name, SSN and address to the printout.
 - Schedule a transition interview.
 - Annotate the printout with the scheduled date of the transition interview.
- Prior to the face-to-face interview with the recipient, review the case record for relevant verifications and related information based on the new TAFDC regulations. A case record summary sheet (TAFDC-REV-Summary Sheet) may be used by workers to summarize current information contained in the AFDC case record. See Attachments A through Q for details of the new program regulations and specific implementation procedures (i.e., Attachment H details the policy and procedures to be followed for the Teen Parent cases).
- If the recipient fails to keep the transition interview without good cause and does not contact the worker to reschedule the interview, the worker will:
 - Close the case for failure to appear for a scheduled TAFDC eligibility review, using AR 26.
 - Annotate the printout with the action taken, AR code, and the date of disposition.
- If the recipient is unable to keep the first transition interview appointment and contacts the worker to request another appointment, the worker will:
 - Schedule a subsequent appointment for the earliest possible available date following the canceled appointment; and
 - Advise the recipient that failure to keep the subsequent transition interview appointment without good cause will result in the closing of the case; and

- Annotate the printout with the date of the subsequent appointment.
 - If the recipient fails to keep any interview appointment without good cause, close the case for failure to appear for scheduled TAFDC eligibility review, using AR 26.
 - Annotate the printout with the case action, AR code and date of disposition.
- Note: The transition process must be completed for each case under review within 90 days of the date of the first scheduled appointment. Each recipient shall be given the opportunity to reschedule the transition interview when he or she is unable to attend due to good cause.
- When the transition review form is complete, recipients must read or have read to them the rights and responsibilities section, then sign and date the form.
 - Give the recipient a verification checklist (VC-1) indicating the verifications required to complete the transition process and advise the recipient to submit them within 10 days. If requested, assist the recipient in obtaining the required verifications.
 - Annotate the printout as case pending. (For the purposes of the transition process, pending is defined as a case in which a face-to-face interview has taken place and the case is awaiting final disposition.)
 - Following the face-to-face interview, when a determination of either continued eligibility or ineligibility for TAFDC is made, the worker will:
 - Make the appropriate entries on the PID and PACES worksheet, if necessary;
 - Submit the completed case to the supervisor. (The date the supervisor signs off on the transition review is the completion date of the eligibility review and the date entered in TD BL 37). A system-generated notification letter will be mailed to the recipient; and

- Annotate the printout with the appropriate AR (see Attachment Q) and the target group code. A cover memo will be distributed with each target group printout, instructing local office staff on the codes to be used in the target group column.

Note: If the case is ineligible, submit a PID using the appropriate TAFDC Action Reason to close the case. Be sure that all eligibility criteria have been explored before submitting for closing and notice of review.

- Submit a weekly summary of transition review activities on the TP/TAFDC Summary form to the unit supervisor (i.e., the number of cases reviewed, and of those reviewed, the number eligible, terminated or pending).
- Once the reviews of all the cases in a target group are completed, submit the annotated printout to the unit supervisor.

Supervisor Responsibilities:

- Review each case for accuracy and completeness, sign and date the TP-TAFDC form after its completion by the worker and the recipient.
- Collect transition review activity statistics from each worker in the unit.
- Complete a TP-TAFDC/Summary Form summarizing the unit's activities and submit the form, each Monday morning beginning 11/13/95, to the director or designee responsible for monitoring the office's transition activities.

Director/Director's Designee Responsibility:

- The director or designee collects and summarizes the unit summary forms and sends a fax of the TP-TAFDC/Summary Form with the office totals to his or her regional director in Central Office each Monday morning beginning 11/13/95. The Central Office Fax number is (617) 348-5111.

PA Food Stamp Changes

When a member of the assistance unit is removed from the TAFDC grant for failure to meet a TAFDC program requirement, such as direct deposit, ESP or Work Program requirements, the household remains a PA household for food stamp purposes. The case will also remain the responsibility of the TAFDC worker. The worker will:

- Complete the following entries on the PACES TD:

Block 59: enter N (if appropriate for categorical eligibility)

Block 87: enter code 4

Block 88: enter the effective date of the action

Block 89: enter one of the following sanction action reasons:

Code 27 - failure to cooperate with Work Program requirements

Code 66 - failure to cooperate with Child Support

Code 73 - failure to cooperate with ESP

Code 74 - failure to cooperate with Direct Deposit requirements

Code 79 - not attending school or GED program

Code 81 - failure to cooperate with Learnfare

Code 88 - failure to cooperate with Immunization

Ineligibility codes are found in Attachment Q.

- No other entries are required. PACES will calculate the food stamps based on the reduced TAFDC benefits and change the MA eligibility codes in block 96 to continue MA benefits.

Note: If the person complies with one or more of the above requirements and the sanction is ended, in addition to making the necessary code changes in blocks 87 - 89, the worker must change the code in block 59 back to Y. This will tell PACES that the household is once again categorically eligible for PA food stamps.

Application Process

Under Welfare Reform the basic application process will remain relatively unchanged. The process still includes asking the applicant about and making provisions to meet his or her immediate needs. When a TAFDC application is filed, the worker will complete the current AFDC application form **AND** the TAFDC supplement (TAFDC-APP/SUP). The applicant must sign the TAFDC-APP/SUP instead of the AFDC application. The signature will cover both the application and the supplement. The supplement captures new information required to determine TAFDC eligibility, such as teen parents and immunization. In addition to the "Right to Know" booklet, the worker will give each applicant the TAFDC Program Brochure which explains regulations specific to the new TAFDC program. Program specific procedures are described in Attachments A - Q.

A separate Field Operations Memo is being issued which explains the selection criteria and the procedures for determining whether an applicant will be assigned to the AFDC control group, the TAFDC treatment group or the TAFDC experimental group.

Questions

If you have questions concerning these procedures, your Hotline designee should call the Policy Hotline at (617) 348-8478.

Listing of Attachments

The following attachments will explain the application process and the procedures for implementing the transition of AFDC recipients to the TAFDC program.

Attachment A Exempt/Nonexempt Assistance Units

Attachment B Need and Payment Standards Reduction and Earned Income Disregards

Attachment C Work Program

Attachment D Employment Services Program

Attachment E The Family Cap

Attachment F Disability Review Process for an Exemption

Attachment G Two-Parent Households: Deprivation Factors

Attachment H Teen Parent Requirements

Attachment I Changes to Child Support Requirements

Attachment J Immunizations

Attachment K Learnfare

Attachment L Assets/Value of Vehicles

Attachment M Lump Sum Income Changes

Attachment N Direct Deposit

Attachment O Court Convictions for Fraud

Attachment P Recovery by Wage Assignment

Attachment Q Systems Desk Guide

Exempt and Nonexempt Assistance Units

Exempt Assistance Units

An assistance unit is exempt from the reduced Need and Payment Standards when a grantee meets one of the exemptions listed below. In a two-parent household, both parents must be exempt for the assistance unit to be exempt. There are also restrictions on certain exemptions for two-parent households which are described starting on A-4. To be exempt, a grantee must be:

- (1) disabled;

A grantee who claims to be disabled must provide:

- (a) verification that he or she is in receipt of SSI-Disability, Social Security for disability or MA/DA, or
- (b) a completed Disability Supplement that will be reviewed by the Disability Review Unit to determine if the grantee meets the medical and/or vocational standards in 106 CMR 203.540 and 203.545. See Attachment F for the Disability Review Process for an Exemption.

- (2) essential to the care of one of the following disabled persons living in the home:

- (a) a child,
- (b) the grantee's spouse,
- (c) the child's other parent, or
- (d) the parent(s) or grandparent(s) of: the grantee, the grantee's spouse or the child's other parent;

A grantee who claims to be **essential to the care of a disabled child** must provide:

- (a) verification that the disabled child is in receipt of SSI; and
- (b) written documentation from a competent medical authority as defined in 106 CMR 201.600 using the TAFDC-4 form that specifies the severity of the child's disability, the reason that the grantee is essential to the care of the disabled child and that the grantee must be in the home during normal school

hours to care for this disabled child if this disabled child is of mandatory full time school age.

A grantee who claims to be **essential to the care of any of the other disabled persons listed above** must provide the verifications in (a) and (b) below:

- (a) verification that the disabled person:
 - 1. is a recipient of SSI-Disability, Social Security for disability or MA/DA, or
 - 2. if a recipient of TAFDC, meets the requirements for Incapacity as specified in 106 CMR 203.530, or
 - 3. if not a recipient of TAFDC, has written verification of the disability from the disabled person's competent medical authority as defined in 106 CMR 201.600; and
- (b) written documentation from a competent medical authority as defined in 106 CMR 201.600 using the TAFDC-4 form that specifies the severity of the disability, the reason that the grantee is essential to the care of the disabled person and that the grantee is unable to be employed because he or she must be in the home to care for this disabled person.

- (3) a pregnant woman who meets the TAFDC definition of an eligible pregnant woman as specified in 106 CMR 203.565

(verified by a medical report from a competent medical authority verifying the pregnancy and expected date of delivery);

- (4) a grantee whose youngest child in the assistance unit is under the age of two or the youngest child under the age of two would be in the assistance unit except that he or she is in receipt of SSI

(verified by birth certificate, baptismal record, etc., showing the youngest child in the assistance unit to be under two and proof that the child is in receipt of SSI, if applicable).

Note: A grantee may not claim this exemption for a teen parent's dependent child if that child's parent is living in the home.

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Attachment A-3

- (5) a grantee whose child is living with him or her and is under the age of three months whether or not this child is included in the assistance unit

(verified by birth certificate, baptismal record, etc., showing the child is under three months).

- (6) a teen parent under the age of 20 who is attending school, not beyond high school, full time; or a combination of a full-time GED program and an approved training or employment-related activity for a total of 30 hours per week; or, if living in a teen structured living program, meeting the requirements specified in Attachment H; and meeting the approved living arrangement requirements specified in 106 CMR 203.600;

A teen parent under the age of 20 who is claiming an exemption must verify:

- (a) his or her full time school attendance from a school official; and
- (b) that he or she meets the approved living arrangement requirements specified in 106 CMR 203.600.

See Attachment H for the Teen Parent Requirements.

- (7) an ineligible grantee who does not have a legal obligation to support the child(ren) for whom he or she is receiving assistance

(verified by proof that the ineligible grantee is related to the dependent child as specified in 106 CMR 203.585 and is not the dependent child's parent);

- (8) an ineligible grantee who has a legal obligation to support his or her dependent child(ren) shall not be exempt unless he or she meets one of the exemptions in (1) through (6) above or is unable to work for pay due to his or her alien status.

An ineligible grantee who has a legal obligation to support his or her dependent child(ren) must provide the applicable verification(s) specified in (1) through (6) above for the exemption being claimed or the verification of alien status found in 106 CMR 203.675 if he or she is claiming to be exempt due to his or her inability to work at a job for pay due to his or her alien status.

Two-Parent Household Exemption Restrictions

Both parents in a two-parent household must meet an exemption for the assistance unit to be exempt. The following restrictions on exemptions apply to two-parent households.

Only one parent may claim to be exempt due to:

- essential to the care of one of the following disabled persons living in the home:
 - (a) a child,
 - (b) the grantee's spouse,
 - (c) the child's other parent, or
 - (d) the parent(s) or grandparent(s) of: the grantee, the grantee's spouse or the child's other parent.
- pregnancy;
- the youngest child in the assistance unit is under age 2 or the youngest child under the age of 2 would be in the assistance unit except that he or she is in receipt of SSI; or
- the youngest child in the home is under three months; **AND**

If one parent claims to be a disabled grantee, the other parent cannot claim to be exempt due to:

- being essential to the care of the disabled persons listed in (a) or (d) above; or
- the youngest child in the assistance unit is under age 2 or the youngest child under the age of 2 would be in the assistance unit except that he or she is in receipt of SSI; or
- the youngest child in the home is under three months; **UNLESS**
there is medical documentation that the parent claiming to be a disabled grantee is unable to care for the disabled persons listed in (a) or (d) above or a child under age 2.

If one parent claims to be a disabled grantee, the other parent cannot claim to be exempt due to:

- being essential to the care of the disabled persons listed in (b) or (c) above;
UNLESS

there is medical documentation that the parent claiming to be a disabled grantee is unable to care for him or herself.

If one parent claims to be exempt due to pregnancy, the other parent cannot claim to be exempt due to:

- being essential to the care of any of the disabled persons listed above; or
- the youngest child in the assistance unit is under age 2 or the youngest child under the age of 2 would be in the assistance unit except that he or she is in receipt of SSI; or
- the youngest child in the home is under three months; **UNLESS**

there is medical documentation that the parent exempt due to pregnancy is unable to care for the disabled persons listed in (a) through (d) above or a child under age 2.

Both parents must provide the applicable verification(s) specified earlier in this attachment for exemption (1) through (6) or (8) and the medical documentation that the parent claiming to be disabled or pregnant is unable to care for any of the disabled persons listed in (a) through (d) above or a child under age 2.

Note: If only one or neither parent in a two-parent household meets an exemption, the assistance unit is nonexempt.

Nonexempt Assistance Units

A nonexempt assistance unit is one in which a grantee, ineligible grantee or, in the case of a two-parent household, neither parent meets one of the above exemptions. A nonexempt assistance unit is subject to the 2.75% Need and Payment Standards reduction.

PACES Coding

Once the worker determines whether the assistance unit is exempt or nonexempt, the appropriate PACES coding must be completed on a PACES PID. See Attachment A-7 through A-17 for the Program Codes and Action Reasons.

REMINDERS	
EXEMPT ASSISTANCE UNIT	NONEXEMPT ASSISTANCE UNIT
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Need and Payment Standards NOT reduced by 2.75%	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Need and Payment Standards ARE Reduced by 2.75%
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Earned Income Disregards = \$30 and 1/3	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Earned Income Disregards = \$30 and 1/2

Program Codes

The Program Code:

- shows that the AU is on TAFDC, AFDC or pending a TAFDC eligibility review
- identifies the exempt or nonexempt status of the AU
- in combination with the action reason, alerts PACES to perform the correct eligibility tests and grant calculation and send the appropriate notice(s)

Exempt AUs are not subject to a reduced need and payment standard and are entitled to 30 1/3 for the full eligibility period.

Nonexempt AUs are subject to a reduced need and payment standard and are entitled to 30 1/2 for the full eligibility period.

Control group AUs receive benefits and payments according to the AFDC eligibility rules.

Program Code (cont.)

Program Codes	
Exempt	
Code	Definition
A	Exempt
B	Exempt - but participating in the Full Employment Program (FEP)
C	Exempt - pending disability review
Program Codes	
Nonexempt	
Code	Definition
1	Nonexempt - two-parent family with youngest child in AU under age 2 *
2	Nonexempt - youngest child in AU age 2 to mandatory full-time school age
6	Nonexempt - youngest child in AU mandatory full-time school age
8	Nonexempt - in a two-parent family, participating in FEP when youngest child in AU is under age 2 *
5	Nonexempt - participating in FEP when youngest child in AU age 2 to mandatory full-time school age
7	Nonexempt - participating in FEP when youngest child in AU mandatory full-time school age

* also applies to SSI child under two who would be in AU but for receipt of SSI

Program Code (cont.)

Special Program Codes:

0 = Active case as of implementation pending TAFDC eligibility review

Note: This code is in use only during the transition period.

3 = Control Group

Action Reasons

Action reasons identify the reason for the exempt or nonexempt status of each AU member. A new set of eligibility and ineligibility action reasons has been developed for TAFDC.

The following set of charts connects the eligibility action reasons and program codes by deprivation factor for typical exempt and nonexempt AUs.

For a complete list of action reasons, see Attachment Q.

Nonexempt Recipients	
Action Reason	Description
04	Grandfathered ESP participant Note: If on a waiting list for a component, recipient must meet work program requirements
05	Teen parent who has completed high school or GED program
06	Able-bodied adult 20 years or older
07	Failed to cooperate with the disability process
17	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sanctioned Grantee with a nonexempt program code • Ineligible Alien with a nonexempt program code <p>Note: AR17 requires an entry in TD BL43. See <u>System's User's Guide</u>, Volume I, PACES Appendix B.</p>

Action Reasons (cont.)

Exempt Disabled Recipients	
Action Reason	Description
09	Disabled parent in a two-parent family whose incapacity established a deprivation factor for the AU
10	Disabled parent
12	Both parents disabled

Exempt Recipients Caring for Other Household Members	
Action Reason	Description
13	Adult/parent whose youngest child in AU is under two *
15	Caring for a disabled person
18	Parent of child born after the family cap date when child is under three months

* also applies to SSI child under two who would be in AU but for receipt of SSI.

Action Reasons (cont.)

Other Exempt Recipients	
Action Reason	Description
14	Pregnant (last four months)
16	Teen Parent in high school or attending a full-time GED program and an approved training or employment-related activity (30 hours) or in a teen structured living program
17	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ineligible grantee not legally responsible and not in need • SSI parent • Sanctioned Grantee with an exempt program code • Ineligible Alien with an exempt program code <p>Note: AR17 requires an entry in TD BL43. See <u>System's User's Guide</u>, Volume I, PACES: Appendix B.</p>

Exemptions for Children	
Action Reason	Description
11	Dependent child
82	Dependent born to TAFDC-eligible woman approved for MA until first birthday regardless of mother's continuing eligibility

95-31-B
Attachment A-13

AUs with a Deprivation Factor of Absence or Death		
Single Parent Family		
Situation: Nonexempt and...	Program Code	Action Reason
Youngest child in AU age two to mandatory full-time school age	2	06
Youngest child in AU mandatory full-time school age	6	06
Participating in FEP and youngest child in AU age 2 to mandatory full-time school age	5	06
Participating in FEP and youngest child in AU mandatory full-time school age	7	06
Situation: Disabled Grantee and...	Program Code	Action Reason
Requires review	C	10
Approved as disabled by the DRU	A	10
On SSI	A	17
On SSDI only or MA/DA	A	10
Situation: Caring for a disabled person	A	15
Situation: Pregnant (last four months)	A	14
Situation: Adult/parent whose youngest child in AU is under 2 years*	A	13
Situation: Parent of child born after the family cap date who is under 3 months	A	18

Note: If a grantee in an exempt AU volunteers for FEP, use Program Code B.

* also applies to SSI child under two who would be in AU but for receipt of SSI.

AUs with a Deprivation Factor of Incapacity		
Two-Parent Family		
Situation: Both Parents Disabled and...	Program Code	Action Reason
Each parent on SSDI only or MA/DA	A	12 for each parent
Each parent on SSI	A	17 for ineligible grantee
Both require review	C	12 for each parent
One parent on SSI, the other (casehead) requires review	C	12 parent requiring review
One parent on SSI*, the other on SSDI only or MA/DA	A	12 parent on SSDI or MA/DA
One parent on SSI*, the other approved as disabled by the DRU	A	12 parent approved by DRU
One parent on SSDI only or MA/DA, the other requires review	C	12 for each parent
One parent on SSDI only or MA/DA, the other approved as disabled by the DRU	A	12 for each parent
Situation: One parent caring for a disabled person and...	Program Code	Action Reason
Person receiving care is on SSI*, SSDI only or MA/DA	A	15 09 disabled parent (not on SSI)
Person receiving care requires review	C	15 09 disabled parent

* if parent on SSI is casehead, use AR 17

Note: Send an Exempt/Nonexempt Status Notice to all two-parent households

AUs with a Deprivation Factor of Incapacity		
Two-Parent Family		
Situation: One parent on SSI, SSDI only, MA/DA or approved by the DRU, the other parent is ...	Program Code	Action Reason
<i>See Attachment A-4 for exemption restrictions in a two-parent household</i>		
Nonexempt and youngest child in AU under age 2*	1,8(FEP)	09 Disabled Parent 06 Other Parent
Nonexempt and youngest child in AU between 2 and mandatory full-time school age	2	09 Disabled Parent 06 Other Parent
Nonexempt and youngest child in AU mandatory full-time school age	6	09 Disabled Parent 06 Other Parent
Nonexempt and youngest child in AU between 2 and mandatory full-time school age and participating in the Full Employment Program	5	09 Disabled Parent 06 Other Parent
Nonexempt and youngest child in AU mandatory full-time school age and participating in the Full Employment Program	7	09 Disabled Parent 06 Other Parent
Pregnant (last four months)	A	09 Disabled Parent 14 Other Parent

* also applies to SSI child who would be in AU but for receipt of SSI.

Note: Send an Exempt/Nonexempt Status Notice to all two-parent households

AUs with a Deprivation Factor of Unemployment		
Two-Parent Family		
Situation: One parent unemployed and the other parent is...	Program Code	Action Reason
<i>See Attachment A-4 for exemption restrictions in a two-parent household</i>		
Caring for a disabled person and youngest child in AU under age 2***	1,8*	06** 15
Caring for a disabled person and youngest child in AU between 2 and mandatory full-time school age	2,5*	06** 15
Caring for a disabled person and youngest child in AU mandatory full-time school age	6,7*	06** 15
Caring for the youngest child in AU under age 2***	1,8*	06** 13
Caring for a child born after the family cap date who is under 3 months and youngest child in AU between 2 and mandatory full-time school age	2,5*	06** 18
Caring for a child born after the family cap date who is under 3 months and youngest child in AU mandatory full-time school age	6,7*	06** 18
Pregnant (last four months) and youngest child in AU between 2 and mandatory full-time school age	2,5*	06** 14
Pregnant (last four months) and youngest child in AU mandatory full-time school age	6,7*	06** 14
Youngest child in AU mandatory full-time school age	6,7*	06** 06 other parent

* FEP

** UP

*** also applies to SSI child under two who would be in AU but for receipt of SSI.

Note: Send an Exempt/Nonexempt Status Notice to all two-parent households

Teen Parents (Head of Household)		
Situation: Teen parent is exempt when...	Program Code	Action Reason
Attending school up to high school or attending a full-time GED program and an approved training or employment-related activity for a total of 30 hours per week or in a teen structured living program	A	16
Completed high school or GED and youngest child in AU under 2**	A	13
Pregnant (last four months) and has completed high school or GED	A	14
Caring for a disabled person and has completed high school or GED	A	15
Situation: Teen parent is nonexempt when...		
Youngest child in AU is between 2 and mandatory full-time school age	2,5*	05
Youngest child in AU mandatory full-time school age	6,7*	05

* FEP

** also applies to SSI child under two who would be in AU but for receipt of SSI.

Manual Notices for Two-Parent Families

Each recipient must be notified of his or her individual exemption status (action reason). PACES notices will now include the reason the recipient is exempt or nonexempt for one-parent households.

For two-parent households, the PACES notice will include the exemption status for the AU (program code), along with the grant and food stamp benefit information.

A manual Exempt/Nonexempt Status Notice (TAFDC-5) listing individual exempt or nonexempt status (action reason) must be sent to each two-parent household at:

- TAFDC transitional review
- application
- any change in a recipient's exempt or nonexempt status

When a Disability Review Unit (DRU) referral has been made, the TAFDC-5 should not be sent to the two-parent household until after the DRU has made the decision on the parent's incapacity.

Applications Using Action Reason 03

All applications for TAFDC must be opened on the system immediately using AR 03 with the exception of TMA cases. A TMA case reapplying for TAFDC is opened in the usual manner and should not be entered as an AR 03.

Teen Parent Requirements 203.600 - 203.640

TAFDC defines a teen parent as a person under the age of 20:

- who is a parent with a dependent child; or
- who is in the last four months of her pregnancy if she has no other children.

A teen parent may be a grantee, a dependent child, or not included in the assistance unit in accordance with 106 CMR 204.305(E), e.g., a teen parent in receipt of SSI benefits, for whom foster care maintenance payments are being received, who is an ineligible alien, or who is sanctioned.

To be eligible for TAFDC, a teen parent must meet:

- school attendance requirements; and
- living arrangement requirement. The living arrangement requirements are different for teen parents under age 18 from those who are 18 and 19.

The TAFDC and AFDC programs have different rules for deeming income from the parent(s) of a teen parent under age 18.

Prior to 11/1/95, teen parents who were dependents could not be identified by the system. Any new application or transition review case with a teen parent who is a dependent must have the teen parent coded with a "V" in Block 97 of the PID, to identify teen parents who are not grantees.

Note: The grantee and the teen parent should be interviewed together so that both the grantee and the teen parent are made aware of the TAFDC requirements.

Exceptions to the Teen Parent Requirements

The exceptions to the teen parent requirements include the following:

- A teen parent who gives birth is not subject to the school attendance requirement for the three-month period following the birth of her child.

- A teen parent who applies for TAFDC or is scheduled for a transition review within 60 days of his or her 18th birthday meets the living arrangement requirement if the school attendance requirement is met.
- A teen parent who applies for TAFDC or is scheduled for a transition review within 60 days of his or her 20th birthday is not subject to the teen parent school attendance or living arrangement requirements.

Use the following sections to explain the new requirements for the teen parent at application or at the TAFDC transition review and to properly code the system.

SECTION	PAGE
Exceptions to the Teen Parent Requirements	H-1
School Attendance Requirement for Teen Parents	H-3
Living Arrangement Requirement for Teen Parents	H-7
Living Arrangement Requirement for a Teen Parent Under Age 18	H-7
Living Arrangement Requirement for a Teen Parent Age 18 and 19	H-11
DSS Referral	H-12
Result of DSS Referral	H-14
Structured Living Program for a Teen Parent	H-15
Examples of Teen Parent Living Arrangements	H-16
Deeming Income	H-26
Coding Teen Parents on PACES	H-27
Program Codes and Action Reasons for Teen Parents	H-28
Adding a Teen Parent Participating in an Education Activity or Component to ESP-MIS	H-29

School Attendance Requirement for a Teen Parent at Application and Transition Review

Step 1 Ask the teen parent if he or she is (a) attending school (not beyond high school) full-time including a vocational high school or (b) attending a full-time GED program and participating in an approved training or employment-related activity for a total of 30 hours a week.

If yes, explain to the teen parent that he or she meets the school attendance requirement. The teen parent must also meet the living arrangement requirement. If the living arrangement requirement is met, the teen parent will be exempt from the lower Need and Payment Standards.

Complete an employment development plan (EDP) with the teen parent. Explain to the teen parent that the EDP will remain in effect even if he or she has not completed the EDP by his or her 20th birthday.

Go to Step 3.

If no, go to Step 2.

Step 2 Ask the teen parent if he or she has graduated from high school or completed a GED program.

If yes, explain to the teen parent that he or she meets the school attendance requirement. The teen parent must also meet the living arrangement requirement. If the living arrangement requirement is met, the teen parent will be subject to the lower Need and Payment Standards unless he or she meets one of the other exemptions (e.g., teen parent's youngest child is under age 2).

If no, explain to the teen parent that he or she does not meet the school attendance requirement. The teen parent and his or her child(ren) are ineligible unless the requirement is met.

Assist the teen parent in meeting the requirement, if he or she requests it. Areas where assistance may be needed include child care and transportation.

Step 3 Explain to the teen parent that he or she:

- must verify his or her school attendance each month by submitting a properly completed ESP-7 form.
- is eligible for child care, if needed.
- is required to attend the educational activity full-time. If attendance falls below 75 percent of the actual hours per week without good cause, the grant will be reduced and may stop. The first instance of failure to comply with this requirement will result in a reduction by the amount equal to the teen parent's portion of the grant unless good cause exists. If the noncompliance continues beyond 30 days and for subsequent instances the teen parent and his or her child will be ineligible.

See Attachment H-1 for information on exceptions to the school attendance requirement.

See Attachment H-29 for a description of teen parent school attendance tracking on ESP-MIS.

Failure to Comply with the School Attendance Requirement

At Application

- A. When the teen parent applying as the grantee has not complied with the school attendance requirement within the application timeframes, approve the case for the teen parent's child only and deny TAFDC for the teen parent, using the NFL-5.

If the teen parent applied for food stamps and is eligible, open the food stamps for the teen parent and his or her child as PA or NPA according to the food stamp household composition rules.

Wait 30 days from the date of approval, then contact the teen parent and, if the teen parent is still not meeting the school attendance requirement, begin the closing process by completing a PID with AR 79.

Note: If the teen parent and his or her child are sanctioned, the child's other parent, if living with the teen parent and child(ren), may constitute an assistance unit of one if otherwise eligible.

- B. When the teen parent applying as a dependent child in the assistance unit has not complied with the school attendance requirement within the application timeframes, approve the case (without the teen parent, but include the teen parent's child) and deny TAFDC for the teen parent, using the NFL-5.

If the teen parent is eligible for food stamps, include the teen parent and his or her child in the appropriate PA or NPA household according to food stamp household composition rules.

Wait 30 days from the date of approval, then contact the grantee and if the teen parent is still not meeting the school attendance requirement begin the grant reduction process to remove the teen parent's child by completing a PID with AR 79.

Note: If the teen parent and his or her child(ren) are sanctioned, the grantee, if living with the teen parent and his or her child(ren), may constitute an assistance unit of one if otherwise eligible.

At Transition Review

- A. When the teen parent who is the grantee has not complied with the school attendance requirement within 30 days from the date of the eligibility review, begin the grant reduction process on Day 31 to remove the teen parent by completing a PID with AR 79. The food stamp household determined at the time of the transition review that contains the teen parent and his or her child remains the same.

Wait 30 days after the reduction notice was generated, then contact the teen parent and, if the teen parent is still not meeting the school attendance requirement, begin the closing process by completing a PID with AR 79.

Note: If the teen parent and his or her child are sanctioned, the child's other parent, if living with the teen parent and his or her child, may constitute an assistance unit of one if otherwise eligible.

- B. When the teen parent who is the dependent child in the assistance unit has not complied with the school attendance requirement within 30 days from the date of the eligibility review, begin the grant reduction process on Day 31 to remove the teen parent by completing a PID with AR 79.

The food stamp household determined at the time of the transition review that contains the teen parent and his or her child remains the same.

Wait 30 days after the reduction notice was generated, then contact the grantee and, if the teen parent is still not meeting the school attendance requirement, begin the grant reduction process of the teen parent's child by completing a PID with AR 79.

Note: If the teen parent and his or her child are sanctioned, the grantee, if living with the teen parent and his or her child, may constitute an assistance unit of one if otherwise eligible.

Impact on Food Stamps

When a teen parent's TAFDC case is closing and the teen parent is receiving:

- PA-FS and, if there is sufficient information to continue food stamp eligibility, use food stamp transaction T8. If there is insufficient information to continue food stamp eligibility, use food stamp transaction T6; or
- NPA-FS, be sure to adjust the PA grant amount.

When a teen parent is a dependent child and the teen parent and/or his or her child is being removed from the assistance unit, the teen parent and his or her child remain eligible for food stamps in the teen parent's current food stamp household.

Summary of Teen Parent Living Arrangement Requirement

The teen parent living arrangement requirement is met by living:

- with a parent(s);
- with an adult age 20 or older who meets the relationship requirements of 106 CMR 203.585 for the teen parent and/or the dependent child;
- with a legal guardian;
- in an approved foster care placement;
- independently under specific conditions; or
- in a teen structured living program.

See Attachment H-2 for information on exceptions to the living arrangement requirement.

Living Arrangement Requirement for a Teen Parent under Age 18 at Application and Transition Review

Step 1 Ask the teen parent if he or she lives with his or her parents?

If yes, explain to the teen parent that he or she meets the living arrangement requirement. The teen parent must also meet the school attendance requirement. If the school attendance requirement is met, the teen parent will be eligible.

Note: If the teen parent is unable to remain at home in the future, he or she must advise the worker who will review eligibility and consider making a DSS referral for assessment.

If the parent(s) of the teen parent receives TAFDC, the teen parent and his or her child must be dependents in the parent's assistance unit.

If the parent(s) of the teen parent do not receive TAFDC, the income of the parents must be deemed to the teen parent's assistance unit.

If no, go to Step 2.

Step 2 Ask the teen parent if he or she can live with his or her parents and if he or she agrees to move home.

If yes, see, If yes, from Step 1 above.

If no, determine if the reason that the teen parent is unable to live with his or her parents is because abuse, neglect, addiction to substances, or some other extraordinary circumstance is present, such as, the teen parent refuses to go home. Go to Step 3.

Step 3 Ask the teen parent if he or she lives with or can live with an adult relative age 20 or older, including a relative of the teen parent's child, legal guardian or in an approved foster care placement.

If yes, explain to the teen parent that he or she meets the living arrangement requirement. If the school attendance requirement is also met, the teen parent is eligible.

If no, explain to the teen parent that he or she has the option of living with a range of relatives age 20 or older (see 106 CMR 203.585). If the teen parent does not have an adult relative age 20 or older or legal guardian, go to Step 4.

Step 4 Determine if the teen parent can live independently by meeting the criteria described in (a) or (b) below.

- (a) married and living with a spouse; or
- (b) unmarried, divorced, widowed or married and living apart from a spouse; and
 - there is no known reason the teen parent cannot live independently (DSS must confirm this); and
 - a graduate of a DSS independent living program; and

- attending school full-time not beyond high school, or
participating full-time in a GED program and an approved training or employment-related activity for a total of 30 hours a week; or
a graduate of high school; or
completed a GED program.

If (a) applies, explain to the teen parent that he or she meets the living arrangement requirement. If the school attendance requirement is also met, the teen parent is eligible.

If (b) applies, the teen parent meets the school attendance requirement. Go to Step 5.

If (a) and (b) do not apply, go to Step 6.

Step 5 Explain to the teen parent that to meet the living arrangement requirement that he or she can live independently, a referral to DSS must be made to confirm this.

If there is a reason that the teen parent cannot live independently, DSS will then determine whether the teen parent is unable to return to his or her parent's home because abuse, neglect, addiction to substances, or some other extraordinary circumstance is present.

If the teen parent does not agree to a referral to DSS, he or she is ineligible for TAFDC.

DSS's decision may result in a recommendation for the teen parent's living arrangement, including being required to live in a structured living program.

Step 6 Explain to the teen parent that to meet the living arrangement requirement, a referral to DSS must be made to determine whether the teen parent is unable to return to his or her parent's home because abuse, neglect, addiction to substances, or some other extraordinary circumstance is present.

If the teen parent does not agree to a referral to DSS, he or she is ineligible for TAFDC.

DSS's decision may result in a recommendation for the teen parent's living arrangement, including being required to live in a structured living program.

Note: A teen parent who applies for TAFDC or is scheduled for a transition review within 60 days of his or her 18th birthday meets the living arrangement requirement if the school attendance requirement is met.

See Attachment H-12 for information on the referral to DSS.

See Attachment H-15 for information on a structured living program.

See Attachment H-26 for information on deeming income.

Additional Local Office Worker Responsibilities

The worker must assist the teen parent under age 18 and call the parents and/or other adult relatives age 20 or older or legal guardian to ask if the teen parent can live with them, if the teen parent requests such assistance.

A teen parent who returns home to live with his or her parents or live with other adult relatives age 20 or older or a legal guardian should be advised that if the home situation deteriorates and abuse, neglect, addiction to substances, or some other extraordinary circumstance is present, the teen parent should advise the worker immediately.

Failure to Comply with the Living Arrangement Requirement

If the teen parent is an applicant and has not complied with the living arrangement requirement within the application timeframes, deny the case using an NFL-5.

If the teen parent is in the TAFDC transition process and has not complied with the living arrangement requirement within 30 days from the date of the eligibility review, begin the closing process on day 31 by initiating a system-generated notice using AR 87. If there is sufficient information to continue food stamp eligibility, use food stamps transaction T8. If there is insufficient information to continue food stamp eligibility, use food stamps transaction T6.

Living Arrangement Requirement for a Teen Parent Age 18 and 19

A teen parent age 18 or 19 who meets the school attendance requirement (see Attachment H-3 through H-4) also meets the living arrangement requirement.

A teen parent age 18 or 19 may live independently when one of the following applies:

- attending school full-time not beyond high school; or
- participating full time in a GED program and an approved training or employment related activity for a total of 30 hours a week; or
- a graduate of high school; or
- completed a GED program.

A referral to DSS to confirm that there is no reason the teen parent cannot live independently is not required unless a worker suspects there may be abuse, neglect, addiction to substances, or some extraordinary circumstance is present in the teen parent's home.

Note: A teen parent who applies for TAFDC or is scheduled for a transition review within 60 days of his or her 20th birthday is not subject to the teen parent school attendance or living arrangement requirements.

DSS Referral

A referral to the Department of Social Services (DSS) is made to confirm that:

- there is no known reason that the teen parent under age 18 cannot live independently: and/or
- a teen parent under age 18 cannot live in the home of his or her parent(s) because abuse, neglect, addiction to substances, or some extraordinary circumstance is present.

The teen parent must agree to a DSS referral.

Note: If DSS confirms there is no reason that the teen parent cannot live independently and the teen parent meets the other criteria to live independently, then a review of the home of the parents of the teen is not necessary.

The DSS referral process is explained below.

The local office worker:

- explains to the teen parent the reasons a DSS referral is required;
- completes the Referral for Assessment and forwards it to the local office director/designee.

The local office director/designee faxes the Referral for Assessment to the Central Office Teen Parent Liaison as soon as possible but no later than the following day.

The Central Office Teen Parent Liaison:

- receives the Referral for Assessments from local offices and faxes it to the DSS Network Coordinator;
- monitors timeliness of the response from DSS;
(DSS will respond to a referral within 15 work days.)

**Coding Teen
Parents on
PACES**

PACES codes track and monitor teen parents, especially those teen parents who are dependents in another TAFDC case. These are in addition to the eligibility review date, the program code and action reason (see the chart on the next page) required for the TAFDC eligibility review.

**Block 97:
Marital Status/
Relationship**

See Appendix B of the *Systems User's Guide, Volume 1: PACES* for the existing codes. The new codes are:

X = Nonaided dependent in household (system-generated for dependents numbered 01-49 with a C0 transaction)

V = Teen parent who is a dependent child with his or her own dependent child

W = Dependent child of a teen parent who is a dependent child

Note: Codes V and W are required for a teen parent and his or her child if the teen parent is a dependent child at the transition review or (re)application.

**Blocks 98-100:
Education, Work
Experience,
Hourly Wage
and Last Year
Employed**

Use the existing codes found in the TD block descriptions in Chapter 3 of the *Systems User's Guide, Volume 1: PACES*.

**Block 101A:
Teen Living
Arrangement
(Enter to the
right of Block
101 and circle)**

Enter one of the following codes for each teen parent (grantee or dependent) and her child(ren) at the transition review or (re)application:

I = Living Independently

P = Living with parents

R = Living with an adult relative over 20

S = Living in a structured setting

T = Living independently and awaiting structured setting placement

Program Code and Action Reasons for Teen Parent (Head of Household)		
Situation: Teen parent is exempt when...	Program Code	Action Reason
Attending school up to high school or attending a full-time GED program and an approved training or employment-related activity for a total of 30 hours per week or in a teen structured living program	A	16
Completed high school or GED and youngest child in AU under 2**	A	13
Pregnant (last four months) and has completed high school or GED	A	14
Caring for a disabled person and has completed high school or GED	A	15
Situation: Teen parent is nonexempt when...		
Youngest child in AU is between 2 and mandatory full-time school age	2,5*	05
Youngest child in AU mandatory full-time school age	6,7*	05

* FEP

** also applies to SSI child under two who would be in AU but for receipt of SSI.

Changes To Child Support Requirements 203.700 - 203.790

The information the grantee or teen parent who is not the grantee must submit to demonstrate cooperation and continued cooperation in establishing paternity or establishing, modifying or enforcing a child support order unless good cause exists is different in TAFDC from AFDC.

The grantee or teen parent who is not the grantee will be deemed not to have cooperated if he or she does not furnish verifiable information about the noncustodial parent (commonly referred to as the absent parent) and the grantee or teen parent who is not the grantee does not have good cause for not doing so. If both of the parents are absent, the information must be furnished for at least one of the absent parents. If information is available for both absent parents, the information on the second absent parent should also be collected.

When the grantee or teen parent who is not the grantee is deemed not to have cooperated, he or she will be subject to a sanction as defined in 106 CMR 203.770.

The information required on an absent parent is his or her:

- FULL NAME (first and last) **and** SSN; or
- FULL NAME (first and last) **and** two of the following:

Date of birth	Telephone #	Employer name & address
Address	Parents' names	Vehicle manufacturer model & license #

The information submitted on an absent parent must be detailed. For example.

FULL ADDRESS	123 Main St. Apt #A2, Boston, MA
FULL DATE OF BIRTH	May 17, 1970
VEHICLE MANUFACTURER	Ford
MODEL &	Escort
LICENSE PLATE #	CAR 123
FULL EMPLOYER INFORMATION	Name: ABC Company Address: 902 Oak Street, Danvers, MA

or

- FULL NAME (first and last) **and** one or more items of information DOR accepts as equivalent for child support enforcement purposes.

The requirements for establishing good cause have not changed. The DTA worker's responsibilities in the good cause determination continue.

See Attachment I-3 for determining an applicant's eligibility.

See Attachment I-5 for a case in the TAFDC transition process.

Child Support Requirements at Application

Step 1 Does the grantee or teen parent who is not the grantee claim good cause for not cooperating with the child support requirements?

If yes, begin the good cause determination process. Refer to 106 CMR 203.740 through 203.775.

Note: Do not refer the case to DOR until the determination that good cause for not cooperating does not exist or there is good cause for not cooperating but DOR can proceed without risk or harm to the relative or child if activities do not involve their participation.

If no, go to Step 2.

Step 2 Complete the entire CA/CS section of the application. Explain the requirement that to be included in the assistance unit the grantee or teen parent who is not the grantee must provide certain information about the absent parent.

The required information is the full name of the absent parent and his/her social security number or the full name and at least two of the following items pertaining to the absent parent: (a) date of birth; (b) address; (c) telephone number; (d) name and address of employer; (e) names of parents; and (f) manufacturer, model and license plate number of any vehicle or the full name and one or more items of information which DOR determines is equivalent to the information listed above. Go to Step 3.

Step 3 Is the grantee or teen parent who is not the grantee able to provide the required information detailed in Step 2 on the CA/CS?

If yes, open the case including the grantee or teen parent who is not the grantee, if otherwise eligible.

Refer the case to DOR. At the top of the CA/CS indicate "Application and Control or TAFDC." DOR will verify the information and respond.

Go to Step 4.

If no, the grantee or teen parent who is not the grantee has been deemed not to have cooperated without good cause and is therefore ineligible and sanctioned in accordance with 203.700(C). Send a denial notice for the grantee or teen parent who is not the grantee only using the NFL-5.

Note: A pregnant woman applying only for herself may not be sanctioned for failure to cooperate until her baby is born, unless she agrees to cooperate at that time.

Refer the case to DOR. At the top of the CA/CS indicate "Application and Control or TAFDC." Be sure the CA/CS contains whatever information about the absent parent that is known. The grantee or teen parent who is not the grantee is ineligible until DOR reports he or she has submitted the required information.

Step 4 Does DOR's response indicate the information submitted was accurate and verifiable?

If yes, no further action is required at this time.

If no, the grantee or teen parent who is not the grantee has been deemed not to have cooperated without good cause and is therefore ineligible and sanctioned in accordance with 106 CMR 203.700(C). Begin the grant reduction process by submitting a TD using AR 66.

Child Support Requirements at Transition Review

Step 1 Complete the entire CA/CS for each absent parent. Explain the requirement that to be included in the assistance unit the grantee or teen parent who is not the grantee must provide certain information about the absent parent.

The required information is the full name of the absent parent and his/her social security number or the full name and at least two of the following items belonging to the absent parent: (a) date of birth; (b) address; (c) telephone number; (d) name and address of employer; (e) names of parents; and (f) manufacturer, model and license plate number of any vehicle or the full name and one or more items of information which DOR determines is equivalent to the information listed above. Go to Step 2.

Step 2 Is the grantee or teen parent who is not the grantee able to provide the required information on the CA/CS?

If yes, refer the case to DOR. At the top of the CA/CS indicate "Transition Review and Control or TAFDC." DOR will verify the information. Go to Step 3.

If no, the grantee or teen parent who is not the grantee is deemed not to have cooperated unless good cause exists and is therefore ineligible and sanctioned in accordance with 106 CMR 203.700(C). Begin the grant reduction process by submitting a TD using AR 66, if the grantee or teen parent who is not the grantee is included in the assistance unit.

Refer the case to DOR. At the top of the CA/CS indicate "Transition review and Control or TAFDC." Be sure the CA/CS contains whatever information about the absent parent that is known. The grantee or teen parent who is not the grantee is ineligible until DOR reports he or she has submitted the required information.

Step 3 Did DOR's response indicate the information submitted was accurate and verifiable?

If yes, no further action is required at this time.

If no, the grantee or teen parent who is not the grantee is deemed not to have cooperated unless good cause exists and is therefore ineligible and sanctioned in accordance with 106 CMR 203.700(C). Begin the grant reduction process by submitting a TD using AR 66, if the grantee or teen parent who is not the grantee is included in the AU.

Learnfare 203.900

Requirement

A dependent child under the age of 14 must attend school regularly. Verification must be obtained that each dependent child under age 14 has met certain school attendance requirements. A dependent child, under age 14, of a nondisabled grantee must not have more than eight unexcused absences during the previous 45-day school quarter.

The Department has developed an automated system to obtain all necessary verifications directly from the school. The grantee will have an opportunity to dispute any information obtained from the school which results in probation or a sanction, when the grantee believes the information is incorrect.

Unexcused Absences

An absence is considered unexcused if the absence(s) is not due to one of the following reasons:

- illness as certified by a physician or a written statement from the grantee if the illness was less than five consecutive school days;
- hospitalization as certified by hospital records;
- a disability that would meet an exemption specified in 106 CMR 203.100;
- death of a family member as verified by a death certificate or death notice;
- religious holidays; and
- a crisis situation approved by the director or designee.

In most instances the school will make this determination. If a grantee disputes a report from the school, the grantee must demonstrate that the absence met one of the above reasons.

Probationary Status

A nondisabled grantee will be placed in a probationary status when his or her dependent child has more than eight unexcused absences in the previous 45-day school quarter.

The dependent child's school attendance must be verified each month during the probationary period. The dependent child may not have more than three unexcused absences during any month in the probationary period.

The Department will notify the grantee and the school when the grantee is placed in probationary status. The grantee will have the opportunity to dispute the information concerning unexcused absences with the Department.

The grantee shall remain in probationary status for six months or until such time the number of unexcused absences during the six preceding school months does not exceed 10 school days, whichever is later.

Sanctions

If a dependent child has more than three unexcused absences during any month in the probationary period, the dependent child must be sanctioned and the cash benefits reduced by an amount equal to the dependent child's portion of the assistance grant. Use AR 81 to start the sanction period for the dependent child. When the school attendance records for the dependent child are received the following month, the decision will be made to continue the sanction or include the dependent child in the assistance unit based on his or her attendance record.

Note: If the only dependent child is sanctioned, the grantee may constitute an assistance unit of one if otherwise eligible.

The Department will notify the school and the Department of Social Services (DSS) when a dependent child has been sanctioned for three consecutive months. The purpose of these notifications is to obtain assistance in addressing the problems associated with the child's inadequate school attendance.

Learnfare Liaison

Each local office will have a Learnfare Liaison. This ensures that schools (public, parochial and private) that have enrolled children covered by a local office area will have only one local office contact.

Responsibilities of the Learnfare Liaison are to:

- collect quarterly information about enrolled students;
- collect information for students requiring monthly reporting of absences;
- monitor probationary periods;
- inform local office workers about beginning and ending sanctions; and
- contact the school and the Department of Social Services (DSS) when a dependent child has been sanctioned for three consecutive months.

Learnfare Tracking System

The Learnfare tracking system allows workers to inquire about dependents who meet the Learnfare select criteria, add dependent school information and track probation periods and monthly school attendance. Exclusions to Learnfare include any case or dependent coded with Program Code 3 and disabled grantees coded with Action Reasons 10 or 12.

School Listing Application

As part of the Learnfare Tracking system, a PC application titled School Listing has been developed, which consists of a statewide listing of schools and corresponding identification numbers. A school identification number must be entered for each dependent.

The Learnfare Tracking system is driven by school ID codes. The schools and their respective codes have been compiled onto a file that has been loaded onto the personal computers in the office. This comprehensive file lists schools by local office and/or statewide. The schools are sorted by city and town. The listing includes the school name, address, ID and phone number.

Report Process

Learnfare will generate letters and reports directly to schools which identify students/dependents at that school who are subject to the school attendance reporting requirement. The reports will include names of children of new applicants and recipients whose cases were reviewed for TAFDC eligibility in the previous month.

After the initial run of the reports, they will be updated monthly and sent to local schools to provide them with identifying information on any child whose name should be added to or deleted from the list of students subject to the school attendance reporting requirement. Schools must report back on attendance of students with more than eight unexcused absences. Schools should annotate the report and send it to DTA. If the schools prefer to use another system, including an automated report, they may do so as long as all of the identifying information is included for each child on each attendance report. These reports must be submitted to the Learnfare liaison at the local office by the school within 14 calendar days at the end of a 45-day period.

Additional Documentation

Additional documentation for accessing and using the Learnfare Tracking System is contained in Systems User's Guide, Volume 5: Subsystems, Chapter V. Documentation for accessing and using the School Listing application can be found in the Personal Computer User's Guide, Volume 3: Learnfare User's Guide, Chapter I.