

From the DTA Policy/Procedure Mailbox

If you have any questions on this column or other policy and procedural material, please have your manager or supervisor email the **DTA Mailbox**.

As we approach National Domestic Violence Awareness month, the questions and answers below address concerns and common misconceptions associated with domestic violence. For more information on domestic violence procedures, refer to the Online Guide, Cross Program topic, Domestic Violence book and Domestic Violence Unit and Services page. For information on TAFDC good cause waivers due to domestic violence, refer to 106 CMR 203.110 and the Online Guide, TAFDC topic, Services book, Good Cause Criteria book and page.

- Q. 1.** Can SNAP clients who are conducting business in DTA offices get help from the Department's Domestic Violence (DV) Specialists, even though they may not be receiving TAFDC?
- A. 1.** Yes. DTA's DV Specialists will speak with any in-office individuals who need information or referrals to domestic violence-related resources and services.
- Q. 2.** Can any DTA client be referred to the on duty DV Specialist?
- A. 2.** No. A referral to the DV Specialist on duty is for SNAP-only and non-DTA clients who contact DTA's Assistance Line. Clients who are requesting service in-person or are in receipt of cash assistance must be referred to that TAO's DV Specialist. It is important to try to connect a client in need of DV-related services to the DV Specialist in their area, as they are most familiar with the resources available.
- Q. 3.** If the SNAP client on the DTA Assistance Line does not want to leave a message for a DV Specialist, are there other places this client can call for help?
- A. 3.** Yes. If a client needs immediate assistance they should contact SafeLink at 1-877-785-2020. SafeLink is a state-wide 24-hour confidential hotline. Be sure to provide the DV Specialist's name and phone number so that the client may call directly if he or she desires at a later time. Of, course a referral must be made to the DV Specialist anytime a client indicates domestic violence or that they are in an unsafe situation.
- Q. 4.** BEACON indicated a heightened level of security (HLS) for a client whose name appeared on my phone queue. Can I forward this phone call to a domestic violence specialist for help and information?
- A. 4.** No. Clients who request the HLS indicator are told that no information regarding their case will be discussed over the telephone with the client or with anyone else. This restriction includes the inability to talk on the phone with the DV Specialist, as well as other central office or Department staff. For more information on the HLS indicator, refer to the Online Guide, Cross Program topic, Heightened Level of Security book.