



Commonwealth of Massachusetts
Executive Office of Health and Human Services
Department of Transitional Assistance
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Field Operations Memo 2007- 45
September 17, 2007

To: Transitional Assistance Office Staff
From:  John Augeri, Assistant Commissioner for Field Operations
Re: TAFDC: DTA Orientation Sessions

Background

The Department is dedicated to providing services and opportunities to families to help them become more self-sufficient. To that end, beginning April, 2007, DTA implemented Orientation Sessions in TAOs statewide.

These Orientation Sessions uniformly communicate to TAFDC applicants and clients information about DTA programs and support services, especially, ESP opportunities available to them.

In addition, the sessions provide a consistent message about TAFDC program requirements as well as DTA's commitment to helping clients successfully participate in TAFDC programs that result in meaningful employment and lasting economic stability.

Purpose of Memo

This memo:

- promotes the use of the PowerPoint presentation as a tool for DTA Orientation Sessions; and
 - details a standardized format for conducting DTA Orientation Sessions.
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Overview

Each TAO must plan and conduct Orientation Sessions on a regular basis. TAO management will designate TAO staff to plan and facilitate the sessions.

To inform TAFDC applicants and clients about the availability of Orientation Sessions, DTA developed an Orientation Sessions poster (Attachment A). Each TAO received one poster in English and one in Spanish to display in the TAO reception area. The posters are laminated and erasable and should be used to advertise the day and time when sessions are being held in the TAO.

Additionally, an invitation card (Attachment B), in English and Spanish, has been developed to be given to or mailed to applicants and clients inviting them to attend a DTA Orientation Session.

Note: An invitational letter is in development and will be available for use in the future.

For each session, TAO management should invite guest representatives from all ESP providers, Department of Revenue-Child Support Enforcement (DOR-CSE), Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies (CCR&Rs) and transportation vendors to make a brief presentation about their services. They may provide brochures and other resource materials as hand-outs for session attendees. Agency representatives may also meet individually with attendees interested in the agency's services immediately after each session. When an agency is unable to send a representative, the TAO facilitator(s) may provide an overview to attendees of that agency's services.

The PowerPoint Presentation

Each TAO has a PowerPoint presentation, located in the "W" Drive, in the folder entitled "Orientation." Currently, the presentation is available in English only. However, a Spanish version is in development. You will be notified when it becomes available.

The PowerPoint presentation provides attendees with an overview of DTA programs, support services and ESP opportunities in a visual format. Use of the presentation during the sessions ensures that attendees statewide receive uniform information about DTA programs and services.

Once the PowerPoint presentation is completed, provider agency representatives and TAO facilitators will deliver more in-depth presentations about the programs, services and opportunities, using TAO area-specific resources.

**TAO Staff
Responsibilities**

TAO Directors/designees are responsible to ensure that DTA Orientation Sessions are offered according to the operational needs of the TAO. Sessions should be planned and coordinated utilizing input of all TAO staff, including Assistant Directors, the Full Engagement Worker, available AU Supervisors and AU Managers, and administrative support staff.

TAO Directors/designees and TAO staff should:

- decide how often to conduct sessions;
- designate staff to facilitate each session;
- make connections with all ESP providers, DOR-CSE, CCR&Rs and area transportation vendors, and coordinate their attendance at sessions; and
- determine how and when to hold sessions for Spanish-speaking applicants and clients, if needed, as well as sessions using interpreters for applicants and clients whose primary speaking languages are other than English or Spanish.

**Standardized
Orientation
Sessions
Format**

For consistency, all TAOs should use the following standardized format when conducting Orientation Sessions.

The facilitator should:

- ◆ introduce him/herself and representatives from other agencies;
- ◆ explain the purpose of the DTA Orientation Sessions;
- ◆ tell attendees what to expect during the sessions;
- ◆ introduce and run the PowerPoint presentation;
- ◆ facilitate/coordinate the representatives' presentations;
- ◆ distribute hand-outs;
- ◆ allow a brief question and answer period;
- ◆ briefly summarize the material presented; and
- ◆ invite attendees to meet with the guest agency/provider representatives.

Applicants and clients should meet with guest agency/provider representatives immediately at the conclusion of the session. It is the facilitator's responsibility to identify appropriate meeting space(s), ensure that BEACON referrals are generated, as needed, and encourage and arrange follow-up with the AU Manager or Full Engagement Worker.

**Orientation
Date Field**

Beginning October 1, 2007, the Department will begin using the “Orientation Date” field on the BEACON TAFDC Work Requirements window. The Full Engagement Worker/Director designee should enter the date that the applicant or client attends an orientation session, in this field.

**Obsolete
Memo**

Field Operations Memo 2007-9: “BEACON TAFDC Work Requirements Window – Orientation Date Field” is obsolete.

Questions

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

DTA Orientation Sessions

Let's work together.

VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING • JOB SEARCH ASSISTANCE • POST EMPLOYMENT SUPPORT

Believing you can.

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSITIONAL ASSISTANCE



Vocational Education and Training

Job Search Assistance

Post Employment Support

See your worker to sign up!!!

Day: _____

Time: _____

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Day: _____

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