

From the Hotline

- Q. Does a combination (SSFSP/FS) case receive more FS benefits than an FS-only or SSFSP-only case, since less income is counted due to the proration rule?
- A. No. All three types of households will receive the same amount of food stamp benefits. The SSFSP is funded at 100 percent of the federal level. Just the allocation will be different, as the chart below shows.

Assistance Unit Size 3 Unearned Income 565 Shelter 500 Utilities 330				
AU Type	FS Only	SSFSP Only	Combination #1	Combination #2
	3 Federal members	3 SSFSP members	1 Federal member 2 SSFSP members	2 Federal members 1 SSFSP member
Allotment Level	282	282	FS 125 SSFSP 157 282	FS 202 SSFSP 80 282

- Q. How is the asset value of "leased vehicles" determined for food stamp benefits? A significant down payment is made to reduce the monthly lease rates. Would the down payment, equity or fair market value then be considered an asset or does the leased vehicle have no countable asset value for food stamp purposes?

- A. There is no countable asset value for leased vehicles for food stamp purposes. Fair market or equity value would not be counted since the vehicle is not owned by the recipient. The down payment is noncountable since it is spent and no longer available to the recipient.

- Q. Recipients in my caseload have begun to receive income tax refunds. How are income tax refunds counted?

- A. For TAFDC, tax refunds (exclusive of the Earned Income Credit) are a countable asset, but not countable income. See 106 CMR 204.120(I).

For food stamp benefit purposes, income tax refunds are treated as nonrecurring lump sum payments. These payments are counted as an asset in the month received. See 106 CMR 363.130(E).

- Q. A recipient has requested an extension of benefits beyond the 24-month period and has come into the office during the first week of month 25. She has just started her job and has two weeks of pay stubs. Should I wait until she has four weeks of pay stubs before I calculate her financial eligibility for the extension?

- A. No. The recipient must provide verification of the four most recent weeks' wages during the first week of month 25. Therefore, since the four most recent week's wages are the two pay stubs, the financial eligibility for an extension is based on the two pay stubs the recipient provided.

For recipients working greater than 35 hours per week (Program Code "4" cases) submit a PACES Worksheet with the wages entered in FIW2 Section, as well as any other countable earned or unearned income that the assistance unit receives. DO NOT enter zeroes for weeks with no wages reported.

For recipients working fewer than 35 hours per week (Program Code "9" cases), do an online calculation with the wages entered in

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F1W2 Section as well as any other countable earned or unearned income that the assistance unit receives. DO NOT enter zeroes for weeks with no wages reported.

Q. If a household member is unemployed and has voluntarily quit during the 60 days before applying for food stamp benefits, does the disqualification penalty (*first violation: 3 months; second violation: 6 months; third violation: 12 months*) begin from the date of application or date of the voluntary quit?

A. The penalty is imposed from the date of the voluntary quit. See CMR 362.340 and 106 CMR 367.800.

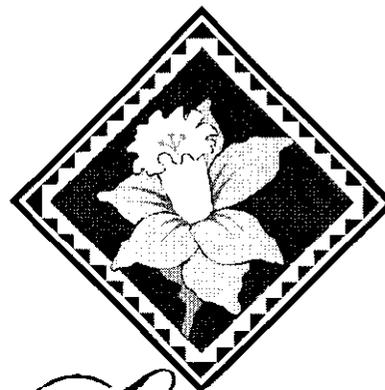
Q. An individual subject to FS/ET completes the job search requirements within 60 days. According to food stamp policy, the FS/ET requirement has been met for 12 months. If the case closes and the individual reapplies within the 12 months, must the FS/ET requirement be met at reapplication?

A. No. The FS/ET requirement has been met for 12 consecutive months. See CMR 106 CMR 362.310 (D)(3).

Deeming of Income and Assets for a Sponsored Noncitizen

TAFDC, FS State Letter 1174

- The new TAFDC and Food Stamp deeming regulations are for sponsored noncitizens with an affidavit of support effective on or after 12/19/97. Existing TAFDC and Food Stamp deeming regulations remain in effect for sponsored noncitizens with an affidavit of support effective before 12/19/97.
- When a Transitional Assistance Worker has a TAFDC or FS noncitizen who is sponsored and is not otherwise exempt from these provisions in accordance with State Letter 1174, the hotline designee should call the Policy Hotline at (617) 348-8478 for assistance in determining the noncitizen's eligibility and benefit amount.
- At review or recertification, cases containing sponsored noncitizens must be checked to determine if the new deeming regulations apply. If the recipient has an affidavit of support effective on or after 12/19/97, the new deeming rules must be implemented.
- Sponsored noncitizen deeming requirements do not apply to the Supplemental TAFDC (STAFDC) or State Supplemental Food Stamp Program (SSFSP).



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