

## Referrals for Outreach Services for Teen Parents - TAFDC

### TAFDC Field Operations Memo 99-9

The types of teen parent cases which must be referred for Outreach Services have been expanded. The cases that must be referred are:

- a teen parent under age 20 whose TAFDC case closed or who is denied TAFDC;
- any teen parent who has left a Structured Living Program (also known as Teen Living Programs or TLPs) before completing the program;
- any teen parent who DSS determines should be referred to a TLP, but who has opted to live with an adult relative or guardian, including those assessed by DSS before the effective date of this memo; and
- any other teen parent determined in need of the Outreach Services, including *all* teen parents under the age of 16 except those living in a TLP.

As of June 1, 1999, the Central Office Teen Parent Liaison will no longer send teen parent referrals to the Department of Social Services; referrals already sent into Central Office during April or May will be completed by DSS. However, beginning this month all Teen Parent Referral forms faxed into Central Office will be handled by the Department of Public Health's F.O.R. Families Program.

### **Systems User's Guide Update 138**

#### TAFDC, EAEDC, SSI Volume 2: FMCS User's Guide Appendix A: SSI Payment Status Codes

Additional SSI Payment Status codes have been included in Appendix A of the *FMCS User's Guide*. These codes on the SDX file indicate that recipients are not eligible for SSI.

## From the Hotline

- Q. I have a case in which the SDX Inquiry - Income Screen shows two different SSI amounts. Which is the correct amount to use if updating PACES?
- A. For food stamp purposes, always update PACES with the lower amount if the amounts on the SDX Inquiry - Income Screen are different.

Unlike the Department, SSA does not necessarily make a determination with regard to fault or fraud when establishing a recoupment for an overpayment. Food stamp regulations 106 CMR 363.220(C)(4) state that recouped monies are *counted* only if the household **intentionally** failed to comply with the requirement of a federal or state needs-based program. Since SSA does not always make a determination of intentional failure to comply, it is safer to use the lower amount.

*Note:* The Monthly SDX/BENDEX Update always updates PACES with the lower SSI amount.

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- Q. If an SSI case is being *recouped due to an overpayment*, should "FS Income" be entered to prevent an increase in the food stamp allotment?
- A. No. SSA does not sanction SSI recipients for failing to comply with a program requirement. If an SSI recipient is overpaid, SSA establishes a recoupment.
- Since a failure to comply with a cash program administered by our own Department was *limited to* sanction reasons, Transitional Assistance Workers should not add the "FS Income" on an SSI case.
- Q. A family of noncitizens in the U.S. as refugees under section 207 of the INA applied for food stamp benefits. Three of the family members entered the U.S. in August 1995 but the father has been here since June 1993. Are they all eligible for federal food stamp benefits?
- A. Yes, the AREERA noncitizen changes amended the federal welfare reform law by extending the eligibility of certain noncitizens including refugees from five to seven years. See State Letter 1166 and food stamp policy at 106 CMR 362.220.

## FYI

### Domestic Violence Waiver

If a recipient is requesting a domestic violence waiver even though the batterer is, for example, in prison and presents no immediate physical threat to the recipient, the Transitional Assistance Worker should remember the following:

Regardless of the circumstances, a recipient may always request a waiver of program requirements due to domestic violence. In this situation, the Department would consider this waiver request because, although the recipient may not face any physical harm, the recipient or the recipient's child may be at risk of continuing emotional harm. The work program requirement may also unfairly penalize the recipient or child due to the trauma either may still be suffering.

Although it is the Transitional Assistance Worker's responsibility to make certain the recipient understands which rules apply and the type of documentation appropriate, under no circumstances should a Transitional Assistance Worker discourage a recipient from completing a waiver request or require that specific documentation be submitted. Even if no documentation is submitted, the request must be forwarded to Central Office within ten days of receipt.

Any recipient who wishes to request a waiver due to domestic violence must be allowed to complete the process. For more details, see 106 CMR 203.110 and Field Operations Memo 98-40.

### Changes to the *PRISM II User's Guide* for SSA Alerts Beginning June 1, 1999

#### All *PRISM II User's Guide* Update 022

The explanation for the SSA Alerts on PRISM II is being clarified. The data element of SSN is being eliminated as an option in the "SSA Demographic Info Correct" and "DTA Demographic Info Correct" alert responses explanation. If the Transitional Assistance Worker corrects the SSN, "SSN Corrected" is the alert response to use.