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**Fax 97- 136**

**Field Operations Memo 97-55**  
**September 10 , 1997**

**To:** Local Office Staff  
**From:** Joyce Sampson, Assistant Commissioner for Field Operations  
**Re:** State Supplemental Food Stamp Benefits for September and October

**Background**

Under the 1997 Emergency Supplemental Appropriations Act, signed by President Clinton on June 12, 1997, states were given the option to issue state-funded food stamp benefits to certain individuals made ineligible by federal welfare reform. On July 11, 1997, Governor Weld signed into law a State Supplemental Food Stamp Program (SSFSP) for certain noncitizens.

This Field Operations Memo:

- ◆ explains how SSFSP benefits will be issued for the initial months of September and October;
- ◆ describes the notice that SSFSP-eligible noncitizens will receive;
- ◆ reminds workers to adjust the Filing Unit Block in the FIW1 section of the Worksheet when making changes to the case;
- ◆ modifies Field Operations Memo 97-47A instructions regarding PA/FS cases containing noncitizens with expired or future end certification dates; and
- ◆ informs workers that effective November 1, 1997, PACES will calculate and issue SSFSP benefits in accordance with 106 CMR 364.600(C).

**SSFSP Benefits  
for September  
and October**

In the initial months of September and October the amount of SSFSP benefits is \$24 for each SSFSP-eligible noncitizen in the household. PACES will select the number of noncitizens eligible for SSFSP from the entry in the Filing Unit Block and multiply it by \$24.

SSFSP benefits for the months of September and October will be issued to the household as an EBT SSFSP benefit which is limited to the purchase of food.

- ◆ September EBT SSFSP benefits will be issued on September 29, 1997 for each case that has been determined eligible for SSFSP and identified on PACES by an entry in the Filing Unit Block. Refer to Field Operations Memo 97-47A for SSFSP coding instructions. **Cases containing SSFSP-eligible noncitizens must be coded with an entry in the Filing Unit Block on or before September 25, 1997. Only those cases with an entry in the Filing Unit Block on PACES will receive SSFSP benefits for September.**
  
- ◆ October EBT SSFSP benefits will be issued on October 24, 1997 for each case that has been determined eligible for the SSFSP and identified on PACES by an entry in the Filing Unit Block. Refer to Field Operations Memo 97-47A for SSFSP coding instructions. **Cases with SSFSP-eligible noncitizens (re)applying after September 25, 1997 must be coded with an entry in the Filing Unit Block on or before October 23, 1997. Only those cases with an entry in the Filing Unit Block on PACES will receive SSFSP benefits for October.**

EBT SSFSP benefits will be transferred to the food stamp head of household in addition to any cyclical cash or food stamp benefits the household will receive.

The EBT SSFSP benefit amount for the household will be identified on the Checks Issued Screen (CHEK) as a type "S" payment. EBT SSFSP benefits which are not accessed will be listed on the 30, 60 and 90 day reports. Refer to Field Operations Memos 97-17 and 97-46 for further instructions.

EBT SSFSP benefits for September and October will not be prorated in accordance with 106 CMR 364.650 based on the date of (re)application and will not be issued as an expedited service. The benefit issued will be a flat amount of \$24 for each SSFSP-eligible noncitizen. Do not issue retrospective SSFSP benefits to cases without an entry in the Filing Unit Block by the date specified above. Further instructions will follow.

**Notices for  
September  
and October**

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Notices will be sent to SSFSP cases receiving benefits for September and/or October. Attachment A will be mailed during the week of September 29, 1997 and Attachment B will be mailed during the week of October 27, 1997. These notices:

- ◆ introduce the State Supplemental Food Stamp Program;
- ◆ describe that SSFSP benefits will be issued as an EBT benefit and the amount being issued for each SSFSP eligible noncitizen;
- ◆ make clear that SSFSP benefits may only be used to purchase food;
- ◆ explain that a separate notice will be received for the following month regarding eligibility; and
- ◆ inform recipients that if they do not have an EBT card they must go to their local office and get one.

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**Changes on a  
Case Containing  
SSFSP  
Recipients**

*Cases containing noncitizens eligible for SSFSP benefits require an entry in the Filing Unit Block in the FIW1 section of the Worksheet. The entry in the Filing Unit Block identifies the number of SSFSP-eligible noncitizens.*

**Workers must adjust the Filing Unit Block in the FIW1 section of the Worksheet when the household composition has changed.** For example, when an SSFSP-eligible noncitizen moves out of the home, the entry in the Filing Unit Block must be decreased to the number of noncitizens still eligible for SSFSP, if any. When an SSFSP-eligible noncitizen moves into the home, the entry in the Filing Unit Block must be entered/increased as appropriate.

**IMPORTANT CHANGE. Workers must zero out the Filing Unit Block in the FIW1 section of the Worksheet when the case is no longer eligible for FS for any reason other than AR 69 (failure to recertify) because the rules for SSFSP are the same as the Food Stamp Program with the exception of noncitizen status. For example, if the FS case closes for failure to verify income, the entry in the Filing Unit Block must be zeroed out to ensure that no SSFSP benefits are issued.**

**Note:** SSFSP recipients should not appear as active FS recipients on PACES.

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**PA Food Stamp  
Households  
Containing  
Noncitizens  
Certification  
End Dates  
Expired or  
Future**

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In Field Operations Memo 97-47A workers were instructed to schedule and complete an eligibility review by the end of August for cases containing noncitizens no longer eligible for food stamp benefits. Due to time constraints and the high volume of cases this may involve, **PA/FS workers are now required to only do a desk review of these cases and enter the number of noncitizens eligible for SSFSP in the Filing Unit Block in the FIW1 section of the Worksheet.** Remember, the entry in the Filing Unit Block identifies the number of SSFSP-eligible noncitizens.

**Note:** Workers are expected to continue to schedule and complete an eligibility review for cases with expired certification dates as time permits. Follow the instructions in 97-47A for coding the case depending on whether **some** or **all** household members are ineligible for FS benefits.

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**November  
SSFSP Benefits**

November SSFSP benefits will be calculated in accordance with 106 CMR 364.600(C). SSFSP benefits will be EBT benefits and issued according to the case cyclical date. Recipients will receive a PACES notice describing the SSFSP amount and any changes affecting the SSFSP eligibility. Further instructions will be issued regarding November SSFSP Benefits.

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**Questions**

Policy questions should be referred to the Policy Hotline at (617) 348-8478. Systems questions should be referred to the Systems Customer Support Services at (617) 348-5290.

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On July 11, 1997, Governor Weld signed into law a State Supplemental Food Stamp Program (SSFSP) for certain noncitizens who were made ineligible for food stamp benefits solely as a result of the Food Stamp Program noncitizen regulations. The SSFSP benefit for September is \$24 for each noncitizen in your household determined eligible by September 25, 1997.

September SSFSP benefits are being issued as an EBT benefit. An EBT SSFSP benefit being transferred in your name as a separate payment in addition to your regular EBT benefits, if any. **If you do not already have an EBT card, you must go to your local office as soon as possible to get one.** If you already have an EBT card to access food stamp benefits you do not need another card to access SSFSP benefits. **EBT SSFSP benefits will be available at POS terminals in food stores that display the Quest logo as of September 29, 1997.** Your SSFSP benefit is limited to the purchase of food.

If you do not agree with the amount of your September SSFSP benefit, you may request a hearing by filing an appeal within 90 days of receipt of the SSFSP benefit. An appeal form is available at your local office.

If you are eligible for SSFSP benefits in October, you will receive a separate notice. October SSFSP benefits will also be issued as EBT SSFSP benefits in addition to your regular cash or food stamp benefits, if any.

If you have any questions, contact your worker.

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If you do not agree with the amount of your October SSFSP benefit, you may request a hearing by filing an appeal within 90 days of receipt of the SSFSP benefit. An appeal form is available at your local office.

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If you have any questions, contact your worker.