



Argeo Paul Cellucci  
Governor

**Commonwealth of Massachusetts**  
*Executive Office of Health and Human Services*  
**Department of Transitional Assistance**  
600 Washington Street . Boston MA 02111

William D. O'Leary  
Secretary

Claire McIntire  
Commissioner

**Field Operations Memo 98-30**  
**August 3, 1998**

**TO: Transitional Assistance Office Staff**  
**FROM: *jk* / *gms* Joyce Sampson, Assistant Commissioner for Field Operations**  
**RE: Change in PRISM II 24-Month Clock Accretion Timetable**

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**Background**

It is critical that Transitional Assistance Workers have access to *current* clock data to provide accurate information to recipients subject to time-limited benefits. The Department is therefore changing the PRISM II 24-month clock accretion timetable.

The PRISM II clock accretion sweep takes place on the first Thursday of each month. Months accreted can be seen in PRISM II the following day. Under the current timetable, PRISM II looks back *two calendar months* from the date of the sweep. For example, the sweep done the first Thursday in July is looking at the recipient's status in the month of May to determine whether or not to count May toward the 24 months.

Under the new timetable, PRISM II will look back *one calendar month* from the date of the sweep. For example, the sweep done the first Thursday in September will look at the recipient's status in the month of August to determine whether or not to count August toward the 24 months.

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**Purpose of Memo**

This memo:

- ▶ explains the change to the clock accretion schedule for the month of August, when the new PRISM II clock timetable will be implemented;
- ▶ discusses the impact of this change on:
  - clock alerts;
  - clock reports; and
  - clock data contained in the ARTS download; and
- ▶ describes a new situation in which, as a result of this change, a manual adjustment to the clock may be required.

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**August Clock  
Accretion  
Schedule**

To implement this change in the clock accretion timetable, PRISM II must run *two* clock sweeps in the month of August.

The first sweep will be the regularly scheduled "first Thursday of the month" sweep, run on the night of August 6, 1998. This sweep will accrete the month of *June 1998* for those nonexempt recipients who meet the 24-month clock criteria.

The second sweep will take place the night of August 13, 1998 and will accrete the month of *July 1998* for those nonexempt recipients who meet the 24-month clock criteria.

Thereafter, all PRISM II clock sweeps will take place on the first Thursday of the month and will accrete the month immediately prior.

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**August Clock Alerts**

All alerts associated with the clocks will be issued for both sweeps in August, as described below.

- For the August 6 sweep, "Check Clock" alerts will indicate that the month of *June* must be looked at for possible manual accretion. "X Mos of State 24-Mo Lmt Left" alerts will reflect data current as of June 30, 1998.
  - For the August 13 sweep, "Check Clock" alerts will indicate that the month of *July* must be looked at for possible manual accretion. "X Mos of State 24-Mo Lmt Left" alerts will reflect data current as of July 31, 1998.
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**Actuate Reports**

Actuate reports will also be available for both August clock sweeps in the Actuate Report Viewer.

The "Month X of 24 as of..." reports available on August 7 will reflect clock data current as of June 30, 1998.

The "Month X of 24 as of..." reports available on August 14 will reflect clock data current as of July 31, 1998.

Thereafter, monthly clock alerts and Actuate reports will reflect data current as of the last day of the prior month.

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**ARTS Download**

The ARTS download of August 10 will reflect clock information from the August 6 sweep containing data current as of June 30, 1998. The ARTS download of August 17 will reflect clock information from the August 13 sweep containing data current as of July 31, 1998.

*Note:* Clock information in ARTS is available for the case head only and not for other adults in the case.

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**Clock  
Adjustments for  
Reopened Cases**

In some instances, a case which has closed may be reopened retroactive to the closing date *after* the PRISM II clock sweep for that month.

*Example:* A case closes for failure to provide verifications on 8/21/98. On 9/3/98 the clock sweep runs for the month of August. The recipient does not have the month of August added to the clock because the case is closed and the recipient was not active for the entire calendar month. However, on 9/10/98 the recipient provides verifications and the case is reopened *retroactive* to the closing date.

Because the recipient has in fact received benefits for the entire month of August, the month must now be added manually to the 24-month clock, if appropriate.

*Note:* Manual adjustments to the clock are only necessary when the case is reopened *after* the PRISM II clock sweep for that month. In the example above, if on 9/1/98 the case was reopened retroactive to the closing date, no manual adjustment would be necessary, as the reopening occurs *before* the sweep on 9/3/98 for the month of August. Similarly, if a case closes and reopens in the *same* month, no manual adjustment is required.

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**New PRISM II  
Alert - "Check  
State Clock at  
Reopening"**

A new PRISM II alert, "Check State Clock at Reopening," will be generated beginning 8/13/98 whenever a TAFDC case reopens and the reopening date is the day after the closing date. Transitional Assistance Workers must check the case to see if the month of reopening should be added to the recipient's clock.

*Note:* Refer to *PRISM II User's Guide*, Appendix C, 24-Month Clock Specification Details, for criteria for clock accretion.

If the month should be added to the recipient's clock, the worker must refer the case to the supervisor for review and approval. The supervisor must, after approval, refer the case to the Director or Assistant Director for final approval and manual accretion.

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**New Clock  
Adjustment  
Reason -  
"Retroactive  
Reopening"**

A new clock adjustment reason, "Retroactive Reopening," is to be used by Directors and Assistant Directors or designees when adding a month to the clock in this situation. This reason has been added to the "24-Month Clock Adjustment Reason" window.

*Note:* See *PRISM II User's Guide*, Chapter V, 24-Month Time Limited Benefits, for complete information on clock adjustments.

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**Questions**

If you have any questions about this memo, have your Hotline designee call the Policy Hotline at (617) 348-8478. Systems-related questions should be directed to the Customer Service Center at (617) 348-5290.

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