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Fax 98-183
Field Operations Memo 98-54
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TO: Transitional Assistance Office Staff
FROM: Joyce Sampson, Assistant Commissioner for Field Operations
Re: Implementation of TAFDC Twenty-Four Month Time Limit

Background

In December of 1996, the Department of Transitional Assistance instituted 24-month Time-Limited Benefits for all employable, able-bodied TAFDC recipients. If, at the end of the 24 months of time-limited benefits, the nonexempt recipient has still not found work, the Department has established a process for requesting an extension of TAFDC benefits beyond the 24-month period.

On December 1, 1998, the first group of TAFDC recipients will have received 24 months of time-limited benefits. This memo provides instructions for prioritizing the processing of these cases. Refer to Chapter 19 in *The TAFDC Procedural Guide* for more details on these cases.

Overview

Beginning December 4, 1998 and each month thereafter, the Director or designee must access the PRISM II 24-Month Clock "Month 24 of 24 as of..." Report in Actuate to identify recipients who have received 24 months of time-limited benefits. The Director or designee will inform the Transitional Assistance Worker which cases have used 24 months of time-limited benefits. The Director or designee should ensure that cases that were "grandfathered" as defined in 106 CMR 203.400 (B) or those cases with a domestic violence waiver pending as defined in 106 CMR 203.110 are excluded from this group.

Prioritize Cases

Transitional Assistance Workers must review the list of cases for accuracy and take action using the following priorities:

- 1) Cases who have not requested an extension should be closed following the procedures found in Chapter 19 of *The TAFDC Procedural Guide*, subtitled “Month 24 of Time-Limited Benefits Received with No Extension Request.”
- 2) Cases with earnings who are working 35 hours a week or more earning at least minimum wage should be processed following the procedures found in Chapter 19 of *The TAFDC Procedural Guide*, subtitled “Extension Requests for Active Cases: Working 35 Hours or More Per Week.”
- 3) Cases with earnings who do not meet the 35 hour a week at minimum wage standard should be processed following the procedures found in Chapter 19 of *The TAFDC Procedural Guide*, subtitled “Extension Requests for Active Cases: Working Fewer Than 35 Hours Per Week or Not Working.”
- 4) All other cases who have requested an extension should be processed following the procedures found in Chapter 19 of *The TAFDC Procedural Guide*, subtitled “Extension Requests for Active Cases: Working Fewer Than 35 Hours Per Week or Not Working.”

REMINDER: When closing the TAFDC case due to the 24-month time limit, food stamp benefits will continue for at least one month. When the TAFDC case is closed for AR 29, 52 or 68, the Transitional Assistance Worker must enter a “T8” in blocks 50 and 51 and enter an “X” in block 59 in the food stamp section of the PID. See Transitions Update #4 for more details.

Questions

Any questions should be directed to the Policy Hotline at (617) 348-8478 by your Hotline designee.
