



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

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Field Operations Memo 99-11
May 17, 1999

TO: Transitional Assistance Office Staff

FROM:  Joyce Sampson, Assistant Commissioner for Field Operations

RE: Child Support (DEFRA) Underpayments

Background

A review of the files used to determine the November, December and January DEFRA payments has shown that some calculations were based on incomplete or inaccurate TAFDC and/or support payment data. One example of incomplete/inaccurate support payment data occurred when the TAFDC case had more than one noncustodial parent paying support but the DEFRA calculation considered the monthly support from only one noncustodial parent, causing the DEFRA underpayment. A system-generated correction will issue the underpayments to the recipients. No action is needed by the Transitional Assistance Worker.

**Under-
payment
Reports**

A separate report for each of the three months will be sent to the Transitional Assistance Offices. These reports entitled *November (December or January) Maximum \$50 Support Payments - Underpayment Discrepancy Report* list the names of the recipients who were issued a DEFRA payment in that particular month for an amount **lower** than it should have been.

The reports display the following:

- Worker number;
- Recipient SSN and name;
- Should Pay - this shows the DEFRA amount the recipient should have received;
- Actual Paid - this shows the DEFRA amount the recipient did receive; and
- Discrepancy - this shows the DEFRA underpayment amount that will be issued to the recipient.

These reports are informational only. They provide the Transitional Assistance Worker with information about his or her assigned recipients.

**Underpay-
ments
Corrections**

The underpayments will be corrected in three separate processes during the month of May. The dates below indicate when the money will be available in the recipient's EBT or direct deposit account.

<u>DEFRA Underpayment Month</u>	<u>EBT/DD Account</u>
November	5/19
December	5/22
January	5/27

The CHEK screen will display the additional payments as a code 2 with a date of 5/19, 5/22 or 5/27. These additional payments are noncountable for June food stamp benefits.

The following notice will be sent to recipients who are due the DEFRA underpayment from November, December and/or January. The name and address card will display the message, "DOR Child Support Payment for _____" (insert applicable DOR collection month of Oct, Nov or Dec).

Massachusetts Department of Transitional Assistance
Notice about Lower Child Support (DEFRA) Payments

Some child support (DEFRA) payments from November, December and January were for amounts less than they should have been. You have been identified as someone who got a lower amount.

- If you are owed a payment for the November child support (DEFRA) payment (DOR collections in October) the money will be available on 5/19;
 - If you are owed a payment for the December child support (DEFRA) payment (DOR collections in November) the money will be available on 5/22;
 - If you are owed a payment for the January child support (DEFRA) payment (DOR collections in December) the money will be available on 5/27.
- (Defra 6/99)

Questions

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