



**Commonwealth of Massachusetts**  
*Executive Office of Health and Human Services*  
**Department of Transitional Assistance**  
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**Field Operations Memo 2009-12**  
**February 27, 2009**

**To:** Transitional Assistance Office Staff  
**From:**  John Augeri, Assistant Commissioner for Field Operations  
**Re:** TAFDC – ESP Providers Offering Learning Disability (LD) Screenings

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**Overview**

To increase the number of clients who are assessed for learning disabilities, DTA has developed a process for ESP providers to:

- offer Learning Disability (LD) screenings to those clients whom they believe may have learning issues; and
- help those clients access the Department's Learning Disability assessment process.

Because ESP providers are able to closely monitor client behavior while participating in an activity, ESP providers are in a good position to identify clients who may benefit from an LD screening. It is also possible that clients may be more willing to disclose and discuss their barriers (such as a learning disability) with ESP providers.

This new initiative will give clients another opportunity to be screened for a learning disability, increasing the chance that a learning disability will be identified and accommodated. With this new initiative even if the client has received a screening from the Department, the client may be screened again by his or her ESP provider. Beginning March 1, this service is being offered in the Newmarket Square and Dudley Square TAOs. Procedures in Field Operations Memo 2005-58 for LD screenings should continue to be followed in all other TAOs.

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**Purpose of Memo**

The purpose of this Field Operations Memo is to:

- tell TAO Staff about this revised procedure; and
  - inform case managers about their responsibilities.
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**ESP Providers  
Responsibilities**

If an ESP provider sees that a client is having difficulty completing an activity and the provider suspects there may be learning disability issues, the ESP provider will:

- ask the client if he or she would like to be screened for a learning disability;
- *if the client accepts the screening offer*, complete the Learning Disability Questionnaire with the client's answers;  
**Note:** The ESP provider will have a Learning Disability Questionnaire (Attachment A) which contains every question currently asked on the Learning Disability window on BEACON.
- once complete, total the value given the questions and write the value on the Questionnaire;  
**Note:** If the score is 12 or more, inform the client that Disability Evaluation Services (DES) will contact the client to follow up on the screening. If the score is less than 12, inform the client that the screening does not indicate any learning disability issue.
- if the score is 12 or more, the ESP provider will e-mail the DES Liaison, informing him or her that the Questionnaire for the particular client has been completed and is being faxed; and
- fax the Questionnaire to the DES Liaison.

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**DES  
Liaison/Case  
Manager  
Responsibilities**

Once the DES Liaison receives the faxed Questionnaire from the ESP provider, he or she must give the faxed copy of the Questionnaire to the case manager.

The case manager must

- enter the answers to the questions from the Questionnaire onto the Screening tab of the Learning Disability window;
  - file the faxed copy of the Questionnaire in the case record; and
  - send a referral to DES and complete the process by following procedures in *A User's Guide, Transitional Assistance Programs and BEACON*, Chapter XVI, Section J, pages 9-13.
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**Final  
Instructions**

Under these new procedures, the only clients that are ineligible for a DES Learning Disability assessment are those clients who have already completed the DES assessment process. If a client has been screened previously and been assessed by DES, the DES Liaison upon receiving the faxed Questionnaire from the ESP provider must:

- contact the ESP provider to inform him or her that no additional assessment will be done by DES; and
- fax the provider the previously completed assessment results.

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**Questions**

If you have any questions, please have your Hotline designee call the Policy Hotline.

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Learning Disability Questionnaire

- 1). Have you had any problems learning in middle school or junior high? (Note: Usually ages 10-14). Y or N
- 2). Do you have difficulty working from a test booklet to an answer sheet? Y or N
- 3). Do you have difficulty or experience problems working with numbers in a column? (Note: 14 19 12). Y or N
- 4). Do you have trouble judging distances? Y or N
- 5). Do any family members have learning problems? Y or N
- 6). Have you had any problems learning in elementary school? Y or N
- 7). Do you have difficulty or experience problems mixing mathematical signs (+/x)? (Note: Addition sign/multiplication sign). Y or N
- 8). Do you have difficulty or experience problems filling out forms? Y or N
- 9). Did you experience difficulty memorizing numbers? Y or N
- 10). Do you have difficulty remembering how to spell simple words you know? Y or N
- 11). Do you have difficulty or experience problems taking notes? Y or N
- 12). Do you have difficulty or experience problems adding and subtracting small numbers in your head? Y or N
- 13). Were you ever in a special program or given extra help in school? Y or N

**Scoring:**

If answered "Yes": Questions 1-5 are worth one point, Questions 6-7 are worth two points, Questions 8-10 are worth three points and Questions 11-13 are worth four points. A "No" answer to any question is worth 0 points.

**Total:** \_\_\_\_\_

**IMPORTANT: Please FAX this to the DES Liaison.**