

## From the Hotline

If you have any questions on this column or other policy and procedural material, please have your Hotline designee call the **Policy Hotline at 617-348-8478**.

- Q.** I took an application today from a man applying for SNAP benefits. He reports being unemployed for over two years and currently has no income. He has a self-declared shelter expense of \$750 per month. Should I request additional information before approving him for SNAP benefits because his expenses are beyond his means?
- A.** Yes, additional information is required. Ask the applicant how he is managing his finances, how long the circumstances have continued and whether or not there is income still to be reported. For more information, refer to 106 CMR 361.620 regarding questionable client information and 106 CMR 361.630 regarding contradictory client information.
- Q.** If a SNAP applicant *is* meeting his ongoing expenses with little or no income, should I request additional verification, and if so, at what point should I make this request?
- A.** Additional verification should be requested, under certain circumstances. If your SNAP applicant was given the opportunity to provide you with new information, but he still fails to offer a reasonable explanation for how he is meeting his expenses despite having little or no income, then additional verification is required. See Operations Memo 2010-55 for more information on the types of additional verifications required at initial certification in SNAP.
- Q.** If a TAFDC or EAEDC applicant reports being unemployed, has little or no income and shows expenses that exceed her ability to pay for these expenses, how do I proceed?
- A.** When a TAFDC or EAEDC applicant shows expenses exceeding income, ask the client how she is managing her finances, how long the circumstances have continued and whether or not there are assets or income still to be reported. If, the applicant is meeting her expenses with no apparent income, or there are other questionable details in the case, additional verification should be required. Refer to 106 CMR 701.410, 106 CMR 702.300 and 106 CMR 702.310, as well as Operations Memo 2010-55 for more information.
- Q.** If additional information or verifications cannot explain why a SNAP, TAFDC or EAEDC client is able to meet expenses that exceed his or her income, is a fraud referral appropriate?
- A.** Yes. For information on completing fraud referrals in these situations, see *A User's Guide: Transitional Assistance Programs and BEACON*, Chapter II, Section E.