



*Commonwealth of Massachusetts  
Executive Office of Health and Human Services  
Department of Transitional Assistance*

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Governor


MARYLOU SUDDERS  
Secretary

KARYN POLITO  
Lieutenant Governor

JEFF McCUE  
Commissioner

**Online Guide Transmittal 2018-9  
February 23, 2018**

**To: Department of Transitional Assistance Staff**

**From:**  **Paul Sutliff, Assistant Commissioner for Programs  
and Field Operations**

**Re: Cross Programs: Updates Regarding 2017 Hurricane Evacuees**

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**Overview**

The Department continues to serve a number of evacuees as a result of the series of hurricanes that struck the Caribbean in August and September of last year. While some evacuees have sought out family and friends in Massachusetts to stay with, others have received aid through the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Temporary Shelter Assistance (TSA) program which provides short-term lodging assistance. Other evacuees have been temporarily placed through the Red Cross or other shelter assistance programs.

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**Purpose**

This purpose of this Transmittal is to advise staff of:

- FEMA payments that are non-countable for DTA programs;
  - the upcoming TSA deadline; and
  - FEMA Helpline contact information.
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**FEMA  
Payments**

Evacuees may be eligible for Housing Assistance (HA) or Other Needs Allowance (ONA) through FEMA. These monies are restricted and may only be used for specified purposes. These funds are not countable for any DTA program. There is no restriction on the location of where these funds may be spent. For example, an evacuee may use HA or ONA funds in Massachusetts or in Puerto Rico when they return.

**Important:** Clients must not be asked to provide verification of FEMA HA or ONA. If a client reports, receipt of these funds, it must be documented in the Narrative, but no further action is required.

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**TSA Deadline**

At the request of the Governor of Puerto Rico, FEMA has extended the TSA program deadline through March 20, 2018 for eligible survivors of Hurricanes Irma and Maria. Some evacuees may have their TSA ending before this date. An evacuee may request that their TSA be continued. Determinations for continued TSA are made on a case-by-case basis.

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**FEMA Helpline**

Clients are encouraged to contact FEMA about TSA eligibility, deadlines and other FEMA benefits via the FEMA Helpline at: 800-621-3362.

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**Questions**

If you have any policy or procedural questions, after conferring with the appropriate TAO personnel, please have your Systems Information Specialists or TAO management email the DTA Mailbox.

Systems issues should be directed to the Systems Support Help Desk.

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