



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


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**Online Guide Transmittal 2019-36
May 2, 2019**

To: Department of Transitional Assistance Staff
From:  Paul Sutliff, Assistant Commissioner for Programs and Field Operations
Re: TAFDC: Repealing the Family Cap

Overview

The Family Cap rule which limited the number of children that could be added to the TAFDC grant once a case was active has been repealed. This repeal impacts not only current applicants but current clients as well.

Purpose of Transmittal

The purpose of this Online Guide Transmittal is to advise TAO staff about:

- the change to the Family Cap rule;
- procedures to add children previously subject to the Family Cap rule into the grant; and
- updates to the Online Guide.

Obsolete Field Operations Memos and Online Guide Transmittals

The following Field Operations Memos and Online Guide Transmittals are obsolete: Field Operations Memo 2000-8, Changes to the Family Cap Waiver Request Process; Field Operations Memo 2007-35, Clarification of the Family Cap Waiver/Exemption Request Process; Field Operations Memo 2008-60, Change to the Family Cap Rule for a Dependent Child who is not a Child of the Client; Online Guide Transmittal 2017-27, TAFDC: Completing the Family Cap Calculation Sheet; and Online Guide Transmittal 2017-79, TAFDC: Family Cap Rule Edits.

Obsolete Family Cap Forms The following Family Cap forms are now obsolete: *EX/WVREQ-1, Family Cap Exception/Waiver Request* (English and Spanish); *FCAL, Family Cap Appointment Letter* (English and Spanish); *FCC, Family Cap Notice* (English and Spanish); *FCWCH, Case History for the Family Cap Waiver Request*; *FCWDN, Notice of Denial of Family Cap Waiver* (English and Spanish); *PWFCD, Pregnant Woman with Family Cap Date*; *TP-FCN, Family Cap Notice* and *Family Cap Calculation Sheet*.

Revised Forms The following Domestic Violence forms have been revised: *DVW (A) Notice of Approval of Domestic Violence Waiver from Certain Program Requirements* (English and Spanish); *DVW (D) Notice of Denial of Domestic Violence Waiver from Certain Program Requirements* (English and Spanish); (the first two are PDF fillable only); *DVWR, Request for a Domestic Violence Waiver* (English and Spanish); *DVW-CHF, TAFDC Case History for Domestic Violence Waiver Request*; *DVWR-CL, Domestic Violence Waiver Request Checklist* and *Domestic Violence Summary Form*.

Revised Brochures The following brochures have been revised: Domestic Violence Brochure “*Everyone Deserves to be Safe*” (Arabic, English, Haitian Creole, Portuguese, Russian, Spanish, Vietnamese); and *TAFDC-PB, Transitional Aid to Families with Dependent Children Program* brochure (English and Spanish).

State Letter A State Letter will be issued at a later date eliminating Family Cap regulations. Until that time, the regulations are not to be enforced.

Procedures: Applicants **Effective immediately** no children can be excluded from the TAFDC grant because they were born after the Family Cap date. Families applying for TAFDC must have eligibility assessed for all children. This includes children in a household with a previously established Family Cap date.

Any current applicant who has a pending application with a child subject to the Family Cap rule must be contacted immediately to ensure that the child is added to the application prior to approval and that all eligibility requirements are discussed and met. If you are not able to make contact before day 45, approve the case, if otherwise eligible, with the child excluded and follow the procedures for ongoing clients.

**Procedures:
Ongoing Clients**

Ongoing clients who have a child subject to the Family Cap rule will receive the following letter: *Important Information About Family Cap Policy Change - Ongoing* informing them the Family Cap rule has been lifted and that their case manager will be contacting them to make an appointment to add their child(ren) to the grant.

TAOs will receive a weekly report of all ongoing clients with children subject to the Family Cap that includes the following information:

- TAO name;
- AU manager name;
- grantee name;
- grantee APID;
- grantee phone number;
- TAFDC reevaluation end date;
- active EDP;
- wages;
- active activity;
- family cap child(ren) name;
- family cap child(ren) date of birth;
- family cap child(ren) age;
- possible crib and layette payment due;
- possible state clock adjustment;
- school enrollment known for family cap child;
- child care enrollment known for family cap child; and
- unearned income for family cap child.

Case managers will use the report to reach out to clients, to prioritize outreach, and to help inform the discussion with each client. If school or child care enrollment is known, immunization has been verified. If the grantee is becoming exempt from the work program requirement clients should be encouraged to continue to work or participate in a work program activity. You may also consult with the Full Engagement Worker.

A new appointment letter: *Important Family Cap Appointment Ongoing In Person and Telephone* has been added to BEACON that must be used when making appointments with clients to add children subject to the Family Cap rule. If a client misses the appointment the case will not close. **Case managers must not close cases manually if a client does not show up for an appointment to add a Family Cap child. Case managers must issue another appointment each time a client misses the appointment.** Be sure to enter a narrative when an appointment letter is sent and if a client misses their appointment.

**Procedures:
Ongoing Clients
(continued)**

Every effort must be made to provide same day service to any clients who walk into a TAO to add a child subject to the Family Cap rule regardless of whether an appointment has been scheduled for them to do so.

For ongoing clients who have a child subject to the Family Cap rule, the following procedures must be followed at next client contact or the scheduled appointment (whichever comes first):

- inform the family that due to a change to the Family Cap policy any child subject to the Family Cap rule must now be added to the grant;
 - add the child to the grant following established procedures;
 - prior to entering child support information, talk to the grantee about domestic violence services, including good cause waivers for certain TAFDC participation and program requirements;
 - if the client **does not** claim good cause for failing to cooperate with the child support cooperation requirements, complete the Absence page and receive the informational pages of the TA-34/36; or
 - if the client **does** claim good cause for failing to cooperate with the child support cooperation requirements, follow the procedures in the Online Guide page “Child Support Good Cause Claimed;”
 - review work program requirements and opportunities with the client and change the client’s status on the Work Requirements TAFDC page;
 - remove any sanctions that were entered after January 1, 2019 due to the presence of a family cap child using the reason administrative/system error;
 - ensure that there is verification that the child who was subject to the Family Cap rule is up to date on Immunizations, including enrollment in school or with a licensed child care provider or a State Assigned Student Identifier (SASID) number;
 - inform the client about Learnfare requirements for any child age 6-16;
 - request any verifications needed using the VC-1;
 - once eligible, add the child to the grant;
 - ensure that any child support income listed in BEACON for the family cap child is terminated; and
 - talk to the family about the effect changes to the TAFDC grant amount and any retroactive payments might have on other benefits.
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**Retroactive
Payment**

Children added to the grant are eligible retroactively back to January 1, 2019. All owed retroactive payments, all owed crib and layette payments and any needed adjustments to the state clock will be completed centrally.

Case managers should notify families that they will receive a notice when these retroactive payments are deposited into their account.

Any retroactive payments that exceed the allowable amount for one issuance will be split into multiple issuances.

Note: Children who are no longer subject to the Family Cap rule but are ineligible for another reason, such as they are receiving SSI, are not eligible for a retroactive payment because they are not eligible to be added to the grant.

**BEACON
Changes**

A notification has been added to BEACON when you enter a case that contains a child subject to the Family Cap rule. It reads, “There is at least one Family Cap child in this TAFDC case. Please review the case with the client or schedule a Family Cap appointment to assess eligibility for the child(ren).” This notification will alert you that a child in the case is still subject to the Family Cap rule. If the client is in the office or on the phone assess eligibility for the child(ren) following the procedures above. If the client is not in the office or on the phone check to see if an appointment has been scheduled. If there is no appointment scheduled, schedule the appointment using the new appointment types listed above.

In the AU Mandatory Responsible page, the Family Cap responsibility “Dependent Child – Family Cap” has been removed.

In the AU Composition Results page, the Family Cap reason “Family Cap Child” has been removed.

**Obsolete Online
Guide Pages**

The following Online Guide pages are obsolete:

Topic: TAFDC
Book: Program Nonfinancial Requirements
Chapter: Family Cap
Page: Family Cap Introduction

Topic: TAFDC
Book: Program Nonfinancial Requirements
Chapter: Family Cap
Page: Family Cap Date

Topic: TAFDC
Book: Program Nonfinancial Requirements
Chapter: Family Cap
Page: A Child Born after the Family Cap Date

Topic: TAFDC
Book: Program Nonfinancial Requirements
Chapter: Family Cap
Page: Eligibility of the Family Cap Child

Topic: TAFDC
Book: Program Nonfinancial Requirements
Chapter: Family Cap
Page: Pregnant Woman with a Family Cap Date

Topic: TAFDC
Book: Program Nonfinancial Requirements
Chapter: Family Cap
Page: Income and Assets of a Family Cap Child

Topic: TAFDC
Book: Program Nonfinancial Requirements
Chapter: Family Cap
Page: Family Cap Waivers

Topic: TAFDC
Book: Program Nonfinancial Requirements
Chapter: Family Cap
Page: Authorizing Family Cap Waivers

**Obsolete Online
Guide Pages
(continued)**

Topic: TAFDC
Book: Program Nonfinancial Requirements
Chapter: Family Cap
Page: Approving Family Cap Waiver Request

Topic: TAFDC
Book: Program Nonfinancial Requirements
Chapter: Family Cap
Page: Denying Family Cap Waiver Request

Topic: TAFDC
Book: Program Nonfinancial Requirements
Chapter: Family Cap
Page: Family Cap Exceptions

Topic: TAFDC
Book: Program Nonfinancial Requirements
Chapter: Family Cap
Page: Approving Family Cap Exception Request

Topic: TAFDC
Book: Program Nonfinancial Requirements
Chapter: Family Cap
Page: Denying Family Cap Exception Request

Topic: TAFDC
Book: Program Nonfinancial Requirements
Chapter: Family Cap
Page: Reopening a Closed Family Cap Child Case

Topic: TAFDC
Book: Program Nonfinancial Requirements
Chapter: Family Cap
Page: Family Cap Q&A

Topic: TAFDC
Book: Program Nonfinancial Requirements
Chapter: Family Cap
Page: Completing the Family Cap Calculation Sheet

Topic: TAFDC
Book: Program Nonfinancial Requirements
Chapter: Family Cap
Page: Family Cap Policy and Procedures

**Revised Online
Guide Pages**

Topic: Transmittal Updates
Page: Transmittal Updates 2017

Topic: Online Forms
Page: TAFDC

Topic: TAFDC
Book: Program Nonfinancial Requirements
Chapter: Child Support
Subchapter: Absent Parent Information at Application
Page: Entering Absent Parent Data

Topic: TAFDC
Book: Program Nonfinancial Requirements
Chapter: Child Support
Subchapter: Absent Parent Information at Application
Page: Importance of Client Cooperation

Topic: TAFDC
Book: Program Nonfinancial Requirements
Chapter: Child Support
Subchapter: Child Support Income
Page: View Direct for Monthly Child Support Contributions

Topic: TAFDC
Book: Program Nonfinancial Requirements
Chapter: Child Support
Subchapter: Child Support Income
Page: Entering Child Support Income

Topic: TAFDC
Book: Program Nonfinancial Requirements
Chapter: Child Support
Subchapter: Child Support Income
Page: Entering Child Support Income - Client

**Revised Online
Guide Pages
(continued)**

Topic: TAFDC
Book: Program Nonfinancial Requirements
Chapter: Child Support
Subchapter: DV Specialists Recommendation Forms
Page: DV Specialists Recommendation Forms

Topic: TAFDC
Book: Program Nonfinancial Requirements
Chapter: Child Support
Subchapter: DV Specialists Narratives
Page: Domestic Violence Specialists Narratives

Topic: TAFDC
Book: Program Nonfinancial Requirements
Chapter: Exemptions
Page: Exemptions from Time-Limited Benefits

Topic: TAFDC
Book: Program Nonfinancial Requirements
Chapter: Exemptions
Page: Two-Parent Exemption Restrictions

Topic: TAFDC
Book: Program Nonfinancial Requirements
Chapter: Pregnancy
Page: Pregnancy

Topic: TAFDC
Book: Program Nonfinancial Requirements
Chapter: Pregnancy
Page: Pregnancy Policy and Procedures

Topic: TAFDC
Book: Program Nonfinancial Requirements
Chapter: Work Program Requirements
Page: Using the Work Requirements TAFDC Page

Topic: TAFDC
Book: Program Nonfinancial Requirements
Chapter: Work Program Requirements
Page: Grantees Who Do Not Have to Meet the Work Program Requirement

**Revised Online
Guide Pages
(continued)**

Topic: TAFDC
Book: Program Nonfinancial Requirements
Chapter: Exemptions
Page: Exemptions Policy and Procedures

Topic: TAFDC
Book: Financial Requirements
Chapter: Household Composition
Page: Household Composition: AU Composition Details-TAFDC

Topic: TAFDC
Book: Financial Requirements
Chapter: Household Composition
Page: Household Composition Policy and Procedures - TAFDC

Topic: TAFDC
Book: Financial Requirements
Chapter: Income – TAFDC
Subchapter: Income Overview - TAFDC
Page: Noncountable Income - TAFDC

Topic: TAFDC
Book: Financial Requirements
Chapter: Income – TAFDC
Subchapter: Income Overview - TAFDC
Page: Rules for Counting Income - TAFDC

Topic: TAFDC
Book: Financial Requirements
Chapter: Need and Payment Standards
Page: Need and Payment Standards

Topic: TAFDC
Book: Related Benefits
Chapter: Infant Benefits
Page: Infant Benefits – Crib and Layette Payments

Topic: TAFDC
Book: Employment
Chapter: Employment
Page: Dependent Care Deduction

**Revised Online
Guide Pages
(continued)**

Topic: TAFDC
Book: Employment
Chapter: Income Disregards and Deductions
Page: The 100% Earned Income Disregard 200% of the FPL Test

Topic: Cross Programs
Book: Harper/ADA
Chapter: Adverse Action Pilot
Page: Adverse Action Pilot Reasons for Closing or Benefit Reduction

Topic: Cross Programs
Book: Interview Wrapup
Page: Dual Participation Processing

Topic: Cross Programs
Book: Interview Wrapup
Page: Interview Wrapup Request Type Priority Benefit Authorization Level

Topic: Cross Programs
Book: Request for Assistance
Page: Domestic Violence

Topic: Cross Programs
Book: Verifications
Chapter: Verification Types
Page: Mandatory Verifications

Topic: Cross Programs
Book: Verifications
Chapter: Verification Types
Page: Optional Verifications

Topic: Cross Programs
Book: Verifications
Chapter: Verification Types
Page: Verification Chart

**Revised Online
Guide Pages
(continued)**

Topic: Domestic Violence
Page: Domestic Violence Unit and Services

Topic: Domestic Violence
Page: Domestic Violence Specialists

Topic: Domestic Violence
Page: Domestic Violence Related Page

Topic: Domestic Violence
Page: Good Cause due to Domestic Violence - Overview

Topic: Domestic Violence
Page: Grounds for Good Cause Due to Domestic Violence

Topic: Domestic Violence
Page: Domestic Violence Waiver - Procedures

Topic: Domestic Violence
Page: Domestic Violence Unit Policy and Procedures

Topic: Scheduled Mailing/Projects
Book: Clothing Allowance
Page: Clothing Allowance

Topic: Business Process (BP)
Book: BP - Overview
Page: Narratives Guidelines Overview

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 them to DTA.Procedural Issues.

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