



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


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Commissioner

**Online Guide Transmittal 2020-31  
April 16, 2020**

**To:**  **Department of Transitional Assistance Staff**

**From:** **Sarah Stuart, Associate Commissioner for Change Management**

**Re:** **Cross Programs: Economic Impact Payments and Federal Pandemic Unemployment Compensation Benefits**

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**Overview** On March 18, 2020, the Families First Coronavirus Response Act was signed into law. This legislation contains provisions for Economic Impact Payments and Federal Pandemic Unemployment Compensation benefits.

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**Purpose** The purpose of this Online Guide Transmittal is to advise staff that the one-time Economic Impact Payment that most Americans will receive is not countable for SNAP, TAFDC and EAEDC. However, the Federal Pandemic Unemployment Compensation benefits are countable for SNAP, TAFDC and EAEDC.

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**The Economic Impact Payment** The Economic Impact Payment is a one-time payment that most Americans will receive through the IRS. This payment is considered noncountable income for SNAP, TAFDC and EAEDC.

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**Federal  
Pandemic  
Unemployment  
Compensation  
(Continued)**

The Department of Unemployment Assistance has implemented the Federal Pandemic Unemployment Compensation (FPUC), which is an additional \$600 per week for individuals collecting regular unemployment benefits. The additional \$600 will be added to unemployment benefits retroactive to March 29, 2020. These benefits will continue until July 31, 2020. The caseworker will sometimes be able to see the FPUC benefit under the “Additions” column on the unemployment screen. Even if the FPUC payment is not showing you must add the \$600 weekly utilizing the instructions below.

**SNAP  
Households**

**At Application:** If a client is applying for SNAP and is also approved for unemployment benefits, you must count the regular unemployment benefits based on the weekly payment issued amount. In addition, you must enter a separate unemployment compensation line item in BEACON for the \$600 weekly FPUC amount the client is receiving.

**During the Certification Period:** If a SNAP case has already been established and the client now reports that they are receiving the \$600 weekly FPUC amount, Simplified Reporting rules will be applied. If the household has a gross income test and the addition of the \$600 weekly FPUC amount, will put the household over the gross income limit you must enter it in BEACON so the case can be denied for over income. If the addition of the \$600 weekly FPUC will not put the SNAP household over the gross income limit you must not enter it in BEACON.

**Remember:** If the household contains an elderly or disabled member, this household does not have a gross income test.

**Note:** If an Unemployment Match appears in BEACON, you must count both the unemployment benefits and the FPUC benefits as the information in the match is considered verified upon receipt and must be counted on all Simplified Reporting cases at the time the match is received.

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**Federal  
Pandemic  
Unemployment  
Compensation**

**At Application:** If a client is applying for TAFDC or EAEDC and there is pending unemployment, the case must be processed without delay. Clients applying for cash assistance must not have their case delayed due to requiring that they file for unemployment.

TAFDC/EAEDC  
Households

If the client is applying and has already been approved for unemployment benefits, you must enter the regular unemployment benefits based on the weekly payment issued amount. In addition, you must enter a separate unemployment compensation line item in BEACON for the \$600 weekly FPUC amount the client is receiving.

**For ongoing TAFDC or EAEDC Households:** If a TAFDC or EAEDC case has already been established and the client now reports they are receiving the \$600 weekly FPUC amount or an Unemployment Match appears in BEACON, this income must be applied to the case.

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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 them to DTA.Procedural Issues.

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

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