



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


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**Online Guide Transmittal 2021-46  
June 2, 2021**

**To: Department of Transitional Assistance Staff**  
**From:  Sarah Stuart, Associate Commissioner for Change Management**  
**Re: SNAP: Interim Reports Sent to COVID-19 Recertification Households**

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**Overview**

The Department has received an extension on the waiver of the SNAP Interim Report (IR) requirement, which was originally set to expire on June 30, 2021. This waiver will continue until further notice. Until the waiver expires, most SNAP households will remain subject to the COVID-19 recertification procedures outlined in [2020-82](#).

Due to a previously coded end date of June 30, 2021, BEACON automatically issued IRs for July to SNAP households that are temporarily waived from the IR requirement. This happened because the system is programmed to send the IR form to applicable households, 45 days before the end of the first half of their certification period. However, these households should not have received an IR form for July and **will not be** required to complete and submit the IR because of the continued application of the waiver.

To reduce the work that will be required to address households to whom DTA unintentionally sent the IRs, EHS/IT has implemented the following data fixes:

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**Overview  
(Continued)**

- The system will prevent additional households from inappropriately receiving IRs. (IRs will continue to go out to NPA households with an associated TAFDC or EAEDC case, as IRs are required for these households.)
- IRs, including those already initiated, will be marked as completed actions. (This data fix will not mark IRs from NPA households with an associated TAFDC or EAEDC case as completed actions, as these households are required to receive IRs that must be processed.)
- An automatic narrative will appear in all cases for which the Department sent an IR even though the household was not required to complete one. (This will exclude NPA households with an associated TAFDC or EAEDC case as IRs are required for these households.)
- IRs will not be available for completion on DTA Connect unless the case is an NPA SNAP household with an associated TAFDC or EAEDC case. (Combo cases will still be able to complete an IR on DTA Connect.)

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**Purpose**

The purpose of this Online Guide Transmittal is to advise staff of the extension of the IR waiver, and procedures for addressing IRs that are submitted by clients who are waived from the IR requirement.

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**Reviewing the  
IR Form**

Some clients who are temporarily waived from the IR requirement may end up submitting the IR form that was sent to them. There are also households that legitimately received an IR form for the same period.

If a client submits an IR for a case in which the second half of the certification period begins in July 2021, staff must review the narratives in BEACON to determine if this is a true IR that was issued for SNAP households with an associated TAFDC or EAEDC case.

If the household is **not** subject to the IR requirement, the Electronic Case Folder (ECF) will include the following narrative entry: **“COVID-19 FNS Waiver – SNAP IR waived.”** These IRs must be processed as a case maintenance change following the procedures outlined below.

If the case does not include the specific narrative entry detailed above, the household remains subject to IR requirements and must be processed as an IR (albeit with consideration to the temporary COVID-19 verification procedures that are still in place).

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**Guidelines for Processing the IR as a Case Maintenance Change**

If staff determine, based on the automatic narrative detailed in the Reviewing the IR Form section of this Transmittal, that the Department sent an IR to a waived household, staff must review the information on the form and process the IR as a case maintenance change:

- **If the client reports on the IR form that their income has changed by more than \$100 (in any direction) but the client does not submit verification**, staff must attempt to determine whether the changed amount will put the household over its gross income limit. Follow these steps:
  - Attempt to cold call the client three times.
  - If all three cold calls are unsuccessful, send an **optional** VC-1 advising the client to call the DTA Assistance Line about the change in income that they reported on the IR form. Add a User Entered Verification, select *Additional Verification* for Element, select *Optional* for FS under Program(s), and add the following text in Document(s) of evidence: **“You recently submitted changes on an IR form, please call DTA so we can tell you if you need to submit verifications.”**
  - If any of the cold calls are successful, ask the client how their income has changed.
    - If the income has increased and the change will result in the case being denied for excess income, send a **mandatory** VC-1 for the income.
    - If the income has increased but it is not enough to close the case, do not request proof of the change in income. Write a narrative that the household is temporarily waived from the IR requirement and that a case manager must address the information at the next reporting period. Disposition the IR as Not Entered Due to Case Status.
    - If the income has decreased, send an **optional** VC-1 for the income that would cause the client’s SNAP benefits to increase.

**IMPORTANT:**

1. If the client submits verification of income that will put the household over its gross limit, staff must update the income in BEACON and close the case.
  2. Since we are treating the changes reported on the IR as a case maintenance change, **case managers must not access the Work Number**. Staff are only authorized to access the Work Number at designated reporting periods.
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**Guidelines for Processing the IR as a Case Maintenance Change (Continued)**

- **If the client reports a change in shelter, utility or dependent care expenses by recording them on the IR form**, the client will not have to provide additional verification of these changes, unless the information is questionable. Follow these steps to process the change:
  - If the change will increase the benefit level, enter the information in BEACON and authorize the increase.
  - If the change will decrease the benefit level, do not enter the information in BEACON. Write a narrative that the household is temporarily waived from the IR requirement and that a case manager must address the information at the next reporting period. Disposition the IR as Not Entered Due to Case Status.
- **If the client submits expense verifications with the IR that will increase the benefit level** (e.g., medical, child support, etc.), enter the information in BEACON and authorize the increase.
- **If the client submits expense verifications with the IR that will decrease the benefit level**, do not enter the information in BEACON. Write a narrative that the household is temporarily waived from the IR requirement and that a case manager must address the information at the next reporting period. Disposition the IR as Not Entered Due to Case Status.

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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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