



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

DEVAL L. PATRICK  
Governor

JOHN W. POLANOWICZ  
Secretary

TIMOTHY P. MURRAY  
Lieutenant Governor

STACEY MONAHAN  
Commissioner

**Operations Memo 2013-41  
July 26, 2013**

**To:** Department of Transitional Assistance Staff

**From:** Lydia Conley, Deputy Assistant Commissioner for Policy, Program and External Relations

**Re:** Annual Reporting and Transitional Benefit Alternative Case Processing Modifications

---

**Overview**

This Operations Memo advises staff about BEACON and case processing changes for Annual Reporting (AR) and Transitional Benefit Alternative (TBA) cases. These changes are required to better align DTA case processing with federal rules. The memo describes which verified information will trigger a benefit recalculation and possible decrease for AR cases and instructions to prevent dual participation in TBA cases. Case manager and Central Office processing responsibilities are included.

---

**AR Changes**

Although the reporting requirement is not changing for AR households, effective with the July 29, 2013 implementation of BEACON Build 45.7, the Department will recalculate an AR household's benefit at any time during the certification period and pay the recalculated amount, even if reduced, in certain circumstances. A recalculation and possible decrease will occur when the Department obtains information considered verified upon receipt including, but not limited to, when:

- the client informs the Department a household member has moved out;
- the Department receives data matches; or
- a change occurs in the cash benefit amount for combination cases.

### TBA Changes

TBA households are not required to report or to provide verification of any changes in household circumstances during the TBA period. However, the Department is required by law to take steps to prevent dual participation.

Effective with BEACON Build 45.7, the Department will adjust a TBA household's benefits and pay the adjusted amount *only* when a TBA household member applies for SNAP benefits in a separate AU or joins another active SNAP AU.

---

### Case Manager Responsibilities for AR Cases

If a client informs the TAO that a household member has moved out, the case manager must remove the household member and wrap up the case. BEACON will recalculate the benefit, notify the client and pay the recalculated amount, even if decreased.

When clients report other changes that may increase their AR benefit, continue to follow established procedures in order for BEACON to recalculate the benefit and issue the increased amount.

### Wrapping up cases in BEACON

If a client reports that a member has moved out of an AR household **and** the client reports another change such as an income change or shelter cost change, it is important to **select only the transaction reason to remove the household member(s) in Interview Wrapup** to assure that the only change used in the benefit calculation is the removal of the household member.

---

### Case Manager Responsibilities to Prevent Dual Participation in TBA Cases

When adding household members in any new application or recertification and the name clearance indicates that this household member is *active in another AU*, the case manager must look up the person identified as already active and complete the following actions:

- Go to AU Composition Results page to determine if the person is active in a TBA household.
  - Follow established procedures by contacting the TBA household's case manager and request that the person be removed from the TBA case.
  - Have your TAO manager contact the designated Central Office personnel to provide the name and/or SSN of the TBA grantee.
  - **Open the person in the new household, effective only after that person is fully closed in the TBA household, which will prevent dual participation.**
-

**Central Office  
Processing of  
Data Matches for  
AR Cases**

The Department's Fraud Investigation and Data Match (FIDM) unit receives matches that are verified upon receipt from federal, state and other sources. Effective July 29<sup>th</sup>, when these matches impact an AR household, the FIDM will recalculate and increase, decrease or terminate the SNAP benefit. Examples of circumstances for which verified matches will cause a recalculated AR benefit include, but are not limited to:

- The removal of a child from a household due to state agency action (for example, by the Department of Children and Families);
  - Information that a household member is also receiving SNAP in another state;
  - Intentional Program Violation (IPV) resulting in disqualification;
  - Information that a household member has a SNAP disqualification in another state;
  - Incarceration of a household member;
  - Death of a household member;
  - Change in the cash benefit amount for combination cases; and
  - Income change from verified upon receipt income data matches.
- 

**Central Office  
Processing of  
TBA Changes**

Until the BEACON functionality can be completely automated, when a TAO manager informs Central Office of the removal of a TBA household member in BEACON in order to prevent dual participation, Central Office will calculate the adjusted TBA benefit amount, manually send a notice to the household and add a narrative in BEACON.

**Note:** This manual process may take up to one week's time.

---

**Notices**

Client notice language has been changed to advise clients of the impact of verified data matches on their monthly AR benefit. The modified notices include: AR and TBA Approval notices and the Notice sent following DTA's receipt and processing of the Interim Report.

---

**Questions**

If you have any questions, please have your Hotline designee call the Policy Hotline.

---