

Operations Bulletin 2016-7: Cross Program: Election Income (Issued 10/24/2016)

Many clients work local, state, and national elections to supplement their income. Election workers may be compensated by a set fee per day or a stipend for the election period. With the presidential election quickly approaching, it is important to remember how election income should be treated. Some of these clients will call the Assistance Line to report their income and inquire about its impact on their SNAP benefits.

Simplified Reporting Households

Most households are certified under Simplified Reporting requirements and are only required to report changes **during the certification period** that would result in their income exceeding the gross limit for their household size. However, income changes are required to be reported **at Interim Report (IR) and Recertification**.

1. During the Certification Period

- If the election income reported plus existing household income causes the household to **EXCEED the gross income limit** for their household size, the case manager must:
 - update the information in BEACON and send a verification checklist (VC-1);
 - upon receipt of the requested verification, enter the income in BEACON to be used in the SNAP benefit calculation for the household's next cyclical month;
 - self-assign the case for the following business day to remove the income/employment and calculate the new benefit.

Important: A VC-1 requesting termination of employment is not required in this instance and must not be sent to the client.
- If the election income reported plus existing household income results in the household remaining **UNDER the gross income limit**, the case manager must not send a VC-1, but must write a detailed narrative indicating that follow up is required at the next IR or Recertification.

Important: Refer to procedures below for addressing election income at IR or recertification.

2. At IR or Recertification Period

If a client reports election income at recertification or IR, the case manager must determine if the income is countable or noncountable for the subsequent IR or recertification period.

- If a client's election income **IS NOT countable** toward their next cyclical month, for example, the payment was received in the prior cyclical month and the client reports that they do not expect to get a check in the next cyclical month, the case manager must write a detailed narrative and must not include the income for the subsequent recertification period.

Important: A VC-1 requesting termination of employment is not required in this instance and must not be sent to the client.
- If the income would have caused the household to **EXCEED the gross limit** for their household size during the month it was received, an overpayment referral must be completed for the month(s) the client was in receipt of the income and did not report it.
- If a client's election income **IS countable** toward their next cyclical month, the case manager must:
 - update the information in BEACON and send a VC-1;
 - upon receipt of the requested verification, enter the income in BEACON to be used in the SNAP benefit calculation for the household's next cyclical month; and
 - self-assign the case for the following business day to remove the income/employment and calculate the new benefit amount as long as verification has been submitted confirming the employment was seasonal.

- If, at IR or Recertification, the client reports that s/he is no longer receiving the election income, only a detailed narrative stating that the client is no longer receiving election income is needed. **Important:** A VC-1 requesting termination of employment is not required in this instance and must not be sent to the client.

Change Reporting Households

Change reporting households are generally required to report changes within ten days. Earned income changes must be reported if one of the two scenarios listed below applies to the household:

1. If a job has started or stopped, the change must be reported within 10 days of the date the change becomes known to the household.
Note: Most election income for change reporting households will fall in this scenario.
2. If earnings go up or down by more than \$100 per month, the change must be reported within 10 days of the date the household member receives the first payment.

For more information on Change Reporting, see 106 CMR 366.110 (A).

EAEDC and TAFDC Households

Election income is countable for cash programs. For more information, see 106 CMR 321.210(A) for EAEDC and 106 CMR 204.210(A) for TAFDC.