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Commonwealth of Massachusetts
Executive Office of Health and Human Services
Department of Transitional Assistance
 600 Washington Street • Boston, MA 02111


JANE SWIFT
 Governor

ROBERT P. GITTENS
 Secretary

CLAIRE MCINTIRE
 Commissioner

Field Operations Memo 2002-9
April 18, 2002

To: Transitional Assistance Office Staff

From:  Cescia Derderian, Acting Assistant Commissioner for Field Operations

Re: Suspension of SSFSP Benefits

Background

Budget shortfalls have left the Department without full funding for SSFSP for the remainder of fiscal year 2002. The Department must suspend benefits to SSFSP recipients beginning May 7, 2002. To implement this change, a "funding reduction" percentage will be put in place in BEACON effective May 1, 2002. For SSFSP benefits, the percentage used will be zero.

SSFSP applications authorized on BEACON on or after May 1 and pending transactions that release on or after May 1 will be calculated using the new (zero) benefit amount.

Instructions for processing expedited food stamp benefits begin on page 2
 Instructions for processing applications begin on page 3.

Notices

On April 26, 2002, notices will be sent to current FS AUs with an SSFSP member on file as of close of business April 25, 2002, informing them of the suspensions.

Recipients of SSFSP-only benefits will receive a notice informing them of the suspension of the SSFSP benefits (Attachment A).

Recipients of federal food stamp benefits and SSFSP benefits ("Combination AUs") will receive a notice informing them that SSFSP benefits will be suspended to zero. This notice will include the actual amount of federal food stamp benefits (Attachment B).

**Notices
(continued)**

Attachment C must be given or mailed to any SSFSP-only or Combination AU whose application is authorized on April 26, April 29 or April 30 because these applicants will not receive the April 26, 2002 mailing.

Expedited Food Stamp Benefits

*Authorized by
Close of
Business
April 25, 2002*

Expedited SSFSP-only and Combination AU benefits authorized by close of business April 25 will not be impacted by this suspension.

*Day 7 Expedited Benefits
Authorized on
April 26, April 29
or April 30*

Only those expedited benefits requiring authorization on April 26, April 29 or April 30 (subject to day 7 expedited processing time frames) should be authorized on those dates.

For expedited benefits authorized on April 26, April 29 or April 30, BEACON will:

- calculate expedited benefits owed from the date of application based on the higher benefit amount and generate that benefit; and
- generate an expedited approval notice regarding this benefit amount.

AU Managers must give or mail Attachment C to all in this group as they will NOT get the BEACON-generated notice mailed on April 26.

*Expedited Benefits
Authorized On or
After May 1 With
an Effective Date
of May 6 or
Earlier*

For expedited benefits authorized on or after May 1 with an effective date of May 6 or earlier, BEACON will:

- calculate expedited federal food stamp benefits from the date of application and generate that benefit, if eligible, and approve the SSFSP benefits at zero; and
- generate an expedited approval notice regarding the federal food stamp benefit amount, if eligible, and the zero SSFSP benefit amount.

The AU Manager must issue a supplemental payment for the expedited SSFSP benefits owed for the period of eligibility from the application date to the appropriate date in the chart on page 4. The supplemental payment must be issued following the instructions also found on page 4.

*Expedited Benefits
Authorized On or
After May 7 With
an Effective Date
Of May 7 or Later*

Applications for expedited benefits taken on or after May 7 must be processed. If eligible, BEACON will:

- calculate expedited federal food stamp benefits from the date of application and generate that benefit, if eligible, and approve the SSFSP benefits at zero; and
- generate an expedited approval notice regarding the federal food stamp benefit amount, if eligible, and the zero SSFSP benefit amount.

In any of these situations, once expedited food stamp benefits are authorized, the pending application must be either approved or denied within the food stamp application processing time frames.

Applications

AU Managers and AU Supervisors should make every effort to authorize pending SSFSP-only or Combination AU applications by close of business April 25, 2002. These applicants will receive the appropriate notice regarding the SSFSP suspension and will have their food stamp benefits automatically recalculated.

*Applications
Authorized by
Close of
Business
April 25, 2002*

For applications authorized by close of business April 25, 2002, BEACON will:

- calculate current federal and state benefits owed from the date of application and generate a prorated benefit based on the higher SSFSP benefit amount through the day before the effective date of the zero SSFSP benefit amount (see chart on page 4); and
- generate an approval notice regarding this amount.

Note: These applicants will receive the appropriate notice (Attachment A or B) referenced on page 1.

Since these are now active AUs, BEACON will recalculate the zero amount for May SSFSP benefits if the SSN ends in "4" through "9" or June SSFSP benefits if the SSN ends in "0" through "3" based upon the chart found on page 5.

No additional AU Manager action is needed.

*Day 30
Applications
Authorized on
April 26,
April 29, or
April 30*

Applications pending on April 26, 2002, that are not subject to the day 30 food stamp application processing deadline, should be held and authorized on or after May 1, 2002. BEACON will calculate the benefit and generate the notice based on the zero SSFSP benefit amount.

If an application subject to the day 30 food stamp application deadline **must** be authorized on April 26, April 29 or April 30. AU Managers **MUST** process that application.

For applicants authorized on April 26, April 29 or April 30, BEACON will:

- calculate current federal or state benefits owed from the date of application and generate a prorated benefit based on the higher SSFSP benefit amount through the day **before** the effective date of the zero SSFSP benefit amount (see chart on page 4); and
- generate an approval notice regarding this zero SSFSP benefit amount.

AU Managers must give or mail Attachment C to all applicants authorized on April 26, April 29 or April 30 as they will NOT get the BEACON-generated notice mailed on April 26.

**Applications
(continued)**

*Applications
Authorized On or
After May 1 With
an Effective Date
of May 6 or
Earlier*

For applications authorized on or after May 1 with an effective date of May 6 or earlier, BEACON will:

- calculate and generate federal food stamp benefits owed, if eligible, and approve the SSFSP benefits at zero; and
- generate an approval notice regarding the federal food stamp benefit amount, if eligible, and the zero SSFSP benefit amount.

The AU Manager must issue a supplemental payment for the SSFSP benefits owed from the application date to the appropriate date in the chart below:

State Supplemental Food Stamps	
SSN Ending In...	Date Before Lower (Zero) Benefit Amount
4	05/06/02
5	05/07/02
6	05/09/02
7	05/10/02
8	05/12/02
9	05/13/02
0	05/31/02
1	05/31/02
2	06/03/02
3	06/04/02

AU Managers must calculate the supplemental payment for benefits owed as follows:

- On the Financial Tab of the Results Tab on the Eligibility Explorer window, click on the Benefit caret and use the State Funding Reduction figure as the difference between the higher SSFSP amount and the new zero amount;
- Multiply that amount by 12 (months) to get a yearly total;
- Divide that amount by 365 (days) to get a daily total;
- Multiply that amount by the number of days from the date of application to the appropriate date in the chart above; and
- Enter this amount on the Related Benefits window and authorize this on the Interview Wrap-up window.

**Applications
(continued)**
*Applications
Taken On or
After May 7 With
an Effective Date
of May 7 or Later*

Applications taken on or after May 7 must be processed. If eligible, BEACON will:

- calculate and generate federal food stamp benefits owed, if eligible, and approve the SSFSP benefits at zero; and
- generate an approval notice regarding the federal food stamp benefit amount, if eligible, and the zero SSFSP benefit amount.

No additional AU Manager action is needed.

**Ongoing
Recipient
Changes**

All SSFSP-only and Combination AUs will be recalculated during the regular AU processing schedule, based on the BEACON Release Date for each SSN, starting with the release date of SSN's ending in 4 (May 1, 2002). SSNs ending in "0" through "3" will receive their regular SSFSP benefits for May.

SSN Ending In...	BEACON Release Date For Suspension of SSFSP	Benefit Suspension Date For SSFSP
4	05/01/02	05/07/02
5	05/02/02	05/08/02
6	05/06/02	05/10/02
7	05/07/02	05/11/02
8	05/07/02	05/13/02
9	05/08/02	05/14/02
0	05/28/02	06/01/02
1	05/28/02	06/01/02
2	05/29/02	06/04/02
3	05/30/02	06/05/02

*Changes
Resulting In
Retroactive
Supplemental
Benefits*

On or after May 1 any change in an AU that contains an SSFSP member will be calculated at the zero benefit amount. The AU Manager must issue a supplemental payment for the amount of money owed to the recipient at the higher amount from the change effective date to the day **before** the benefit date for the zero SSFSP benefit amount found on the chart on page 4. This must be issued on BEACON in the Related Benefits window.

Recoupment

Recipients having money recouped from their SSFSP benefits will have the recoupment suspended.

Recipients having money recouped from their federal food stamp benefits *will not be* impacted.

Questions

If you have any questions, please have your Hotline designee call the Policy Hotline at 617-348-8478.

Attachment A

Local TAO Address

Important Notice - Read Carefully
Este Mensaje Es Importante - Lea Cuidadosamente

Massachusetts Department of Transitional Assistance

Client Name
Client Address

SSN: 000-00-0000
TAO

Date

AN IMPORTANT NOTICE ABOUT YOUR SSFSP BENEFITS

Dear *Client Name*:

The Department does not have additional funding for the State Supplemental Food Stamp Program (SSFSP) for fiscal year 2002.

As a result, your SSFSP benefits will go to zero (0) beginning with your May benefits if your Social Security Number ends in 4 through 9 and June if your Social Security Number ends in 0 through 3.

If you received a notice dated before May 1, 2002 about a food stamp change, the amount given in that notice may not be correct.

If you disagree with this decision, you have the right to a fair hearing. The reverse side of this notice contains important information about your hearing rights. To request a hearing, complete the reverse side of this notice.

Manual Citation: 106 CMR 360.030, 106 CMR 364.600, 106 CMR 366.130.

Please call your worker (*Worker Name*) at (*Worker Phone Number*) if you have any questions about your case.

Local TAO Address

Important Notice - Read Carefully

Este Mensaje Es Importante - Lea Cuidadosamente

Massachusetts Department of Transitional Assistance

Client Name

SSN:

Client Address

TAO

Date

AN IMPORTANT NOTICE ABOUT YOUR SSFSP AND FSP BENEFITS

Dear *Client Name*:

The Department does not have additional funding for the State Supplemental Food Stamp Program (SSFSP) for fiscal year 2002.

As a result, your SSFSP benefits will go to zero (0) beginning with your May benefits if your Social Security Number ends in 4 through 9 and June if your Social Security Number ends in 0 through 3.

Your Federal food stamp benefits will be _____.

If you received a notice dated before May 1, 2002 about a food stamp change, the amount given in that notice may not be correct.

If you disagree with this decision, you have the right to a fair hearing. The reverse side of this notice contains important information about your hearing rights. To request a hearing, complete the reverse side of this notice.

Manual Citation: 106 CMR 360.030, 106 CMR 364.600, 106 CMR 366.130

Please call your worker (*Worker Name*) at (*Worker Phone Number*) if you have any questions about your case.

AN IMPORTANT NOTICE ABOUT YOUR FOOD STAMP BENEFITS

The Department does not have additional funding for the State Supplemental Food Stamp Program (SSFSP) for fiscal year 2002.

If you are approved for SSFSP benefits, they will go to zero (0) beginning with your May benefits if your Social Security Number ends in 4 through 9 and June if your Social Security Number ends in 0 through 3.

Your Federal food stamp benefits will not be impacted by this change.

If you received a notice dated before May 1, 2002 about a food stamp change, the amount given in that notice may not be correct.

If you disagree with this decision, you have the right to a fair hearing. To request a hearing, ask your worker for an appeal form.

Manual Citation: 106 CMR 360.030, 106 CMR 364.600, 106 CMR 366.130.

Please call your worker if you have any questions about your case.