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Access to Policy Online from your desktop shortcut and BEACON will continue to be updated once a month by MIS staff until each of the remaining phases is complete.

Phase two of the project will redirect the Policy Online desktop short cut to the web-based environment.

Phase three will redirect the Policy Online shortcut within BEACON to the web-based environment.

At the conclusion of this project, all points of access for Policy Online will be web-based. TAO staff will be notified of the scheduled dates of implementation for phases two and three of this project.

## **FYI**

### **BEACON Online Help Update Issued in May 2007**

BEACON Online Help Update Issue # 9 (05/23/07)

## **FYI**

### **Changes to the EOHHS Mass.gov DTA Homepage**

This month you will see the following changes to the EOHHS Mass.gov DTA homepage.

#### **Research and Statistics:**

The link to DTA Facts and Figures has been updated with May 2007 Grant Levels, Eligibility Standards and FY'07 Appropriations.

The program links for Emergency Aid to the Elderly, Disabled and Children; Food Stamps; Homeless; Supplemental Security Income; and Transitional Aid to Families with Dependent Children, when selected, display updated caseload information.

“Avoid having your ego so close to your position that when your position falls, your ego goes with it.”

Colin Powell

## **FYI**

### **Processing Nonrecurring Medical Expenses**

Food Stamp regulations allow a client to choose to average nonrecurring medical expenses over the certification period or have the nonrecurring medical expenses applied as a deduction for a single month. For the client to make an informed decision, the AU Manager must understand the implications of both options and be prepared to explain the effect each option has on the food stamp benefit.

There are instances when the averaging of nonrecurring medical expenses is not advantageous to the client. For example, a nonrecurring medical expense of \$360, averaged over a twelve-month certification period, allows the client \$30 per month in medical expenses. Since food stamp regulations only allow medical expenses in excess of \$35 per month, the AU would not receive a medical deduction. In contrast, if the \$360 nonrecurring medical expense had been applied to a single month, the medical deduction would have yielded an increase in food stamp benefits, provided the AU was not already receiving the maximum monthly benefit allotment.

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If the nonrecurring medical expense is reported during the certification period, the AU Manager may average the expenses over the remainder of the certification period or may allow the expense as a one-time deduction, based on the client's preference. For more details on nonrecurring medical expenses, see 106 CMR 364.440(C) and (D).

**Remember:** Whenever a nonrecurring medical expense is allowed as a one-time deduction, the AU Manager must zero out the medical expense after that particular month's FS benefits have been issued.

## FYI

### Project SAFE Update

New Initiatives Memo: *Pre-Employment Services for Homeless TAFDC Families Initiative*, issued September 5, 2006, informed TAO staff about the Safe Assistance to Further Economic Empowerment (Project SAFE) Program implemented in fiscal year 2006. In fiscal year 2007, Project SAFE was offered to residents in four emergency shelters.

To date in FY 2007, Project SAFE has been implemented at *The Family House* in Dorchester, *Housing Families, Inc.* in Malden

and the *Crittenton Hastings House* in Brighton. The final shelter scheduled this year for Project SAFE is *Crossroads* in East Boston. This implementation is scheduled to begin in early June. For fiscal year 2008, Project SAFE will be implemented in five additional shelters.

## FYI

### TAFDC and FS Eligibility for Battered Noncitizens

Field Operations Memo 2005-22, *TAFDC and FS Program Eligibility for Battered Noncitizens*, clarifies the process for determining if a noncitizen is eligible for TAFDC and food stamps as a battered noncitizen. Persons who may ordinarily be ineligible for benefits could be eligible because of their domestic violence history.

TAFDC and FS applicants do not have to self-petition under the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) to qualify for TAFDC or food stamps as a battered noncitizen. There are a number of ways an individual can obtain their battered noncitizen status. Applying under VAWA is one way for an individual to obtain battered noncitizen status. The applicant may also have the required immigration status under the regulations if they have a pending or approved I-130 petition to immigrate as a spouse or child of a U.S. citizen or as a spouse or child of a Legal Permanent Resident (LPR).

The code found on the applicant's permanent resident card shows whether the noncitizen immigrated through a family member or by some other means. Some common codes which verify that the noncitizen immigrated through a spouse or parent are IR1, IR2, IR6, IR7, F21, F22, F24, F26, F27, F29. Please note that these codes are only examples. There are additional codes which may indicate that the individual meets the criteria to be eligible for TAFDC or FS as a battered noncitizen.

If you have a question about a code or are unsure about whether the applicant has the correct immigration status to qualify as a battered noncitizen, please refer to Field Operations Memo 2005-22, the Noncitizen Online Guide or contact your TAO Noncitizen Liaison.