



# FAMILY INDEPENDENCE ADMINISTRATION

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## POLICY DIRECTIVE #05-11-SYS

### WMS SOFTWARE VERSION 2005.1

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| <b>Date:</b><br>March 25, 2005 | <b>Subtopic(s):</b><br>Welfare Management System (WMS) |
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#### AUDIENCE

The instructions in this policy directive are for all Welfare Management System (WMS) users in the Job Centers, Non-Public Assistance (NPA) Food Stamp (FS) Offices and ancillary sites. They are informational for all other staff.

#### POLICY

New York State's WMS is updated on a regular basis to reflect changes in City, State and Federal regulations. The WMS software release for 2005.1 migrated into production on March 21, 2005.

#### SYSTEM ENHANCEMENTS

WMS Software Version 2005.1 includes the following changes:

- PA Extended Recertification Period of 24 Months
- Automated Establishment of PA Recoupment Records
- New Closing Codes for Failure to Complete 6 Month Mail-In Recertification
- Changes to Voluntary Quit Codes (PA)
- Additional Needs Code **42** (PA Shelter Allowance Supplement)
- New Budgeting Method for Section 8 Housing
- Additional Changes to Legally Responsible Relative (LRR) and Supplemental Security Income (SSI) Budgeting for public assistance
- Automated Individual Line Sanctions for Food Stamps
- Revisions to the Turnaround Document (TAD) (**LDSS-3517**)

HAVE QUESTIONS ABOUT THIS PROCEDURE?  
Call 718-557-1313 then press 2 at the prompt followed by 765 or  
send an e-mail to *FIA Call Center*

PA Extended  
Recertification  
Period of 24 Months

In an effort to reduce the number of participants who appear in local Job Centers each year for recertification, some cases received a 24-month recertification period. Cases eligible for the 24-month recertification period met the following criteria:

Eligibility criteria

- All active adults on the case must be 60 years of age or older; or
- All active adults on the case ages 18-59 must have certain specified disabilities; and
- One of the following income source codes with an amount greater than zero:
  - **16** – Black Lung Disease Program
  - **27** – Social Security Disability Benefit
  - **29** – Social Security Retirement Benefit
  - **31** – Supplemental Security Income (SSI) Benefit
  - **48** – Income from Spina Bifida
- The Shelter Proration Indicator for the household is not **A** (Enhanced Shelter Calculation).

**Note:** PA HIV/AIDS Services Administration (HASA) cases are not included in this system change as they were included in the change to extend FS recertification periods to 24 and 48 months (see PD #04-34-SYS for more information).

A detailed procedure on the extended recertification period for PA cases will be provided under separate cover.

Automated  
Establishment of PA  
Recoupment  
Records

WMS will now automatically process PA recoupments resulting from Wage Reporting System (WRS) and Unemployment Insurance Benefits (UIB) matches entered by the Office of Revenue and Investigation (ORI) Division of Financial Review and Processing (DFRP) through their Automated Listing of Eligibility Requirements Tracking System (ALERTS). Staff can identify these actions in WMS by one of the following Originating IDs:

- **OQA** – Recoupments based on a Bureau of Eligibility Verification (BEV) investigation
- **CHU** – Recoupments due to reasons other than BEV or BFI (e.g., computer matches)

When responding to inquiries regarding these recoupments, Job Center staff must review the documents scanned into the case file to determine the reason and calculation for the recoupment.

New Closing Codes for Failure to Complete 6 Month Mail-In Recertification

In order to comply with current regulations, households with a 12-month recertification period will now be required to respond to a 6-month eligibility questionnaire as a condition of continued eligibility for public assistance (PA), medical assistance (MA) and food stamps (FS). Currently, responding to the six-month questionnaire is optional.

In preparation for the implementation of this requirement two new closing codes have been created for use when the questionnaire has not been completed and returned:

Two new closing codes

- Closing code **G36** (Failure to Complete the TA [6 Month] Mail-In Recert) is to be used when all adults on the case are aged/disabled. Use of this code will enable Family Assistance (FA) and Safety Net Federally Participating (SNFP) households to receive five months of transitional FS benefits.

**Note:** Closing code **G36** is only valid on cases where all adults are aged/disabled.

- Closing code **G37** (Failure to Complete the TA [6 Month] Mail-In Recert) closes the PA case and discontinues food stamp benefits.

Staff should not use these codes until the procedure outlining this process has been published.

Changes to Voluntary Quit Codes (PA)

Currently, code **E41** (Voluntary Quit or Reduced Earnings [Household = 1]) is used to close a PA case because the participant voluntarily quits or reduces earnings in order to receive public assistance. State regulations require codes to differentiate separate occurrences of voluntary quit. Code **E41** has been made obsolete and replaced by the following codes that reflect three occurrences of voluntary quit:

Code **E41** is obsolete

Three occurrences of voluntary quit

- **N41** – Voluntary Quit, 1st Occurrence (three months and until compliance)
- **N42** – Voluntary Quit, 2nd Occurrence (five months and until compliance)
- **N43** – Voluntary Quit, 3rd Occurrence (and Subsequent) (six months and until compliance)

Codes **N41**, **N42** and **N43** are currently valid to:

- Close the FS case; and
- Sanction an individual line for PA or FS.

The codes are now valid for PA and NPA FS case level closings when the household size equals one. Since these codes are not automatic bump-up codes, each additional infraction must be entered by the JOS/Worker. The JOS/Worker must enter a Client Notice System (CNS) notice number in element **280** of the TAD when using one of these codes to close a case or sanction an individual line.

**Additional Needs Code 42 (PA Shelter Allowance Supplement)** Residents in New York City homeless shelters may be eligible for a new shelter supplement program, Housing Stability Plus (HSP). HSP provides assistance to eligible homeless shelter residents for obtaining permanent housing and provides a shelter supplement toward payment of the monthly shelter cost. The shelter supplement will be issued for a period of five years and will be reduced by 20 percent each year after the first year. To facilitate the issuance of this shelter supplement, Additional Needs Code **42** (Shelter Allowance Supplement) was developed.

A detailed procedure on the HSP program will be provided under separate cover.

**New Budgeting Method for Section 8 Housing** A new Shelter Type Code, **40** (Section 8 Voucher – 30% Limit), was created for PA and FS cases where the household is participating in the New York City Housing Authority (NYCHA) Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) Section 8 program. The PA shelter allowance for households with Shelter Type Code **40** will be budgeted according to the standard of need for the family size based on the shelter maximum schedule below.

See PD#05-10-SYS for detailed instructions

The new shelter maximum amounts are as follows:

| New shelter maximums | <u>Household size</u> | <u>Section 8 Voucher Shelter Maximum</u> |
|----------------------|-----------------------|--|
|                      | 1                     | \$124                                    |
|                      | 2                     | \$150                                    |
|                      | 3                     | \$207                                    |
|                      | 4                     | \$248                                    |
|                      | 5                     | \$289                                    |
|                      | 6                     | \$318                                    |
|                      | 7                     | \$346                                    |
|                      | 8                     | \$368                                    |

**Note:** Section 8 housing is not public housing.

**Mass rebudgeting (MRB)** A mass rebudgeting (MRB) ran on March 20, 2005 to change the shelter type for NYCHA Section 8 housing cases to Shelter Type **40**.

A detailed procedure on the new budgeting method for NYCHA Section 8 housing will be provided under separate cover.

Additional Changes to Legally Responsible Relative (LRR) and Supplemental Security Income (SSI) Budgeting

Prior to WMS software version change 2005.1, the presence of legally responsible relatives, both non-SSI and SSI recipients, was considered when determining the eligibility and amount of assistance to a PA household. Allen budgeting is used for non-SSI recipients and Rice budgeting is used for SSI recipients. For cases having a Shelter Proration Indicator (PRO IND) of **N** (non-Danks Housing with Shelter) or **S** (Danks Housing with Shelter) different calculations are used for determining the shelter grant and the PA food and other (F&O) grant. This budgeting methodology did not work for multisuffix cases. As a result, staff was unable to properly calculate a WMS budget for multi-suffix cases where one suffix was subject to Allen/Rice budgeting, but the other suffix was not.

Effective with this release, new edits to the Shelter Proration Indicator (PRO IND) of **N** (non-Danks Housing with Shelter) and **S** (Danks Housing with Shelter) have been programmed to ensure that multisuffix cases in which one suffix has the presence of a legally responsible relative or an individual in receipt of SSI and is subject to Rice or Allen budgeting are correctly budgeted.

A detailed procedure on Danks budgeting will be provided under separate cover. These modifications do not change the instructions given in PD #04-37-ELI.

Automated Individual Line Sanctions for Food Stamps

Currently, when a participant fails to comply with an engagement requirement an automated process is used to sanction the individual's line for PA, but a manual process is required to sanction the individual for FS. In an effort to prevent improper budgeting due to FS not being sanctioned timely, the individual line for FS will be sanctioned at the same time the individual line for PA is sanctioned.

Use with PB #04-117-SYS

New York City Work Accountability and You (NYCWAY) will determine, based on Department of Labor (DOL) criteria, whether the individual should be sanctioned for FS as well as PA and pass a file identifying the PA and FS individual line sanctions to WMS nightly. Employment sanctions often result in the pro rata reduction of the household benefits, therefore the status of the PA and FS individual lines will be **SN** (sanction). A sanction notice with the correct budget reduction information will also be generated by CNS.

Any case that fails to be sanctioned automatically for PA and FS each night will be placed in a separate file that is sent to NYCWAY and posted to the appropriate worklist (e.g., **NOI**, **POITN**, **PRISN**, **SAFTR**). These cases will have to be processed manually.

New override code **Note:** A new override code, **LZ**, was created to lift a line-level FS sanction only in instances where it has been determined that an individual was inappropriately sanctioned because his/her employability status (ES) code was entered incorrectly.

Revisions to the Turnaround Document (TAD) (**LDSS-3517**)

Effective March 2005, the TAD (**LDSS-3517**) has been revised to reflect two new fields:

- FAP – Food Assistance Program Indicator (element **353**); and
- MSP – Medicare Savings Program Indicator (element **345**)

Code **F** (Eligible for Food Assistance Program) is a valid entry in element **353** of the TAD.

Element **345** is to be used by Medical Assistance Program (MAP) staff only.

As a result of these changes the FAP Indicator Data Entry Form (**LDSS-4840**) will be made obsolete.

## REQUIRED ACTION

Automated Individual Line Sanctions for Food Stamps

In instances when the individual line sanction cannot be processed through the automated process, staff must continue to manually process individual line sanctions for PA and FS as described in PB #04-117-SYS.

When it is determined that an individual was erroneously sanctioned for FS due to an incorrect ES code, correct the ES code and lift the FS sanction by entering the following on the TAD:

- AC in element **350**
- Override code **LZ** in element **351**
- The current date in element **352**

Calculate and save a new budget to change the individual's status on the budget from **SN** to **AC**. Process TAD and budget in accordance with current procedures.

**PROGRAM  
IMPLICATIONS**

Paperless Office  
System (POS)  
Implications

There are no POS implications.

Food Stamp  
Implications

New PA closing codes

Cases closed with PA closing code **G36** will receive a separate FS determination. Cases closed with PA closing code **G37** do not require a separate FS determination.

New shelter type code  
for NYCHA Section 8

As a result of the new shelter maximums for NYCHA Section 8 housing cases, participants may receive a change in their FS benefit amount.

HSP rent supplement

The HSP supplement amount is exempt from FS budgeting. Therefore, the amount entered with Additional Needs Type **42** will not impact FS eligibility.

Medicaid  
Implications

PA extended  
recertification of 24  
months

PA cases eligible for the extended recertification period of 24 months will receive a separate MA case recertification at the 12th month of the 24-month certification period.

New closing codes for  
failure to complete 6  
month mail-in  
recertification

Cases closed using closing codes **G36** (Failure to Complete the TA [6 Month] Mail-In Recert, TBA/Sep Det) and **G37** (Failure to Complete the TA [6 Month] Mail-In Recert, FS discontinued) will have the MA extended until the end of the current certification period.

**LIMITED ENGLISH  
SPEAKING  
ABILITY (LESA)  
IMPLICATIONS**

For Limited English Speaking Ability (LESA) applicants/participants, make sure to obtain appropriate interpreter services in accordance with Policy Directive #02-43-OPE.

## FAIR HEARING IMPLICATIONS

Avoidance/  
Resolution

Ensure that all case actions are processed in accordance with current procedures and that electronic case files are kept up to date. Remember that applicants/participants must receive either adequate or timely and adequate notification of all actions taken on their case.

To avoid inappropriate adverse actions, process all changes of address and address corrections immediately. Ensure that the address is complete, including any "in care of" designation and the apartment number. Prior to initiating a case closing for inability to locate, review the case record documentation and WMS to ensure that all information corresponds.

Conferences at Job  
Centers

An applicant/participant can request and receive a conference with a Fair Hearing and Conference (FH&C) AJOS/Supervisor I at any time. If an applicant/participant comes to the Job Center requesting a conference, the Receptionist must alert the FH&C Unit that the individual is waiting to be seen.

The FH&C AJOS/Supervisor I will listen to and evaluate the applicant/participant's complaint. After reviewing the case file and discussing the issue(s) with the JOS/Worker responsible for the case and/or the JOS/Worker's Supervisor, s/he will determine if the action taken was correct. If the determination is that the action taken was correct, the FH&C AJOS/Supervisor I will explain the reason for the determination to the applicant/participant. If the explanation is accepted, no further action is necessary. The AJOS/Supervisor I must complete a Conference Report (**M-186a**).

If the determination is that the action taken was incorrect or correct but lacking the supporting documentation, the FH&C AJOS/Supervisor I will settle in conference (SIC), enter detailed case notes in NYCWAY and forward all verifying documentation submitted by the applicant/participant to the appropriate JOS/Worker for corrective action to be taken. In addition, if the adverse case action still shows on the **Pending (08)** screen in WMS, the AJOS/Supervisor I must prepare and submit a Fair Hearing/Case Update Data Entry Form (**LDSS-3722**), if the case has been granted aid continuing (ATC), to change the **02** to an **01** or a PA Recoupment Data Entry Form (**LDSS-3573**) to delete a recoupment. The **M-186a** must also be prepared.



Conferences at NPA FS Offices If a participant comes to the Food Stamp Office and requests a conference, the Receptionist must alert the Site Manager's designee that the participant is to be seen. If the participant contacts the Eligibility Specialist directly, advise the participant to call the Site Manager's designee.

The Site Manager's designee will listen to and evaluate the participant's complaint regarding the case closing. The participant must provide current verification of address to resolve the issue. After reviewing the documentation, case record and discussing the issue with the Group Supervisor/Eligibility Specialist, the Site Manager's designee will make a decision. The Site Manager's designee will decide to resolve or defend the case based on all factors and on whether the case was closed correctly. The Site Manager's designee is responsible for ensuring that further appeal by the participant through a fair hearing request is properly controlled and that appropriate follow-up action is taken in all phases of the Fair Hearing process.

Evidence Packets Should the applicant/participant elect to continue his/her appeal by requesting or proceeding to a Fair Hearing already requested, the FH&C AJOS/Supervisor I or the Site Manager's designee is responsible for ensuring that further appeal is properly controlled and that appropriate follow-up action is taken in all phases of the Fair Hearing process.

All Evidence Packets must contain a detailed history, copies of relevant WMS screen printouts, other documentation relevant to the action taken and copies of NYCWAY **Case Notes** screens.

All evidence packets must include the returned envelope, address verification, notices sent and any other pertinent information to support the Agency's action.

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## REFERENCES

04-ADM-05  
 04-ADM-07  
 05-ADM-02  
 SPP #2004-00642  
 SPP #2004-00541  
 SPP #2004-00701  
 SPP #2004-00679  
 SPP #2004-00777  
 SPP #2004-00849  
 SPP #2005-00048  
 SPP #2004-00842

**RELATED ITEMS**

PB #04-117-SYS  
PD #04-37-ELI  
PD #05-10-SYS