



George E. Pataki
Governor

NEW YORK STATE
OFFICE OF TEMPORARY AND DISABILITY ASSISTANCE
40 NORTH PEARL STREET
ALBANY, NY 12243-0001

Robert Doar
Commissioner

Informational Letter

Section 1

Transmittal:	04-INF-20
To:	Local District Commissioners
Issuing Division/Office:	Temporary Assistance (TA)
Date:	October 25, 2004
Subject:	Temporary Assistance Policy: Computer Matching Clarification
Suggested Distribution:	Temporary Assistance Directors Fraud Supervisors Medicaid Directors Food Stamp Directors TOP Coordinators Staff Development Coordinators
Contact Person(s):	Temporary Assistance Policy Questions: Central Team at 1 800 343-8859 extension 4-9344
Attachments:	Attachment - Computer Matches Verified Upon Receipt
Attachment Available On – Line:	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Filing References

Previous ADMs/INFs	Releases Cancelled	Dept. Regs.	Soc. Serv. Law & Other Legal Ref.	Manual Ref.	Misc. Ref.
02 ADM-07, 01 ADM-09, 03 INF-10, 88 INF-72, 94 LCM-5, 92 LCM-93	88 INF-14			TASB, Chap 5, p. 8 sect E	

Section 2

I. Purpose

The purpose of this release is to inform districts of a necessary clarification regarding Temporary Assistance (TA) computer matching policy. The Food Stamp policy on actions resulting from computer matches is different and clarification of the Food Stamp policy will be issued separately.

II. Background

Districts had previously been instructed by 88 INF-14 that **all** computer matches had to be independently verified by the social services district prior to taking action to reduce or discontinue TA benefits and issuing appropriate timely or adequate notice. This policy continues to be outlined in the Temporary Assistance Sourcebook (Chapter 5, Page 8, Section E). Unfortunately, this policy is not entirely accurate. This INF simply clarifies a TA policy that has actually been in effect for some time now.

In the early 1990s, this Office received guidance from the federal government indicating that states could act directly on computer match information without obtaining follow-up verification provided that it was from a primary source and the information was current and accurate. This has been the policy basis for taking direct action and issuing appropriate legal notices when the TA grant is impacted by such mass changes as Social Security COLA increases.

III. Program Implications

A. Temporary Assistance

When a computer match comes from a primary source such as the Department of Labor (Unemployment Insurance Benefits (UIB)), Social Security Administration (RSDI or SSI), etc. there is no need for the district to independently verify the information provided through the match as long as the data is current (within 60 days of date of case action) and the district has reason to believe that the information from the match is valid. In these instances, the district can take action to reduce or discontinue TA benefits and issue appropriate notice. When the appropriate adverse action notice (for TA, timely or adequate, depending on circumstances) is sent to clients, they still have a chance to request a fair hearing if the information is believed to be in error.

When a computer match involves a secondary source as the Wage Reporting System (WRS), however, there is a need to verify with the client or the primary source (for WRS the employer) the accuracy of the information before initiating any case action. It is also possible this information may be available in the case record. Districts must access the case record to determine whether the computer match information can be verified via documentation already on file. If an alternative methodology to case record review is needed, districts must submit a letter for approval to Russell Sykes – Deputy Commissioner, OTDA, Division of Temporary Assistance, with an alternate plan to.

TA case action can only be initiated directly based on a computer match when the data is current and from a primary source or a secondary source that has been independently verified. This limits the instances in which case action can be initiated directly based on a computer match without any independent verification from the agency. For example, TA grants can be adjusted based on the annual RSDI COLA increase since the computer match is from a current primary source. However, WRS computer matches are through a secondary source and generally are not current so these must be independently verified before any case action is initiated.

This policy applies whether the computer matches are from federal or non-federal source. The TASB will be updated to reflect this clarification.

Attached is a list of the main computer matches that the State provides districts which indicates for each current match if the district may initiate TA case action directly (with appropriate legal notice) without obtaining independent verification.

B. Food Stamps

Reporting requirements and resource limits in the Food Stamp program are unaffected by this TA clarification. With certain exceptions, TA/FS households with any non-disabled adult (ages 18 through 59) are subject to Six-Month Reporting rules for FS. This means that for FS they are only required to report changes in income during the course of their certification period if the change causes their total gross monthly income to exceed 130% of the Poverty Level for their household size.

If action is being taken to change the TA grant based on computer match information, it is considered “verified upon receipt” and the information should be acted on for Food Stamps as well. However, failure of the applicant/recipient to respond to a TA request for clarification is **NOT** a basis for adverse action against the FS household if the household is subject to Six-Month Reporting (See 01 ADM-09 and 02 ADM-07 and 03 INF-10 for details on Food Stamp policy and Six-Month Reporting).

Separate determinations of FS eligibility must be made for households having their TA case closed, or their TA application denied, for “Failure to Provide Verification”. This determination must be made according to FS reporting and documentation rules. Recent WMS modifications have been made both Upstate and in NYC to provide improved system support of Separate Determinations for Food Stamps.

Issued By _____

Name: Russell Sykes
Title: Deputy Commissioner
Division/Office: Temporary Assistance

Computer Matches Verified Upon Receipt

SDX – SSI benefit match

BENDEX - RSDI benefit match

PARIS – Interstate welfare benefits match

Felon Match – Fleeing felons and violators of probation and parole match

Prison Match – Match with DOCS for State prisons and DCJS for city and county jails

UIB - Match with DOL for UIB benefits

Death Match – Match with DOH to identify the recently deceased

Computer Matches Not Verified Upon Receipt

WRS (Wage Reporting System) – Earnings match

New Hires – Match of all NY State new hires (employment)

TA/MA FIRM (Financial Institution Recipient Match) – New resource match that will target State financial institutions (typically bank/credit union accounts) – has not gone into effect yet