

GENERAL INFORMATION SYSTEM
Center for Employment & Economic Supports

July 6, 2009

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TO: Commissioners, TA Directors, FS Directors, Staff Development Coordinators

FROM: Russell Sykes, Center for Employment and Economic Supports

SUBJECT: Transitional Food Stamp Benefits for Participants of TA Grant Diversion Programs (TEAP)

EFFECTIVE DATE: Immeidately

CONTACT PERSON: CEES Food Stamp Bureau @1-800-343-8859, ext. 3-1469

The purpose of this GIS is to call attention to new Food Stamp Program rules affecting eligibility for transitional food stamp (TBA) benefits for the households of certain Transitional Employment Assistance Program (TEAP) participants. This new policy information first was provided in 09 ADM-11, issued on June 19, 2009.

Effective July 1, 2009, FS households participating in an employment program that is funded, at least in part, through diversion of the household's entire TA grant (Case Types = 11 or 12 only) are eligible to receive FS benefits under the Transitional Benefits Alternative (TBA), if they otherwise qualify, for up to 5 consecutive months. (Administrative Directives 01 ADM-16 and 02 ADM-07 define all other TBA qualifying factors.)

This means that if a household begins receiving, or already is receiving, a \$0 cash grant because the entire grant is being diverted to support the employment earnings, the household is eligible for TBA FS benefits. As with any TBA-FS case, if any member of the FS household begins to receive a TA or SN cash grant again, the TBA period must end and the household must be recertified.

This new policy, as defined in 09 ADM-11, replaces the policy that had last been re-iterated in GIS 06 TA/DC038, dated 10/30/06. GIS 06 TA/DC038 stated that "...food stamp households participating in an employment program that is funded, at least in part, through diversion of the household's entire Temporary Assistance (TA) grant, are not eligible to receive Food Stamp benefits under the Transitional Benefits Alternative (TBA) while participating in the grant diversion employment program."

Individuals participating in TEAP remain work registrants during the TBA-FS period (unless they meet one of the FS exemptions), and if they fail to comply with TEAP may be subject to a sanction after the end of the TBA period.

Auto TBA should not be done when closing a \$0 grant TA case on WMS if a household has received any months of TBA while on TA and received the 0\$ cash grant due to diversion of the entire grant to fund employment. Doing auto TBA would incorrectly generate another five-month TBA period for the household. SSD workers should use TA/FS Reason Code J06 and issue the remaining months of TBA, if any, through a worker-initiated transaction.

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For New York City cases, if the full five months of TBA eligibility have not been completed at the time of closing of the \$0 TA case on WMS, the FS case will continue automatically until the full five months of the TBA benefits have been issued.

Households with TEAP participants that are not eligible for TBA may be eligible for regular FS benefits while participating in TEAP if they otherwise remain eligible after subsidized and unsubsidized earnings are budgeted. The subsidized portion of the TEAP income is counted as FS unearned income in determining the household's monthly FS eligibility and benefit level. The un-subsidized portion of earnings is counted as earned income.

Welfare Management System

1. Upstate WMS Implications: WMS Payment Type Code "14-TEAP (Transitional Employment Advancement Program)", previously WMS Payment Type Code "14 – TEAP (Training and Employment Assistance Program)," is available to authorize payments to employers.
2. Upstate ABEL Implications: When budgeting TEAP income in ABEL budgets on TA cases, workers should use Earned Income Source Code "31-Earnings from Subsidized Private or Public Sector Employment (TA Only)." On TA/FS budgets, when SF-8 is used to access the FS Budget Input Screen, ABEL brings over this Code and associated amount as Unearned Income Source Code 31. If the TA budget deficit is zero, the FS budget must be calculated as a FS-TBA budget. This requires that the FS budget data (income, shelter costs) be modified to represent the FS budget data that existed prior to the TA budget being calculated as a zero deficit TEAP budget. In most cases, this will result in deletion of the TEAP Unearned Income source 31 amount from the FS budget only. As with any TBA case, the prior TA deficit amount would not be entered as Income when determining the household's FS benefit. In addition a "T" would need to be entered in the SD field which will limit the FS budget from being calculated and stored for a period of greater than five months. Following the five-month TBA period, the FS-TBA budget must be re-budgeted as a non-TBA-FS budget.
3. Downstate WMS Implications - NYC: The date entered in the budget effective date portion of Screen NSBL00 of ABEL will be the start month for TEAP TBA. Workers should enter the TEAP Income (Income Source code 37) with a Program indicator "P" on Screen NSBL06 of the employed individual for diversion cases. WMS will automatically set the five-month FS-TBA end date and calculate the TBA benefit for the case.

At the end of the TBA period, if the case is still in the program, the Program indicator should be changed from "P" to "B" thereby ending the 5-month TBA period and allowing the TEAP income to be budgeted for both TA & FS.

A CNS Notice will be sent to clients in the 4th month of their TBA period requesting information.

WMS will also generate a report of cases receiving FS-TB benefits and cases with expired FS-TB period to alert workers to re-budget the case.