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| LOCAL COMMISSIONERS MEMORANDUM |  
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DSS-4037EL (Rev. 9/89)

Transmittal No: 98 LCM-7

Date: February 4, 1998

Division: Temporary Assistance

TO: Local District Commissioners

SUBJECT: Enhanced PA Earned Income Disregard (42%) Mailing

ATTACHMENTS: Attachment I - Upstate 42% Notice - available  
on line  
Attachment II - New York City 42% Notice - available  
on line  
Attachment III -Electronic Response Form - available  
on line

The purpose of this memorandum is to provide social services districts (SSDs) with information concerning a district optional mailing which the Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance (OTDA) will make on behalf of requesting districts. The purpose of the mass mailing is to encourage employment by publicizing the new 42% earnings disregard and reminding recipients of the 60 month limit on federal public assistance benefits. Any increase in employment to 20 hours or more per week will favorably impact the State's TANF participation rate.

Attached to this LCM are upstate and New York City versions of the notice which explain to PA recipients the financial advantage of employment. The mailing will only be sent in districts which specifically request OTDA to send them. The second paragraph will be modified for each district so that the example is district specific. For example, Attachment I contains information specific to Oneida County. For Monroe County the information would be specific to that district. In addition, in those districts that currently participate in the Child Assistance Program (CAP), districts may request that the following two sentences regarding CAP be included at the end of the notice:

"In addition, you may be eligible to participate in the Child Assistance Program (CAP) which also offers a very favorable treatment of earned income. Please contact your local department of social services for more information regarding CAP."

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The mailing will be sent by WMS on behalf of each requesting district to all Family Assistance (FA) and Safety Net Assistance (SNA) family cases in the district beginning the week of March 16, 1998 and ending the week of March 23, 1998. In addition, the mailing will be sent to case type 14 (PG - ADC) cases that contain an adult active on the case. While the PG-ADC category is not currently being used for public assistance, there are some PG-ADC cases that have not been transferred to FA or SNA yet. The mailing will not be sent to Child Assistance Program (CAP) recipients.

Districts that would like to participate in this optional mailing must notify this Office before close of business February 13, 1998. Attachment III to this LCM is an electronic response form that districts must complete and return (e-mail or fax) to Wendy Dmitri (OIW030), (fax 518-474-9347) by February 13, 1998. If you do not notify the Office by this date, your district will not be included in the mass mailing.

Inquires regarding this release may be directed to:

Regional Representatives: Region I (518)473-0332;  
Region II (518)474-9344; Region III (518)474-9307;  
Region IV (518)474-9300; Region V (518)473-1469;  
Region VI (212)383-1658

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Patricia A. Stevens  
Deputy Commissioner  
Division of Temporary Assistance

Dear Sir or Madam:

This is about an important change which went into effect on November 1, 1997 that allows employed family members receiving public assistance (PA) to keep much of their earnings while receiving PA benefits. The new law also provides that most families cannot get PA if their income exceeds the poverty level. Under the new law, when a member of your family gets a job we do not count the first \$90 and 42 % of the remainder against your monthly PA grant. This allows families in which a member is working to increase the total amount of money they have to spend each month.

An example will show how this works. A family of three in Oneida County usually gets a monthly PA grant of \$529. The chart below shows what this family will have in monthly income with no one working and what the family will have in monthly income when someone is working part-time (20 hours per week) or full-time (40 hours per week) at the minimum wage.

	<u>PA GRANT</u>	<u>EARNINGS</u>	<u>TOTAL MONTHLY INCOME</u>
No Work	\$529	\$0	\$529
Part-Time Work	\$322	\$446	\$768
Full-Time Work	\$63	\$893	\$956

As you can see, a family in which a member is working part-time has \$239 more per month in total income than a family in which no one is working and a family in which a member is working full-time has \$427 more per month in total income than a family in which no one is working. This means that if someone in your family gets a job, you will have more money to save or spend. In addition to this, if you are employed, you may be eligible for state and federal earned income tax credits, which could add up to \$4,387 more a year to your income. Clearly, if you work, you will be much better off financially.

Also, you probably are aware that a new federal law limits families to 60 months of federal public assistance benefits in a lifetime. After receiving assistance for 60 months you may only be eligible for non-cash assistance. So it is more important now than ever before for families to be moving toward financial independence.

There is a lot your social services office can do to help you get a job. You may be assigned to work experience program to help establish work habits and skills, and also provide you with a work reference to use with employers. Job search programs with classes on how to complete an employment application and go to a job interview may also be available to you. The social services office may refer you to jobs or send you to the local Department of Labor to look at the jobs that office has available. There may even be an on the job training program with a local employer available for you.

If you need child care in order to participate in any of the above activities or to work, your social services office can assist you in locating a child care provider and in paying for child care. This is called the child care guarantee. For those individuals receiving family assistance, whose children are under the age of 6, this guarantee means that the district may not sanction you if are unable to meet work requirements if you have proven that child care is not available. The guarantee continues for up to 12 months after your family assistance has ended if you are working and your income is within certain limits. A change in law now makes this guarantee available to working families who voluntarily close their family assistance case.

If you have any questions about how the new law works, or if you need help in getting a job or finding or paying for child care, please call your worker.

Dear Sir or Madam:

This is about an important change which went into effect on November 1, 1997 that allows employed family members receiving public assistance (PA) to keep much of their earnings while receiving PA benefits. The new law also provides that most families cannot get PA if their income exceeds the poverty level. Under the new law, when a member of your family gets a job we do not count the first \$90 and 42 % of the remainder against your monthly PA grant. This allows families in which a member is working to increase the total amount of money they have to spend each month.

An example will show how this works. A family of three in New York City usually gets a monthly PA grant of \$577. The chart below shows what this family will have in monthly income with no one working and what the family will have in monthly income when someone is working part-time (20 hours per week) or full-time (40 hours per week) at the minimum wage.

	<u>PA GRANT</u>	<u>EARNINGS</u>	<u>TOTAL MONTHLY INCOME</u>
No Work	\$577	\$0	\$577
Part-Time Work	\$370	\$446	\$816
Full-Time Work	\$111	\$893	\$1,004

As you can see, a family in which a member is working part-time has \$239 more per month in total income than a family in which no one is working and a family in which a member is working full-time has \$427 more per month in total income than a family in which no one is working. This means that if someone in your family gets a job, you will have more money to save or spend. In addition to this, if you are employed, you may be eligible for state and federal earned income tax credits, which could add up to \$4,387 more a year to your income. Clearly, if you work, you will be much better off financially.

Also, you probably are aware that a new federal law limits families to 60 months of federal public assistance benefits in a lifetime. After receiving assistance for 60 months you may only be eligible for non-cash assistance. So it is more important now than ever before for families to be moving toward financial independence.

There is a lot your social services office can do to help you get a job. You may be assigned to work experience program to help establish work habits and skills, and also provide you with a work reference to use with employers. Job search programs with classes on how to complete an employment application and go to a job interview may also be available to you. The social services office may refer you to jobs or send you to the local Department of Labor to look at the jobs that office has available. There may even be an on the job training program with a local employer available for you.

If you need child care in order to participate in any of the above activities or to work, your social services office can assist you in locating a child care provider and in paying for child care. This is called the child care guarantee. For those individuals receiving family assistance, whose children are under the age of 6, this guarantee means that the district may not sanction you if are unable to meet work requirements if you have proven that child care is not available. The guarantee continues for up to 12 months after your family assistance has ended if you are working and your income is within certain limits. A change in law now makes this guarantee available to working families who voluntarily close their family assistance case.

If you have any questions about how the new law works, or if you need help in getting a job or finding or paying for child care, please call your worker.

Please return this form by February 13, 1998

TO:  
Wendy Dmitri  
User ID 0IW030  
Fax # (518) 474-9347  
40 North Pearl Street  
Section 7D  
Albany, NY 12243

County: \_\_\_\_\_

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| | Send the 42% Notice  
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| | Do not send the 42% Notice  
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For CAP counties only:

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| | Include CAP Language in Notice  
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Completed by: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_