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OFFICE OF FAMILY INDEPENDENCE MANUAL TRANSMITTAL 2008-24
Volume 3 Food Stamp Program
Manual Transmittal 24

TO: County Directors of Family and Children Services
State Directors
OFI Regional Managers
OFI State Operations Staff
OFI FS Program Specialists

FROM: David Statton, Interim Director
Division of Family and Children Services

RE: Updates to the Food Stamp Program Manual

PURPOSE

This manual transmittal contains clarifications to the categorically eligible assistance units and TANF Community Outreach Services (TCOS) policy. Guidelines for how to request verification for incomplete information, and updates to the waived and exempt counties based on the 2008 ABAWD waiver are provided. Several earned and unearned income types in Chart 3420.2, Types of Income, have been redefined to align Food Stamp Program policy with TANF and Medicaid policies. The interim changes policy for *increases in benefits* has been updated in response to the November, 2007 Federal Management Evaluation Review.

DISCUSSION

This transmittal includes clarifications on policy contained in the following sections:

Section 3035, Verification – This section is updated to provide guidance on steps that can be taken when an AU submits partial verification. These guidelines were developed as a result of several discussions that took place in Error Reduction Board Meetings about actions taken on cases where all needed information had not been received.

Section 3210, Categorically Eligible Assistance Units – This section clarifies which households may be categorically eligible when certain ineligible members are included in the AU. Households that contain a member who is either IPV disqualified or a convicted drug felon do not meet the criteria for categorical eligibility.

The liquid resources of these households are counted when determining eligibility for the AU. Households that contain ineligible aliens, ineligible students, ineligible ABAWDS, work sanctioned members, or enumeration sanctioned members are categorically eligible for food stamps, but the ineligible members are not included in the AU.

Section 3211, Expanded Categorical Eligibility – TANF Community Outreach Services (TCOS).

This section clarifies which households may be categorically eligible under TCOS services when an ineligible member is included in the AU. Households that contain a member who is either IPV disqualified or a convicted drug felon or an elderly/disabled AU whose income is greater than 200% of the FPL do not meet the criteria for categorical eligibility. The liquid resources of these households are counted when determining eligibility for the AU. Households that contain ineligible aliens, ineligible students, ineligible ABAWDS; work sanctioned members, or enumeration sanctioned members are categorically eligible for food stamps, but the ineligible members are not included in the AU.

Section 3355, ABAWDS – This section updates the list of waived and exempt counties based on the 2008 ABAWD Waiver. Georgia has been approved for a two-year waiver, which expires March 2010. Under this waiver, there are 74 exempt counties and 85 counties that will operate an Employment and Training (E&T) program. The cities of East Point and Macon are exempt cities under this ABAWD waiver.

Section 3400- Financial Eligibility Criteria Overview – Policy is added to state that the resources of individuals who are categorically eligible TANF or SSI, and *households that receive TCOS services* are not counted toward the resource limit. The liquid resources are counted for households that are not categorically eligible for benefits.

Section 3405, Resources – Policy is added to state that households which are categorically eligible for food stamps do not have to meet the resource limits.

Section 3420, Income – Definitions for specific types of earned income such as bonus pay, commission, overtime, tips, vacation pay, and salaries have been defined and added to the income chart.

Section 3425, Self-employment Income – Policy is changed to state that the 40% standard deduction for the cost of doing business is allowed if the AU *establishes* that it incurs at least one allowable cost of doing business.

Section 3650, Failure to Report Earned Income Budgeting – Due to the change in adverse action period to 14 days, the 10-10-14 rule will apply to determine if a late report of earned income results in an over issuance.

Section 3705 – Notification – This section is updated to change the adverse action period from 10 days to 14 days. This policy is being implemented to allow food stamp recipients sufficient time to receive notices and to respond to actions being taken on their cases.

Section 3715, Interim Changes – The interim changes policy for *increases in benefits* has been corrected in response to the Federal Management Evaluation Review.

Section 3810, Issuance – This section is updated to change the criteria for replacement of benefits when food is destroyed in a disaster and was purchased with food stamp benefits. Households that experience a food loss or power outage of 4 or more hours may receive replacement benefits within 10 days after report of the loss.

Appendix F- Add the following forms to Appendix F: Forms 126SP, Self-Employment Work Calendar (Spanish Version); Form 127SP, Self Employment Work Calendar Log (Spanish Version); Forms 173T-SP, Appointment Letter for Telephone Interviews (Spanish Version); Form 296SP, Expedited Food Stamp Guide (Spanish Version); Form 339SP, SRR Simplified Reporting Form (Spanish Version); and Form 863, Notice of Missed Review Appointment. Revisions to the following forms are also included: Form 47, Food Stamp Program in Georgia; and Form 809, Verification of Earned Income.

Appendix G- The Food Stamp Disaster Plan has been removed from the manual. This plan was revised and now contains personnel information; therefore, it has been placed on the OFI website as a resource for disaster planning. The new Appendix G is a *Food Stamp Manual Reference Guide*. This new guide is a topical index for policy searches and program information.

Appendix L- Add Appendix L, Child Support Services Glossary, to the Food Stamp Manual.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR MANUAL MAINTENANCE

- Remove Section 3035, Verification, and replace with the same.
- Remove Section 3210, Categorically Eligible, and replace with the same.
- Remove Section 3211, TANF Community Outreach Services, and replace with the same.
- Remove Section 3355, ABAWDS, and replace with the same.
- Remove Section 3400, Financial Eligibility Criteria Overview, and replace with the same.
- Remove Section 3405, Resources, and replace with the same.
- Remove Section 3420, Income, and replace with the same.
- Remove Section 3425, Self-employment Income, and replace with the same.
- Remove Section 3650, Failure to Report Earned Income Budgeting, and replace with the same.
- Remove Section 3705, Notification, and replace with the same.
- Remove Section 3715, Interim Changes, and replace with the same.
- Remove Section 3810, Issuance, and replace with the same.
- Remove Appendix F-TOC and replace with the same. Add the following forms to Appendix F:

Form 47, Food Stamp Program in Georgia; Form 126SP, Self-Employment Work Calendar (Spanish Version); Form 127SP, Self Employment Work Calendar Log (Spanish Version); Form 173T-SP Appointment Letter for Telephone Interviews (Spanish Version);

Form 296SP, Expedited Food Stamp Guide (Spanish Version); Form 339SP, Simplified Reporting Requirement (Spanish Version); Form 809, Verification of Earned Income; and Form 863, Notice of Missed Review Appointment

- Remove Appendix G, Food Stamp Disaster Plan and replace it with the *Food Stamp Manual Reference Guide*.
- Add Appendix L, Child Support Services Glossary, to the Food Stamp Program manual.

Place Manual Transmittal 2008-24 Cover Letter following Manual Transmittal 2007-23 Cover Letter in Appendix C.

ON-LINE MANUAL (ODIS) UPDATE

The material in this manual transmittal will be updated in the ODIS system effective **August 1, 2008**.