



**B. J. Walker, Commissioner**

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**OFFICE OF FAMILY INDEPENDENCE MANUAL TRANSMITTAL 2009-27  
Volume 3 Food Stamp Program  
Manual Transmittal 27**

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

**FROM:** Kathy Herren, Deputy Director  
Division of Family and Children Services

**RE:** Updates to the Food Stamp Program Manual

**PURPOSE**

The purpose of this transmittal is to add the *Face-to-Face Interview Waiver* requirements to the application processing and review sections of the manual. Based on the waiver, telephone interviews may be conducted at each initial application or review regardless of hardship status. Documentation of hardship status is not required. A face-to-face interview may be conducted if requested by the household or if the agency determines that one is appropriate. To align Program policy with federal regulations, the delay reasons for cases exceeding the SOP have been defined as agency delay or client delay. Participation has been defined, and procedures for COMPASS applications have also been included. This transmittal also clarifies and updates policies for ABAWDS, citizenship/alien status, resources, and reviews. Effective 2/1/09, the state was granted a statewide ABAWD waiver. ABAWDS who live in Georgia are waived from the 3-month time limit and from participation in the E&T program until January 31, 2010. Under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) of 2009, all counties are exempt from the 3-month time limit and from participation in the E&T program until September 30, 2010. The eligibility criteria for Afghan and Iraqi immigrants and retirement accounts excluded by the 2008 Farm Bill have also been included in the manual.\_\_\_\_\_

**DISCUSSION**

This transmittal includes policy clarifications that are contained in the following sections:

Section 3035 - Verification – The *Summary Verification Chart* is changed to state that the AU’s statement is accepted for student status if the student is enrolled in an institution of higher education. The “**Note**” under the liquid resources section has been changed to state that TPS policy applies only to AUs that are not categorically eligible for benefits.

Section 3105 - Application Processing – The *Face-to Face Interview Waiver* requirements have been included in this section. Participation is defined as the AU having their EBT card, PIN, and benefits available in their EBT account by the 7<sup>th</sup> day for expedited applications and by the 30<sup>th</sup> day for un-expedited applications following the date of application. COMPASS application procedures have been added to Chart 3105.3, Application Filing Procedures.

Section 3110 – Expedited Application Processing – This section adds the screening and interviewing requirements for COMPASS applications. Procedures are changed to verify identity prior to conducting an interview for expedited applications.

Section 3245 – Students – Verification requirements changed to accept the AU’s statement of student status. A student is exempt if responsible for the care of a child age six but under 12 with no adequate childcare and the student must comply with work requirements by working 20 hours per week as employed or self-employed or by participating in work study. Form 875 is no longer used to verify educational income and expenses but may be used to establish a student’s eligibility through the work study exemption.

Section 3320 – Citizenship/Alien Status – This section adds the eligibility criteria for Afghan and Iraqi aliens. Effective 12/26/07, Iraqi and Afghan aliens were granted special immigrant status under section 101(a)(27) of the INA. The period of eligibility for Iraqi aliens cannot exceed eight months, and the period of eligibility for Afghan aliens cannot exceed six months. Effective 3/11/09, Afghan aliens admitted under the Omnibus Appropriations Act of 2009 are extended eligibility from six months to eight months.

Section 3355 – ABAWDS – The ABAWD charts for mandatory and waived counties have been removed due to the statewide waiver and ARRA provisions.

Section 3405 - Resources – Retirement accounts excluded by the 2008 Farm Bill have been added to Chart 3405.1, Types of Resources.

Section 3520 – SSA Prisoner Verification – Policy added to address prisoner alerts at initial application and review based on simplified reporting requirements.

Section 3614 – Excess Medical Deductions – Policy added that mileage to and from the doctor’s office or pharmacy may be allowed as a medical deduction and that verification of medical expenses, which are \$35 or less, is not required if the expense will not result in a deduction.

Section 3630 – Sponsored Aliens – Verification requirement changed to no longer require income verification if support is not received from the sponsor when making a determination of indigence.

Section 3710 – Reviews - Policy changed to state that a timely review must be completed in sufficient time for the AU to access benefits in its normal issuance cycle. Timely reviews may be completed no later than in sufficient time for an eligible AU to participate by its normal issuance cycle or notified of ineligibility by the 30<sup>th</sup> day after date of last issuance cycle. The requirement for a yearly face to face interview has been removed. A telephone interview may be conducted. The requirement to provide 2<sup>nd</sup> interview appointment prior to the 15<sup>th</sup> of the month has been

removed. Removed wording that telephone interviews must have waivers and prior approval. Forms 354, HIPPA and Voter Declaration statements are no longer required at review.

Section 3715 – Interim Changes - A subsection entitled “American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (ARRA)” is added to include the claims provisions of the act. Overpayments created during the period of April 1, 2009 through September 30, 2009 must not include the additional benefit amount that households receive as a result of the act. If the household is totally ineligible, the additional benefit amount is included in the claims balance.

Appendix D – Documentation Standards – The ADTS have been removed from the documentation standards. Only the SUCCESS Screen Documentation requirements are included in the manual.

Appendix F- Forms Table of Contents (TOC) - Add the following forms to Appendix F:

Form 173A – Appointment Letter (Rev. 05/09)

Form 286 – TANF/Food Stamp Review Form (Rev. 03/09)

Form 286SP – TANF/Food Stamp Review Form Spanish (Rev. 03/09)

Form 297A - Rights and Responsibilities (Rev. 01/09)

Form 840 – Medical Transportation Expense Log – (03/09)

Form 841 – Food Loss Replacement Form – (03/09)

Appendix M - E&T Case Accuracy Review Process - This section will be removed from the manual.

## **INSTRUCTIONS FOR MANUAL MAINTENANCE**

Remove Section 3035, Verification, and replace with attached Section 3035.

Remove Section 3105, Application Processing, and replace with attached Section 3105.

Remove Section 3110, Expedited Application Processing, and replace with attached Section 3110.

Remove Section 3245, Students, and replace with attached Section 3245.

Remove Section 3320, Citizenship/Alien Status, and replace with attached Section 3320.

Remove Section 3355, ABAWDS, and replace with attached Section 3355.

Remove Section 3405, Resources, and replace with attached Section 3405.

Remove Section 3520, SSA Prisoner Verification, and replace with attached Section 3520.

Remove Section 3614, Excess Medical Deductions, and replace with attached Section 3614

Remove, Section 3630, Sponsored Aliens, and replace with attached Section 3630.

Remove Section 3710, Reviews, and replace with attached Section 3710.

Remove Section 3715, Interim Changes, and replace with attached Section 3715.

Remove Appendix D, Documentation Standards and replace with Appendix D, Documentation Standards

Remove Appendix F-Table of Contents (Rev. 03/09) and replace with Appendix F-Table of Contents (Rev. 07/09):

- Remove Form 173A (Rev. 12/07) and replace with Form 173A SP (Rev. 05/09)
- Remove Form 286-Food Stamp Review Form (Rev. 01/09) and replace with Form 286-TANF/FS Review Form (Rev. 03/09)
- Remove Form 286Sp-Food Stamp Review Form (Rev. 01/09) and replace with Form 286Sp (Rev. 03/09)
- Remove Form 297A-Rights and Responsibilities (Rev. 01/08) and replace with Form 297A (Rev. 01/09)
- Add Form 840-Medical Transportation Expense Log, to the Food Stamp Program manual.
- Add Form 841-Food Loss Replacement Form, to the Food Stamp Program manual.

Remove Appendix M, E&T Case Accuracy Review Process, from the Food Stamp Program Manual.

Place Manual Transmittal 2009-27 Cover Letter following Manual Transmittal 2008-26 Cover Letter in Appendix C.

### **ON-LINE MANUAL (ODIS) UPDATE**

The material in this manual transmittal will be updated in the ODIS system effective **7/1/09**.

