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OFFICE OF FAMILY INDEPENDENCE MANUAL TRANSMITTAL 2010-29
Volume 3 Food Stamp Program
Manual Transmittal 29

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

FROM: Isabel Blanco, Executive 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 waiver requirements to *average student work hours* to the “students” section of the manual. The *Waiver-to-Average Student Work Hours* allows students to average their work hours when the hours fluctuate from week to week because of class schedules or employer needs. Students must maintain an average of 20 hours per week or 80 hours per month to remain eligible for food stamp benefits. The verification requirements for excluded income sources and the definitions for specific types of corporations and their corresponding IRS forms/schedules have also been included in the manual. This transmittal also clarifies and updates policy regarding citizenship/alien status, identity, and the excess medical deduction. Effective 12/19/09, Afghan and Iraqi immigrants became eligible for food stamps under Public Law 111-118 the same as refugees under Section 207 of the INA. SAVE procedures, data matches used to verify identity, and medical transportation costs have also been included in the manual.

DISCUSSION

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

Section 3035 - Verification – In this section, the verification requirements for excluded

income types: loans, educational loans, and vendor payments have been added to the *Summary Verification Chart*.

The client's statement is accepted as verification if the income is not counted in the budget.

Section 3245 – Students – The waiver requirements to *average student work hours* have been included in this section. Student work hours may be averaged for employed and self-employed students. A **note** has been added on page 1 of this section that states “students enrolled in CD-ROM, DVD and internet classes, or hybrid classes are considered to be enrolled in an institution of higher education.”

Section 3320 – Citizenship/Alien Status – This section updates the eligibility criteria for Afghan and Iraqi immigrants. Effective 12/19/09, the eligibility status for Afghan and Iraqi immigrants under Public Law 111-118 became the same as refugees under Section 207 of the INA. This means that immigrants with special immigrant visa (SIV) status are now eligible for 7 years from the date their status is granted. Web-1 SAVE procedures have been replaced with Web-3 SAVE procedures.

Section 3335 – Identity – This section incorporates several data matches that may be used to verify identity. To verify a client's identity, the following matches should be used:

1. *Georgia Vital Records* that matches the client's name and DOB
2. *The Work Number* showing employee information that matches name and DOB
3. *SDX/BENDEX* - name and DOB match
4. *DOL New Hire Alert* - name match
5. *DOL UCB Screen* (receipt of UCB screen showing clients full name and address)

DOL Wage Inquiries **CANNOT** be used to verify identity. These inquiries do not fully identify the client since they only show the first 3 letters of the client's last name.

Section 3425 - Self-employment Income – Policy is added to define the different types of corporations and their corresponding IRS forms/schedules. These forms are needed to verify regular earned or self-employment income.

Section 3510- Internal Revenue Service (IRS) and Beneficiary Earnings and Exchange Record System (BEERS) Information Security- This section will be **REMOVED** from the Food Stamp Program (FSP) manual. The FSP will no longer act on information received from IRS/BEERS, which is provided by the IEVS system.

Section 3614 – Excess Medical Deduction – Policy is changed to state that mileage driven to and from the doctor's office or the pharmacy to pick up prescriptions may be allowed as a medical deduction, if at least one of the household's vehicles is used for transportation. The vehicle must belong to a member of the food stamp household. The mileage rate as established for state employees plus parking are used to calculate medical

transportation costs.

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

- Form 297 – Application for Benefits (Rev. 04/10)
- Form 297SP – Spanish version Application for Benefits (Rev. 04/10)

INSTRUCTIONS FOR MANUAL MAINTENANCE

- Remove Section 3035, Verification, and replace with attached Section 3035.
- Remove Section 3245, Students, and replace with attached Section 3245.
- Remove Section 3320, Citizenship/Alien Status, and replace with attached Section 3320.
- Remove Section 3335, Identity, and replace with attached Section 3335.
- Remove Section 3425, Self-employment Income, and replace with attached Section 3425.
- **Remove** Section 3510, IRS and BEERS Information Security, from the Food Stamp Program manual
- Remove Section 3614, Excess Shelter Deduction, and replace with attached Section 3614.
- Remove Appendix F-Table of Contents (Rev. 01/10) and replace with Appendix F-Table of Contents (Rev. 06/10):

Place Manual Transmittal 2010-29 Cover Letter following Manual Transmittal 2010-28 Cover Letter in Appendix C.

ON-LINE MANUAL (ODIS) UPDATE

The material contained in this transmittal will be updated on the ODIS website effective **June 1, 2010**.