



Department of Human Resources
311 West Saratoga Street
Baltimore MD 21201

Family Investment Administration
ACTION TRANSMITTAL

Control Number: #03-48

Effective Date: UPON RECEIPT

Issuance Date: MAY 27, 2003

**TO: DIRECTORS, LOCAL DEPARTMENTS OF SOCIAL SERVICES
DEPUTY/ASSISTANT DIRECTORS FOR FAMILY INVESTMENT
FAMILY INVESTMENT SUPERVISORS AND ELIGIBILITY STAFF**

FROM: KEVIN M. MCGUIRE, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

**RE: WORK REQUIREMENTS FOR VOLUNTARY QUIT AND VOLUNTARILY
REDUCING WORK EFFORT**

PROGRAM AFFECTED: FOOD STAMP PROGRAM

ORIGINATING OFFICE: OFFICE OF POLICY, RESEARCH AND SYSTEMS

SUMMARY:

This action transmittal provides policy about changes in the food stamp rules for customers who voluntarily quit a job or reduce their work effort.

- **Under old policy** to be considered a voluntary quit or reduction in work effort the case manager had to:
 - ◆ Look back at the 60-day period before the date of application in establishing voluntary quit and reduction of work effort; and
 - ◆ Determine if the job hours were 20 hours per week or provided the equivalent of 20 hours per week time minimum wage.
- **The new policy:**
 - ◆ Reduces the “look back” period to 30 days.
 - ◆ Increases the job hours to 30 hours per week or 30 hours times the minimum wage.

ACTION REQUIRED:

- An individual is ineligible for food stamps if, in the 30 day period before applying for benefits or at any time after application, he or she:
 - ◆ Voluntarily and without good cause quits a job of 30 hours a week or more; or
 - ◆ Reduces his or her work effort voluntarily and without good cause and, after the reduction is working less than 30 hours per week.

➤ The voluntary quit policy applies if:

- ◆ The job was 30 hours or more per week or provided weekly earnings at least equivalent to the federal minimum wage multiplied by 30 hours;
- ◆ The quit happened within 30 days prior to application or anytime thereafter; and
- ◆ The quit was without good cause.

Example 1: Mr. A applied for food stamps on April 11. He stated that he had quit his job on March 1st. Since this is more than 30 days prior to the date of application, the customer is not subject to a voluntary quit penalty.

Example 2: Ms. B also applied for food stamps on April 11. She stated that she had quit her job on April 1st because she was tired of working. Ms. B's job averaged 35 hours per week. The case manager made a determination that Ms. B had voluntarily quit her job. She is ineligible for food stamps.

Example 3: Mrs. C applied for food stamps for herself and her husband on May 15. She told her case manager that she had quit her 25-hour per week job because she only made minimum wage and she no longer wanted to work. This is not a voluntary quit because the job was less than 30 hours per week.

➤ The reduction of work effort applies if:

- ◆ Before the reduction, the individual was employed 30 hours or more per week;
- ◆ The reduction occurred within 30 days prior to the date the application was filed or any time thereafter; and
- ◆ The reduction was voluntary and without good cause.

Note: The minimum wage equivalency does not apply when determining a reduction in work effort.

Example 4: Mr. D applied for food stamps on June 14. He reported that he had been working 40 hours per week, but now that the weather is so nice, he decided to work part time. He is now working 20 hours per week. The case manager determined that he was ineligible because he voluntarily reduced his work effort without good cause.

Note: Suitable Employment is discussed in section 130.15 of the Food Stamp Manual. Good Cause is discussed in sections 130.13 and 130.21.

ACTION DUE:

This change is advantageous to both case managers and customers; therefore the policy is effective upon receipt of the action transmittal.

INQUIRIES:

For questions contact Kay Finegan at 410-767-7939 or Marilyn Lorenzo at 410-767-7333.

cc: FIA Management Staff
Constituent Services
DHR Help Desk
RESI