



**Department of Human Resources
311 West Saratoga Street
Baltimore MD 21201**

FIA INFORMATION MEMO

Control Number: #03-53

Issuance Date: June 17, 2003

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

FROM: KEVIN M. MCGUIRE, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

RE: COMPUTER BASED TRAINING

PROGRAM AFFECTED: FOOD STAMPS

**ORIGINATING OFFICE: BUREAU OF CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT AND
OFFICE OF POLICY, RESEARCH AND TRAINING**

Background:

The Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) has sanctioned Maryland each of the last eight years because our food stamp error rate has exceeded the national tolerance level. Instead of paying the sanction money to the federal government, FNS allowed DHR to "reinvest" the money to develop and implement food stamp (FS) error prevention strategies. The Computer Based Training (CBT) Project is a strategy created using FS Reinvestment funds. The CBT system is an interactive system that offers individuals the opportunity to learn or refresh Food Stamp Program (FSP) knowledge at their own speed.

The computer based training system is available to all local department and DHR central staff who have access to a PC that has Intranet access. In addition, computers dedicated to the CBT have been installed in each local jurisdiction in a location designated by each local department administration.

Computer Based Training (CBT)

The CBT is divided in to several sections:

1. Courses

- A. Application Maintenance Course (AMC) covers customer application procedures and application processing.**
- B. Financial Eligibility Course (FEC) covers the financial eligibility and calculation requirements.**

C. Technical Eligibility Course (TEC) covers the technical eligibility decisions required in FS eligibility.

2. Tests

3. Reports

The test results for individuals are anonymous and never available to supervisors. Test results are displayed when a test section is completed along with a comparison indicating how well everyone else in the State has done on each question. Combined test results are available in "Reports" on a local department and statewide level to district managers, assistant and deputy directors and directors as well as specific central staff. The data results will allow the LDSS and DHR central to develop individual LDSS or district office strategies to reduce FS errors.

A desk guide for CBT users is attached, however, a quick reference to accessing the system follows.

SIGNING ON TO THE SYSTEM

It is recommended that the CBT be accessed by using a dedicated CBT PC. The CBT program automatically loads on these PCs. The user must sign on to the system using the user name **cbtuser** and the password **cbtuser1**. The CBT program logon screen is then displayed.

Individuals can access the CBT on their PC if their PC is a model that is less than 3 years old. Older PCs do not have the capacity to load all the files needed for CBT. The local department System Administrator should be contacted to ensure the PC has the capacity. In addition, the System Administrator needs to complete the initial downloading of plug-in programs ("Flash 5" and "Micro Media") and ensure access to Family Investment Program Network (FIPNET). The CBT automatically loads. There are guidelines for the System Administrator in the CBT System Administrator's Manual.

Once the CBT system is accessed, regardless of whether individuals sign on to the CBT System with a dedicated PC or their own PC, the procedures for logging on to the CBT training program are the same.

1. Enter your CARES logon ID in the box marked ID. CARES log-on IDs have been loaded into the CBT system. If you cannot access the system because your log-on has not been loaded, please contact John Fowler at 410-767-7196.
2. Enter your CARES ID again, as the password, in the box marked "password."
3. Select either of two animated characters to assist you through the screens or specify none. If none is chosen the program will not have a computer-generated voice to guide you through the courses.

4. Select Table of Contents (TOC) and choose a policy section of the manual by clicking on the book icon next to AMC, FEC or TEC.
5. Click on the name of the section you wish to review (Adverse Action, Civil Rights, etc.). A link to the test for the section is available by clicking on Exit and then Test. Once in the Test section users are able to access the actual FS policy manual section related to this subject matter by clicking on the policy link icon that is located on the upper right side of each of the answer pages for each test question."
6. There is an Explanation link displayed at each question also. Opening that link provides the user with additional policy or a clarification of the answer to the question.
7. The test results page has a link back to any question the user answered incorrectly.

PAYMENT ACCURACY

The Computer Based Training System is an error reduction initiative. We encourage all eligibility and eligibility review staff to use the computer based training to maximize their skill and knowledge in FS policy. To ensure that the information in the CBT is current the course sections and the test questions will be updated quarterly.

INQUIRIES

As with any computer system technical issues may arise and System Support Staff have been trained to assist CBT users with system problems.

Please direct Food Stamp policy questions to Kay Finegan at 410-767-7939 or Marilyn Lorenzo at 410-767-7333. Systems questions should be directed to System Support at 410-767-7002. Should you have other comments or questions please contact Deborah McWilliams at 401-767-7080 or John Fowler at 410-767-7196.

cc: FIA Management Staff
Constituent Services
OTHS
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Communications