



Department of Human Resources
311 West Saratoga Street
Baltimore MD 21201

FIA INFORMATION MEMO

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**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: EXPEDITED FOOD STAMPS

PROGRAM AFFECTED: FOOD STAMP PROGRAM

ORIGINATING OFFICE: OFFICE OF POLICY, RESEARCH AND SYSTEMS

SUMMARY

Expedited Food Stamps help individuals and families in need of food right away. It is important to insure that no one in Maryland goes without food.

There are no changes in the expedited food stamp policy. This informational memo contains reminders and suggestions to ensure that all food stamp households who are eligible for expedited food stamps receive them as soon as possible. Case managers should make every effort to process expedited food stamps to eligible households the **same** day the application is filed.

CURRENT AND ONGOING POLICY

- ◆ If otherwise eligible, the following households **must** receive food stamp benefits right away, but no later than seven calendar days after the date the application is filed:
 - Households with less than \$150 gross monthly income and who have \$100 or less in liquid resources.
 - Households whose combined gross income and liquid resources are less than the household's monthly rent or mortgage and utilities, including entitlement to SUA or LUA, as appropriate.
 - Migrant or seasonal farmworker households who are destitute, and have liquid resources that do not exceed \$100.

- ◆ Every local office should already have procedures in place for evaluating all food stamps applications on the same day that the household seeks assistance to identify those that are entitled to expedited service.

- ◆ Local departments must evaluate applications filed in person (**including applications that are dropped off**), by mail or fax, or electronically, and households applying for food stamps only as well as households applying for several programs
- ◆ For drop off applications or when the applicant cannot be seen on the same day he or she applies, the person evaluating applications for expedited service must make sure that information about income, deductions and assets is included on the application.
- ◆ The case manager will use the applicant's statement as to the amount of income, assets and deductions in determining the benefit amount if verification is not available.
- ◆ The only required verification for expedited food stamps is identity. This does not have to be a photo ID. If necessary, the local department may make a collateral contact to verify identity.
- ◆ The local department should also check to make sure there is a contact phone number for an applicant that does not already have an independence card so that one can be issued if the household is found eligible for expedited food stamps.
- ◆ An interview is not required to receive expedited food stamps if it is not possible to schedule one within the expedited time frame. **An interview is required for regular food stamps.** If the customer receives expedited food stamps without an interview and then fails to show up for the scheduled interview or does not reschedule an interview, the customer is not eligible for ongoing food stamps.

INQUIRIES

Please direct policy questions to Kay Finegan at (410) 767-7939 or Suzanne Diggs at (410) 767-4369.

cc FIA Management Staff
Constituent Services
DHR Help Desk