



Department of Human Resources
311 West Saratoga Street
Baltimore MD 21201

FIA ACTION TRANSMITTAL

Control Number: #04-37

Effective Date: July 1, 2004

Issuance Date: June 8, 2004

**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 – REDUCTION IN WORK EFFORT

PROGRAM AFFECTED: FOOD STAMP PROGRAM

ORIGINATING OFFICE: OFFICE OF POLICY, RESEARCH AND SYSTEMS

SUMMARY

In 1996, welfare reform legislation added a work requirement that makes individuals who voluntarily and without good cause reduce their work effort to less than 30 hours per week ineligible for food stamps. Current policy states that the minimum wage equivalency does not apply when determining reduction of work effort. A recent clarification changes this policy.

NEW POLICY

When an individual voluntarily and without good cause reduces his or her hours to less than 30 hours per week (reduction of work effort), but continues to earn at least 30 times the minimum wage, the individual is exempt from food stamp work requirements. He or she is not subject to a work disqualification.

Examples:

Mrs. A works 40 hours per week. She earns \$7.00/hour. She decided that she did not want to work full time any more. Her employer agreed to let her work 25 hours per week. Since her weekly earnings of \$175 ($\$7.00 \times 25 = \175) exceed \$154.50 (the federal minimum wage times 30 or $\$5.15 \times 30 = \154.50), she is exempt from work requirements and is not disqualified.

Mr. B works 35 hours per week. He earns \$6.00 per hour. He decided that he wants to cut back on his hours so he can spend more time in his garden. He now works 25 hours per week. Since his weekly earnings of \$150 ($\$6.00 \times 25 = \150) are less than \$154.50, he is subject to a disqualification for his reduction in work effort.

Reminders:

- ◆ This policy does not apply when the employer reduces an employee's work hours.
- ◆ The case manager must consider good cause reasons listed in the Food Stamp Manual in section 130.21 before determining that a household member reduced his or her work hours.

ACTION REQUIRED

There are no new CARES procedures. Please follow standard CARES procedures for coding work requirements and penalties.

In the Food Stamp Manual remove the "Note" that follows section 130.18C. We will include this change in the next manual release and on the FIPNET.

ACTION DUE

This policy is effective with new applications or recertifications taken on or after July 1, 2004.

INQUIRIES

Please direct policy questions to Kay Finegan at 410-767-7939.

cc: FIA Management Staff
Constituent Services
DHR Help Desk