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

FROM: LYNDA FOX, DEPUTY SECRETARY FOR PROGRAMS AND
LOCAL OPERATIONS

RE: QUARTERS EarnED WHILE ILLEGALLY RESIDING IN THE
UNITED STATES

PROGRAM AFFECTED: FOOD STAMP PROGRAM AND TEMPORARY
CASH ASSISTANCE

ORIGINATING OFFICE: OFFICE OF POLICY, RESEARCH AND SYSTEMS

SUMMARY

This action transmittal provides guidance on determining eligible immigrant status when
a lawful permanent resident requests to be credited with quarters of coverage that were
earned by someone who was illegally in this country at the time the quarters were earned.

POLICY

For purposes of eligibility for social security benefits and for purposes of immigrant
eligibility for Supplemental Security Income, the Social Security Administration (SSA)
counts quarters worked while the person was living in this country. The quarters are
counted regardless of the person’s legal or illegal alien status at the time the work was
performed and regardless of whether a valid social security number was used. The SSA
does not try to determine immigration status of the immigrant, the immigrant’s spouse or
immigrant’s parents at the time the work was performed.

In determining an immigrant’s eligibility for food stamps and TCA, count quarters
worked while the person was legally or illegally in this country except for quarters earned
after December 31, 1996 in which the person received federal means-tested benefits.
Follow the directions in the State Verification Exchange System Users Manual for making the 40 qualifying quarter determination.

INQUIRIES

Please call Kay Finegan at 410-767-7939 if you have any questions.

cc:  DHR Executive Staff
     FIA Executive Staff
     Constituent Services
     OIM Help Desk
     CIS Testing Facility