



Department of Human Resources
311 West Saratoga Street
Baltimore MD 21201

FIA ACTION TRANSMITTAL

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00-20

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

Charles E. Henry for
FROM: ROBERT J. EVERHARD, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

RE: WAIVERS FOR REPORTING CHANGES

PROGRAM AFFECTED: FOOD STAMP PROGRAM

ORIGINATING OFFICE: OFFICE OF POLICY, RESEARCH AND SYSTEMS

SUMMARY

In an effort to simplify policy for case managers and customers, we requested two food stamp waivers that modify change reporting. This transmittal describes a new waiver and modifies an existing waiver. The new waiver defines the date that a household knows about a new source of earned income as the date the new employment begins. The modified waiver increases the change reporting threshold for households who receive earnings on a piecework basis from \$80 to \$100.

OLD POLICY

- A. A food stamp household is required to report a new source of employment within 10 days of the date the household knows about the change. This means that, in some instances, households are required to report new employment well before actually starting a new job.
- B. Households that receive all their earnings at a piece rate must report changes in monthly earnings of \$80 or more.

NEW POLICY

- A. New waiver: The date that a household knows about a new source of earned income is the date a job starts. Case managers can more easily identify the date a household starts a new job when it is necessary to establish an overissuance. The

waiver will also help customers to better understand when they need to report the change in employment status.

Example: Mr. Smith was hired June 1. When he was hired, his employer told him that the job would begin on June 15. Mr. Smith has ten days from June 15, the date he starts, to report the change to his case manager.

Note: The case manager has ten days to make the change.

- B. Modified waiver: Households that receive earnings on a piecework basis are required to report changes of \$100 or more in monthly earned income.

Example: Ms. Brown works for a sheltered workshop. He earned \$50, \$25, \$20, and \$25 in March. CARES computed \$120 as earnings. In June his earnings were \$50, \$45, \$55, and \$50. The monthly amount was \$200. Because this increase was less than \$100, it is not a reportable change. **Even though this is not a reportable change, if the household reports it, the case manager must act within required time frames.**

PAYMENT ACCURACY

- It is important to inform households of all of their reporting requirements at application and recertification.
- Emphasize the requirements for reporting income changes because this is where QC finds the most errors.
- **Remind customers that it is just as important to report reduced income or a loss of a job as it is to report an increase or a new job.**

ACTION DUE

- A. The waiver for reporting a new source of employment was approved for 2 years beginning October 1, 1999.
- B. The increase in the threshold for reporting changes in piece rate income is effective January 1, 2000.

CARES PROCEDURES

- CARES will calculate earned income properly when you enter the income amount and the correct frequency type.
- Use the "actual" frequency designator only when income is earned monthly or has been manually converted to monthly. CARES will count the amount of income entered as the full monthly amount whenever "AC" is used.

INQUIRIES

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

cc: **FIA Management Staff** **Constituent Services**
 OIM Help Desk **CIS Testing Facility**