



Department of Human Resources  
311 West Saratoga Street  
Baltimore MD 21201

Family Investment Administration  
**ACTION TRANSMITTAL**

Control Number: #11-20

Effective Date: January 1, 2011

Issuance Date: UPON RECEIPT

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

**FROM: ROSEMARY MALONE, INTERIM EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**

**RE: ALIGNING CERTIFICATION PERIODS FOR FOOD SUPPLEMENT AND  
TEMPORARY CASH ASSISTANCE WHEN THE TRANSITIONAL FOOD  
SUPPLEMENT (TFS) FREEZE IS BROKEN**

**PROGRAM AFFECTED: FOOD SUPPLEMENT PROGRAM (FSP) and  
TEMPORARY CASH ASSISTANCE (TCA)**

**ORIGINATING OFFICE: OFFICE OF PROGRAMS**

**SUMMARY:**

Action Transmittal 11-14, "Transitional Food Supplement Benefit Change" provided information on the change in the Transitional Food Supplement (TFS) policy regarding households that return to TCA during the five month TFS period. Effective January 1, 2011 households returning to TCA during the five month TFS period are recertified for Food Supplement Program (FSP) benefits under normal FSP requirements and a new certification period is assigned. This includes all TCA cases reopened for any reason (an Agency error closure, TCA reopened pending an appeal, or the customer reapplies) during the five month TFS period. Wait until the TCA case has been approved to break the TFS freeze and complete a recertification of the FSP case.

Upon reopening, the TCA case is assigned a 12 month certification period. In most instances when the TFS freeze is broken, the household is recertified and given new six month certification period. The certification periods for the TCA and FSP may not be aligned. When certification periods are not aligned, the customer must be seen more often than necessary, resulting in poor customer service and an increase in agency workload. The Food and Nutrition Service approved a waiver to allow us to align the certifications by completing an early recertification of the FSP case.

**REQUIRED ACTION:**

When a TFS household returns to TCA during the five month TFS period, the freeze must be broken and they must be recertified for FSP under normal FSP rules. Assign the FSP case a six month certification period. The first FSP recertification (after the freeze is broken) will be

a mail-in. If the household completes the recertification and remains eligible, recertify the FSP case for six additional months. When the TCA case is recertified complete an early recertification of the FSP case. If the household remains eligible for TCA and FSP, assign another 12-month certification to the TCA case and a six month certification to the FSP case. Completing the early recertification of the FSP will align the certification periods. See chart on page three for further clarification.

**EXAMPLE:**

Ms. Potts' TCA case was closed effective March 1 because her income was overscale. Her FSP benefits went into TFS effective March 1. The TFS period was March through July. Ms. Potts lost her job and reapplied for TCA on May 5. Her TCA was approved on May 17 and she was given a 12-month certification period, May through April. When the TCA case was approved the case manager recertified the household for FSP and broke the TFS freeze. The new FSP certification period is 6 months, June through November. In October Ms. Potts completes the FSP recertification and is recertified 6 more months, December through May. When Ms. Potts completes her TCA recertification in March the case manager also completes an early recertification of the FSP case. If Ms. Potts is eligible the case manager assigns a new 6-month certification period. At this point Ms. Potts' TCA and FSP certification periods will be aligned.

**ACTION DUE:**

Upon Receipt

**INQUIRIES:**

Please direct TCA policy questions to Marilyn Lorenzo at 410-767-7333 or [mlorenzo@dhr.state.md.us](mailto:mlorenzo@dhr.state.md.us), Gretchen Simpson at 410-767-7937 or [gsimpson@dhr.state.md.us](mailto:gsimpson@dhr.state.md.us) or Mary Ellen Scalley 410-767-7953 or [mscalley@dhr.state.md.us](mailto:mscalley@dhr.state.md.us).

cc: DHR Executive Staff  
FIA Management Staff  
Constituent Services  
DHR Help Desk

