



Department of Human Resources  
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Baltimore, MD. 21201-3521

## FIA ACTION TRANSMITTAL

Issuance Date: June 19, 1996

Effective Date: July 1, 1996

Control Number: FIA OPA #97 - 06 REVISED

**TO: DIRECTORS, LOCAL DEPARTMENTS OF SOCIAL SERVICES  
DEPUTY/ASSISTANT DIRECTORS FOR FAMILY INVESTMENT  
FAMILY INVESTMENT SUPERVISORS**  
*Charles E Henry for*

**FROM: KEVIN MAHON, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, FIA**

**RE: GPA-PW PAYMENT STANDARD**

**PROGRAM AFFECTED: GENERAL PUBLIC ASSISTANCE-PREGNANT WOMEN**

**ORIGINATING OFFICE: OPA/ DIVISION OF PROGRAM POLICY AND  
REGULATION**

**Background:** The GPA-PW program provides benefits to a pregnant woman during the first through the fifth month of her pregnancy. The payment standard is \$209 monthly. There is no regulation requirement for the GPA-PW minor to live with a specified person.

The budget for FY'97 included a reduced amount for the GPA-PW program because there are other programs and services available to cover the needs of this population.

**New Policy:** The Administrative Executive Legislative Review (AELR) Committee questioned our method of allowing the reduced funding for GPA-PW and referred the policy to the Attorney General's Office. The opinion was the \$150 payment for the 3rd through the 5th month was inconsistent with the statute and the Budget Act and that assistance be provided from the time pregnancy is verified through the 5th month but at a reduced payment. The \$150 payment has been reduced to \$125 per month.

**The GPA-PW grant amount is a flat \$125 paid from the time pregnancy is medically verified through the fifth month. The 14 day delay policy no longer applies to GPA-PW applicants or recipients, and the benefit is not to be prorated.** The rules and regulations regarding who is eligible for this program, and the income and assets counted, have not changed. Countable income is deducted from \$125 to determine the payment.

Regulations have been adopted that will require a pregnant minor to live with an adult caretaker relative who will be the payee, except under specific circumstances. The new policy requires a minor, pregnant woman to reside in the home of her parent, legal guardian, or other adult relative in order to receive assistance unless:

- The minor has no living parent, legal guardian, or other adult relative whose whereabouts is known.
- The parent, legal guardian, or other adult relative will not allow the minor to reside in their household.
- The physical or emotional health or safety of the minor would be in jeopardy if residing in the same household with their parent, legal guardian, or other adult relative.
- The minor has lived apart from their parent, legal guardian, or other adult relative for at least one year before the application for assistance.
- The minor resides in an adult-supervised supportive living arrangement.

The new policy also requires the parent, legal guardian, other adult relative, or the adult supervisor in a supportive living arrangement to be the payee of the minor's GPA-PW benefit. The pregnant minor will no longer receive benefits in her own name, and a representative payee must be found even if the minor is exempt from living with a parent or other relative .

Recipients of GPA-PW benefits as of June 1996 were notified of the reduction in benefits effective July 1, 1996 by mass mailing. (Copies of the notices are attached.)

**ACTION REQUIRED:**

**The new policies apply to all GPA-PW applications and interim changes received on or after July 1, 1996, when the applicant or payee is a minor pregnant woman:**

1. Determine the living situation of the minor.
2. If the minor states that she has lived independently for a year before applying for assistance, request proofs such as rent receipts, gas, electric, telephone bills, etc.
3. Determine if the minor can identify a payee, and if so, advise the minor that the payee must come into the office to sign necessary forms and to be trained on EBT (the worker must send written notice to the payee advising of the need for them to come into the office).
4. If the minor is living in a group home or other supportive living facility, request proof.

5. Advise the minor pregnant woman that an adult representative from the facility must come in to sign necessary forms and to be trained on EBT.
6. Local departments may refer the pregnant minor to services in cases where the minor is claiming not to have a suitable payee.
7. GPA-PW assistance is to be denied to any minor pregnant woman not meeting the new policy criteria.

**AIMS:**

Deny any request for assistance if the pregnant minor does not meet the new policy criteria. Complete the AIMS 2/3A form to deny the request, using an appropriate denial code. Send a manual letter with the message stating that the case is being denied because, "The applicant does not meet the requirement of living with a relative as specified by policy".

If eligibility is met for any applications pending from June 1996, approve \$209 for June less any proration, and \$125 for July, providing July is the month pregnancy is verified through the fifth month of pregnancy.

**NOTE:** Any case with earnings will continue to have the current AFDC earnings policy of \$30 and 1/3 disregards, work expenses, etc applied to determine the grant amount.

**CARES:**

Deny any request for assistance if the pregnant minor does not meet the new policy. Enter code 561 on the STAT screen for the GPA-PW AU. Code 561 has the following text, "Household does not meet GPA-PW technical eligibility requirements."

When you finalize any applications pending from June, the June benefit will be \$209, less any proration. The July benefit will be the flat grant of \$125 without any proration. **CARES has not been reprogrammed to accommodate this new policy.** The system will continue to prorate benefits 14 days from the date of application. **To authorize a correct grant amount when the month of application is July or later, a supplemental BEG must be issued to ensure a correct payment in the month of application.** The supplemental BEG amount is the difference between the prorated benefit amount and \$125, the new GPA-PW grant amount.

- Create a BEG for the GPA-PW AU using Option R - Benefit Error.
- Select Option C - PreCARES BEG.
- Enter the application month and amount of the supplemental BEG.
- Use code AE as the reason for the BEG issuance reason.
- Narration must be done explaining the action taken.

- If there is an associated food stamp AU, it is necessary to enter the supplemental BEG amount on the UINC screen as unearned income type GA - General Public Assistance to prevent a food stamp overissuance .

**NOTE:** Any case with earnings will continue to have the current AFDC earnings policy of \$30 and disregards, work expenses, etc. applied to determine the grant amount. A regulation will be promulgated to change this in October. For all earnings cases, the supplemental BEG amount is the difference between the prorated benefit amount and the grant amount due the household. The grant amount is found on the CAFI screen.

**Action Due Date:** This policy change is effective with all GPA-PW application requests for assistance by or on behalf of a minor pregnant woman received on and after July 1, 1996.

- The minor pregnant woman policy is effective July 1, 1996.
- The payment policy is effective for all cases as of July 1, 1996.

**Action Required Of:** All Local Departments of Social Services.

**Effective Date:** July 1, 1996.

For questions call Rufus McCrea at 767-7748 or the DHR Help Desk at (410) 767-7002 or 1-800-347-1350.

KM/bba  
Attachments

cc: DHR Executive Staff  
FIA Management Staff  
Constituent Services