



Department of Human Resources
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FIA ACTION TRANSMITTAL

Issuance Date: February 14, 1997

Effective Date: Upon Receipt

Control Number: FIA/OPA #97-66 REVISED

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

**FROM: *Charles E. Henry for*
KEVIN MAHON, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, FIA**

**RE: DATA TRACKING REQUIREMENTS FOR WORK PROGRAMS
PROGRAMS
AFFECTED: TEMPORARY CASH ASSISTANCE (TCA) WORK PROGRAMS AND
FOOD STAMP EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING (FSET) PROGRAMS.**

ORIGINATING OFFICE: OPA/ DIVISION OF WORK OPPORTUNITIES

SUMMARY:

This transmittal replaces #97-66 issued December 24, 1996, which was printed without pages 4 and 6 of the Activity Codes.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

In connection with the work requirements imposed by federal legislation, Maryland has developed minimum standards for each local office's collection and maintenance of data on the work activities in which their Temporary Cash Assistance (TCA) customers and Food Stamp Employment and Training (FSET) program work registrants participate. Most of the details about the data collection systems used to track work activities can be found in the PI MIS Manual, published in February 1996 and in the FSET MIS Technical Assistance Guide, published in April 1996. The standards listed below are the general guidelines on data collection and data entry that have been previously articulated by staff of the Division of Work Opportunities in papers, letters, meetings and phone conversations.

ACTIONS TO BE TAKEN:

Each local department of social services (DSS) is responsible for ensuring that all required data is collected in a timely and accurate manner, even if this function has been delegated to another

entity (e.g., Service Delivery Area). At this point, no standard of timeliness has been developed; the standard of accuracy is that all required data is entered in the appropriate field, utilizing the most appropriate code available.

TCA Work Programs:

In relation to the work activities in which TCA customers are placed, the following guidelines apply:

1. Registering TCA Customers - All participants in work activities, including unsubsidized employment, must first be registered in the WO MIS (formerly known as the PI MIS). Registration entails the collection and entry of the information included on the PI Application (DHR Form 1390). Areas using the CARES may eliminate the use of the PI Application Form by entering all pertinent information on CARES screens, thereby triggering the download of this information to the WO MIS the next day. Areas using the AIMS/AMF systems can not download information collected on those systems to the WO MIS. Therefore, these areas must manually enter the data included on the PI Application Form, using the appropriate WO MIS screen; we recommend but do not require the use of the Application Form in this process. Anne Arundel County, or any other area that has created its own data base, may also choose to electronically download the required data to the WO MIS, as long as the downloaded data can be read into the WO MIS file structure by the local office.

2. Tracking Customers' Activities - Local offices must enter information about each activity in which a TCA customer participates: 1) at the start of the activity, and; 2) at the end of the activity. It is important to note that some programs may include two or more activities (e.g., Work Experience and Job Search). If this is the case, the local office must track each type of activity separately, whether it is part of the same program or not. All data fields included on the Activity/Termination Form in the Add Activity and Leave Activity sections must be completed unless otherwise noted in the PI MIS Manual. We strongly recommend, but do not require the use the of the Activity/Termination Form to collect the data described here.

Attached to this Action Transmittal is a revised excerpt from the PI MIS Manual giving the Activity Codes that should be used immediately when recording new work activity(ies) of TCA customers. If an activity has previously been added (Add Activity) to the WO MIS using an old Activity Code, you must use that same code to document that the person left the activity (Leave Activity).

Note that unsubsidized employment is considered to be a work activity and should be tracked as such.

3. Documenting the Status of the Customer at Termination - Local offices should not terminate a TCA customer from the WO MIS until the date on which the customer closes his/her grant. At the point of termination, the local office must document the status of the customer utilizing the available Termination Codes. If the customer is employed, the local office also must enter information about the job held by the customer.

All pertinent data fields included on the Activity/Termination Form in the Termination and Placement sections must be completed. We strongly recommend, but do not require the use of the Activity/Termination Form to collect the data described here.

4. Recording the Monthly Attendance of Customers in Work Activities - Local offices are not required to enter into the WO MIS Attendance File, information about the monthly work activity attendance of TCA customers from single parent households. Local offices may utilize this facility if they choose. Local offices are required to collect and enter into the WO MIS, actual attendance information on all TCA customers from two-parent families. Note that only hours of actual attendance (by week, by activity), not scheduled hours, must be entered. DHR has not developed any forms in connection with this process.

The monthly report on "subtractable" AFDC-UP cases that local areas had been asked to submit in previous years, is no longer required.

FSET Work Programs

In relation to the work registration of Food Stamp recipients and subsequent placement of them into work activities, the following guidelines apply:

1. Work Registration - All Food Stamp recipients who are not exempted from having to be work registered (i.e., do not meet any of the Statutory Exemptions) must be registered in the FSET MIS. Registration entails the collection and entry into the FSET MIS, of information included on the DHR Form 711A. Areas using the CARES may eliminate the use of the Form 711A by entering all pertinent information on CARES screens, thereby triggering the download of this information to the FSET MIS the next day. Areas using the AIMS/AMF systems can not download information collected on those systems to the FSET MIS. Therefore, these areas must manually enter the data included on the Form 711A, using the appropriate FSET MIS screen; we recommend but do not require the use of the actual 711A form in this process. Anne Arundel County, or any other area that has created its own data base, may also choose to electronically download the required data to the FSET MIS, as long as the downloaded data can be read into the FSET MIS file structure by the local office.

2. Tracking Work Registrants' Activities - Local offices must enter information about each activity in which a Work Registrant participates. It is important to note that some programs may include two or more activities (e.g., Work Experience and Job Search). If this is the case, the local office must track each type of activity separately, whether it is part of the same program or not. DHR has not created a form to facilitate the collection of information on activities.

3. Documenting When a Work Registrant Receives a Notice of Adverse Action (NOAA) - Local offices must record information about any Notices of Adverse Action are sent to the Work Registrant for failure to cooperate with the work requirements under the FSET program. This information is critical in the calculation of the State's

participation rate. The field for recording this information is included on the screen related to the 711A data.

4. **Documenting Other Outcome Information** - Local offices must enter other pertinent information about the outcome of the person's participation in a work activity, including job placement information if the person entered employment. This information is included on the DHR Form 294 which was previously completed by the SDA.

ACTION REQUIRED OF:

All Local Departments of Social Services.

ACTION DUE DATE:

Upon Receipt.

INQUIRIES:

Inquiries may be directed to Fred Schroeder (767-8192) or any staff of the Division of Work Opportunities (767-7119).

**cc: FIA Management Staff
Constituent Services**

ACTIVITY CODES

Below are the available Activity Codes (with their definitions) used to document activities provided to participants in Work Activities.. Note that only adults and teen parents who are heads of households, may have their hours counted in the calculation of the State's monthly participation rate. Also note that local programs must use the specified three letter combination for each type of activity; the option of varying the third letter of the Activity Code is no longer available.

WEJ 1. Unsubsidized Employment

This category includes full-time or part-time employment where the person's wages are not being subsidized with any government funds. Employment as a member of the Armed Forces on active duty, self-employment, and entry into a registered apprenticeship program are considered to be work activities falling into this category. The term "subsidized" does not include tax credits to which the employer may be entitled for employing the person.

Note:

- Local programs may count all hours of unsubsidized employment during each month in which the person is receiving assistance authorized under the section of the federal welfare reform legislation entitled Temporary Cash Assistance for Needy Families. This includes recipients of Temporary Cash Assistance, Welfare Avoidance Grants, and Emergency Assistance for Families with Children (federal requirements).

WSU 2. Subsidized Private Sector Employment

This category includes full-time or part-time employment in any private-for-profit or private-non-profit sector job where the person's wages are being subsidized with government funds. An example of this type of activity is Grant Diversion, where part or all of the person's grant is diverted to reimburse the employer for some or all of the wages paid to the person.

WSP 3. Subsidized Public Sector Employment

This category includes full-time or part-time employment in any public sector job where the person's wages are being subsidized with government funds. An example of this type of activity is Grant Diversion, where part or all of the person's grant is diverted to reimburse the employer for some or all of the wages paid to the person.

WEX 4. Work Experience

This category includes public or private sector work situations where the person has the opportunity to acquire the skills and knowledge necessary to perform a specific job, including learning about appropriate work habits and behaviors. Typically, the person is not paid for participating in a work experience activity, although he or she may receive a needs-based payment to cover the incidental costs

of participating.

OJT 5. On-the Job Training

This category involves training which is given to a person by an employer in the public or private sector. The training is provided while the person is engaged in productive work with the employer, and provides knowledge or skills essential to the full and adequate performance of the position into which he/she was hired. The person receives a wage from the employer which is considered to be a training wage.

Notes:

- The program operator must enter into a contractual relationship with the OJT employer to specify the terms under which program funds will be used to reimburse the employer for providing training and supervision to the person (State requirement).

- Payments to an employer must not exceed an average of 50% of the training wages paid by the employer to the person during the period of training (State requirement).

JBS 6. Job Search and Job Readiness Assistance

This category includes a variety of activities aimed at assisting the person to locate unsubsidized employment as quickly as possible.

Job Search activities include instruction on the effective strategies that can be used by persons in seeking/obtaining their own jobs. Services include, but are not limited to, resume writing, interviewing skills, labor market information, telephone techniques, information on job openings, and job acquisition strategies, as well as the provision of office space and supplies for the job search.

Job Readiness Assistance includes instruction in career exploration, instruction on basic work place expectations and behaviors.

Note:

- Activities in the Job Search and Job Readiness Assistance category are limited by time. A person may participate in these types of activities for a combined total of 240 hours per year, of which only 160 can be consecutive (federal requirement).

WEM 7. Community Service

This category includes any work that provides a benefit to the public and is not otherwise described in this list of activity categories.

Generally, the person is not paid for his or her work; the person may be asked to locate his or her own community service position, or be placed in an existing position by the program operator.

BEV 8. Vocational Education

This category includes instruction in an institutional or work-site setting, designed to upgrade a person's technical skills and

information required to perform a broad array of related jobs.

Note:

- A person may participate in Vocational Education activities for a maximum of 12 months (federal requirement).

- For any given month, persons engaged in this activity, plus teen parents (only) engaged in Education or Secondary Education (see below), may not constitute more than 20% of the State's total number of countable participants reported for that month (federal requirement).

WEC 9.

Child Care Services

This category involves child care provided by a person, for the child (or children) of another person who is participating in a Community Service activity, as defined above.

Note:

- Generally, the person is not paid for providing child care; if payments to the child care provider is made, the child care arrangements must meet the State's child care licensing regulations (State requirement).

BED 10.

Secondary Education/GED

This category includes educational instruction provided by a secondary school or an alternative educational program leading to achievement of a high school diploma or high school equivalency (e.g., GED).

Notes:

- Persons placed in this type of activity must not have received a high school diploma or a certificate of high school equivalency (federal requirement).

- Teen parent, heads of household, who participate in this activity may be determined by states to be Countable Participants, regardless of how many hours per week they participated and without first participating in a Core work activity, as long as the state considered their level of participation to be "satisfactory" (federal requirement).

- For any given month, teen parent, heads of household, engaged in this activity and in Education, plus all persons engaged in Vocational Education, may not constitute more than 20% of the State's total number of countable participants reported for that month (federal requirement).

BER 11.

Education

This category includes education that is directly related to employment.

Notes:

- Persons placed in this type of activity must not have received a

high school diploma or a certificate of high school equivalency (federal requirement).

- Education must be directly related to employment (federal requirement).

- Teen parent, heads of household (only), who participate in this activity may be determined by states to be Countable Participants, without first having had participated in a Core work activity (federal requirement).

- For any given month, teen parent, heads of household, engaged in this activity and in Secondary Education, plus all persons engaged in Vocational Education, may not constitute more than 20% of the State's total number of countable participants reported for that month (federal requirement).

- A person may participate in Education activities for a maximum of 12 months (State requirement).

- Hours spent by a person in this type of activity (other than teen parent, heads of household, are only countable toward the State's participation rate after the person has participated in one of the "core" work activities, activity categories numbered 1 - 9 above (federal requirement).

IST 12. Job Skills Training

This category includes training which is provided in an institutional or work-site setting and is designed to upgrade a person's technical skills and information required to perform a specific job.

Note: -

- Job Skills Training must be directly related to employment (federal requirements).

- Hours spent by a person in this type of activity are only countable toward the State's participation rate after the person has participated in one of the "core" work activities, those numbered 1 - 9 above (federal requirement).