



Commonwealth of Massachusetts
Executive Office of Health and Human Services
Department of Transitional Assistance
600 Washington Street • Boston, MA 02111

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Governor

KERRY HEALEY
Lieutenant Governor

RONALD PRESTON
Secretary

JOHN A. WAGNER
Commissioner

Field Operations Memo 2004-27
July 19, 2004

To: Transitional Assistance Office Staff

From: Cescia Derderian, Assistant Commissioner for Field Operations

Re: TAFDC – Work Program Requirement Expansion (Phase I)

Overview

Nonexempt grantees will soon be required to meet the Work Program requirement (unless the exemptions found in 106 CMR 203.400(A)(1) apply) in the following ways:

- 1) a grantee whose youngest child in the AU (or who would be in the AU but is ineligible because the child receives SSI, foster care maintenance payments, adoption assistance or due to the Family Cap provisions. See 106 CMR 204.305(E)(1), (2), (3) or (7).) is:
 - (a) between the ages of two and mandatory full-time school age will be required to meet the Work Program requirement for **20 hours per week**; or
 - (b) between the ages of mandatory full-time school age through eight years old will be required to meet the Work Program requirement for **24 hours per week**; or
 - (c) age nine or older will be required to meet the Work Program requirement for **30 hours per week**.

Note: In a two-parent AU each parent will be required to meet the hourly requirement based on the age of the youngest child as described above.

**Overview
(continued)**

2) a grantee (including both parents in a two-parent AU) who is residing in an emergency shelter and who is complying with his or her housing search activities in addition to the other activities outlined in his or her self-sufficiency plans meets the Work Program requirement.

Note: The Department does not plan on implementing 1) and 2) *before* mid-September.

3) regardless of the age of the youngest child described on the previous page, a grantee (including both parents in a two-parent AU) may meet the Work Program requirement through Department-approved education or training activities, employment or community service.

Note: The Department plans on implementing this effective July 19, 2004.

**Purpose of
Memo**

This memo informs AU Managers:

- about an informational mailing to all nonexempt recipients; and
 - about processing AUs who wish to meet the new Work Program requirement through education or training. A Field Operations Memo detailing processing these AUs through BEACON will be issued by mid-September.
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Recipient Mailing Attachment A will be sent to all nonexempt recipients, telling them of the change and that they should contact their AU Manager immediately if they wish to enroll in an education or training activity.

This mailing will occur the week of **July 19, 2004**.

Recipients who have questions about the mailing should be told about the increased hours of participation and that education or training activities now meet the Work Program requirement. Employed recipients who have an increased hour requirement, should be encouraged to ask their employer if their hours can be increased.

Meeting the Work Program Through Education or Training If the grantee wishes to meet the Work Program requirement through education or training, the following ESP components will be approved when the goal is to improve the grantee's job skills and help him or her get a job. The vocational education or training activities that meet the Work Program requirement are limited to:

- Skills Training;
- Basic Education (GED, ESL, ABE);
- Post Secondary Education (2 Year College); or
- YPP.

These activities only meet the Work Program requirement for 12 months.

Any parent who is currently meeting the Work Program requirement by participating in an activity other than education or training **must** be given the opportunity to enroll in an education or training activity. If no education or training activity is available, the parent must continue meeting the Work Program requirement in the current activity until the education or training activity becomes available.

BEACON Workaround

Until modifications are made to BEACON, the following workaround needs to be completed by the AU Manager to enroll a recipient in an education or training activity.

AU Managers must:

- set the "Meets Compliance" radio button on the TAFDC tab to "Yes;"
 - from the drop-down box, select the "New Ed/Training Requirement" Compliance Reason;
 - enter the date that is 60 days from the current date in the Compliance End Date field; and
 - enroll the recipient in the appropriate education or training activity.
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Questions

If you have any questions, please have your Hotline designee call the Policy Hotline at 617-348-8478.

{BEACON USER STREET_ADDRESS}
{BEACON USER CITY, STATE, ZIP}

Important Notice - Read Carefully
Este Mensaje Es Importante - Lea Cuidadosamente

Massachusetts Department of Transitional Assistance

{RECIPIENT NAME}
{RECIPIENT ADDRESS}
{RECIPIENT CITY/TOWN, STATE, ZIP}

{RECIPIENT SSN}
{BEACON USER OFFICE NAME}

July 2004

Important Notice Please Read

Dear {Recipient}:

The Department will be changing its TAFDC Work Program rules soon.

A parent whose youngest child is between two and mandatory school age must participate in the Work Program for 20 hours per week.

A parent whose youngest child is mandatory school age through eight years old must participate in the Work Program for 24 hours per week.

A parent whose youngest child is age nine or older must participate in the Work Program for 30 hours per week.

Both parents in a two-parent family will be required to meet these new hourly requirements.

You can meet the Work Program by:

- Working in a job for pay;
- Working full time in the Full-Employment Program;
- Participating in a Department-approved education or training activity;
- Participating in a community service program; or
- A combination of the activities listed above.

You will receive another notice telling you when you must meet these new hourly requirements. You may ask for a referral for any of the activities listed above by contacting your worker at any time.

If you need child care, we will help you get it. If no child care is available, you will not have to meet this requirement. Ask your worker about child care availability.

Call your worker _____ at _____ if you have any questions about the new requirements.