

DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES
744 P Street, Sacramento, CA 95814



October 12, 2004

ALL-COUNTY INFORMATION NOTICE NO. I-72-04

TO: ALL COUNTY WELFARE DIRECTORS
ALL FOOD STAMP COORDINATORS
ALL CALWORKS PROGRAM
SPECIALISTS

REASON FOR THIS TRANSMITTAL

- State Law Change
- Federal Law or Regulation Change
- Court Order or Settlement Agreement
- Clarification Requested by One or More Counties
- Initiated by CDSS

SUBJECT: TRANSITIONAL FOOD STAMP BENEFITS QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS (Q&As)

REFERENCE: ALL COUNTY LETTER NUMBER 03-66 and ALL COUNTY INFORMATION NOTICE NUMBER I-21-04

The purpose of this All-County Information Notice is to provide counties with the second volume of Q&As regarding Transitional Food Stamp Benefits. These Q&As were developed in consultation with the County Welfare Directors Association's Food Stamp Committee Review and Action Team before being finalized.

If you have any questions regarding the enclosed Q&As, please contact Detta Hunt, Food Stamp Policy Development Unit, at (916) 653-6161 or detta.hunt@dss.ca.gov.

Sincerely,

Original Document Signed By:

RICHTON YEE, Chief
Food Stamp Branch

Attachment

TRANSITIONAL FOOD STAMPS (TFS) –QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS (VOL. II):

1. If an application for CalWORKs (CW) is denied at intake and it is later determined that the CW case is eligible for only one month, is the household eligible to TFS benefits after the CW case is closed? What if food stamp benefits were prorated for the month?

Yes. TFS should be based on the full month of benefits for the month that CW was discontinued. (MPP 63-504.131)

2. A household receives CW and food stamps (FS) in March; CW is discontinued at the end of March. However, the only eligible CW child left the home in February. Does the county issue TFS based on the March FS allotment?

The TFS amount is based on the actual food stamp allotment issued for the month that CW was discontinued. (MPP 63-504.13)

3. If the county is in the middle of adding a person to the CW/FS household and CW is discontinued, should the new person be included in the TFS benefit amount?

No. The new person had to be part of the FS/CW case at the time of discontinuance. (MPP 63-504.13)

4. If a household is receiving TFS benefits and they move in with a household currently receiving benefits through the regular FSP, and under the regular FSP the TFS household would be required to be in the same household, what action is the county required to take?

None. The county would let the TFS case run unless the household reapplied for benefits. At the end of the TFS period, the household would be subject to normal food stamp program household composition rules. (MPP 63-504.13)

5. A household is moving to another county and the receiving county grants FS, however before CW is approved in the new county the household's income increases and they are no longer eligible for cash aid. Which county would be responsible for issuing TFS? The county that last had the CW case or the receiving county that picked up the FS?

The county that discontinued the CW case would be responsible for the TFS case. (MPP 63-504.132)

6. Is a Food Stamps property test needed to determine TFS eligibility during the month a household loses CalWORKs benefits if the household is otherwise eligible for TFS?

No. Resources are not used as a factor to determine TFS eligibility. Eligibility for TFS is based on when a FS household is discontinued from CW. (MPP 63-504.132)

7. The TFS benefit is to be adjusted if a person who was a part of that TFS case has been approved for benefits with another FS household. Can the individual be removed from the TFS allocation prior to being allowed to apply with another FS household?

No. There is no guarantee that the individual will receive food stamp benefits in the other household and therefore they are not to be removed from the TFS household until they are approved for benefits in the new household.

8. After the household is granted TFS, it is determined the client had unreported income during the TFS period. Can the household's benefits be reduced to reflect the unreported income while receiving TFS?

No. The county is not to adjust the household's transitional benefit after TFS has started. Households are not required to report changes during the TFS period.

9. If Mom is both FS and CW sanctioned and the child leaves the home thereby triggering the CW discontinuance and the child moves into a new assistance unit – Does the county end the FS sanction to allow mom to receive TFS benefits?

No. (MPP 63-504.131(b))

10. Would the TFS period begin after aid-paid-pending stops (i.e., after the client loses the appeal)? Do counties grant TFS from the original discontinuance date or from the last month that the client receives aid-paid-pending?

TFS is granted when aid-paid-pending ends – the last month the client receives a CW grant. (MPP 63-503.13)

11. A CW case is discontinued at the end of the month. The next month the county becomes aware that one member of the CW household is a fleeing felon. Should the fleeing felon continue to be included in the TFS case?

Yes. The fleeing felon would continue to be included, because at the time TFS was established they were part of the CW case. The fleeing felon would not be included in the TFS case if the county knew prior to the discontinuance of the CW case and the establishment of TFS. (MPP 63-504.132 (b))

12. A household has been suspected of fraudulently receiving regular FS or CW benefits. What happens if the household is currently receiving TFS when the county discovers that fraud has occurred?

If an individual in the household was discontinued from CW or FS because of an IPV conviction, then the individual would not be eligible for TFS. If the county discovers the fraud after TFS has been started, and once the individual was convicted of the IPV, then the county would have to remove them from TFS. (MPP 63-504.131)

13. Is the county required to issue TFS when there has been an Intentional Program Violation (IPV) conviction for CW or FS? What if the IPV occurred prior to TFS being issued but was not determined until after the TFS had begun?

No. When a member of the household has been discontinued from CW and FS due to an IPV, the county is not to issue TFS benefits for that individual. Further, if the county determines there is an IPV after TFS is issued the county needs to discontinue the household member who committed the IPV from TFS. (MPP 63-504.131(b))

14. The CW household consisted of a mother and a minor child. Mom died and the child went to live with relatives. The relative's information is unknown. Does the county set up the TFS for the child only? What if the payee is unknown?

The TFS case could only be set up if there is a designated authorized representative prior to benefits being issued. The child would not be in their own household, therefore there would not be a TFS case. If the child's relatives were eligible for food stamps, they could apply for regular food stamp benefits. (MPP 63-402.61)

15. Will households receiving TFS be entitled to the annual COLA that is effective every October?

Yes.

16. A client becomes homeless; does that change any TFS eligibility?

No. (MPP 63-504.131)

17. Are clients required to be photographed or fingerprinted for the TFS case?

No, not specifically for TFS. They should have already met SFIS requirements prior to receiving regular FSP benefits.

18. A worker has erroneously increased the TFS benefit amount during the 5-months period. Should an overissuance claim be established?

Yes.

19. When collecting overissuances for a TFS case, should the applicable percentage of the TFS benefit be collected?

Yes.

20. When setting up TFS do you base benefits on the last month of the previous quarter or the first month of the new quarter?

You base the TFS budget on the last month that FS and CW benefits were received. (MPP 63-504.132)