

DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN RESOURCES
SOCIAL SERVICES ADMINISTRATION
311 West Saratoga Street
Baltimore, Maryland 21201

DATE: June 22, 2000

CIRCULAR LETTER # SSA #00-6

TO: Directors, Local Departments of Social Services
Deputy/ Assistant Directors for Family Investment
Family Services Administrators, Supervisors and Case
Managers
Family Investment Supervisors and Case Managers
Local Department of Social Services

FROM: Linda E. Mouzon, Executive Director
Social Services Administration

Charles Henry, Acting Executive Director
Family Investment Administration

RE: Temporary Cash Assistance-CARES/Foster/Kinship Care
Payments

PROGRAMS AFFECTED: Adoption
Child Protective Services
Kinship Care
Foster Care
Services to Families with Children
Temporary Cash Assistance

ORIGINATING OFFICES: Office of Special Services

BACKGROUND: The Office of the Inspector General reviewed an audit
conducted by the Office of Legislative Audits on
Temporary Cash Assistance CARES – Foster \ Kinship
Care payments. The findings revealed incidences of
unreported changes and duplication of payments in these
programs. This circular letter provides guidelines to reduce
these areas of risk.

ACTION REQUIRED OF: All Local Departments

REQUIRED ACTION: Temporary Cash Assistance/CARES and Foster/Kinship Care Payments

ACTION DUE DATE: Immediately Upon Receipt

CONTACT PERSON: Mildred Gee, Manager
Special Projects Unit
Office of Special Services
(410) 767-7095

PURPOSE: The purpose of this circular letter is to provide guidelines regarding the initiation of Temporary Cash Assistance and or Food stamps/ CARES and Kinship/Foster Care payments to reduce the likelihood of simultaneously or retroactively claiming a child for two federal programs.

GOAL: The primary goal of this circular letter is to comply with federal regulations to avoid dual payments in Temporary Cash Assistance and or Food Stamps/ CARES and Foster/Kinship care.

REQUIREMENTS

1. Children entering out-of-home placements from Temporary Cash Assistance (TCA) and or Food Stamp households.
 - CIS clearances are to continue on all children entering out-of-home placements to determine if TCA and or Food Stamps benefits are being paid on their behalf.
 - If TCA and or Food Stamp benefits are being paid on behalf of a child who has been removed from his/her home, within 48 hours of removal written notification of the date of removal must be sent by the service worker or designated staff person to the appropriate Family Investment Administration staff so that benefits can be terminated. Documentation must be filed in the case file.
 - Family Investment staff should provide written notification of the child's removal from the grant to the service worker within 10 days of receipt of notification. Documentation must be filed in the case file.
 - Family service staff shall submit forms currently in use to either the designated unit or individual (s) responsible for processing the foster care board rate. Existing protocols governing the payment process and IV-E eligibility determinations should be followed.

II. Kinship Care Conversions to Foster Care

- Notification to the child's worker of the Kinship Care provider's approval as a restricted foster parent should continue.
- When TCA and or Food Stamp benefits are received by the kinship care provider on behalf of the child (ren), written notification of the approval must be made within 5 days by designated Family Service Staff to Family Investment Program staff requesting the removal of the specific child (ren) from the TCA grant. The Family Investment worker must inform the caregiver of their choice whether or not to include the foster care board rate as income when considering food stamp eligibility. Documentation must be filed in the case file.
- Family Investment Program staff must forward to the service worker written notification of the child's removal from the TCA grant or Food Stamp household i.e., hard copy CARES Stat screens or other local notification screen) within 10 days of receipt of notification.
- A copy of the removal verification and documents currently used to initiate foster care payments shall be submitted to the appropriate unit or individual responsible for processing the foster care board rate.
- If foster care board payments are made retroactive to the date of application or approval, TCA benefits paid to the caregiver on behalf of the specific child (ren) during that time period are to be calculated and deducted from the foster care board rate. Documentation must be filed in the case file.

III Children exiting Foster Care Placements into Temporary Cash Assistance Households.

- Family service staff or other designated program staff shall immediately initiate the process of discontinuing the foster care board rate for the child (ren) exiting foster care. Documentation shall be filed in the case record.
- Written notification of the child's exit out of foster care shall be provided to the appropriate Family Investment Program staff.

NOTE: The existing policy shall be used to certify and collect over issuance's in Food Stamps.