



FIA ACTION TRANSMITTAL

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

FROM: NETSANET KIBRET, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR 

RE: TRANSITIONAL SUPPORT SERVICES (TSS)

**PROGRAMS AFFECTED: TEMPORARY CASH ASSISTANCE (TCA) AND
SUPPLEMENTAL NUTRITION ASSISTANCE
PROGRAM (SNAP)**

ORIGINATING OFFICE: OFFICE OF PROGRAMS

Summary

The Transitional Support Services (TSS) initiative is a new Family Investment Administration (FIA) program which originated from the Two-Generation Family Economic Security Commission’s 2018 Final Report. The initiative’s purpose is to assist families with their transition from welfare to work as it lessens the effect of the benefit cliff immediately upon obtaining employment.

A household may be eligible to receive up to three consecutive months of TSS benefits after its TCA case closes due to over-scale income, at least a portion of which must be earned income. The TSS grant amount is a cash benefit equal to the last monthly TCA payment received by the household (not including TCA underpayment corrections).

TSS is not TCA. Therefore, any months of TSS do not count toward the 60-month TCA time limit.

Action Required

Eligibility Overview

Beginning July 1, 2019 certain TCA households will be eligible for TSS.

Households are eligible for the TSS benefit if all of the following criteria are met:

- The household received TCA for at least two consecutive months prior to the TCA case closing, and the household's TCA case must have closed due to over-scale or gross over-scale income. At least a portion of the household's income considered in the TCA eligibility determination must be earned income or self-employment income.
- The case closure must take place on or after July 1, 2019 in order for the household to be eligible for the TSS benefit.
- The maximum number of months for which a household may receive TSS is three months.
- Individuals sanctioned at the time of the TCA closure are not eligible for TSS and TCA disqualified individuals are not considered part of the TSS household. Both needy and non-needy caretaker relatives are ineligible.

Breaking the TSS 3-Month Period

Once TSS begins, a household will continue to receive the benefit for three consecutive months. TSS benefits will only end before the three month period ends if:

1. TCA is approved once again; or
2. A member of the household dies.

If the death of a member of the TSS household is confirmed, existing policy should be followed to correctly code the deceased person in CARES.

TSS Closure and TCA Reapplication

A household cannot receive TSS and TCA in the same month. As a part of the clearances for TCA applications, the LDSS must confirm that no household members currently receive TSS benefits. This can be done by viewing the Benefit History Listing (BENL) screen. TSS payments will have a hashtag sign (#) next to them to differentiate them from regular TCA payments. The LDSS can then determine if future TSS payments are due to the household based on the number of consecutive TSS payments previously received.

If a TCA application will be approved before TSS has ended, the LDSS must deny the TCA in the appropriate month(s) to ensure the household does not receive TCA in the same month in which it receives TSS.

If a household member was active on another TCA assistance unit (AU) within the past four months it is important to check that AU for potential TSS benefits as well.

If a household wishes to apply for TCA before TSS benefits have ended, the LDSS must explain to the household whether TCA or TSS would be most beneficial, but it must not make a decision on behalf of the household.

Impact on SNAP Benefits

Households that are eligible for TSS will also be eligible for transitional SNAP benefits. Transitional SNAP benefits will begin at the same time as the TSS. The policy for calculation of transitional SNAP benefits will not change.

Attachments

- TCA Manual Section 1311
- SNAP Manual Section 420.12

Training

A training webinar will be available on The HUB by Monday, June 24, 2019.

References

Two-Generation Family Economic Security Commission's 2018 Final Report
<https://governor.maryland.gov/ltgovernor/wp-content/uploads/sites/2/2019/01/FINAL-Report-Two-Generation-Family-Economic-Security-Commission-12.28.18.pdf>

Inquiries

For policy-related questions, please complete the [FIA Policy Information Request Form](#) found on Knowledge Base as shown in the screenshot below.

The screenshot displays the DHS Knowledge Base website. The navigation bar includes 'Administrations', 'Tools', 'Resources', 'Links', and 'Local Offices'. A search bar is present. The left sidebar lists various categories, with 'Family Investment Administration' and 'Contact us with your FIA Program Eligibility Policy Question' highlighted with red circles. The main content area is titled 'Contact us with your FIA Program Eligibility Policy Question' and contains a 'FIA Policy Information Request' form. The form includes instructions: 'Have a FIA policy question? Click on the link to complete a Policy Information Request. Your question will be routed directly to the Bureau of Policy.' It also states: 'Questions will be answered within 48 business hours. If a question requires further research, you will be notified that there will be a delay and kept apprised of the status. Remember to review the policy manuals, Action Transmittals, and forms found on Knowledge Base (<http://kb.dhs.maryland.gov/family-investment-administration/>) prior to submitting a request; many times the answer to your question can be found through our online resources.' Technical questions regarding CARES functions should be directed to the Bureau of Systems Development and Management at fa.bsdm@maryland.gov. A red asterisk indicates a required field: '* Required'. The form has a label 'Email address *' and a text input field containing 'Your email'. On the right, contact information is provided for Carrie A. Durham, JD (Director, Office of Policy and Training) and Candice A. Roberts (FIA Executive Assistant). A 'Tools' button is visible at the bottom right.

cc: DHS Executive Staff
 FIA Management Staff
 Constituent Services
 DHS Help Desk
 Office of Administrative Hearings