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

FROM: LA SHERRA AYALA, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

RE: PUBLIC ASSISTANCE TO ENTREPRENEURSHIP
PROGRAM (PA2E) CAPITAL GRANT PROGRAM

PROGRAM IMPACTED: TEMPORARY CASH ASSISTANCE (TCA),
SUPPLEMENTAL NUTRITION ASSISTANCE
PROGRAM (SNAP)

ORIGINATING OFFICE: OFFICE OF PROGRAMS

SUMMARY

On March 11, 2021, President Biden signed the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 into law. Now Public Law 117-2, it establishes the Pandemic Emergency Assistance Fund (PEAF) in section 403(c) of the Social Security Act (the Act).

With the use of the PEAF, DHS has developed the Public Assistance to Entrepreneurship (PA2E) Capital Grant Program. The PA2E Capital Grant Program will support our TCA and SNAP customers with children under 18 in their households. The PA2E Capital Grant Program will provide a one-time only, non-recurring payment awarded to assist with start-up funds needed to launch a business during the COVID-19 Pandemic. The timeframe for the PA2E Capital Grant Program is October 1, 2021 through September 30, 2022.

PA2E Capital Grant Program

The Public Assistance to Entrepreneurship Program (PA2E) offers classes on starting a business. Courses are conducted virtually and/or in a classroom setting with other Department of Human Services (DHS) customers in your local area. The primary goal is to provide entrepreneurship
training for customers with aptitude, ideas, and talent, who are in pursuit of their entrepreneurial
dreams of starting a small business while supporting their families. Applicants can apply for this
one-time only grant up to a maximum grant of $9,000. The official time frame for this program
is October 1, 2021, through September 30, 2022.

The applicant must meet the following eligibility criteria:

- Must be a current or former TCA recipient and/or TCA related populations (Foster
  Youth, TCA Youth, Non-custodial parents) within the past 2 years or,
- Must be a current or former SNAP recipient with a child or children living in the
  household under the age of 18 within the past 2 years and,
- Must have successfully graduated from the PA2E cohort within the past 2 years and,
- Have a complete viable business plan that includes detailed Financials and,
- Know the estimated business start-up costs and,
- Have a complete Forecast plan of how business will sustain revenue to continue after the
  grant is exhausted or,
- Can show proof all above criteria is met and Business is in good standing with the State
  of Maryland and,
- Must have established a business bank account.

The Office of Cash Programs (OCP) will work in collaboration with the Office of Nutrition
Assistance Programs to administer this grant program. The Small Business Development Center
(SBDC) representatives will recruit PA2E graduates. The LDSS point of contact for the PA2E
program will support the recruitment process by referring past PA2E graduates to their business
consultant at the SBDC. SBDC Consultants will manage application submissions to OCP.

INQUIRIES:

Please direct policy questions to FIA Policy by completing the FIA Policy Information Request
Form found on Knowledge Base or via email at fia.policy@maryland.gov for Montgomery
County only.

For systems questions, please email fia.bsdm@maryland.gov.

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