



# February 2015

# On Target

## February '15 Contributors

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### Looking At Job Quit....

When a client applies for SNAP benefits, the agency determines the client's participation classification status as mandatory, exempt, or voluntary ([461-130-0310](tel:461-130-0310)). Each household member has his or her participation classification status determined.

Mandatory clients are not eligible for SNAP if they voluntarily quit a productive job. *A productive job is one that averages at least 30 hours per week or pays at least 30 hours per week times the federal minimum wage.* Clients must not quit these jobs within 30 days before applying for SNAP or while receiving SNAP. Reducing hours of work below the productive job standard is also considered job quit. An applicant who voluntarily and without good cause quits a job or reduces weekly work hours below 30 is ineligible for SNAP benefits.

If the filing date falls within the 30-day period following a job quit or work reduction, the person who quit the job or reduced work hours will be ineligible during the month in which the filing date falls and for the appropriate OFSET disqualification of one, three or six calendar months ([461-135-0521](tel:461-135-0521)).

**Example:** James (26) applies for SNAP benefits on 02/01/2015 for himself, his girlfriend, Lara (24) and his friend Marcus (22) who all purchase and prepare together. James was working as a full time trainer, 40 hours per week, for the Oregon Ducks football program. Lara and Marcus are full time students participating in work-study programs. James was so upset with the championship loss, he quit his job on 01/15/2015 and called Chip Kelly to ask for a job with the Falcons. Chip was not hiring. The agency determines James is a mandatory client; Lara and Marcus are exempt as full time students.

#### Was James working a productive job?

#### Did James quit a job within 30 days of the filing date?

#### Is there good cause for the job quit?

#### Is the household eligible for SNAP benefits?

James was working a productive job as he worked over 30 hours per week. He quit his job only 15 days prior to applying for SNAP benefits and does not meet any other exemptions. James quit his job because his team lost the championship game and he thought he could get a position with his old boss, Chip Kelly. There is no good cause for his job quit. Finally, yes the household is eligible for SNAP benefits because there are two other household members who are not penalized for a job quit. Lara and Marcus are also part of the filing group and are eligible household members. Not very often do we see roommates who purchase and prepare together. It is important to review the application at the interview to ensure the household status is correctly documented. We wouldn't want Lara or Marcus to be forgotten from the household group as they are eligible to receive benefits.

Review FSM SNAP E. Nonfinancial Eligibility for further information on addressing mandatory clients and job quit.

*Quality Control*

## The Many Faces of Notice Writer

Often times workers need to send notices to customers who do not read English. Perhaps that worker reads and can write in the customer's language and perhaps not. There are some interesting facts to know about how our mainframe system uses language coding and the notice writer systems – pretty important facts actually.

By FNS (Food and Nutrition Services) rules, we must provide our SNAP applications and notifications, including pending notices, in the customer's requested language; this is a Civil Rights issue. Sounds simple but it isn't.

So, if you are the worker and you are sending a customer a notice using the Notice Writer system, which language they are coded makes a difference as to which notice system you use.

That's confusing so here's an example or two:

A customer is coded Arabic. We need to close their case because they called us and asked us to do that. We can go into NOTM,GS and select the voluntary closure notice. Since everything is pretty much written for you but the dates, it translates it into the appropriate language. A vendor also translates the portions the worker writes in, for example "verification of May's income" would be translated on a pending notice. An English version of the same notice is sent in the same envelope.

Another example is a customer whose language is coded SP. NOTM,GS will not translate even the pre-filled in portions of the notice to Spanish. The notice will not be sent to a vendor for translation either. They end up getting a notice that is not translated. That's a Civil Rights violation because the customer already told us they need their notices written in Spanish. Ouch!

The worker must access the Spanish notices through NOTM,SP. Since the notice is going from NOTM,SP, the worker filled-in spaces must be written in Spanish by the worker. The computer will not do that for you nor will it be sent to a vendor for translation.

So remember, NOTM,GS (FS) is for English and any other language other than Spanish. NOTM,SP for Spanish. Meeting the language needs of our clients is very important and your attention to detail is appreciated!

*Charna Freehan, Program Management Evaluator (PME)*

## Turbo Tax Applications

DHS started receiving faxed applications from Turbo Tax in mid-January. These applications caught us by surprise and there was no coordination provided by Turbo Tax or the Food and Nutrition Service in advance of these applications.

After some national conversations with the Food and Nutrition Service, Turbo Tax independently decided on February 1<sup>st</sup> to link individuals to Oregon's online application instead of using the paper application. The new process has slowed the number of applications received by the Department, and the applications are no longer being pre-filled with information from individual's tax returns.

Conference calls are being conducted weekly if you have any questions about processing these applications. All are welcome to participate in the calls. The information about how to participate is in the transmittal [SS-IM-15-003](#).

*SNAP Policy Unit*

## Didja Know??

On a TANF UCMS case when there is a non-citizen listed, workers need to give them an In-Grant Code of **NO**.

Bonus: Add **TNC** coding on the c/d for all non-citizens. Include **TNC** coding on the n/r only when there is earned or unearned income in the household.

*TANF Policy Analysts*

## Didja Know??

A reminder from the TANF Policy Analysts..... Don't forget to check **IEVS** for everyone in the financial group, not just head of household and payee.

*TANF Policy Analysts*

## Can ERDC cover it?

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A family comes in to apply for ERDC assistance. The caretaker is employed at a child care facility. Here is what you need to know.

**Is the caretaker the provider or are they employed by the provider?** Families can only qualify for ERDC if they work for a child care provider who meets certain criteria. People who do not qualify include nannies and people who provide child care in either their home or someone else's home.

**What type of child care provider?** Once we know they are employed by a provider we need to know if the provider is a center or a Certified Family provider (CFM). If the provider is a license-exempt home or Registered Family (RFM) provider, the caretaker *is not eligible* for ERDC.

*Tip: Not sure if the provider is Registered or Certified? If they are an active provider on DPPM, you can simply check their provider type. If not, their OCC license number can help. Numbers that start with RF are Registered Family, CF are Certified Family and CC are Certified Centers.*

**Does the provider offer an employee discount?** The provider cannot charge DHS more than they would charge a private pay employee. Employee discounts are applied to the total charge, not to the copay.

*Example: The provider normally charges \$550 per month and gives a \$200 discount to employees. The copay is \$190. The provider should complete the billing form with a total charge of \$350 (their monthly rate minus the employee discount). The family is still responsible for paying the full \$190 copay and DHS will pay \$160.*

**Is the copay higher than the cost of care?** Once employee discounts are applied, does the family have an unmet child care need? If there is no unmet need, the family is not eligible for ERDC.

**Is the caretaker watching their own child?** If the caretaker is responsible for caring for their child as part of a group of children, they are eligible for ERDC. Though many centers and Certified Family providers try to keep employees and their own children separate, it is not always possible.

*Child Care Policy Analysts*

## TANF Start Dates

Start dates can be confusing. SNAP uses filing date, ERDC uses the DOR and then there is TANF. TANF is the only program in which the start date is determined by clearing all financial and non-financial requirements. This includes the requirement to complete an interview.

QC reviewed 340 TANF cases in FFY 2014 of which 133 were cited with an error. 19 percent of errors cited were due to an incorrect start date. Common error situations found include opening TANF on the filing date or the DOR. These errors could be avoided by discussing this trend in a team huddle.

The following two situations, along with the requirement to clear all financial and non-financial eligibility, also impact the TANF start date:

1. At initial application, if the only eligible child is an unborn, the start date may not be earlier than the first day of the calendar month preceding the month in which the due date falls. All other eligibility requirements must be cleared to determine the start date.
2. After a TANF closure (non-redetermination), if the client has established a DOR and submits a new application prior to the closure, the start date is the 1st of the month following the closure.

Remember it's important to check all DHS screens available prior to opening TANF. Narrate all IEVS screens check and clarify any discrepancy found on those screens. The FSM is a great tool, so when in doubt it's a good idea to do a quick look up.

*Quality Control*

## WPAY Reminder

Remember to check WPAY when checking your child support screens. Any payment(s) from 2014 will no longer show on SMU1. Missed child support is a common error this time of year.

## TANF Supplemental Interview Guide - DHS 7882

As more customers apply for benefits through the online application, a request has been received to streamline the process for those individuals who request TANF benefits within 30 days of submitting their online application. In response, the TANF Program has developed the *TANF Supplemental Interview Guide* (DHS 7882) to be used in this process.

When a customer applies for SNAP online, much of the information necessary for processing a TANF application is already obtained. If the customer decides to apply for TANF within 30 days of the SNAP application, it is not necessary to complete the DHS 415F again.

If the customer requests TANF during their SNAP interview, the eligibility worker should complete the process for the current benefits and then route the applicant to the scheduler for a TANF intake appointment. The scheduler will then schedule a face-to-face appointment with a TANF intake worker. During the TANF intake, the worker should go over the *TANF Supplemental Interview Guide* (DHS 7882) with the applicant and obtain a new signature.

If the customer requests TANF after their initial SNAP online application has been processed, but it has been less than 30 days, they should be scheduled for a face-to-face intake with a TANF worker.

If the customer qualifies for a hardship exemption to the face-to-face requirement, the DHS 7882, along with any other forms necessary for the TANF process can be mailed to the applicant. The customer should be told that their potential TANF benefit eligibility will not start until all required forms are signed and returned to the office.

**Please note:** The DHS 7882 is not intended to be given to customers ahead of their TANF face-to-face intake, but rather completed during the appointment.

Workers should remember that unless a hardship exemption is granted and narrated, TANF applications still require a face-to-face appointment.

The DHS 415F (DHS 6623 packet) should still be the primary application for TANF benefits. The DHS 7882 is intended to eliminate the duplicate questions for customers that started by using the online application.

See Transmittal [SS-IM-15-005](#).

*TANF Policy Analysts*



**Didja Know.....** SNAP applicants who are determined to meet expedited criteria must be given a scheduled appointment **and** issued their benefits within 7 calendar days. Customers do not lose expedited eligibility for not being reachable by phone. Customers only lose expedited eligibility if they miss their scheduled appointment unless the reason for the missed appointment is beyond their control.

*SNAP Policy Analysts*



# January 2015 Targeted SNAP Reviews 100% Accuracy Honor Roll

0313 Milwaukie APD	1301 Burns SSP	2019 Cottage Grove AAA
0411 Warrenton AAA	1311 Burns APD	2403 N. Valley Proc Ctr SSP
0914 Redmond APD	1513 Medford APD SSO	2711 Dallas AAA
1201 John Day SSP	1611 Prineville APD	3102 Enterprise SSP
1211 John Day APD	1612 Madras APD	3112 Enterprise APD
	1802 Lakeview SSP	

## 90% or Better

96.67 Keizer SSP	2405	93.33 Estacada APD	0314	92.00 Albany AAA	2211
96.15 La Grande SSP	3101	93.33 Ontario APD	2311	91.49 Grants Pass SSP	1701
96.00 West Portland AAA	2518	93.33 Santiam Center SSP	2404	91.30 Klamath Falls SSP	1801
95.56 Salem AAA	2411	93.33 Florence AAA	3211	90.00 Roseburg SSP	1001
94.74 McMinnville AAA	3617	92.86 Canby APD	0310	90.00 McKenzie Ctr SSP	2001
93.33 Baker City APD	0111	92.86 La Grande APD	3111	90.00 Lebanon SSP	2202
93.33 Oregon City APD	0311	92.50 Eugene AAA	2011	90.00 South Salem SSP	2401
		92.00 Roseburg APD DSO	1017		

### Didja Know...

- The TRACS targeted case management (TCM) flag looks like this:

The screenshot shows the TRACS system interface with several tabs: Plans, Steps, Partners, Plan Manager, Accommodations, Active plans on case, and Preview PDP... The main window displays a table of plans with columns for Status, Status Effective Date, Begin Date, Completion Date, and Reason. Below the table, there are various input fields for case details, including Plan Type (JOBS), Branch (3402), AFS Case Nbr, Education Prior (11), and PRISM (Yes). The 'Case Mgmt Flag' dropdown menu is highlighted with a red circle and set to 'Yes'. Other fields include Dom Viol, Voc Rehab, DCS Case, Veteran, Svc Group (TANF (T)), Attestant (VANDUSSELDORP, LORI), Load Code (MM), and Exmp Reas. The Employment Goal is 'Find stable employment and become self sufficient', the Plan Goal is 'Return to JOBS program and work to have your disqualification removed', and the Support Services are 'To be determined'. Special Instructions include 'Report any changes to your case manager within 10 days.'

- You have to change the TCM flag to “yes” every month a case manager does a TCM-qualifying action.
- The TCM-qualifying action taken by the case manager has to be narrated on TRACS but *does not* have to be narrated by the case manager. (The narration should say what the action was and that a case manager took the action.)
- There has been some confusion over the new TANF Snapshot and how this relates to TCM. There is currently no “Case Managed” column on this report. Whether a JOBS activity is contractor managed does not affect the TCM flag.
- You can find more information on TCM in FSM Case Management A.5 and at <http://www.dhs.state.or.us/policy/selfsufficiency/publications/ss-ar-14-013.pdf>