DHS Oregon Department of Human Services

Children, Adults and Families

Information Memorandum Transmittal

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Authorized Signature

Number: SS-IM-07-028
Issue Date: 12/10/2007

Topic: Agency-wide Policy

Subject: Employer Database for FS and Medicaid Clients

Applies to (check all that apply):

- ☐ All DHS employees
- ☒ Area Agencies on Aging
- ☒ Children, Adults and Families
- ☐ County DD Program Managers
- ☐ County Mental Health Directors
- ☐ Health Services
- ☒ Seniors and People with Disabilities
- ☐ Other (please specify):

Message: Many staff have expressed concerns about the new requirement to add employer names to the CI database for all FS and Medicaid clients. This requirement was explained in SS-AR-07-010 and an 11/26/07 e-mail to managers.

Most of the concerns involve the reason for this new requirement, workload and the accuracy of the data. Your comments and our responses are:

1. *Do you know why the Legislature needs this info?*
   HB3252 was introduced during the last session, requiring DHS to submit an annual report of the top 40 employers of FS, FHIAP, Medicaid and TANF clients. The bill also required reporting whether an employer was unionized and estimating the state's cost of providing benefits to employed clients. Although the bill did not pass, it created enough interest for the Legislature to require this information of us in a more limited way: confined to FS and Medicaid clients only, with no need to report whether a company is unionized or to estimate the cost of benefits. The alternative to this agreement was the potential of a new bill that would have required us to report much more than the employer name. To meet this need, we explored a data match with the Employment Department, but were told federal law prevents them from assisting with this. Given no budget, OIS was limited on what could be done to meet the obligation.

2. *How long do you anticipate this to go on?*
   The agreement between the Legislature and DHS management is open-ended.

3. *When do we have to start doing this?*
   Our agreement with the Legislature was to start December 1. The reformatted version of the Person Alias/Update screen has been available since November 26.

4. *If the client is self-employed, what do we put on that screen?*
   Nothing. The Legislature is interested only in identifying companies that employ our clients.

5. *If they are no longer employed for a specific employer, is there a way to take an employer off the list, or are they there forever, or until they are replaced with a new employers?*
   There is no need or ability to remove employers. Simply add the new employer when you receive the information.

6. *Is it true that you can't get to the CI screen for FS-only cases? I was told a dummy case would have to be created if the client gets no medical. Is this true?*
   No. CI (Client Index) screens exist for every person on a CM or FS record. Without CI, you wouldn't be able to find anyone through WEBM. To get to the Person Alias/Update screen for anyone on CI, press {F16} from the WEBM, FIND screen.

7. *Most workers already put this info on the description line on FS at the end of an income line Ben#:____________. Can that particular area not be captured?*
   The problem with using Ben# is that it's a free text field. That means anything can be entered in that area. We found FtF, the name of an NC1 whose income is included with the NC2, etc. There are also thousands of EML lines that show the calculation (40 x 8.50 x 4.3) instead of the name. We looked at having OIS write some code to evaluate each item and try to decide if it was an employer. For example we could exclude numbers, but that would drop 7-11 and other business names containing numbers. Before implementing, we searched for existing items that could be used to initially load the database. We found so many blanks, calculations and information other than name in that field that the amount of systems work involved outweighed the benefits.

8. *Is there a reason we aren't using the TRACS Employment tab to track this?*
   We considered using the TRACS Employment tab, but it didn't meet the need primarily because SPD doesn't use TRACS. In addition, TANF workers are accustomed to entering placements on TRACS; non-TANF workers are not. TANF is the smallest program we have so we would miss the majority of employers. Managers discussed capturing the employer information on TRACS for all SSP clients, but this was more of a workload because the TRACS Employment tab requires more data entry than adding the name on CI.

9. *While it might appear to be a small addition to our detailed jobs, I am concerned about the timing of this.*
   We are too, but this is not an option or a DHS-generated request.

10. *If this entry is not updated regularly, will this be used to cite errors with the targeted reviews? For example, if a staff inputs the employer as Burger King on CI FIND screen, then at recert learns the client went to work at McDonald's, but fails to update CI FIND, will we be cited an error?*
    No errors will be cited; just an FYI. Reviewers will not be checking the screen for the correct employer; just to see if an employer name has been entered for FS and Medicaid clients with earned income. There are no dates associated with entry of employer names in the database.

11. *Do workers have to verify the employer each time a client gets a new job?*
    No. There is no requirement to verify the name of the employer. In most cases, you will have the employer name with the income verification, but there will be no review of this.

12. *If a client works for a company off and on, are we to input the employer information each time they go back to that employer?*
    No. Entering an employer once for that client is enough.

13. *For migrant workers, should we enter all the different farms/crops they work at or do we keep it generic and enter migrant worker?*
    If you have the name of the farm that employs them, enter that into the database. If not, enter Migrant Worker. Remember that you are not required to verify the name of the employer.

14. *When clients work for temp agencies, do we enter the name of the agency or each job they work through the temp agency?*
    The client works for the temp agency. Enter that employer name.

15. *How soon will the targeted reviewers start looking for the employer names?*
    Reviewers will begin checking this in December. Remember that workers are required to add employer names at cert, recert and when working any change report. There is no intent to review all cases and add the information now.

16. *I'm not electronically inclined, but I'm wondering if there is a pop-pad type system that would assist workers in getting it done quicker. I watched a staff enter employment on one person, and it was about 50 keystrokes to get to the screen, then to the right location on the screen.*
    Workers can always create a quick key or a pop-pad on their desktops for any repetitive action. We don’t understand how this could be done to require so many keystrokes. Starting from WEBM, FIND as workers have been trained to do

since 1996 makes this a quick process. Workers are always welcome to ask for help with pop-pads. The CAF training unit, Lisa Stegmann and local computer experts should be available.

December will be our testing month to work out issues with the database. Please continue to send feedback to any FS or Medicaid program analyst to help us identify any possible changes to make the process easier.

If you have any questions about this information, contact:

Contact(s):	FS and Medicaid Program Analysts		
Phone:		**Fax:**	
E-mail:			