



July 2012 On Target

July '12 Contributors

Catherine McDonald
 Melanie Tavernier
 Don Main
 SNAP Policy Analysts
 SSP Medical Policy Analysts
 TANF Policy Analysts
 Childcare Policy Analysts
 SSP Training Unit
 Christy Sinatra
 Michelle Clinch
 Client Maintenance Unit

In this issue:

| | |
|--|---|
| Veterans, Disabled Veterans and Aid & Attendance | 1 |
| Making the Most of Policy Boxes | 2 |
| EBT Card Replacement Process to be Centralized | 3 |
| Change of Address | 3 |
| Health System Transformation | 4 |
| Verification of TANF received in Oregon | 4 |
| Upcoming Training Offered by the SSP Training Unit | 5 |
| Get Those Primes Merged | 5 |
| SNAP Honor Roll | 6 |
| News From The Training Unit | 6 |
| Medical Honor Roll | 7 |
| SNAP 201 Is Back!!! | 7 |

Veterans, Disabled Veterans and Aid & Attendance

The federal Veterans Administration (VA) pays out many kinds of benefits: educational aid, pensions, survivors' assistance and aid to the disabled.

All of these income types are coded as VET on page 2 of FSMIS. So how is the computer to know if a veteran should be considered disabled? The SNAP definition of *disability* includes a person who:

- Receives VA benefits for nonservice or service-connected disability rated or paid as total (100%) under [title 38](#) of the United States Code (USC); or
- Is the spouse or child of a veteran entitled to compensation for a service-connected death or pension benefits for a nonservice connected death under [title 38](#) of the USC and has a disability considered permanent under section 221(i) of the [Social Security Act](#); or
- Is a veteran or the spouse of a veteran, considered by the VA to be in need of Aid and Attendance benefits under [title 38](#) of the USC; or
- Is a veteran or the spouse or child of a veteran and is considered permanently incapable of self-support under [title 38](#) of the USC.

When the income received from the VA meets one of these conditions, be sure to add the **VET** HH Type code on page 1 of FSMIS. The code tells the computer that the person meets the definition of *disabled*. The VET HH Type means they can receive a medical deduction and removes the cap on the shelter deduction that most households are subject to.

And how are you to know if the income meets one of these conditions? In most cases, you will see this information on the client's VA award letter – it will specify the percentage of disability (anything from 30% to 100%) or the Aid & Attendance funds. If not, the VA website lists payment levels that should help you identify the terms of the benefit. Go to <http://va.gov/> then select Veterans Services, Benefits & Services.

One more note – Aid & Attendance benefits are paid to cover the costs of a care provider to help a disabled vet with daily tasks of life. When the veteran states that the costs are being used for this purpose, exclude the Aid & Attendance benefit from countable income.

To get the correct level of SNAP benefits, code all VA income as VET, but be sure to add the VET HH Type code when the veteran meets the disability criteria!

SNAP Policy Analysts

Making the Most of Policy Boxes

A central part of every Program Analyst's day is responding to policy questions – by phone, IM and e-mail. Although we try to write policy clearly, there are always going to be unusual situations, unidentifiable assets, and times when branch practice or folklore seem to be in conflict with the manual.

We are here to help and are happy to do so. We also have some simple ideas about how to get the most out of your contacts with us. Here goes.

Look before you ask.

Don't spend a bunch of time struggling to find an answer, but do get familiar with the manual and the administrative rules website (easily accessible from the *Family Services Manual* main table of contents). Did you know that the TOC page also has a link to the transmittals?

Try using the Search function.

Per [SS-IM-12-026](#), the Search function now requires an extra step. However, OIS has promised to restore it to its former glory and it is still useful as is. Getting good at using Search can be incredibly helpful. By using the Search function, you can narrow your focus to a few rules or FSM sections as well as pull in other sections you may need to consider. Most of the analysts use it every day and can give you a short refresher in how it works.

Go to your HSS4, Lead Worker or other policy expert.

Every branch or office should have someone on-site whose job duties include this kind of help. Sometimes they aren't available or you need an answer *now*, but don't forget that help is often close at hand.

Send your question to the policy box, not the analyst.

Like everyone else, we have absences (planned and unplanned), meetings and unbreakable deadlines. If you send your question to a specific person, you may end up waiting longer for your answer than necessary. Here are our Outlook addresses:

- Childcare Policy
- Medical SSP-Policy
- SNAP Policy
- TANF Policy



Don't be offended if our answer is limited to where you can find the policy.

If the policy is clear and contained in the manual, we will sometimes just tell you exactly where to find it. This isn't meant to be rude: it's more the "teach a man to fish" philosophy and you should find that it pays off in the long run.

But if you don't understand the answer, ask again.

You have a big job to do and we are not here to make it harder. If you need to know how to make a change, or the policy we quoted doesn't help or you don't see why you got the answer you got, ask again.

Give us the situation as clearly and completely as you can.

How to make a Program Analyst wail – leave out dates, the age of the client, student status, where we are in the eligibility period or some other key detail. Then argue with the answer you get because "but they are *fill in the blank!*" We can't over-emphasize how important it is to give us all the information we need to provide a correct answer.

If you are getting different answers to the same question, call us on it!

All the Program Analysts hear from time to time that different staff give different answers. The reason – we believe – is usually that you are asking different questions. But when you are clearly getting conflicting direction, please tell us. We will get our story straight, come to consensus and send the "real" answer. Generally you will see all members of the policy unit copied on the e-mail to reinforce this. You are helping us and the rest of field staff when you point out our inconsistencies.

Knowledge is power; share it.

Some offices have a great practice in place. When staff can't come to an internal consensus, they send the question to policy, then share the response they get back. We think this is especially helpful for new policy, uncommon situations that aren't so uncommon in your area and to address branch folklore that just won't go away.

Does this sound like an awful lot of guidance? It really boils down to using your resources wisely and getting the most from your contacts.

EBT Card Replacement Process to be Centralized

Page 3

A change is coming regarding how replacement EBT cards are issued that plays into our fraud prevention efforts. Today, clients visit their local branch when they need an EBT card replaced. This fall, the EBT card replacement process will be centralized statewide and local branches will stop offering this service.

The change does not affect how we issue initial EBT cards as part of a new application or intake appointment; we will continue doing this step in the branches.

EBT card replacement is being centralized to:

- Reduce workload and decrease traffic in branch lobbies; and,
- Reduce the overall number of cards replaced which also may reduce fraud opportunities. In May 2012 alone, more than 16,000 EBT cards were replaced throughout the state.

A project team composed of representatives from a variety of positions, branches and the central office is working out the details. The team is working on exceptions to the new process, and training and communications strategies. The new process will involve clients reporting the need for a new card by phone and receiving the replacement card by U.S. Mail. The team is testing the mail process and preparing tools to help you talk to clients about the upcoming change.



We'll be sharing more information with you as it becomes available. If you have questions in the meantime, please talk with your supervisor.

Christy Sinatra, Communications Officer DHS

Change of Address

Having the correct address on the system for our clients continues to be a problem. Often, clients forget to tell us they have moved. In other cases when they do tell us, we update the address on only one program's screens (CM or FS) without updating it on the other.

ERDC families in SRS and SNAP clients in SRS or TBA are not required to report a change of address. Everyone else – ERDC cases in CRS, all medical households, TANF and the few SNAP cases in CRS – must inform DHS within 10 days of a move.

Among the numbers we serve, those who are SNAP SRS or TBA recipients only are in the minority. For all other households, be sure to tell your clients about the need to report a change of address within 10 days. That part is on them.

The responsibility for DHS is to ensure that we act on reported changes in address **on all active cases**. A February *On Target* article mentioned that sending forms or notices to the wrong address when DHS has an updated available one now causes a QC error in SNAP. Other problems are returned mail – which is already a heavy workload – increased phone calls and disruption in multiple program benefits.

One way to ensure that you update the address on all open cases is to get in the habit of accessing the mainframe through webm, find, SSN or prime #. Doing this brings up a menu of all DHS cases with their status. If any food, cash or medical case is in CP, OP, SU or VP status, be sure to update the address.

Although we don't see it often, there are times where a field office carries the SNAP case and 5503 carries the medical. When this occurs, and a client reports an address change to 5503 or to the field office, it is up to the office that gets the new address to ensure it is forwarded to the other branch.

If your branch doesn't have a process in place for this or if you are unaware of your branch's process, please ask a lead worker or manager how to handle this.

If you have another 15 seconds, enter the address in HZIP. The program will check for address validity, identifying the need for directionals (e.g. SE, N), street designation (e.g., Ave, Ct) and an apartment or unit number.

We can't do much about client non-reporting, but we can make our best effort to use reported information correctly.

SNAP and SSP Medical Policy Analysts

Health System Transformation

Next steps and status update on Coordinated Care Organizations

Eight new Coordinated Care Organizations (CCO) will enroll 175,000 Oregon Health Plan members on August 1. On June 29, a letter was sent to those members notifying them about this change. The letter includes the name of their current managed care plan and the name of their new CCO. For those members moving to a CCO on September 1, a letter will be sent on August 1.

To make the transition as seamless as possible, members will follow their managed care organization (MCO) into the new CCO. Their benefits and doctors will stay the same.

An additional phone line has been added at the Statewide Central Processing Center (Branch 5503) to field calls from members regarding CCOs. Since the first round of letters was sent, call volume continues to be low. Members can call 1-855-226-6170 with their questions.

Information and materials about CCOs are available online to help answer questions members may have. Both the [Oregon Health Plan](#) website and www.health.oregon.gov have been updated and have materials available to members including a [fact sheet](#) and [FAQ](#) in English and Spanish.

Staff can find helpful tools on the OHA/DHS Intranet [staff tools page](#).

Health system transformation – federal waiver approved

Last week, the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services approved a waiver giving Oregon more flexibility to move forward toward our goal of improving health and health care for Oregon Health Plan members.

Under the agreement, Coordinated Care Organizations will have more flexibility to pay for services that improve health and lower costs, but are not traditionally covered by Medicaid. Examples include preventive services to reduce unnecessary hospital visits and acute care, more primary care, and greater emphasis on local community health workers who can help OHP members manage chronic illnesses.

In a news release earlier this week, Governor Kitzhaber thanked Oregon's federal partners noting that "this waiver is the final building block to creating a better model of care, and Oregon is ready to demonstrate how local communities can lead the nation in keeping people healthier over the long term in a more effective way."

The full waiver and a waiver brief can be found on www.health.oregon.gov. For more information please visit: health.oregon.gov or [Health Transformation Staff Blog](#)

SSP Medical Policy Analysts



Verification of TANF received in Oregon

If you receive a call from another state asking about the number of countable months that a former client received TANF, SNAP and/or Medical in Oregon, direct the person from the other state to the Out-of-State verification contacts in Central Office. Those contacts are Chris McCain and Stephanie Caudillo at (503) 945-5600. Chris or Stephanie will ask the other state to submit the request on their agency letterhead, via fax. Chris or Stephanie will then respond back to the other state saving you work and making sure our responses to other states are consistent and timely.

If you have questions about TANF time limits you can direct them to Carol Krager at 503-945-5931 or to the TANF Policy mail box.

Carol Krager, TANF Policy Analyst

Upcoming Training Offered by the SSP Training Unit

| | |
|---|--|
| Essentials | 10/23 Salem |
| Computer Connections | 8/7 Tigard, 10/30 Salem |
| Expedited SNAP | 9/11 Tigard, 11/6 Salem |
| SNAP Basics | 8/21 Tigard, 11/27 Salem |
| SSP Medical | 9/11 Portland, 10/23 Tigard |
| TANF Eligibility | 10/23 Portland, 12/11 Tigard |
| TANF Case Management | 9/11 Salem, 12/4 Portland |
| DV Policy & Case Planning | 8/14 Portland, 9/25 Salem, 11/8 Salem, 12/20 Tigard |
| Eligibility for Non-Citizens | 8/7 K. Falls, 8/14 Corvallis, 8/28 Portland, 10/9 Salem |
| SSP Reception - Customer Service | 9/11 Redmond |
| SSP Communication Fundamentals | 9/12 Redmond |
| SNAP 201 | 8/7 Eugene, 8/21 Portland, 8/28 Salem, 9/11 Eugene, 9/18 Roseburg, 10/2 Bend, 10/16 Tigard, Bend, Portland |
| SNAP Netlink – Students | 8/13 |
| SNAP Netlink – OFSET | 8/23 |
| SSP Medical Checkup | 8/15 Portland, 10/2 Eugene, 10/18 Portland |
| TANF Refresher | By Management Request Only |
| Svcs to Non-Citizens Refresher | 10/2 Roseburg |

Requests are being accepted from management for SNAP 201, SSP Medical Checkup, and the TANF Eligibility and Non-Citizens Refresher courses.

Please contact the training unit to request a class to be scheduled in your area.

SSP Training Unit

Get Those Primes Merged

Duplicate prime numbers continue to present problems and can affect our client's ability to access care. Due to changes in some systems including MMIS and OR-Kids, the process of merging primes has changed!

The Client Maintenance Unit (CMU) will merge all medical primes. Your two options are:

- Contact the Service Desk to merge the two prime numbers (a ticket will be created and sent to CMU). OR...
- Contact CMU directly: Phone: 503-378-4369, Fax: 503-373-0357 or email: MAINTENANCE Client (client.maintenance@state.or.us)

Remember, if there are open medical benefits on both prime numbers, eligibility needs to be closed on one of the primes before they can be merged.

More good news! Check out the new [MSC.0148](#) form. There is a new "button" at the top of the pdf form, "Submit email." You will now be able to complete the form, click the button, and an email with your 148 form attached will automatically go to CMU.

Client Maintenance Unit



June 2012 Targeted SNAP Reviews 100% Accuracy Honor Roll

| | | |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|------------------------|
| 0101 Baker City SSP | 1002 South Umpqua Center | 2019 Cottage Grove ADS |
| 0111 Baker City SPD | 1011 Roseburg SPD | 2411 North Salem ADS |
| 0310 Canby SPD | 1202 Condon SSP | 2412 South Salem ADS |
| 0311 Oregon City SPD | 1404 Refugee Branch SSP | 2911 Tillamook ADS |
| 0313 Milwaukie SPD | 1603 Warm Springs SSP | 3013 Hermiston SPD |
| 0411 Warrenton ADS | 1611 Prineville SPD | 3111 LaGrande SPD |
| 0511 St. Helens SPD | 1702 Cave Junction SSP | 3112 Enterprise SPD |
| 0702 Integrated Srvs SSP | 1717 Grants Pass DSO | 3311 The Dalles SPD |
| 0913 LaPine SPD | 1811 Klamath Falls SPD | 3415 Tigard SPD |
| 0914 Redmond SPD | | 3417 Beaverton SPD |

90% or Better

| | | | | | |
|-----------------------------|------|----------------------------|------|----------------------------|------|
| 97.14 Corvallis SSP | 0201 | 95.56 Grants Pass SSP | 1701 | 93.33 Hermiston SSP | 3003 |
| 97.14 Gateway Center | 1102 | 95.56 Eugene LCOG ADS | 2011 | 92.00 E Multnomah ADS | 3518 |
| 96.67 Astoria SSP | 0401 | 94.74 LaPine SSP | 0903 | 90.00 Medford SSP | 1501 |
| 96.00 Springfield SSP | 1101 | 94.12 Bend SPD | 0911 | 90.00 South Valley SSP | 1502 |
| 96.00 SE Portland ADS | 1418 | 94.00 D4 Processing Center | 2203 | 90.00 Prineville SSP | 1601 |
| 96.00 Medford SSO | 1513 | 93.33 Estacada SPD | 0314 | 90.00 McKenzie Center | 2001 |
| 96.00 Medford DSO | 1517 | 93.33 St. Helens SSP | 0501 | 90.00 Cottage Grove SSP | 2003 |
| 96.00 Albany ADS | 2211 | 93.33 Redmond SSP | 0902 | 90.00 Ontario SSP | 2301 |
| 96.00 Hillsboro SPD | 3411 | 93.33 Roseburg DSO | 1017 | 90.00 Tillamook SSP | 2901 |
| 96.00 Portland Mid-Area ADS | 3515 | 93.33 Rogue Family Center | 1505 | 90.00 Milton-Freewater SSP | 3004 |
| 95.65 Alberta SSP | 0701 | 93.33 Woodburn ADS | 1911 | 90.00 Tigard SSP | 3403 |
| | | 93.33 Albany SSP | 2201 | | |

News From The Training Unit

We are thrilled to announce two new [online courses](#) available in the [Learning Center](#).

[SNAP Overview](#) is ideal for staff waiting to take SNAP Basics and anyone wanting an overview of the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program. It explains federal and state government responsibilities; eligibility requirements; items allowed to be purchased; and other benefits/resources available to SNAP recipients.

[SNAP Transitional Benefit Alternative](#) is intended for for any eligibility worker who would like a refresher. The course defines TBA; explains eligibility and reporting requirements; and demonstrates the appropriate actions to take when changes occur.

Since TBA cases can now get JPI (effective May 1), we recommend staff take the newly revised Job Participation Incentive course that is also available in the Learning Center.

Michelle Clinch, Online Learning Specialist



June 2012 Targeted Medical Reviews 100% Accuracy Honor Roll

| | | |
|--------------------------|---------------------------|----------------------|
| 0201 Corvallis SSP | 1502 South Valley SSP | 2402 North Salem SSP |
| 0303 North Clackamas SSP | 1602 Madras SSP | 2701 Dallas SSP |
| 0501 St Helens SSP | 1603 Warm Springs SSP | 2901 Tillamook SSP |
| 0702 Integrated Srvs SSP | 1702 Cave Junction SSP | 3001 Pendleton SSP |
| 0903 LaPine SSP | 1802 Lakeview SSP | 3102 Enterprise SSP |
| 1002 South Umpqua Center | 1901 Woodburn SSP | 3201 Florence SSP |
| 1402 New Market Theater | 2003 Cottage Grove SSP | 3301 The Dalles SSP |
| 1404 Refugee Branch | 2201 Albany SSP | 3401 Beaverton SSP |
| 1406 Teen Parent SSP | 2202 Lebanon SSP | 3403 Tigard SSP |
| | 2203 D4 Processing Center | |

90% or Better

| | | | | | |
|-----------------------|------|-----------------------------|------|----------------------------|------|
| 96.67 Springfield SSP | 1101 | 93.33 Rogue Family Center | 1505 | 90.00 Baker City SSP | 0101 |
| 96.55 West Eugene SSP | 2002 | 93.33 Grants Pass SSP | 1701 | 90.00 Prineville SSP | 1601 |
| 96.43 McKenzie Center | 2001 | 93.33 Newport SSP | 2101 | 90.00 Santiam Center | 2404 |
| 95.00 Redmond SSP | 0902 | 93.10 McMinnville SSP | 3601 | 90.00 Keizer SSP | 2405 |
| 95.00 Gateway Center | 1102 | 92.50 Wash Cnty Proc Center | 3404 | 90.00 Hermiston SSP | 3003 |
| 95.00 Medford SSP | 1501 | 92.00 SE Portland SSP | 1401 | 90.00 Milton-Freewater SSP | 3004 |
| 93.94 Oregon City SSP | 0302 | 92.00 Gresham SSP | 3502 | 90.00 D2 ERDC Proc Center | 3503 |
| | | 91.43 South Salem SSP | 2401 | | |

SNAP 201 Is Back!!!

After a long hiatus, the SNAP refresher class (formerly called Food Stamps 201) is back. This class is built around the policies that most commonly lead to errors or just plain confusion. It is intended for staff who have had at least one year's worth of SNAP caseload experience.

The class will be 2 days.

Sign up for a sessions near you on the [Learning Center](#) or send your request for a local session to Betty Silva in the SSP Training Unit.

