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TO: **Income Maintenance Supervisors**
Income Maintenance Lead Workers
Income Maintenance Staff
W-2 Agencies
Workforce Development Boards
Job Center Leads and Managers
Training Staff
Child Care Coordinators

FROM: Shawn Smith, Bureau Director
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Division of Health Care Access and Accountability

DHS OPERATIONS MEMO

No: DHS 14-46

DATE: 11/14/2014

FS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	MA	<input type="checkbox"/>	BC+	<input type="checkbox"/>
SC	<input type="checkbox"/>	CTS	<input type="checkbox"/>	FSET	<input type="checkbox"/>

**SUBJECT: CARES Worker Web Enhancements to Automate the FoodShare
Break-in-Service Policy**

CROSS REFERENCE: FoodShare Handbook: [2.1.1.3](#), [6.1.2](#), [6.1.3.1](#); Process Help: [3.13](#)

EFFECTIVE DATE: 12/22/2014

PURPOSE:

The purpose of this Operations Memo is to announce enhancements to CARES Worker Web (CWW) to automate the process for reopening Food Share (FS) benefits under the FS break-in-service policy.

BACKGROUND:

The FS break-in-service policy was implemented in 2007 to allow FS benefits that have been closed for renewal, six-month reporting, or reported changes to be reopened in the month following the closure without completion of a new application.

When FS benefits are reopened under the break-in-service policy, benefits are prorated from the date all requirements to reopen are met. The original certification period is maintained, and no interview or signature is required. Currently, to reopen FS with prorated benefits, income maintenance (IM) workers must update the FS request date and enter that a signature was

obtained and an interview was completed. These actions reset the certification period so workers must also manually adjust the certification period after confirming benefits open. These manual processes are error prone. If the worker forgets to adjust the certification period, the six-month reporting time period and the next renewal date will be affected. If the worker doesn't update the signature or interview fields, the FS will continue to fail. To avoid FS errors and to reduce IM workload, CWW will be enhanced to automate the break-in-service policy.

POLICY:

There are no changes to the break-in-service policy with this implementation. FS benefits can be reopened without a new application in the following situations:

RENEWAL:

The FS benefits can be reopened as long as the interview was completed timely and all requirements are met by the end of the month following the month the renewal is due. (FSHB [2.1.1.3](#))

SIX-MONTH- REPORTING:

The FS benefits can be reopened as long as the Six Month Report Form (SMRF) is received and complete, and all verifications are submitted by the last day of month seven. (FSHB [6.1.2](#))

REPORTED CHANGE:

If the FS benefits were closed for lack of verification after a change was reported or discovered, the FS benefits can be reopened as long as the requested verification is submitted in the calendar month following case closure. (FSHB [6.1.3.1](#))

➤ **NOTE:** Households are not eligible for expedited benefits when the FS benefits are reopened under the break-in-service policy.

CARES:

A new page, "FS Break in Service" will be added to CWW to collect information about whether the case meets the criteria to be reopened under the break-in-service policy and the date all requirements were met. Workers must evaluate the case to determine if the break-in-service policy can be applied. If the policy can be applied, the question "Is this case a break in service?" should be answered "Yes." The worker must then enter the date that all requirements were met. This is the date the FS benefits will begin.

Workers will be able to add case comments using the "Add Case Comments" button.

Workers should not update the "FoodShare Program Request" page unless the break-in-service policy is not being applied and a new application is being processed.

If the date that all requirements were met is earlier than the FS filing date, CARES will use the filing date and consider the actions a new application. An interview and signature will be required, and a new certification period will be set.

If the date that all requirements were met is later than the last day of the month following the closure, CARES will continue to fail the FS, and a new application will be required.

New FS Break in Service Page

Primary Person : EXEMPT ABAWD EXAMPLE 29F PP Case: 6150785564 Status: Open Mode: Ongoing 3.5 1/06/2014

▶ Action Items (0) ▶ Documents (0) ▶ Discrepancies (0) ▶ Work Items (0)

FS Break in Service

Effective Period

* Begin Month: 11 / 2014 Last Updated: 11/03/2014
Worker ID: XCTZ13

Break in Service Details

Is this case a break in service? Yes

Date when the requirements are met: 11 / 03 / 2014

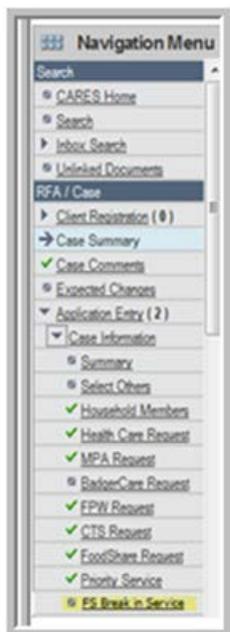
Enter New Begin Month: MM / YYYY Go

Updated on or before MM / DD / YYYY Go

Add Case Comment Cancel Previous Next

The new “FS Break in Service” page will not be scheduled in a driver flow. Workers will be able to access the page from the Navigation Menu.

Navigation Menu



Late SMRFs turned in after the last day of the reporting month (month six) must still be entered on the “View/Record Six Month Report Actions” page as received and complete as of the last day of the reporting month. CARES will prorate the month seven benefits based on the date entered on the “FS Break in Service” page.

Example 1: Joe’s FS benefits were closed October 31 because he did not submit verification of a change in income. On November 18, Joe submitted the required verification. Because all requirements to reopen were met before the last day of the calendar month following the closure, Joe’s FS benefits can be reopened under the break-in-service policy. Once the worker has updated the “FS Break in Service” page to indicate that this is a break-in-service case, entered November 18 as the date the requirements were met, and run eligibility, CARES will reopen the FS case without requiring a signature or interview and will prorate November benefits from November 18. The certification period will remain the same as it was prior to closure.

Example 2: Judy’s SMRF was due in September. She turned it in on October 10. All questions were answered and the SMRF was signed. The worker entered the SMRF as received and complete on the CWW “View/Record Six Month Report Actions” page using a September 30 date and processed the SMRF. Verification of a change in rate of pay was requested with a due date of October 20. Judy submitted the verification on October 15. The worker updated the “FS Break in Service” page to indicate that the case met the “break in service” criteria and that all requirements were met as of October 15. Judy’s FS case will be reopened without requiring a signature or interview. Her October benefits will be prorated from October 15, and she will maintain her original certification period.

CONTACTS:

BEPS CARES Information & Problem Resolution Center

*Program Categories – FS – FoodShare, MA – Medicaid, BC+ – BadgerCare Plus, SC – SeniorCare, CTS – Caretaker Supplement, FSET – FoodShare Employment and Training.

DHS/DHCAA/BEPS/LA