

## TANF HOT TOPIC – July Policy Changes

### [SS-PT-15-009](#) TANF Change in Income – Procedure For Acting Upon Job Hire Information and Transitioning Cases Off TANF

There have been quite a few questions regarding this policy change. The new process stems from field feedback that this was a complicated, administratively burdensome area. There was a delay in releasing the updates, primarily due to concerns over our statewide TANF participation rate. Now that the participation rate is at a level where we have a small cushion, the TANF leadership decided that we can sustain the dip in WO and JPI numbers. We have certainly not forgotten the importance of participation rates and the need to stay above 50% to stay out of penalty, however, the negative impact to clients (due to loss of TBA eligibility) and the cumbersome, error-prone administrative process needed to be addressed.

When a customer reports employment, we still need to document weekly hours, hourly rate and date of first pay check. If the customer doesn't know this information, we will pend them to report this. Once the Department knows the date of the first paycheck, TANF will reduce or close the month following the month in which the first paycheck is received. So, if a customer gets their first paycheck in April, TANF will close 5/31/15. This allows for benefits to be impacted in a consistent manner, regardless of whether we have to pend for further information.

Staff should still message the benefits of providing verification to customers when they call to report the new job. They should be informed about the options regarding ERDC and about the benefits of JPI. If they request ERDC, there are still verification requirements for that. For JPI, staff should not pend for the information but can let the family know they may be eligible for benefits if they can verify the two weeks of actual hours worked. Remember, we have options in how we verify the hours worked ... a paystub is not required.

### [SS-PT-15-013](#) REF/SNAP/TANF: Effective Date; Initial Month Benefits

This policy was updated to reduce errors around start dates, to allow for alignment with SNAP and to ease the eligibility process. For TANF, benefits can now be opened back to the filing date, so long as all eligibility requirements are completed within forty-five days. If these requirements, including the interview, are not met, a new filing date must be established. If an applicant fills out a 415F with a filing date of 5/22/15, and clears eligibility on 6/5/15, benefits would go back to 5/22/15. If an applicant requests TANF during their phone intake for SNAP, they should be scheduled for a FTF interview. If they are scheduled for that interview and complete the 7882 on 5/24/15, this will become their filing date. If they provide all verification on 6/17/15, benefits should be opened effective 5/24/15.