

CONNECTICUT STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION  
BUREAU OF HEALTH AND NUTRITION SERVICES AND  
CHILD/FAMILY/SCHOOL PARTNERSHIPS  
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TO: Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) Day Care Home Sponsors

FROM: Maureen B. Staggenborg, Director  
Child Nutrition Programs

DATE: November 1, 2004

SUBJECT: Operational Memorandum #05H-05  
**Zero and Temporary Income Q&A**

Income Eligibility Applications for providers, provider's own children and/or day care participant households in Tier II homes are submitted annually to determine Tier I eligibility for meals served in day care homes. If any one of those applications includes a total income of zero, or lists a source of income that is temporary in nature ("temporary income") it may be temporarily approved by the determining official for up to 45 calendar days. At the end of the approval period, the provider or day care participant household must be contacted to determine if the household income has changed. If the income remains at zero or is still temporary in nature, the determining official must document the contact, and may again temporarily approve the application for up to 45 calendar days. If the income has changed, a new application must be provided to the provider or day care participant household so that they may re-apply.

### **Zero and Temporary Income Q&A**

**Question:** Is temporary income the same as Temporary Family Assistance (TFA)?

**Answer:** No. Temporary Family Assistance (TFA) is the name for the cash assistance program for basic and special needs which are paid to recipients of Jobs First – Connecticut's Welfare Reform Program, administered by the State Department of Social Services. TFA replaced what was previously known as the Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC) program.

**Question:** What are some examples of temporary income?

**Answer:** Examples of temporary income include: unemployment, worker's compensation, short-term disability and maternity/parental leave. However, this list is not all-inclusive, so some judgment may be required at the time the income eligibility determination is made.

**Question:** What are some other types of economic situations that might result in a temporary approval?

**Answer:** There may be other circumstances that require temporary approval besides zero income. For example, when a household reports a temporary decrease in income, temporary eligibility may be determined based on the present, reduced rate of income, rather than on annual income. Eligible providers or day care household participants could also receive temporary approval in the following types of economic situations: temporary layoffs, strikes (voluntary work stoppage) and temporary disability of a wage earner resulting in loss of income.

**Question:** How often am I required to follow-up on zero and temporary income situations?

**Answer:** Sponsors must document follow-up on zero and temporary income situations every 45 *calendar* days.

**Question:** Am I required to obtain a new Income Eligibility Application every 45 calendar days?

**Answer:** No. A system must be in place to ensure that sponsor *contact* with each provider or day care household participant that has reported zero or temporary income is documented every 45 calendar days. This may be accomplished with a telephone call or during home visits to a provider. If the income situation remains the same (unchanged) at the end of the 45 days, sponsor contact may be documented by initialing and dating the application and indicating “no change.” The application should then be returned to the system for subsequent follow-up in another 45 calendar days. At the time the provider or day care household participant indicates that the situation is no longer zero income or temporary in nature, a new Income Eligibility Application must be obtained and a re-determination of the eligibility must be made.

**Question:** What if I am unable to make contact with the household within 45 calendar days?

**Answer:** In the event that household contact to verify zero or temporary income is not made within the required 45 calendar days, then the provider or day care household participant(s) must be reclassified as *Tier II* eligible until the verification is performed.

**Question:** What will happen if, during the course of a CACFP administrative review, it is determined that sponsor contact was not adequately documented every 45 calendar days?

**Answer:** If an administrative review results in findings that demonstrate a failure by the sponsor to document zero and/or temporary income every 45 calendar days, the State agency reviewer(s) will reclassify the affected provider or day care household participant(s) from *Tier I* to *Tier II eligible* from the time(s) the 45 days expired. This will result in an over claim (monies owed to the State agency by the sponsor).

Please contact Maureen Staggenborg at (860) 807-2070 or Susan Bohuslaw at (860) 807-2073 if you have any questions.

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