

GENERAL INFORMATION SYSTEM
Center for Employment & Economic Supports

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TO: Commissioners; TA & FS Directors; WMS Coordinators; Employment Coordinators

FROM: Russell Sykes, Deputy Commissioner, Center for Employment and Economic Supports

SUBJECT: REVISED - Treatment of 2010 Census Temporary Income using new Earned Income Source Code '75 – Census Income (PA Only) and Exclusion of Temporary Census Income from Food Stamp Budgeting

EFFECTIVE DATE: March 1, 2010

CONTACT PERSON: Food Stamp Policy Bureau, 1-800-343-8859, ext. 3-1469, TA Bureau at 4-9344; Employment and Advancement Services at 6-6106.

Background

The Census Bureau has begun hiring approximately 1.4 million **temporary** employees to help conduct the 2010 national census. The primary employment period for Census 2010 temporary employees will be from March 2010 through July 2010, although for some it may last longer. Most of the temporary employment positions associated with Census 2010 will be for “enumerators” who work in their own communities. Some of these temporary employees either may be applying for or in receipt of temporary assistance and/or food stamp benefits.

In order to encourage the recruitment of a sufficient number of enumerators in communities with high participation in the Food Stamp Program (known as SNAP on the federal level), the federal government has given states the option of excluding temporary Census income as income for the Food Stamp Program. Under this option, temporary Census income may be excluded when determining a household’s food stamp eligibility and benefit amount through September 30, 2010. New York State has decided to take this waiver.

Purpose

The purpose of this GIS is to inform local districts that temporary Census income will be excluded as income from Food Stamp Program eligibility determinations and benefit calculations, and to notify them about the creation of a specific Earned Income Source Code ‘75 – Census Income (PA Only)’ to be used to budget the Census income for TA purposes.

As noted above, the primary dates for Census temporary employment will be from March, 2010 through, July 2010. However, **the exclusion of Census income from the FS budget will be effective from March 1, 2010 through September 30, 2010**, in the event that some Census operations extend beyond the projected July 2010 end date.

Census income must not be counted in the FS budget as long as the applicant/participant earned the income for services related to the 2010 Census operation, **regardless of his/her hiring date** for temporary Census employment.

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Census income will **not** be excluded from either Temporary Assistance or HEAP eligibility and benefit determinations. Recipients of recurring Food Stamp benefits continue to be categorically income eligible for HEAP.

The income earned and hours of paid employment worked by those employed as temporary census workers will count towards meeting both TA and FS employment requirements, provided the hours of paid employment are documented and reported as indicated in the program implication section below.

Program Implications

Food Stamps (FS)

For households applying for Non-Temporary Assistance Food Stamp (NTA-FS) benefits, temporary census income must not be entered on the ABEL budget.

For households applying for or receiving both Temporary Assistance and food stamp benefits, the exclusion of the temporary census income is fully supported on WMS.

In Upstate WMS, effective February 13, 2010, for TA budget 'FROM' dates of 03/01/10 or greater ABEL will support the entry of temporary Census Income as Earned Income Source '**75-Census Income (PA Only)**'. Earned Income Source Code 75 will **not** be a valid entry for FS budgets and the census income will not be carried over to the ABEL FS budget input screen on TA/FS budgets. (See ABEL Transmittal 10-2 for more information.) Temporary Census income should **not** be entered manually on either NTA-FS or TA-FS budgets in Upstate WMS.

For NYC WMS, effective February 13, 2010, for TA budgets for the period of 03/A/10 or later, Income Source '75 - Census Income (PA Unearned/FS Exempt)' must be used when budgeting temporary Census income. Temporary Census income must **not** be entered manually on NTA-FS budgets in NYC WMS. Earned Income Source Code 75 will not be a valid entry for FS budgets, and the census income entered on a FS budget using the code will be ignored in the FS calculation.

Temporary Assistance (TA)

TA does not exclude or disregard the income received by temporary employees of the U. S. Census Bureau. Workers must enter income from this source as Earned Income Source "75-Census Income Only (PA Only)" into the TA budget and **must not** enter the earned income received from this source Earned Income Source "01-Salaries, Wages". Use of the correct Earned Income Source code of "75" continues generating all appropriate earned income disregards. Workers must provide recipients who timely report the receipt of new or increased earned income with the appropriate administrative processing standards associated with new or increased earned income in accordance with 01 ADM 13, "Temporary Assistance Budgeting: Initial and Increased Earnings of Recipients".

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Employment -- Documenting Hours of Paid Employment

Since the hours of work participation associated with this temporary employment is countable towards the participation rate calculation districts should not wait for the hours of paid employment, including the hours worked for the Census Bureau, to be entered onto ABEL TA budgets, given the administrative processing period for budgeting earned income which is reported timely.

Prior to properly budgeting the earned income, the information should be entered onto the WMS Caseload Management System (CMS) for upstate districts or the NYCWAY for New York City as soon as possible after appropriate documentation verifying the projected actual hours of paid employment (e.g. employer statement) has been obtained.

Districts must ensure that the hours of paid employment reported on ABEL and the CMS (NYCWAY for NYC) are documented and reported in accordance with the requirements outlined in 08-ADM-07 for temporary assistance households with dependent children and 07-ADM-08 for safety net assistance households without dependent children.

Food Stamp Work Requirements

Although the temporary census income an individual receives is excluded when determining a household's food stamp eligibility through September 30, 2010, individuals who are working at 30 or more hours per week or are receiving weekly earnings at least equal to the federal minimum wage multiplied by 30 hours (currently \$217.50 per week) are exempt from food stamp work requirements.

Home Energy Assistance Program (HEAP)

As noted above, Census income will **not** be excluded from HEAP eligibility and benefit determinations, however, recipients of recurring Food Stamp benefits continue to be categorically income eligible for HEAP.