ORANGE COUNTY SOCIAL SERVICES AGENCY
CFS OPERATIONS MANUAL

Effective Date: August 17, 2009 **Number: D-0512-D**

PDU DISPATCH

Food Stamp Applications for Transitioning Youth

OCSSA

Purpose

To provide guidelines for facilitating the food stamp application process for transitioning youth.

Background

On June 16, 2009, the California Department of Social Services issued All County Letter (ACL) 09-25, Food Stamp Application Process for Youth Who Are “Aging Out” of Foster Care. This ACL established the requirement for County child protective agencies to facilitate the processing of food stamp applications for transitioning foster youth (youth whose foster care eligibility is ending as a result of the termination of child dependency proceedings upon turning 18 or completing high school or its equivalent prior to turning 19). This ACL was issued to enhance the likelihood that food stamp applications will be submitted for transitioning youth as many have no income or assets and, further, do not access food stamp benefits for which they may be eligible.

Although a Food Stamps eligibility worker cannot process a food stamp application to determine eligibility until child dependency proceedings have been terminated, facilitating the application process for transitioning youth will increase the likelihood that eligible youth receive this essential benefit.

Legal Mandates

All County Letter (ACL) 09-25, June 16, 2009.

California Department of Social Services (CDSS) Manual of Policy and Procedures (MPP), Division 31-525.68, provides the legal mandate for County social workers to provide the necessary records, referrals, and documentation to support youth transitioning from the child dependency system to living independently as adults.

CDSS MPP, Division 31-525.86, provides the legal mandate for County social workers to support transitioning youth’s efforts to live independently by providing information and referrals for public assistance, including food stamps.

Definitions

Transitioning Youth: A dependent of the Orange County Juvenile Court for whom child dependency proceedings are to be terminated upon the youth turning 18 years of age or completing high school or its equivalent prior to turning 19. (Transitioning youth have previously been referred to as “emancipating youth.”)

POLICY

Application for Food Stamp Benefits

Within no more than 30 calendar days prior to the Juvenile Court hearing calendared to terminate child dependency proceedings, and in order to facilitate the food stamp application process for transitioning youth, the assigned Senior Social Worker (SSW) will:

• Provide every transitioning youth, regardless of the California county in which he or she is placed or intends to reside upon termination of child dependency proceedings, with the following forms:

- *Application for Food Stamp Benefits (DFA 285-A1)*
- *Statement of Facts (DFA 285-A2)*
- *Applying for Food Stamp Benefits (FS 22 QR)*
- *How to Fill Out Your QR 7 Quarterly Eligibility/Status Report (QR 7A)*
- *Food Stamp Benefits, How to Report Household Changes (FS 23 QR)*

• Review each question on the *Application for Food Stamp Benefits (DFA 285-A1)* and *Statement of Facts (DFA 285-A2)* and instruct the youth to provide responses to each question based on the youth's projected living circumstances as of the date of the Juvenile Court hearing calendared to terminate child dependency proceedings
• Instruct the youth to date the *Application for Food Stamp Benefits (DFA 285-A1)* and *Statement of Facts (DFA 285-A2)* with the date on which the application is completed
• Instruct the youth to provide a reliable telephone number at which he or she can be contacted upon termination of child dependency proceedings
• Provide the youth with the telephone number for the Foster Care Program Integrity Coordinator (704-8842)
• Advise the youth that completing the *Application for Food Stamps Benefits (DFA 285-A1)* does not guarantee eligibility for food stamp benefits upon termination of child dependency proceedings, but that the submission of the application initiates the process for determining eligibility
• Keep a photocopy of the completed *Application for Food Stamp Benefits (DFA 285-A1)* in the Services/Miscellaneous acco
• Send by pony mail or hand deliver the completed, signed *Application for Food Stamp Benefits (DFS 285-A1)* and *Statement of Facts (DFA 285-A2)* to the Foster Care Program Integrity Coordinator (Building 124) 10 calendar days prior to the Juvenile Court hearing calendared to terminate child dependency proceedings

Note: The Foster Care Program Integrity Coordinator will assign the completed *Application for Food Stamp Benefits (DFA 285-A1)* to the Eligibility Technician (ET). The ET will hold the *Application for Food Stamp Benefits (DFA 285-A1)* for up to 30 days from the date it is received pending the outcome of the Juvenile Court hearing calendared to terminate child dependency proceedings as the application cannot be processed until child dependency is terminated.

The 30-day period during which eligibility must be determined begins on the date the ET receives the *Application for Food Stamp Benefits (DFA 285-A1)*, not the day on which the youth signs it. When child dependency proceedings are continued past the 30-day period during which the application has to be processed, the ET will deny the *Application for Food Stamp Benefits (DFA 285-A1)*.

Whenever practicable, upon receiving the *Application for Food Stamp Benefits (DFA 285-A1)*, the ET will telephone the youth to update the application based on changes in the youth's living situation and answer any questions the youth might have regarding food stamp benefits.

Issuance of Electronic Benefits Card (EBT)

To facilitate issuance of the EBT card (the card that allows the youth to access food stamp benefits, if determined to be eligible) and Personal Identification Number (PIN), the assigned SSW will:

- Pick up the EBT card and PIN from the ET upon receiving notification from the ET to do so
- Maintain the EBT card and PIN in a secure location until delivered to the youth
- Hand deliver the EBT card and PIN to the youth at least one day prior to the date of the Juvenile Court hearing calendared to terminate child dependency proceedings
- Review the *Additional Information About Electronic Benefit Transfer (TEMP 2214)* and *Electronic Benefit Transfer (EBT) Important Information (TEMP 2215)* with the youth
- Instruct the youth to sign the *Electronic Benefit Transfer (EBT) Important Information (TEMP 2215)* form and return the signed form to the ET

Notification of Termination of Dependency

Within two hours of receiving notification that child dependency proceedings have been terminated regarding a transitioning youth for whom an *Application for Food Stamp Benefits (DFA 285-A1)* has been submitted, the assigned Social Worker will make the following notification, as applicable:

- For Youth Planning to Reside in Orange County: Notify the designated Foster Care Program Integrity Coordinator by email, telephone (704-8842), or emailing the completed Placement Information Change (PIC) notification

OR

- Youth Planning to Reside Outside Orange County: Notify the Food Stamp Program Specialist in the other California county in which the transitioning youth intends to reside by telephone or email. (The names and contact information for Food Stamp Program Specialists in all California counties are listed on pages 23-24 of All County Letter [ACL] 09-25, June 16, 2009)

Application Denial Due to Delay of Termination of Dependency

Upon receiving notification that child dependency proceedings are continued regarding a transitioning youth for whom an *Application for Food Stamp Benefits (DFA 285-A1)* was submitted, the assigned SSW will:

- Review the photocopy of the already completed *Application for Food Stamp Benefits (DFA 285-A1)* with the youth
- Instruct the youth to make any required changes to responses on the *Application for Food Stamp Benefits (DFA 285-A1)*. Changes must be made by 1) drawing a single line through the response; 2) documenting the updated response; and 3) initialing next to the line where the change was made
- Instruct the youth to sign a new signature page for the *Application for Food Stamp Benefits (DFA 285-A1)*
- Instruct the youth to date the new signature page with the date on which the *Application for Food Stamp Benefits (DFA 285-A1)* was reviewed
- Submit the revised *Application for Food Stamp Benefits (DFA 285-A1)* and new signature page to the designated Foster Care Program Integrity Coordinator within no more than 10 calendar days of the new Court date

Refusal of Application for Food Stamp Benefits

The assigned SSW will instruct the youth to sign the *Application for Food Stamp Benefits (DFA 285-A1)* and to write, “Services Declined” when the youth declines to complete the application. The assigned SSW will also enter a CWS/CMS contact, which documents the attempt to assist the youth with completing the application and the youth’s decision not to do so.

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Youth Planning to Reside Outside California

The policy outlined above in the “Refusal of Application for Food Stamp Benefits” will be followed when a transitioning youth indicates an intent to reside outside California upon termination of child dependency proceedings.

REQUIRED FORMS

Online Forms

Required forms listed below may be printed out and completed, or completed online, and may be accessed by clicking on the link provided.

Form Name	Form Number
Application for Food Stamp Benefits	DFA 285-A1
Statement of Facts	DFA 285-A2
Applying for Food Stamp Benefits	FS 22 QR
How to Fill Out Your QR 7 Quarterly Eligibility/Status Report	QR 7A
Food Stamp Benefits, How to Report Household Changes	FS 23 QR
Additional Information About Electronic Benefit Transfer	TEMP 2214
Electronic Benefit Transfer (EBT) Important Information	TEMP 2215

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