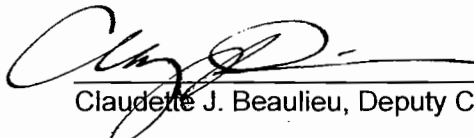




**STATE OF CONNECTICUT**  
 DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES  
**UNIFORM POLICY MANUAL**

  
 Claudette J. Beaulieu, Deputy Commissioner

October 1, 1998  
 Effective Date

POLICY TRANSMITTAL NO.: UP-11-04

SUBJECT: Diversion Program – Technical Changes

This transmits revised policy to establish the Diversion Program as an alternate to the Temporary Family Assistance Program (TFA) instead of a part of TFA.

The Department proposed legislation and received authorization to implement the Diversion Program through Public Act 98-239, Section 5, which the Department implemented on October 1, 1998. The Department recently discovered that following the publication of a notice of intent on November 17, 1998, and the receipt of public comment, the promulgation process for the addition of the Diversion program policies to the UPM was not completed. Upon this discovery, to correct this oversight as expeditiously as possible, the Department published a new notice on September 7, 2010 and completed the promulgation process.

The main provisions of the regulation implement the Diversion Program as a non-recurrent financial assistance program for families with short-term needs. The program provides an alternative to TFA for families who do not need monthly cash assistance payments but do have a barrier, which prevents them from maintaining their independence from public assistance.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR UPDATING THE UPM:

Remove and Recycle

Insert

8500  
 8500.01/8500.01 pg.2  
 8500.01 pg 3/8500.01 pg 4  
 8500.01 pg. 5/8500.01 pg 6  
 8500.01 pg. 7/8500.01 pg 8  
 8500.01 pg. 9/8500.01 pg 10  
 8515/8515.05  
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 \*\*\*\*\*  
 8515.15/8515.15 pg. 2  
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 8515.15/8515.15 pg. 2  
 8515.20/8515.20 pg. 2  
 8515.25/8515.30  
 8515.35

The following is to correct removal and recycle of the following pages previously submitted under Policy Transmittal 11-05, Jobs First Employment Services Conciliation:

8530.45 pg. 3/8530.50  
 8530.50 pg. 2/8530.50 pg. 3  
 \*\*\*\*\*

8530.45 pg. 3/8530.50  
 8530.50 pg. 2/8530.50 pg. 3  
 8530.50 pg. 4

The following is to correct removal and recycle of the following pages previously submitted under Policy Transmittal 11-06, Changes to the Safety Net Services Program:

8545.05/8545 pg. 2  
8545.05 pg. 3  
\*\*\*\*\*

8545.05/8545.05 pg. 2  
8545.05 pg. 3/8545.05 pg. 4  
8545.05 pg. 5

DISPOSITION: This policy transmittal may be recycled once the UPM has been updated.

DISTRIBUTION: UPM list

RESPONSIBLE UNIT: Family Services Unit – Telephone (860) 424-5540

Date Issued: 7-18-11

WH

**CONNECTICUT DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES  
UNIFORM POLICY MANUAL**

**Date:** 10-1-98

**Transmittal:** UP-11-04

**8500**

**Section:**  
Jobs First

**Type:**  
POLICY

**Chapter:**

**Program:** TFA  
ES

**Subject:**

SN  
DP

8500 Jobs First is Connecticut's temporary assistance program that provides cash and services to needy families with children. The four components of Jobs First are Temporary Family Assistance (TFA), Employment Services (ES), Safety Net Services (SN) and the Diversion Program (DP). This section describes the eligibility requirements and the benefits available from Jobs First. Child care benefits that are available to recipients of Jobs First benefits are found in sections 17b-3-1 to 17b-3-6, inclusive, of the Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies.

- Temporary Family Assistance is the cash assistance benefit paid to families for basic and special needs. In most instances it is a time limited benefit. Some families are exempt from the time limit. Others may qualify for an extension to the time limit.
- Employment Services are designed to rapidly move Jobs First recipients into employment and toward independence from Temporary Family Assistance. Most able bodied adults are required to take part in Employment Services as determined by the Department, which may include components such as job search, work activities and short term education and training. The Department may support these activities through means such as case management, transportation and a cash participation allowance. The most fundamental goal of the Employment Services program is unsubsidized employment.
- Safety Net services are made available within available resources, to some families who have exhausted their twenty-one months of time limited eligibility for Temporary Family Assistance. Safety Net Services assist families in accessing services available in the community.
- The Diversion Program is an alternative to ongoing Temporary Family Assistance. It provides a nonrecurring, short-term cash benefit to families to help them deal with a specific crisis situation or incident of need. It is designed for families who do not require ongoing cash assistance.

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**Chapter:**

**Definitions**

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The following definitions apply to the Jobs First program. These definitions may or may not be the same as those used in other programs.

Administrative Overpayment

An administrative overpayment is an overpayment caused by the Department's incorrect action or failure to act within the appropriate time limits.

Applicant

Applicant means the individual or individuals for whom assistance is requested.

Application

Application is written indication on a form prescribed by the Department of the desire to obtain assistance.

Application Process

The application process is all activity related to the exploration, investigation and disposition of an application beginning with the filing of an assistance request and ending with disposition of the application.

Asset

An asset is cash or any item of value which is actually available or which a person has the legal right, authority and power to obtain or to utilize for his or her support.

Asset Limit

The asset limit is the maximum amount of equity in counted assets which an assistance unit may have and still be eligible for a particular program administered by the Department.

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Assignment

An assignment is the act of transferring one's equitable interest in an asset or a claim to another person or to an organization.

Assistance Unit

The assistance unit consists of one or more individuals who apply for or receive assistance together under TFA or Diversion.

Authorized Representative

An authorized representative is an adult, over the age of eighteen, who has written authorization to act on the behalf of an assistance unit of which he or she is not currently a member, and who would otherwise not be eligible to act without such authorization.

Beginning Date of Assistance

Beginning Date of Assistance is the earliest date on which an assistance unit or a member of an assistance unit is entitled to the benefits of the program.

Burial Fund

A burial fund is a revocable burial contract - that is, a fund held by a licensed funeral director to be used for funeral and burial expenses, but which can be released prior to death by mutual agreement.

Cash Payment

A cash payment is a monetary benefit issued to or on behalf of an assistance unit in check form or deposited into a financial institution via an electronic benefit distribution system.

Corrective Payment

A corrective payment is assistance which the Department provides to or on behalf of an assistance unit as an adjustment for an underpayment, of refunds owed to the assistance unit.

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Counted Asset

A counted asset is an asset which is not excluded.

Date of Application

The date of application is the date a formal written request for assistance is filed with the Department.

Debit Card

The debit card is a magnetically coded swipe card used to access benefits from an EBT account in a financial institution.

Dependent Child

A dependent child is a child who meets the age requirements of the program and applies for or receives TFA.

Domestic Violence, Victims of

A victim of domestic violence is someone who has been battered or subjected to extreme cruelty by physical acts that resulted in or were threatened to result in physical injury; sexual abuse; sexual activity involving a child in the home; being forced to participate in non-consensual sexual acts or activities; threats of or attempts at physical or sexual abuse; mental abuse; or neglect or deprivation of medical care.

Digital Imaging

Digital Imaging is a biometric identification system that uses scanned graphical information for evaluation and identification purposes.

Disregards

Disregards are those amounts which are subtracted as standard adjustments to countable income and which do not represent expenses paid by the assistance unit.

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Electronic Benefits Transfer (EBT) Account

An Electronic Benefits Transfer (EBT) account is an account in a financial institution into which the Department of Social Services deposits cash and food stamp benefits. The clients access their benefits from these accounts through the use of Department-issued debit cards.

Electronic Fund Transfer (EFT) Account

An electronic fund transfer account is a client's personal checking or savings account into which the Department of Social Services directly deposits a client's cash benefit.

Eligibility Process

The eligibility process is all activity related to the application, interim activity and redetermination process.

Ending Date of Assistance

Ending date of assistance is the last day on which the assistance unit or a member of an assistance unit is entitled to the benefits of the program.

Essential Household Item

An essential household item is furniture, furnishings and equipment found in or about a house which is used in connection with the operation, maintenance and occupancy of the home, as well as an item used in the functions and activities of home and family life or for comfort and accommodation.

Excluded Assets

Excluded assets are assets which are available from certain specified sources but are not counted in determining eligibility and level of benefits.

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Excluded Income

Excluded income is income which is available from certain specified sources but is not counted in determining eligibility and level of benefits.

Grant Reduction Recoupment

Grant reduction recoupment is a method of recoupment in which the Department reduces the assistance unit's monthly assistance grant.

Good Cause

Good cause means circumstances beyond ones control which reasonably prevent him or her from complying with a program requirement.

Home Property

Home property is:

1. real property which someone owns and is using as principal residence; and
2. life use which is the right of a person to occupy and/or enjoy the income proceeds of real property during the person's lifetime in accordance with the terms of a legal agreement.

Income

Income is money or its equivalent which is received by, or deemed available to, an assistance unit during a period of time.



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Income-In-Kind

Income-in-kind is the value of goods, commodities, or services which are provided to the assistance unit or to a third party on behalf of the assistance unit in lieu of cash.

Installment Recoupment

Installment recoupment is a method of recoupment in which the assistance unit makes monthly installments to the Department in the form of cash.

Issuance Date

The issuance date is the day of a month that a benefit check notice or other item is mailed or made available for pickup in a DSS office. For assistance units receiving benefits through an electronic distribution system, the date of issuance will be the actual date the benefits are available in financial institutions and can be accessed through a bank teller or through the use of electronically coded cards.

Intentional Recipient Error

An intentional recipient error is an intentionally incorrect oral or written statement made by the assistance unit regarding circumstances affecting eligibility or the amount of benefits. An intentional recipient error is also the intentional failure by the assistance unit to report timely the receipt of income or assets, or other changes in circumstances affecting eligibility or the amount of benefits.

Interim Activity

Interim activity is any action or activity other than application or redetermination.

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Lump Sum

A lump sum is an amount of money which is received by an assistance unit on a one time basis and is not expected to recur.

Lump-sum Recoupment

Lump-sum recoupment is a method of recoupment in which the assistance unit makes a lump-sum payment to the Department in cash.

Maintenance Payments from Title IV-E

Maintenance payments from Title IV-E of the Social Security Act are funds administered by the Department of Children and Families (DCF) available to individuals for room and board and other services given for qualified foster children or adopted children.

Needs Group

Needs group is the group of persons comprising the assistance unit and certain other persons whose basic needs are added to the total needs of the assistance unit members when determining the income eligibility of the assistance unit.

Non-Home Property

Non-home property is real property which a person owns but is not using as principal residence.

Notice

A notice is a written statement which the Department mails to the assistance unit to inform the unit that the Department has taken or intends to take a specific action in the unit's case.

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Overpayment

An overpayment is the amount of assistance paid to or on behalf of the assistance unit in excess of the amount to which the unit is properly entitled.

Personal Effects

Personal effects are clothing, jewelry or items used for personal care or individual education.

Point of Banking Terminal

A point of banking (POB) terminal is a point of sale device located in banks to allow bank customers to swipe a magnetic debit card to access their account.

Principal

Principal is the amount of money owed as a debt, upon which interest is calculated.

Protective Payee

A protective payee is an authorized representative of the assistance unit designated by the Department to receive and discharge cash benefits on behalf of an assistance unit in which he or she is not an assistance unit member or a guardian or caretaker relative of an assistance unit member.

Protective Payment

A protective payment is a type of restricted payment that is issued on behalf of an assistance unit to a protective payee who is interested in or concerned with the welfare of the assistance unit.

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Recovery

Recovery is the process by which the Department collects certain income or assets of an individual who either received benefits from the Department, or who was legally liable for the support of a person when that person was receiving benefits from the Department.

Recoupment

Recoupment is recovery of benefits which were incorrectly paid to an assistance unit.

Redetermination Process

The redetermination process is all activity related to the reevaluation of a recipient's eligibility.

Request for a Fair Hearing

A request for a Fair Hearing is a clear statement by the assistance unit or the unit's authorized representative which indicates that the unit disagrees with a Departmental action or non-action, and wishes to have its case reviewed by an official who was not personally involved in the action that is subject to appeal.

Restricted Payment

A restricted payment is a third party payment issued on behalf of an assistance unit to a vendor or to a protective payee.

Self-Directed Job Search

Self-Directed Job Search is an unstructured Employment Services activity in which a participant engages in unsupervised job seeking.

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Sponsor

A sponsor is an individual who executed an affidavit of support or similar agreement on behalf of a non-citizen, other than the non-citizen's parent or spouse, as a condition of the non-citizen's entry into the United States.

Standard of Assistance

A standard of assistance is a rate established by the Department for a particular special need item or consolidated group of special need items.

Standard of Need

The Standard of Need is the normal, basic needs which are recognized by the Department as predictable, recurrent and common to all individuals within a particular assistance program category.

Unsubsidized Employment

Unsubsidized employment is employment with wages or a salary that is entirely paid by the employer without any contribution of funds from the Department.

Verification

Verification is the act of confirming a fact, circumstance or condition through direct evidence or other reliable documentation, collateral contact or sworn statement.

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**Chapter:**

**Diversion Program**

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**Subject:**

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8515 This chapter describes the eligibility requirements of the Diversion Program (DP). This Program is a cash assistance program that provides non-recurrent, short-term benefits to families to deal with a family's specific crisis situation or episode of need. This program is offered as an alternative to ongoing monthly assistance.

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**Chapter:**  
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**Subject:**  
**Rights and Responsibilities**

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8515.05 A. Rights of Applicants

1. If offered, the TFA applicant may choose to accept Diversion assistance instead of ongoing TFA.
2. The TFA applicant may withdraw their TFA application once Diversion assistance is offered.
3. TFA applicants may rescind their agreement to accept Diversion assistance within three business days of the date the agreement is signed.

B. Responsibilities of the Department

1. The Department offers Diversion assistance to applicants who are eligible for TFA and meet the profile of the program, as described in subsection 8515.15.
2. The Department informs the TFA applicant of the specific assistance the applicant is eligible to receive under the Diversion Program and TFA.

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**Subject:**

**Eligibility Process**

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8515.10 A. Application Process

1. Each applicant of TFA is screened for Diversion assistance.
2. During the face-to-face interview, families are evaluated to assess whether the needs of the family may be met by assistance provided under the Diversion Program rather than monthly TFA assistance.
3. An applicant of TFA may not apply for Diversion assistance. The Department offers Diversion assistance to families who possess the characteristics of the program profile, as described in subsection 8515.15 B.
4. Once offered, the applicant may choose to accept Diversion assistance or continue with the TFA eligibility process.
5. Before a TFA applicant can decide to choose Diversion assistance instead of TFA, the Department gives specific details about the benefits the family is eligible to receive through the Diversion Program and the benefits it is eligible to receive through TFA.
6. A TFA applicant choosing Diversion assistance completes an agreement form which indicates the applicant's decision to accept Diversion assistance and withdraw their TFA application.
7. If an applicant rescinds their acceptance of Diversion assistance, the Department uses the original application to determine their eligibility for TFA. (Cross Reference: 8515.05 A.3.)

B. Standards of Promptness

1. The standard of promptness for issuance of benefits for the Diversion Program is fifteen days from the date of the TFA application.
2. Once the agreement to accept Diversion assistance is signed, the applicant has three business days to rescind their acceptance.

C. Assessment of Needs and Barriers

1. The Department assesses the barriers presented by the applicant which prevent the applicant from obtaining or maintaining employment.
2. The Department determines the Diversion assistance amount based on the current and anticipated job related needs of the applicant not to exceed the maximum benefit amount they would be eligible to receive under TFA.



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**Diversion**

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**Subject:**

**Eligibility Process**

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8515.10 D. Interim Activity

1. Except as provided for under subdivision D. 2. of this section, changes reported by the assistance unit after the application month do not affect the assistance unit's eligibility, benefit calculation or time limited status.
2. During the Diversion eligibility period, the assistance unit may be eligible for and receive special needs and special benefits.

E. Period of Eligibility

1. The period of eligibility is three months starting with the month of the TFA application.
2. For assistance units subject to time limited assistance, Diversion assistance shall count as three months toward that time limit.
3. Except as provided for under subsection 4. of this section, an assistance unit receiving Diversion assistance is not eligible to receive monthly Temporary Family Assistance during the three months of the Diversion period.
4. The Commissioner, or his or her designee, in his or her sole discretion, may decide to give an assistance unit monthly temporary family assistance during the Diversion period if the Commissioner or his or her designee determines that the assistance unit has experienced undue hardship.
5. A time limited assistance unit who is in the last three months of time limited assistance is not eligible for the Diversion Program.
6. A time limited assistance unit who has exhausted their 21 months of time limited assistance may be eligible for the Diversion Program if they meet the extension eligibility requirements.

F. Undue Hardship Criteria

An assistance unit in a Diversion period may be eligible to receive ongoing cash assistance when it has experienced undue hardship. Undue hardship may be, but is not limited to, a result of a fire, flood, loss of employment which is not a result of willful misconduct or incapacity of the wage earner, to such an extent that the person is not able to engage in work, and the circumstances have resulted in a serious threat to the health, safety or welfare of the client which can only be addressed through the provision of ongoing cash assistance.

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PROCEDURES

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Diversion

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Eligibility Process

P-8515:10 Application Process

Step	Action
1	<p>Use the W-1239 and W-1240 to screen for and determine the eligibility of each TFA applicant for Diversion as defined in the UPM 8515. <b>Does the household meet the eligibility requirements and the program profile?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If <u>yes</u>, offer Diversion and proceed to step 2.</li> <li>• If <u>no</u>, continue to evaluate for TFA.</li> </ul>
2	<p>Explain the limitations to and maximum benefits of the program. <b>Does the household want to pursue an application for Diversion?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If <u>yes</u>, proceed to step 3</li> <li>• If <u>no</u>, continue to evaluate for TFA.</li> </ul>
3	<p>Complete the W-1306 "Diversion and TFA Benefit Comparison" to provide the applicant with a comparison of TFA and Diversion benefits. <b>Does the applicant want to apply for Diversion?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If <u>yes</u>, proceed to step 4.</li> <li>• If <u>no</u>, continue to evaluate for TFA.</li> </ul>
4	<p>Complete the W-1300 "Diversion Program Request/Agreement with the applicant.</p> <p>NOTE: If the applicant rescinds the acceptance of Diversion, the Department determines eligibility for TFA with the original application.</p>
5	<p>Wait three days to give the client the opportunity to withdraw his/her application.</p>

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P-8515.10 Application Process

6	<p>If client does not withdraw Diversion application grant Diversion as follows:</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Diversion: EMS Case Processing</b></p> <p>Screening (J)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• KIND Screen – Select Financial Assistance</li><li>• INCH Screen:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>◆ Manually enter DP program code.</li><li>◆ Medical Coverage Group and Program Type fields are not enterable.</li></ul></li><li>• Waiver Type will not be assigned at this time.</li></ul> <p>Interview (O)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• STAT – Notice Program Code and Type.</li><li>• DEM2 – Check Diversion Counter and Date Fields.</li><li>• DCWH – Complete Diversion Circumstance Work History.</li></ul> <p>Process Application Months (P)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• In application month, PF-23 to DPAN from CAFI.</li><li>• DPAN – Enter Approved Needs</li><li>• Back at CAFI, EMS displays Total Approved Needs amount in Benefit Amount field.</li><li>• Confirm benefits. <i>Note: The DP payment will only appear in the month of application; all ongoing months' benefit amounts should equal \$0.00.</i></li><li>• EMS will assign the Waiver Type.</li></ul>
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**Chapter:**

**Diversion**

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**Subject:**

**Non-Financial Eligibility Requirements**

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8515.15 C: Concurrent Assistance

1. Individuals receiving Diversion assistance may not concurrently receive assistance from the following programs:
  - a. ongoing TFA;
  - b. Old Age Assistance;
  - c. Aid to the Blind;
  - d. Aid to the Disabled; or
  - e. SSI.
  
2. Individuals receiving Diversion assistance as a member of one assistance unit may not receive Diversion assistance as a member of another assistance unit simultaneously.

D. Child Support

1. Individuals receiving Diversion assistance are not required to assign their rights to receive child support payments to the Department.
2. Clients are informed of the services available through the Child Support unit.
3. No fee is charged for child support services for Diversion assistance recipients.

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**8515.20**

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**Section:**  
**Jobs First**

**Type:**

**POLICY**

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**Chapter:**  
**Diversion**

**Program:**

**DP**

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**Subject:**  
**Benefits Available Through Diversion**

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8515.20 A. Employment Related

An individual may receive Diversion assistance to cover the cost of employment related expenses such as, but not limited to, the following items:

1. tools or equipment necessary to perform the duties of the job;
2. union or association fees necessary to permit entry into a job; or
3. license or certificate fees which would permit the individual to start or re-enter a field of work in which the individual has training.

B. Basic Needs

A family may receive assistance to cover the cost of basic needs such as:

1. housing;
2. food;
3. clothing; or
4. utilities.

C. Transportation

An assistance unit may receive assistance to pay for the cost of transportation to maintain employment or to help obtain employment. The expenses covered include, but are not limited to:

1. public transportation;
2. car insurance;
3. car registration; or
4. car repairs.

D. Child Care

Receipt of Diversion assistance may qualify an assistance unit for child care when they meet all other requirements of the child care programs.

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**Subject:**

Benefits Available Thorough Diversion

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8515.20 E. Employment Services

1. In addition to financial assistance, an individual may be referred to the Department of Labor for help to find a job.
2. The assistance unit is not penalized if a member of the assistance unit does not comply with TFA Employment Services requirements.

F. Benefit Limitations

1. The Department shall have discretion regarding the type and amount of Diversion Assistance offered to eligible individuals.
2. The amount of Diversion assistance benefits shall not exceed the cash assistance equivalent of three months of TFA for such assistance unit.





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**Subject:** Standard of Assistance

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8515.30 A. Maximum Benefit Amount

1. An assistance unit is eligible to receive up to the cost of the short-term current or anticipated need but the benefit may not exceed a maximum of three times the monthly benefit amount the family would be eligible to receive under TFA.
2. An assistance unit may only receive Diversion assistance once in a twelve-month period.
3. Diversion assistance is only available to the adult in an assistance unit three times in the adult's life.
4. The twelve month period begins with the month of the TFA application.

B. Minimum Benefits

1. Diversion Program benefit payments are not issued if the assistance unit's benefit level is less than \$10.00.
2. If the Diversion assistance payment would be less than \$10.00, the assistance unit is not eligible.

C. Special Needs and Special Benefits

An assistance unit receiving Diversion assistance may be eligible for special needs and special benefits if, during the Diversion eligibility period, the assistance unit meets the requirements governing special needs or special benefits. (Cross Reference: 8562.25 and 8590)

D. Limitations of Benefits

1. An adult may only receive Diversion assistance a total of three times in their lifetime except for an adult in an assistance unit that joins with another assistance unit, as set forth in subdivision D.3. of this section.
2. The Department uses TFA policy on combining assistance units. (Cross Reference: 8540.05 B)
3. If an assistance unit joins another assistance unit which has received Diversion assistance within the past 12 months the new assistance unit may receive Diversion assistance if an adult in the new assistance unit has not received Diversion assistance in the last 12 months. This is true even if there is another adult in the assistance unit who has received Diversion assistance in the last 12 months.

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**Subject:**  
**Recovery and Recoupment of Benefits**

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- 8515.35
- A. Diversion assistance payments are subject to recovery. (Cross Reference: 8585.40)
  - B. Diversion assistance payments incorrectly paid may be recouped from subsequent ongoing TFA assistance payments.
  - C. An assistance unit who received Diversion assistance fraudulently is not eligible for any future Diversion assistance.

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Participation Allowances

8530.45 E. Supplements to Self-Directed Job Search Participation Allowances

1. The Department issues a supplemental payment in addition to the Self-Directed Jobs Search participation allowance for baby sitting and/or transportation under the following conditions:
  - a. for supplements to the transportation allowance, exceptional circumstances must exist to justify the need for a supplemental payment for the required face-to-face contact; and
  - b. for supplemental baby sitting allowance, the assistance unit must have more than one child who qualifies for and is in need of a baby sitter.
2. Supplemental payments are issued for costs associated with the required face-to-face contacts, but not for additional voluntary contacts.
3. The total of the supplement to the baby sitting participation allowance is the actual cost of the additional baby sitting (over the first \$55 per month) not to exceed an additional \$36.00 per month.
4. The total of the transportation participation allowance plus the transportation supplemental payment may not exceed the amounts allowed for transportation special benefits. (cross-reference 8530.40)

F. Special Participation Allowances for Irregular, Short-Term Activities

1. Employment Services participants required to attend irregular, short-term activities as specified by their Employability Plans, may receive a special participation allowance to cover the baby sitting and transportation costs associated with such participation.
2. An irregular, short-term activity is one that does not last more than five (5) consecutive days.
3. Participation allowances paid under these circumstances are \$10.00 per day, not to exceed \$50.00 in a month.

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**Chapter:**

**Employment Services**

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**ES**

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**Subject:**

**Conciliation**

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8530.50 A. Introduction

Conciliation is a process designed to allow the Department and the participant the opportunity to put forth a good faith effort to settle disputes, disagreements or misunderstandings related to Employment Services (ES) before an adverse action is taken.

B. General Principles

1. The conciliation process is used to settle disputes relating to Employment Services, except those regarding a voluntary quit of employment, reduction in the level of earnings or termination of employment due to willful misconduct.
2. The conciliation process must be completed within thirty (30) calendar days from the date conciliation is initiated, but may be ended earlier as described below under Section E.
3. The first day of the conciliation period is determined as follows:
  - a. When conciliation is initiated by the Department, the first day of the conciliation period is the date that a notice of conciliation is sent to the individual;
  - b. When conciliation is initiated by the individual, the first day of the conciliation period is the date the request is received by the Department.
4. Benefits will not be reduced, suspended or discontinued based on the issue being conciliated until the conciliation process is completed.

C. Initiating Conciliation

1. Conciliation is initiated by the Department when a preliminary determination has been made that an Employment Services participant has not complied with ES requirements without good cause and before sending the notice which imposes the penalty or increases a penalty for failure to comply.

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8530.50 C. Initiating Conciliation (continued)

2. Conciliation may be initiated by the participant when he or she believes that the services offered or required are inappropriate or incorrect.

D. Conciliation Conferences

1. Conciliation conferences may be conducted by way of an in-office, face-to-face conference or, with the participant's consent, through a telephone conference.
2. The Department informs the individual about Employment Services requirements and the conciliation process.
3. The individual has the right to bring another person to the conference to act as his or her representative.
4. If a Department supervisor is involved, he or she may act as a mediator in the process.
5. All notices regarding conciliation shall include notice of the right to receive reasonable accommodation for disabling conditions that may be contributing to the alleged non-compliance.
6. The Department shall review the individual's file, including their Service Needs Assessment and the Connecticut Works Business System, to determine if a disability that is reasonably indicated by documentation in the file may have contributed to alleged non-compliance.
7. During the conciliation meeting, the Department shall offer the individual the opportunity to be screened for mental health conditions, substance use disorders or learning disabilities.
8. The conciliation shall remain open as long as the individual is cooperating with the screening process.

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8530.50 D. Conciliation Conferences (continued)

9. If the screening indicates that the individual is more likely than not to have a disability that contributed to non-compliance with an ES requirement, a finding of good cause will result.
10. As a result of the screening, additional professional evaluation and treatment may be recommended. Additional instances of good cause will not be granted based on the same screening if the individual does not cooperate with recommendations of professional evaluation and necessary treatment.
11. The Department shall inform the Department of Labor Jobs First Employment Services case manager of the determination.
12. The Department may also make a referral for future evaluation to the Bureau of Rehabilitation Services or to a participating provider in the Department's medical assistance program.
13. The Department shall engage the individual in a conversation regarding the need for reasonable accommodations related to their participation in the program.

E. Terminating Conciliation

1. The Department may terminate the conciliation prior to the thirtieth (30) day under the following conditions:
  - a. when the participant does not appear at a scheduled conciliation conference without good cause, and does not contact the Department to reschedule;
  - b. when the participant, without good cause, does not meet a deadline to respond to a request to contact the Department to arrange a conciliation conference;
  - c. when the dispute between the Department and the participant is successfully resolved prior to the thirtieth (30) day;

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8530.50 E. Terminating Conciliation (continued)

- d. when it has been determined by the Department that the dispute cannot be resolved.
2. The participant may terminate the conciliation process at any time.
3. Good cause is considered to exist when circumstances beyond the participant's control reasonably prevent him or her from appearing at a conciliation meeting or responding to a request to contact the Department to schedule a conciliation conference.

F. Failure to Offer Conciliation

Failure by the Department to offer conciliation when it is appropriate does not confer any right to continued benefits.

G. Effect on Fair Hearings

The participant's right to a Fair Hearing is not impaired in any way as the result of participating in conciliation. (cross reference: 8525.05)

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**Chapter:**

**Safety Net Services**

**Program:**

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**Subject:**

**Provision of Safety Net Services**

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8545.05 A. General Principles

1. Safety net services are provided by the Department to assist certain families identified as having significant barriers to employment who are at risk of losing benefits under TFA or who are no longer eligible to receive TFA.
2. Safety net services are provided only to the extent that funding is available for such services. Safety net services are not provided through an entitlement program. To the extent the family is eligible for safety net services and the available funds only allow a limited number of eligible families to receive safety net services, the Department exercises its discretion and provides such assistance to those families with the greatest need.

B. Eligibility Requirements

1. In order for a family to be eligible for safety net services, the family shall:
  - a. have applied for TFA, been referred for orientation and have significant barriers to employment as identified by the Department during its initial assessment;
  - b. be receiving TFA and have significant barriers to employment as identified during the first 12 months of employment services by an employment services case manager;
  - c. be receiving TFA and have made a good faith effort to seek and maintain employment but have not been able to do so or is at risk of failing to complete the employment services program;
  - d. have been on TFA and exhausted eligibility for TFA, including all possible extensions; or
  - e. have been on TFA and not eligible for six-month extensions due to:
    - (i) the receipt of two sanctions from the Department during the first 20 months of the 21-month time limit for TFA; or



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8545.05 B. Eligibility Requirements (continued)

(ii) the Department's determination that the family has not made a good-faith effort to seek and maintain employment. Families who are at risk for losing TFA benefits under subparagraph B.1.c. of this-section may establish good faith by complying with the requirements under section 8540.10 subsections D. and E.

2. A family that is no longer eligible for TFA, in accordance with subparagraphs B.1.d. or B.1.e., shall:

- a. meet residency requirements as set forth in section 8540.45;
- b. meet the eligible child requirements, as set forth in section 8540.15; and
- c. have income below the income payment standard for the appropriate assistance unit, as set forth in section 8562.15.

C. Scope of Safety Net Services

1. Assessment

The Department shall conduct an in-depth family needs assessment for families who have been determined to be eligible for the program. The assessment examines such factors as current employment status, family income, employment history and family risk factors. As part of the assessment, the Department determines the family income necessary to allow the family to become self-sufficient.

2. Service Plan and Plan Components

- a. The service plan describes the safety net services that the Department has determined are necessary for a family. The Department determines which safety net services shall be provided to the family and the duration, frequency and intensity of such services using the results of the in-depth family needs assessment.

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8545.05 C. Scope of Safety Net Services (continued)

- b. Every service plan shall include intense case management services, which includes visits to the family's home.
- c. The service plan is designed to provide these services that are necessary to meet the family's needs as efficiently as possible and to minimize the likelihood of harm to children in the family.
- d. Safety net services in a service plan may include, but are not limited to, the following services or components:
  - (i) eviction prevention or other services that promote stability in the family's housing situation, such as mediation, counseling and referrals to homeless shelters, if appropriate;
  - (ii) continual monitoring for child abuse or neglect;
  - (iii) supportive services to assist individuals to meet employment and job search responsibilities;
  - (iv) linkages to employment services networks;
  - (v) assistance or referrals to solve problems, including, but not limited to, language barriers, substance abuse and budgeting;
  - (vi) identifying and removing barriers to employment;
  - (vii) employment-related activities to be performed by members of the family;
  - (viii) for a family no longer eligible for TFA and for whom assistance through community resources is unavailable, food, shelter and clothing;
  - (ix) for a family on TFA and at risk of losing benefits under TFA, additional screening, assessment or case management services needed to identify and address barriers to work or to compliance with employment services requirements or to document eligibility for an exemption from program requirements (Cross-reference 8530.15); or
  - (x) for families on TFA and at risk of losing benefits, development of independent performance contracts to establish that good faith efforts were being made to seek and maintain employment. (Cross-reference 8540.10)

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8545.05 C. Scope of Safety Net Services (continued)

3. Delivery of Safety Net Services

- a. Safety net services are provided through the existing community service delivery network, with additional resources provided by the Department, as necessary and available, if the services are not available through the existing community service delivery network.
- b. Safety net services are provided in-kind or through vendor or voucher payments.
- c. Safety net services may be provided either directly by the Department or by a contractor.

D. Administrative Review

A person aggrieved by the Department's decisions concerning whether and to what extent discretionary safety net services or benefits are provided shall be given an opportunity to request an informal review.

1. A written request for an informal review shall be made to the Department's agent where the program is locally administered or, if there is no such agent, to the Department. The request shall be made or postmarked no later than ten days from the date of notice of the decision from the Department or its agent.
2. The informal review shall be conducted by any person or persons designated by the Department or its agent, other than a person who recommended or approved the decision under review or a subordinate of such person.

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8545.05 D. Administrative Review (continued)

3. Not later than thirty days from the date of the informal review the Department or its agent shall issue a written report of its findings, which may order a change to the original decision of which review was sought. The Department or its agent shall use information presented with the request to make factual determinations of the circumstances of the applicant or recipient who requested the review. A copy of the result shall be provided promptly to the applicant or recipient who requested the informal review and shall include any documents presented with the request for an informal review.
4. If, following an informal review and report of findings, the original decision is unchanged, the Department shall provide a desk review of the findings, upon written request of the applicant or recipient, to ensure compliance with an agent's contractual obligation. The applicant or recipient shall request such desk review no later than ten days after the decision has been rendered. The Department shall use no new information, which could have been presented at the informal review, for the purposes of such desk review. Requests should be sent to:

Commissioner, Department of Social Services  
Family Services Unit  
25 Sigourney Street  
Hartford, CT 06106

5. The foregoing procedures are exclusive and administrative fair hearings are not available to review the Department's discretionary determinations whether to offer safety net services.